



Factors Related to Nurse Manager's Job Satisfaction: An Integrative Literature Review

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Abstract. Nurse managers have a bearing on the quality and safety of health-care services, therefore understanding the factors that influence their job satisfaction can help healthcare organizations retain nurse managers. This study aims to develop an understanding of the factors that shape nurse managers' job satisfaction. An integrated literature review focusing on ten articles retrieved from electronic databases was made, and the articles reviewed focused on job satisfaction among nurse managers. Major themes were extracted and synthesized from these sources. Nurse manager job satisfaction is influenced by four key factors: organizational support, workloads, nurse manager-supervisor relationship, competence, and training quality. It was concluded afterward that the efforts to improve the satisfaction and retention of nurse managers should focus on cultivating working environments characterized by healthy workloads, professional growth, as well as strong inter-organizational relationships.

Keywords: Job Satisfaction · Nurse · Work satisfaction · Nurse Managers

1 Introduction

The World Health Organization [1], defines nursing as “the autonomous and collaborative care of individuals of all ages, families, groups, and communities, sick or well, in all contexts.” Nursing encompasses health promotion, sickness prevention, and the care of the sick, disabled, and dying, implying that registered nurses have a diverse variety of professional options [1]. Retaining and recruiting nurses are likely to be the most pressing challenges in the healthcare industry in the face of a looming nurse shortage. In the United States, over 70 000 nurses leave the profession yearly [2, 3]. Nurse managers play an important role in staff retention, healthcare transformation, and healthcare outcomes [2]. Improving the retention of nurse managers is vital to overcoming some of the identified nursing challenges. Nurse managers are responsible for supervising human

and financial resources, as well as ensuring patient and staff satisfaction, maintaining a safe environment for staff, patients, and visitors, maintaining standards and quality of care, and aligning the unit's goals with the hospital's strategic goals [4]. Nurse managers must have strong communication and leadership abilities, they ought to be skilled in coordinating resources and staff as well as meeting goals and objectives. They have to be successful leaders capable of striking a balance between working with the nursing staff, and the health facility members and directors.

These high expectations might contribute to increased burnout and decrease satisfaction among Nurse managers [5]. There have been many studies on staff nurse's job satisfaction, but few studies conducted concerning nurse managers. The loss of seasoned nurse managers has the potential to cause tremendous clinical and administrative challenges, that affected organizations [3]. One avenue that is effective in improving the levels of managers retention is improving job satisfaction which is defined as any combination of psychological, physiological, and environmental circumstances that cause a person thoughtfully to say I am satisfied with my job [6]. Improving the levels of nurse managers' job satisfaction is one of the avenues that can be employed to improve their retention and improve their performance and productivity, previous studies showed inconsistency about the factors related to nurse manager's job satisfaction, therefore, an integrative review of the literature might be essential to identify the gap in this area and indicate the factors that most commonly associated with job satisfaction among nurse managers, However, such efforts require an understanding of the factors that relate to nurse managers' job satisfaction. The purpose of this study is to develop an understanding of the factors that are related to nurse managers' job satisfaction.

2 Methods

The databases of PubMed, CINAHL, and Elsevier were searched for related scientific evidence published between 2012 and 2022. The search was conducted using different combinations of keywords including; nurse managers, work satisfaction, job satisfaction, nurse leaders, and nurse administrators. The inclusion criteria for articles to be considered in this review were 1) published in the English language, 2) published between the years 2012 and 2022, and 3) the article must be original research. Incomplete reports in the form of conference proceedings, abstracts, posters, editorial papers, or opinion papers were excluded from this review. As shown in Fig. 1, the initial search results executed at the different search engines came back with 1323 articles, and then, the titles were exported from the federated search results into MS excel sheet and compiled together in one comprehensive list. Then, upon removing the duplicates from the list, 650 article titles were left. Then, the primary researchers went through the 650 titles and excluded 540 articles as the titles were not relevant to the focus of this integrative review; 110 articles were left. The screening procedure continued with reading the abstracts of 110 articles by the primary researchers, 90 articles were then excluded and 20 were included. The 20 articles were printed in full text and reviewed carefully. Upon reviewing the full text, 10 articles were excluded as it does not relate to the main focus of this review as set in the inclusion criteria and doesn't met the purpose of this review. Finally, 10 articles were included at the current review.

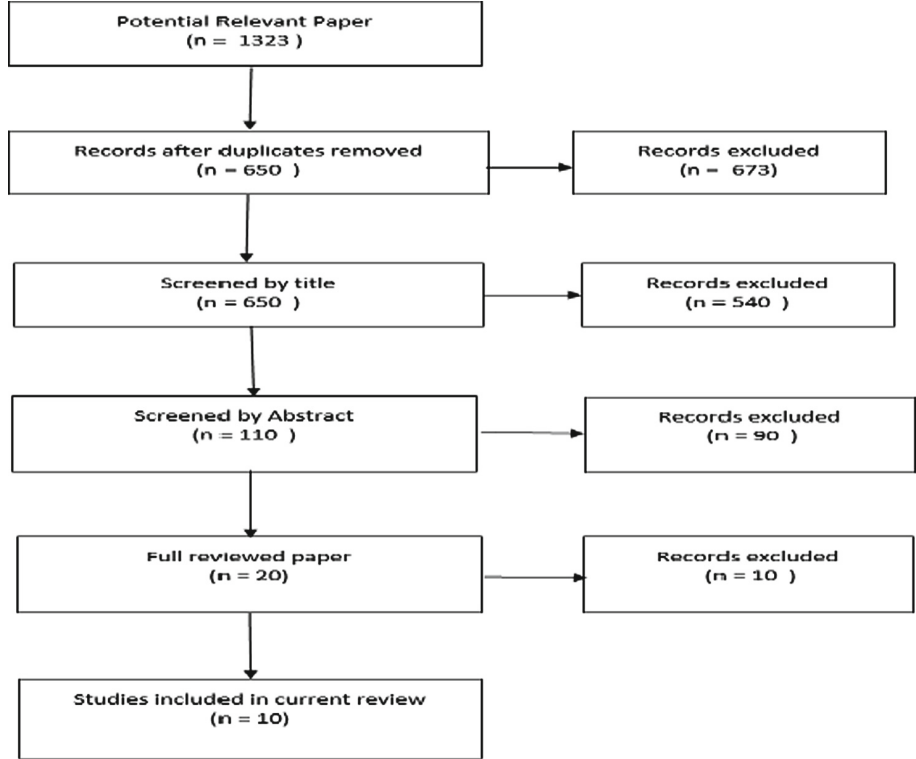


Fig. 1. Literature search, inclusion, and exclusion flowchart

3 Results

Ten articles were reviewed and included. As shown in (Appendix 1, Table 1), for each included article, the data of authors, year of publication, the purpose of the study, design, sample size, outcome, strength, and weaknesses findings were extracted and summarized. The data analysis involved stripping findings from each of the ten studies. The findings were then analyzed to extract common themes relating to the factors that influence the job satisfaction of nurse managers.

The analysis of the resources led to the identification of four themes about factors related to nurse managers’ job satisfaction. The themes are: 1) workloads 2) organizational support 3) competency and training and 4) manager-supervisor relationship will be discussed in detail in this section.

3.1 Workload

Studies reviewed have reported that nurse managers often supervise many employees and must balance clinical and administrative responsibilities. Moreover, nurse managers often feel overwhelmed by the heavy workload as shown in the study [7]. Nurse managers should maintain their clinical skills and develop the relevant managerial abilities and skills required to supervise valuable human and non-human resources. Nurse managers may supervise up to 100 individuals [8]. In some cases, they may be in charge of multiple units. Such burdensome levels of responsibility make it hard for nurse managers to not only perform their responsibilities but also affect their overall satisfaction with their profession. Burdensome workloads can cause physical and psychological stress on nurse managers [7]. Moreover, high workloads are linked to various negative outcomes including anxiety, hypertension, weight changes [7], and anxiety. The stress emanating from the high workload has a negative relationship with job satisfaction [7].

3.2 Organizational Support

The levels of organizational support that nurse managers receive have a bearing on their levels of job satisfaction [8]. Supportive organizations are characterized by measures aimed at creating a healthy practice environment and the provision of sufficient resources for the nurse managers and other employees to complete their tasks [9]. Administrative support not only contributes to the creation of a healthy work environment but also contributes directly to job satisfaction [12]. Moreover, organizational support may mediate the effects of job stress on the levels of job satisfaction reported by nurse managers [13]. Nurse managers who are supported by the provision of co-managers and administrative assistants are unlikely to suffer from burdensome workloads and are more likely to report higher levels of job satisfaction [8]. A previous study addresses poor job satisfaction among nurse managers and claims that poor satisfaction is a problem that is linked to a lack of organizational support [9]. Lack of organizational support is manifested in the form of failure to provide the resources and support required to implement organizational initiatives [3]. Moreover, some nurse managers stated that organizational constraints led to obstacles to success that were worsened by frequent policy changes and administrative bureaucracy in many hospitals [14].

3.3 Competency and Training

Study [3] emphasize the value of competency and training. Nurse managers' training and competency were highlighted as valuable to job satisfaction. Proficiency in both the knowledge and skills required to complete the nurse manager responsibilities makes it possible to enjoy the job and find it challenging rather than hard [3]. The adequacy of the training that nurse managers is also vital to their job satisfaction as it determines their capacity to undertake their duties effectively and use more modern approaches. However, many nurse managers lacked basic orientation and were not sufficiently prepared for the responsibilities and duties associated with their position [3]. In some cases, nurse managers stumble into the position and must learn on the job which can be quite difficult. A considerable proportion of nurse managers report almost quitting in the first year due to

the complexity of their role and their lack of training. Even experienced nurse managers express the feeling that they lack the foundational knowledge required to execute their jobs [10]. Overall, lack of competency and lack of training makes it harder for nurse managers to undertake their responsibilities which contributes to the erosion of their job satisfaction.

3.4 Manager-Supervisor Relationship

Relationships play a major role in shaping the levels of job satisfaction that can be attained in any workplace context. Nurse managers have different types of relationships, each of which has a bearing on the levels of job satisfaction [11]. Nurse managers that have supportive and empowering supervisors are more likely to have higher levels of job satisfaction [12]. There is a positive correlation between the levels of supervisor support and nurse manager job satisfaction. Effective collaboration between nurse managers and supervisors is a positive correlate with job satisfaction. A good relationship between a nurse manager and the supervisor is essential to a healthy work environment which in turn helps improve the levels of performance and job satisfaction [13]. However, the relationships between nurse managers and supervisors are not always positive. A considerable proportion of nurse managers report having a poor relationship with their supervisors [13]. Some nurse managers report that their supervisors (who tend to be nursing directors or other similar roles) micro-managed them and they felt a lack of autonomy in their position [14, 15]. There are nurse managers that describe their practice contexts as punitive with little independence. Such working environments do not allow nurse managers to express their creativity and capacity, which undermines their capacity to derive the most satisfaction from their job.

4 Discussion

The nurse manager role is indispensable to the delivery of quality and safe healthcare services. Nurse managers are key contributors in coordinating the clinical and administrative responsibilities that affect patient outcomes, nurse staff retention, and the transformation of healthcare. It is imperative for healthcare organizations to not only protect but also expand the supply of nurse managers to meet the growing need for healthcare services.

The finding showed that the workload placed on nurse managers influences their level of job satisfaction. This lines up with findings from other clinical positions that show that a greater workload is associated with reduced levels of job satisfaction [7]. First, a Burdensome workload can cause burnout, stress, dissatisfaction, and lower levels of job satisfaction. Thus, the duties of a nurse manager must be designed to fit a manageable workload. Also, supporting measures must be provided, including assistants that limit workload and immediate interactions. However, the level of workload can significantly impact nurse manager job satisfaction. When the workload is excessive and not manageable, nurse managers may feel overwhelmed and unable to meet the demands of their job. This can lead to feelings of frustration, stress, burnout, and eventually, job dissatisfaction. On the other hand, when the workload is manageable, nurse managers are more likely to feel a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction in their role. They

have the time and resources to focus on their responsibilities and make a positive impact on the lives of patients and their staff. It is important for organizations to recognize the impact of workload on nurse manager job satisfaction and to take steps to ensure that workload is manageable and sustainable. This may include providing additional resources and support, reducing the number of responsibilities, or reassessing workload and making adjustments to ensure it is balanced and reasonable.

Study [2] concluded that organizational support affected the levels of nurse manager job satisfaction. Nurse managers working in organizations that supported them with adequate personnel, resources, and professional development responsibilities were more likely to report higher levels of job satisfaction. Organizational support can take many forms, including providing adequate resources and support staff, recognizing and rewarding good performance, and providing opportunities for professional growth and development. When nurse managers feel that their organization values their contributions and provides them with the resources they need to perform their job effectively, they are more likely to be satisfied with their role. In addition, a supportive work environment can also positively impact job satisfaction. When nurse managers feel that they are part of a team and that their colleagues are supportive and collaborative, they are more likely to feel fulfilled and satisfied with their job. Moreover, when nurse managers feel unsupported by their organization, they may experience low morale, job dissatisfaction, and even burnout. This can lead to increased turnover, which can have a negative impact on patient care and the overall success of the organization. Healthcare organizations should ensure that their nurse managers are sufficiently supported with the resources, technologies, and personnel required to complete their administrative and clinical responsibilities.

Study [1] also revealed that the nature of the nurse manager-supervisor relationship affects the nurse managers' job satisfaction. A positive relationship between a nurse manager and their supervisor can lead to open and effective communication, collaboration, and mutual trust. This can result in increased job satisfaction as nurse managers feel that their contributions are valued and that they have the support they need to perform their job effectively. However, when the relationship between a nurse manager and their supervisor is negative or strained, it can lead to feelings of stress, frustration, and job dissatisfaction. Nurse managers may feel unsupported, micromanaged, or not trusted to make decisions, which can erode their confidence and impact their job satisfaction. It is important for both nurse managers and supervisors to work together to build a positive and supportive relationship. This may include regular check-ins, open communication, and opportunities for feedback and collaboration. When the relationship between a nurse manager and their supervisor is positive and supportive, nurse managers are more likely to feel satisfied with their job and perform at their best.

Study [6] has shown that the nurse manager's training and competence have a bearing on the levels of job satisfaction as shown in a study. Training and development opportunities can help nurse managers stay up-to-date with the latest best practices and technologies, and can give them the tools they need to successfully manage their departments. This can result in increased job satisfaction as nurse managers feel that they are well-equipped to perform their job and make a positive impact on patient care. Moreover, competence can lead to recognition and respect from colleagues, patients, and staff.

When nurse managers feel confident and competent in their roles, they are more likely to feel valued and satisfied with their job. Most nurse managers coming from clinical backgrounds find difficulty in handling the administrative aspects of being nurse managers without sufficient training. Therefore, it is imperative to ensure that nurse managers are adequately trained in their weak points to improve their effectiveness in their managerial roles.

Studies [1, 3, 8, 9] employed a cross-sectional survey design which allows researchers to capture a snapshot of the factors that are connected to the nurse manager's job satisfaction at a given time. However, the design is flawed and hinders the ability to identify influential factors on job satisfaction among nurse managers. Studies that support greater involvement of the researcher in controlling the predictors of job satisfaction are needed. Thus, the use of more rigorous designs in the study area is a research priority that would lead to improved understanding and quality of evidence pertaining to the influential factors on job satisfaction. Secondly, a considerable proportion of the reviewed studies used very small sample sizes, which weakens the reliability of a study due to the compounding effects of random and systematic factors on the observations made. Hence, future studies should consider employing larger sample sizes. Overall, some serious methodological concerns should be addressed by future studies on the factors that are related to nurse managers' job satisfaction.

5 Conclusions

The findings of the integrated literature review indicated that nurse managers are likely to report higher levels of job satisfaction in work environments that feature manageable workloads, organizational support, training, career development opportunities, and good relationship with supervisors. Thus, healthcare organizations should consider evaluating and adjusting their nurse managers' workloads, develop measures to improve interpersonal relationships, ensure that their nurse managers are sufficiently supported, and encourage the professional growth of their nurse managers. Other measures that may be beneficial include promoting nurse manager autonomy, social support, team cohesion, strategies to manage and reduce stress, and their power to make decisions for change. Co-management, with or without the use of electronic support resources such as expert systems, are also changes to be considered. The promotion of pro-social group behaviors, coaching, team building, and the implementation of wellness programs all have the potential to improve interrelationships and team cohesion.

6 Implication for Nursing Practice

The findings have multiple implications for nursing management:

- Healthcare organizations should consider re-examining core values to provide reasonable workloads and track nurse managers' burnout levels, stress levels, and overall well-being.
- Healthcare organizations must foster quality relationships between nurse managers and supervisors to improve job satisfaction.
- Healthcare organizations should ensure nurse managers are prepared to handle the demands and responsibilities of their position, as training and competence are key factors in job satisfaction.
- Healthcare Organizations should ensure nurse managers are provided adequate training, orientation, continuing education, and mentorship to handle the role and responsibilities of nurse managers.

7 Recommendations for Future Studies

The integrated literature review led to the identification of a very limited number of studies that focus solely on the factors that influence job satisfaction among nurse managers. Thus, there is a clear need for more studies focusing on the factors that influence job satisfaction among nurse managers. Moreover, most of the studies that were reviewed did have noticeable methodological weaknesses that should be addressed in future studies. Strengthening the methods employed in this study area as well as integrating theory-based studies could better the conceptualization of job satisfaction among nurse managers. Furthermore, there is a need for interventional studies aimed at investigating the efficacy of certain strategies in improving the levels of job satisfaction among nurse managers.

8 Limitations

No Limitations.

Appendix

Table 1. Summary of the Studies Included in the Review

#	Authors (Year)	Purpose of the study	Design	Sample	Outcome	Strength	Weakness
1	Weaver et al. (2019)	To examine the relationship between supervisors and nursing unit managers and the nursing outcomes.	A cross-sectional survey	72 unit-based nurse managers and 41 supervisors.	Job satisfaction is tied to the degree of collaboration and relationship between nurse managers and supervisors. There was a significant positive correlation between collaboration and nurse managers’ job satisfaction.	Reasonable sample size	Lack of Randomization
2	Simpson et al. (2017)	To investigate whether the addition of an administrative assistant and individualized transformational leadership training decreased the adverse effects of a larger span of control and influenced job satisfaction among nurse managers.	A quasi-experimental research design	8 nurse managers recruited from a large urban healthcare organization.	There was a significant improvement in the levels of job satisfaction among the participating nurse managers. Thus, the span of control and provision of support for nurse managers should be considered as options for improving their levels of job satisfaction.	Relatively strong design	Small sample size

(continued)

Table 1. (continued)

#	Authors (Year)	Purpose of the study	Design	Sample	Outcome	Strength	Weakness
3	Warshawsky et al. (2019)	Exploration of the environment that influence nurse managers' job satisfaction.	A cross-sectional survey involving the use of nurse managers' practice environment scale and job satisfaction measures.	348 nurse managers recruited from 25 hospitals across 9 healthcare systems in the United States.	The working environment was predictive of the nurse managers' job satisfaction. The finding suggests that work environment factors including support and relationships influence nurse managers' job satisfaction. The study also highlights gaps in the competence of nurse managers.	Relatively large sample size. No randomization or controls.	No randomization or controls.
4	Cox (2019)	Exploring the lived experiences of nurse managers to determine the factors that contributed to their job satisfaction.	A qualitative phenomenology design.	nurse managers who have served in their current positions for more than five years at a large home healthcare organization in New York.	Staff relationships, organizational and leadership support, focus on nurse manager responsibilities, and commitment to caring for patients in the home environment contributed to the nurse managers' job satisfaction.	In-depth data collection using interviews.	The lack of cross-validation of the themes.

(continued)

Table 1. (continued)

#	Authors (Year)	Purpose of the study	Design	Sample	Outcome	Strength	Weakness
5	Keith et al. (2022)	To investigate the effect of generational membership on nurse managers’ job satisfaction and perception of the practice environment.	Survey design of data collected from nurse managers. Multiple linear regression analysis was employed in the analysis of the collected data.	-	While generational membership did not impact job satisfaction, the practice environment was a strong influence on job satisfaction.	Large sample size.	Lack of randomization or controls.
6	Roth et al. (2019)	To create an evidence-based formal mentorship program for nurse managers to improve their retention rates and to assess the impact of the program on their job satisfaction.	Quality improvement project The mentorship was guided by the exemplary leadership framework. Data collection focused on job satisfaction, transformational leadership behavior, and leadership practices.	Two hospitals in the Pacific Northwest. 15 nurse managers participated in the project.	There was a significant increase in the nurse managers’ job satisfaction, transformational leadership behaviors, and intent to stay after participation in the mentorship program. The findings suggest that offering opportunities for training and improving competence can improve nurse managers’ job satisfaction.	A relatively strong design.	Small sample size.

(continued)

Table 1. (continued)

#	Authors (Year)	Purpose of the study	Design	Sample	Outcome	Strength	Weakness
7	Jäppinen et al., (2021)	The study examines nurse managers' stress from the workload and how it is associated with job satisfaction, practice environment, and job stress.	A survey design was employed.	209 nurse managers from Finnish central hospitals.	Nearly a fifth of nurse managers experience stress due to high workload which was also linked to lower levels of job satisfaction and a negative perception of the practice environment.	Large sample size.	Lack of randomization.
8	L'Ouverture (2019)	To examine the relationship between two approaches to leadership and job satisfaction among nurse managers.	The study involved a cross-sectional survey design.	Data collection entailed the use of an online survey targeting nurse managers.	Self-leadership is not a significant predictor of job satisfaction among nurse managers. Authentic leadership and three of its four dimensions are statistically significant predictors of job satisfaction among nurse managers.	The inclusion of nurse managers from different regions.	Relatively small sample size.

(continued)

Table 1. (continued)

#	Authors (Year)	Purpose of the study	Design	Sample	Outcome	Strength	Weakness
9	Kath et al. (2012)	To examine the factors that moderate the negative effects of job stress among nurse managers.	A quantitative cross-sectional survey design was used.	-	The findings revealed that autonomy, social support, and predictability buffered the negative effects of stress on performance and job satisfaction. The study also reports that nurse managers have high-stress levels which tend to decrease with age.	A relatively large sample size.	Lack of control group and randomization.
10	Aziz et al., (2020)	To investigate the effect of professional behavior on job satisfaction among nurse managers.	A descriptive correlational design.	170 nurse managers working at Assuit University Hospital.	A significant positive correlation between professional behavior and job satisfaction. Communication, relationships, and working conditions appear to have the highest impact on job satisfaction among nurse managers.	Relatively large sample size and use of validated instruments for data collection.	The lack of randomization is the main weakness.

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