Assessing the Job Engagement and Organizational Commitment of Bedside Care Nurses

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Abstract. Background: For nurses to be efficient and effective, job engagement and organizational commitment are crucial, and these concepts are connected to a number of performance outcomes. Understanding these professional aspects of nurses' lives would therefore benefit and help improving the work environment, and consequently patients' outcomes. Purposes: To assess the nurses' job engagement and organizational commitment at various career stages, and to assess the association between these concepts. Methods: A descriptive correlation design was used. Convenient sampling method was used to recruit nurses from the accessible population. Registers nurses who have been working at an oncology center for more than one year were included in the study. Data were collected through a self-reported scales. Results: The average job engagement score was 35.7 out of 45, and the average organizational commitment score was 4.28 out of 7. The late career stage was where nurses were found to have the highest job engagement score (mean = 37.1), and the highest organizational commitment score (mean = 4.36). It was found that there was a weakly positive correlation between the job engagement and organizational commitment. Conclusions: The current study sheds light on the bedside nurses' levels of job engagement and organizational commitment. Both concepts are at an intermediate level and have been incrementally raised as career stages have advanced. These concepts might be effectively advanced by empowering nurses, and novice nurses require particular attention and support.

Keywords: Bedside care · job engagement · nurses · organizational commitment

1 Introduction

Organizational commitment is defined as psychological bond employees' feel towards the goals of the organization [1]. Thakur et al. [2], reported that organizational commitment consists of three components; affective-organizational, continuance, and normative.

The organizational commitment is a multidimensional construct [3], that is associated with the organizational outcomes such as; performance, satisfaction and service quality [4], turnover and turnover intention [5], absenteeism, tenure, and readiness to achieve organizational goals, as well as job engagement [3].

Job engagement is the degree to which the individual care and absorbs it in his or her functional roles [6]. Numerous studies have found that job engagement can successfully predict both organizational and employees' work-related outcomes [7]. Organizational outcomes including: satisfaction, retention, efficiency, productivity and profitability. Whereas, employees' work-related outcomes include: workplace attitudes, and person performance [7].

Baker and Demerouti [8] stated that an engaged employee shows high level of enthusiasm and energy, and such employees usually describe their tiredness as pleasant state because it is associated with positive accomplishments. According to Schaufeli et al. [6] engagement is not a momentary and specific state, but rather it's a fixed and emotional state of mind that does not focus on an individual's object, occasion or behavior. Accordingly, they define job engagement as "a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption".

The first component is vigor, which is characterized by high levels of energy and mental flexibility, desire to invest effort in work activity and show stability and consistency when facing difficulty. The second component dedication that is characterized by experiencing a sense of significance, enthusiasm, challenge employees of work, passion, and inspiration (Bakker & Schaufeli, 2015). The last component is absorption, which is characterized by being fully focused, happily in one's work, whereby time passes quickly and one has difficulties with detaching oneself from work [6].

Engaged workers are more creative, productive, and more willing to spend more efforts [9]. Previous studies stated that rewards and recognition and value fit, were significant predictors of all three job engagement components [8, 10].

According to Simpson [11] job engagement is negatively related to turnover intentions and positively related to job satisfaction and organizational commitment. In particular, employee with lower levels of engagement at work is likely to have a higher intent to leave the organization, as well as actual leave [12].

Very few research could be located that evaluated these concepts across the various career stages or examined the relationship between these concepts, despite the fact that studies have evaluated the degree of organizational commitment and the degree of job engagement. Thus, exploring the role of organizational commitment, and job engagement would contribute effectively to understanding these professional aspects of nurses' life. The current study aimed to assess the nurses' job engagement and organizational commitment, and assess the association between them. The following research questions were answered by the study:

1. What are the scores of nurses' job engagement and organizational commitment?
2. Are there differences in nurses' job engagement and organizational commitment according to their demographics?
3. Are nurses' job engagement and organizational commitment associated with each other?

2   Methods

A descriptive correlation design was used. Registers nurses who have been working at an oncology center for more than one year were included in the study. By setting $\alpha =$ 0.05, and medium effect size for correlation (0.3), and power $= 80\%$; Cohen's tables for sample size estimation indicated the minimum need of 85 participants.

2.1   Sampling and Data Collection

Convenient sampling method was used to recruit nurses from the accessible population. All nurses who are currently working in the hospital were invited to participate. The study questionnaires were distributed to each unit manually, and the completed questionnaires were recollected one week later.

2.2   Measurement

The questionnaire includes the socio-demographic data sheet; and two scales intended to measure job engagement, and organizational commitment. Job engagement was measured by the "short form of the Job Engagement Scale". This scale was adopted and modified by Crawford et al., [13]. They modified the original scale that is developed by Rich, LePine, Crawford, and developed the short form which consists of 9 items. It includes the three dimensions of engagement; physical, emotional and cognitive, which are the same underlying constructs of physical as vigor, emotional as absorption, and cognition as the dedication [14]. Each dimension is represented by three questions. Example items include: "I work with intensity on my job" (physical), "I am enthusiastic about my job" (emotional), and "at work, my mind focuses on my job" (cognitive). Each item has a 5-points Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). This scale has been developed in response to numerous requests from researchers and organizations to have a shorter version of the scale. Scientific literature supported the psychometric properties of the scale, with even higher psychometric strength than other job engagement scales, and scale's construct validity was also supported [14]. Previous studies also supported the scale's internal consistency, in which the reliability scores ranged from 0.89 to 0.94 [13]. Internal consistency in this study was assessed, and Cronbach's Alpha was 0.87. This scale was also used previously in the nursing population in several studies [15].

Organizational commitment measured by the "Three-Component Model (TCM) of commitment" [16]. This scale measures the three dimensions of commitment: desire-based "affective commitment," obligation-based "normative commitment" and cost-based "continuance commitment" [17]. The original TCM questionnaire contains 24 items, with eight-items reflecting each sub domain. Later the TCM was revised, and shortened to have six-items to measure each sub domain with a total of 18 items [18]. Each item has seven points Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Affective commitment was measured by six questions, in which, three questions were positively worded, and three questions were negatively worded. Continuance commitment was measured by the next six questions, and all these questions were worded positively. The normative commitment was measured by the last six questions, where

five questions were worded positively and only one were worded negatively [19]. Previous studies supported the scale's convergent and discriminant validity, internal reliability. The alpha reliability coefficient was more than 0.7 [20]. In this study Cronbach's Alpha was 0.81. This scale was used previously in the nursing population to assess the relationship between organizational commitment and intention to leave among nurses [19].

2.3 Ethical Considerations

It was stated clearly that participation is voluntary, and they can withdraw from the study any time. Confidentiality was maintained by coding each questionnaire with a serial number without names. The informed consent was provided to all subjects as a cover page for the questionnaires. Subjects considered agreed to participate in the study by returning the completed questionnaires.

Data were analyzed by IBM Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the study sample, and to identify the scores of job engagement and organizational commitment. Pearson correlation coefficient was used to test association between the two concepts. The one way ANOVA and independent T-test were used to detect differences in the main outcome variables based on the nurses' socio-demographical factors.

3 Results

The current study recruited 260 registered nurses, where most of them were women (54%), single (58%), and have bachelor degree in nursing (89%). Nurses' ages ranged between 22–54 years old, with an average of (28.2, SD $\pm$ 6), and their working experience ranged between 1–19 years, with an average (5.5, SD $\pm$ 4.3).

3.1 Nurses' Job Engagement and Organizational Commitment

As shown in Table (1), the total score of job engagement for the study sample ranged between 16–45, with an average (35.7, SD $\pm$ 4.98), and the total score of organizational commitment for the study sample ranged between 2.61–5.76, with an average (4.28, SD $\pm$ 0.6).

Exploring the scores of job engagement and organizational commitment over different career stages revealed that nurses had the highest job engagement score were found in the late career stage (mean = 37.1, SD $\pm$ 3.77). Additionally, the highest organizational commitment score was in the late career stage (mean = 4.36, SD $\pm$ 0.567), (Table 2).

3.2 Main Outcome Variables and Nurses' Demographics

Comparing the scores of job engagement, and organizational commitment based on the students' demographics; area of practice, job title, age, marital status and gender revealed that both Job engagement and organizational commitment has statistically significant differences with age (F3,256 = 1.29, p = 0 .03), (F3,256 = 0.32, p = 0 .05).

Table 1. The overall score of the outcome variables for the study sample

Outcome variable	Min.	Max.	Mean	Median	$SD \pm$	95% CI for the Mean
Job engagement	16	45	35.69	36	4.98	35.18 – 36.2
Organizational commitment	2.61	5.67	4.28	4.30	0.60	4.21 – 4.34

Table 2. The scores of job engagement and organizational commitment over career stages

Career trends		Initiation stage	Transitional early career stage	Midcareer building stage	Late-career stage
Job engagement	Mean	35.41	35.47	35.22	37.09
	Variance	18.06	29.47	28.72	14.27
	$SD \pm$	4.2	5.42	5.36	3.77
Organizational commitment	Mean	4.24	4.25	4.29	4.36
	Variance	0.33	0.414	0.34	0.32
	$SD \pm$	0.58	0.64	0.58	0.56

Nurses between 27–30 years old group (mean = 35.94) had statistically significant higher Job engagement than nurses up to 26 years old group (mean = 35.17) (p = 0.028) (95% Confidence Interval -3.32 – 2.09). Nurses with 30 and above years old group (mean = 4.33) had statistically significant higher organizational commitment than nurses between 27–30 years old group (mean = 4.29) (p = 0.023) (95% Confidence Interval -0.38 – 0.29).

3.3   Association Between the Outcome Variables

Pearson correlation coefficient was used to test the association between job engagement and organizational commitment. Results revealed that job engagement had a positive weak correlation with organizational commitment (r = 0.25, p < 0.001) (r2 = 0.06).

4   Discussion

The highest job engagement scores were found among older nurses. According to Laschinger et al., [21], job engagement generated from the own physical strength, cognitive, and emotion that are put into work and translated into action. Current results might be due to the ability of older nurses to behave appropriately and rationally as a result to career growth. Moreover, higher self-regulating, and adaptation might occur with frequent change in the job demands and responsibilities. Results revealed that job engagement rises considerably with increase nurse age, which could reflect the search for stability among older nurses. On the other hand, younger nurses might have different

concerns; such as exploring opportunities and seeking higher rewarding jobs and this may affect their job engagement, by lowering the vigor and dedication to current job.

In the current study, the highest organizational commitment scores have been reported among nurses with work experience of 10 years and more. This result is similar to a previous study, which reported that nurses with longer experience tend to demonstrate higher organizational commitment, and novice nurses reported lower organizational commitment [22].

Assessing the organizational commitment revealed that the lowest scores were found among nurses working in the specialized units. Such result is consistent with a previous study that stated that nurses working in intensive care units had lowest commitment scores [22]. This might be attributed to the workload and stressful work environment which could have a negative impact on their emotional attachment to their organization.

4.1   Limitations of the Study

The following limitations were considered with regard to the generalizability of the findings: The possible differences in views and experiences among nurses who did not participate in this study. Additionally, nurses completed the study questionnaires while they were on duty, and this might create a source of response set bias.

4.2   Conclusions

The current study sheds light on the bedside nurses' levels of job engagement and organizational commitment. Both concepts are at an intermediate level and have been incrementally raised as career stages have advanced. These concepts might be effectively advanced by empowering nurses, and novice nurses require particular attention and support.

4.3   Implications for Nursing Administration and Clinical Practice

1. Organizations should build the culture of fostering employees' professional growth, which in turn improves organizational commitment and job engagement.
2. Administrators should design targeted strategy to maintain and improve job engagement and organizational commitment based on nurses' experience.
3. Paying attention to the nurses' ability to contribute effectively in the work procedures and environment could help intensify the level of coherence with the organization, and consequently improve their engagement and commitment.
4. Clear policy for rewarding and promotion might contribute to enhancing nurses' commitment and job engagement.

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