

Work Satisfaction, Intention to Stay and Hindering Factors Among Staff Nurses in Military Hospital in Saudi Arabia, A Proposed Action Plan

Mary Ann C. Natividad¹, Dr. Joel John A. Dela Merced²

<https://orcid.org/0009-0002-5722-7102>¹, <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1459-5274>²

Saint Bernadette of Lourdes College^{1,2}

smnatividad24@sbcl.edu.ph¹

jdelamerced@sbcl.edu.ph²

ABSTRACT

This quantitative descriptive-correlational study was conducted among staff nurses in a military hospital in Saudi Arabia to examine the relationships among work satisfaction, workplace hindering factors, and intention to stay, and to provide the basis for developing a Nurse Retention and Satisfaction Enhancement Program (NRSEP). A total of 86 staff nurses participated using a validated researcher-made questionnaire, and the data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The study revealed high levels of work satisfaction ($M = 2.94$) and intention to stay ($M = 2.77$). Poor management, staff shortage, and limited career growth emerged as the most common workplace hindering factors. Age significantly influenced work satisfaction and intention to stay ($p < .05$), whereas no significant differences were found across other demographic variables. Work satisfaction demonstrated a moderate positive relationship with intention to stay ($r_s = .571, p < .001$), while workplace hindering factors showed moderate negative relationships with both work satisfaction ($r_s = -.430, p < .001$) and intention to stay ($r_s = -.425, p < .001$). The study was limited to a single military hospital, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings and warrant further research across multiple healthcare settings. The findings highlight the importance of strengthening leadership, workforce support, employee recognition, and career development to improve nurse retention and provide evidence for implementing the NRSEP as a practical strategy for sustaining a satisfied and stable nursing workforce in military healthcare settings.

Keywords: *Work satisfaction, hindering factors, intention to stay, nurse retention, military hospital*

INTRODUCTION

Work satisfaction is a positive emotional state resulting from supportive work environments and effective teamwork. Hindering factors, including heavy workload, scheduling issues, and workplace stress, can reduce satisfaction and increase turnover intention. Healthcare turnover remains a global concern, with Press Ganey (2024) reporting that one in five healthcare employees left their organization between 2022 and 2023. In Saudi Arabia, Alqahtani et al. (2024) noted that high turnover adversely affects healthcare quality, patient safety, and organizational performance. Despite extensive research on job satisfaction, burnout, and leadership, limited studies have examined the combined relationship among work satisfaction, hindering factors, and intention to stay among nurses in military hospitals. This study addresses this gap by assessing these variables among staff nurses in a military hospital in Saudi Arabia.

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to determine the levels of work satisfaction, hindering factors, and intention to stay among staff nurses in a military hospital in Saudi Arabia. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of Age, Sex, Marital Status, Nationality, Religion, Length of Experience, Educational Background, and unit assigned?
2. What is the level of work satisfaction among staff nurses in terms of Leaders, Staff: Patient Ratio, Task Allocation, Paid Leaves, Schedule, Salary, Autonomy and Decision Making, and Recognition and Rewards?
3. What is the extent of intention to stay among staff nurses?
4. What hindering factors affect staff nurses in the workplace?
5. Are there significant differences in work satisfaction, hindering factors, and intention to stay when grouped according to demographic profile?
6. Is there a significant relationship among work satisfaction, hindering factors, and intention to stay?

Scope and Delimitations

This study focused on nurses employed for more than six months in a military hospital in Saudi Arabia. It examines work satisfaction, hindering factors, and intention to stay using a quantitative descriptive-correlational design. The study does not include staff nurses on vacation, other healthcare professionals, or hospitals outside the military setting. Findings are limited to self-reported data and may not fully represent all military hospitals in the region.

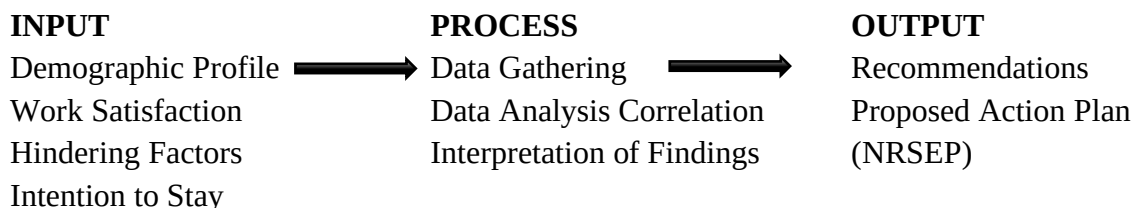
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Holter (2022), Onyema (2025), and Mozolova et al. (2026) consistently reported that work satisfaction is a significant predictor of nurse retention, with higher job satisfaction reducing turnover intention and factors such as remuneration, managerial support, and manageable workloads strengthening retention. Likewise, Idahosa (2025) and Tsapnidou et al. (2025) identified understaffing, burnout, toxic leadership, and inadequate organizational support as major workplace hindering factors that diminish job satisfaction and increase nurses' intention to leave. Furthermore, Rose (2023) and Amankwa (2025) found that effective leadership, intrinsic motivation, work-life balance, and a positive organizational culture significantly enhance nurses' intention to stay. Collectively, these studies underscore the importance of organizational strategies that improve work satisfaction and address workplace barriers to strengthen nurse retention.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is anchored on Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, which distinguishes between hygiene factors (hindering factors) and motivator factors (work satisfaction). Hygiene factors prevent dissatisfaction, while motivators enhance satisfaction and retention.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative descriptive-correlational design to assess work satisfaction, hindering factors, and intention to stay among staff nurses.

RESEARCH DESIGN

A descriptive-correlational approach was used to examine relationships among variables without manipulation.

RESEARCH STEPS

This study commenced with a comprehensive review of the literature to establish its theoretical foundation and identify research gaps. Guided by the literature, a quantitative descriptive-correlational design was developed, followed by data collection using a validated, researcher-developed questionnaire administered to staff nurses at a military hospital in Saudi Arabia. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics to examine the study variables, test the hypotheses, and formulate evidence-based recommendations.

DATA COLLECTION AND SAMPLE SELECTION

Data were collected from 86 registered staff nurses with at least six months of clinical experience at a government-operated military hospital in Medina, Saudi Arabia, using proportionate sampling. A validated researcher-made questionnaire was administered electronically, with voluntary participation and informed consent. Data were gathered over two weeks, and all responses were securely stored and used solely for research purposes.

DATA ANALYSIS METHODS

The study used descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations to summarize demographics, work satisfaction, hindering factors, and intention to stay, while inferential tests were used to assess differences and relationships among variables. ANOVA, Mann–Whitney U, and Kruskal–Wallis were used to examine demographic group differences, and Spearman's rho assessed correlations among the main variables. All analyses were conducted using standard statistical software, with normality and homogeneity checked beforehand.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES AND VALIDATION

This study aimed to test the hypotheses that there are no significant differences in work satisfaction, workplace hindering factors, and intention to stay across nurses' demographic

characteristics, and that there are no significant relationships among the study variables. The hypotheses were validated using appropriate inferential statistical analyses. One-way ANOVA, Mann–Whitney U, and Kruskal–Wallis tests were employed to examine differences across demographic groups, while Spearman’s rho was used to determine the relationships among work satisfaction, workplace hindering factors, and intention to stay. The analyses revealed significant differences in work satisfaction and intention to stay only across age groups, while significant correlations were found among the study variables, leading to the partial rejection of the null hypotheses.

Study Limitations and Ethical Considerations

The study was limited to a single military hospital and employed a cross-sectional design using self-reported data, which may limit the generalizability of the findings and preclude causal inferences. Ethical standards for research involving human participants were strictly observed. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, confidentiality and anonymity were maintained, participation was voluntary, and data were used solely for research purposes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings revealed that respondents were predominantly 36–40 years old, female, married, Filipino, Muslim, bachelor's degree holders, and nurses with more than five years of clinical experience, with the largest proportion assigned to the Emergency Room. Staff nurses demonstrated high levels of work satisfaction ($M = 2.94$) and intention to stay ($M = 2.77$) with autonomy, leadership, and task allocation receiving the highest ratings. These findings are consistent with Holter (2022), Onyema (2025), and Rose (2023), who reported that higher work satisfaction and effective leadership strengthen nurses’ commitment to remain in their organizations. In contrast, poor management ($f = 46$), staff shortage ($f = 41$), and limited career growth ($f = 36$) emerged as the most common workplace hindering factors, supporting the findings of Idahosa (2025) and Tsapnidou et al. (2025), who identified organizational barriers as major contributors to reduced job satisfaction and increased turnover intention. Significant differences in work satisfaction and intention to stay were found only across age groups, suggesting that career stage may influence organizational commitment. Furthermore, the moderate positive relationship between work satisfaction and intention to stay and the negative relationships between workplace hindering factors, work satisfaction, and intention to stay support Herzberg’s Two-Factor Theory, which emphasizes that motivator factors enhance employee retention while deficiencies in hygiene factors contribute to dissatisfaction. Collectively, these findings provide empirical support for implementing the Nurse Retention and Satisfaction Enhancement Program (NRSEP) to strengthen leadership, staffing support, recognition, and career development in military healthcare settings.

SUMMARY

This study assessed job satisfaction, barriers, and intention to stay among staff nurses at a military hospital in Saudi Arabia. Results showed high work satisfaction and strong intention to stay. The most common hindering factors were poor management, staff shortages, and limited career growth. Age significantly influenced satisfaction and retention, while other

demographic variables showed no significant differences. Work satisfaction was positively correlated with intention to stay, whereas hindering factors were negatively correlated with both satisfaction and retention. These findings highlight the interconnected nature of workplace conditions and nurse retention.

CONCLUSIONS

The study concludes that staff nurses in the military hospital generally experience high levels of work satisfaction and a strong intention to stay. However, organizational hindering factors, particularly management issues, staffing shortages, and limited career advancement, negatively affect satisfaction and retention. Enhancing leadership support, improving staffing patterns, strengthening recognition systems, and providing clear career pathways are essential for sustaining a stable nursing workforce. The results affirm the importance of addressing both motivator and hygiene factors to improve nurse retention.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Healthcare administrators should strengthen leadership practices, optimize staffing levels, expand career development opportunities, and implement formal employee recognition systems to improve satisfaction and retention. Military healthcare organizations are further encouraged to adopt the Nurse Retention and Satisfaction Enhancement Program (NRSEP) as an evidence-based quality improvement initiative to address the organizational barriers identified in this study. Future research should evaluate the effectiveness of the NRSEP across diverse healthcare settings and larger nurse populations.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The researchers express gratitude to all who contributed to this study, including colleagues, friends, and family, for their support and encouragement.

AI DECLARATION STATEMENT

AI-supported tools helped with grammar and structure in creating this article. No AI tools were used to collect, analyze, or interpret data; all authors are credited for their academic contributions.

REFERENCES

- Alqahtani, N., et al. (2024). Nurse retention in Saudi Arabia: Factors influencing turnover intention. *Saudi Journal of Nursing Science*, 12(1), 45–56.
- Amankwa, E. (2025). Intrinsic motivation and intent to stay among healthcare workers. *Journal of Workplace Behavioral Health*, 40(1), 22–38.
- Holter, A. (2022). Job satisfaction, self-efficacy, and turnover intention among nurses. *Journal of Nursing Research*, 30(2), 98–110.
- Idahosa, I. (2025). Burnout, workload, and organizational support among nurses during COVID-19. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 81(2), 345–360.
- Mozolova, V., et al. (2026). Job satisfaction, engagement, and intention to stay among nurses. *Journal of Nursing Scholarship*, 58(1), 12–25.

- Onyema, K. (2025). Job satisfaction and turnover intention among nurses. *Journal of Healthcare Leadership*, 17(1), 33–45.
- Press Ganey. (2024, July 17). *Employee engagement in 2024: Trends, challenges, and opportunities*. Press Ganey. <https://www.pressganey.com/resources/blog/employee-engagement-in-2024-trends/>
- Tsapidou, E., et al. (2025). Toxic leadership and nursing staff retention: A thematic review. *Journal of Nursing Ethics*, 32(1), 15–30.