

## Research Article

## Determining Job Satisfaction of Nurses in Emergency Departments of Shiraz Hospitals

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**Abstract: Introduction:** Job satisfaction is one of the most important factors in job success, especially in nurses and hospital staff who play a significant role in promoting community health as human resources. Therefore, this study was conducted to evaluate the job satisfaction of emergency staff at Shiraz public hospitals. **Methods:** This cross-sectional study was carried out on 400 nurses working in the emergency departments of 5 hospitals in Shiraz. The sampling from the emergency departments was done randomly. The data were collected using the JDI questionnaire (Job Descriptive Index), and the t-test and ANOVA were also used to analyze the data. **Results:** 274 individuals in this study (68.5%) were female and 211 ones (52.8%) were married. There was no significant relationship between job satisfaction and gender, employment status, organizational position, and marital status ( $p > 0.05$ ). According to the ANOVA results, there was a significant relationship between job satisfaction and educational level ( $p = 0.006$ ), work experience ( $p = 0.014$ ) and income ( $p = 0.003$ ). **Conclusion:** Based on the results of the present study, the individuals with higher work experiences, higher education and higher income had higher job satisfaction as well.

**Keywords:** Job Satisfaction, Nurses, Emergency Department.

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### INTRODUCTION

Increasing public health and community wellbeing is one of the most important issues in the current age and is considered an inevitable necessity. In this regard, the presence of expert, efficient and, at the same time, cheerful and satisfied staff who are involved in the health of the community seems necessary (Lu, H. *et al.*, 2007).

Job satisfaction is an issue that has been studied frequently in different organizations since the 1920s, and according to many experts, it is one of the most challenging organizational concepts and the basis for many management policies to increase organizational efficiency and effectiveness (Sh, B. *et al.*, 2012). Job satisfaction is a major factor in the job success of any individual and increases the efficiency and satisfaction of the individual (Pour, S.H., & Ghadermarzi, H. 2012). There are various definitions of job satisfaction, but it is generally defined as the individuals' feelings about their job and its various dimensions (Hajibabae, F. *et al.*, 2016). Job satisfaction dimensions include a general attitude

toward work, promotion opportunities, payment, quality of supervision, and relations with colleagues (Coplan, B. *et al.*, 2018). Robbins suggested that employees' satisfaction must be taken into consideration for two reasons: 1) Absence from work, job abandonment, and job resignation were found more among dissatisfied staff. 2) Satisfied and cheerful staff were physically and mentally healthy and increased the efficiency of work (Ganji, K. *et al.*, 2015). Job Satisfaction can increase productivity, organizational commitment, physical and mental health, and work morale (Amirghodsi, S., & Naeini, A. B. 2016).

Different countries have examined job satisfaction status in their work systems and have dealt with this issue from different perspectives. Thus, the highest job satisfaction was seen in the United States (41%) followed by Scotland (38%), the United Kingdom (36%), Canada (33%) and Germany (17%), respectively (Papp, I. *et al.*, 2003). Several factors including the nature of work, salary, promotion, work experience, age and gender can be effective in determining occupational stress and, consequently, job satisfaction (Roman, L. 2008). Job satisfaction is a

phenomenon beyond the boundaries of the organization, and its effects can also be observed in the private life of the individuals outside the organization. If employees are dissatisfied with their job, they will have less interest and commitment to do their duties (Hassani, M. *et al.*, 2017). No expert rejects the claim that dissatisfaction of the employees in any organization will negatively affect their work morale and organizational productivity (Ganji, K. *et al.*, 2015).

One of the key occupations in healthcare environments is nursing (Hassani, M. *et al.*, 2017). Nurses and hospital staff play a significant role in promoting community health. Organizations cannot have high efficacy in promoting community health if there is no efficient and lively staff satisfied with their job (Gh, T. *et al.*, 2010; Sangari, A. 1996). Lu *et al.*, (2005) showed that increased satisfaction in nurses would lead to providing better health care services to patients and reduce the number of nurses' absence and job abandonment (Lu, H. *et al.*, 2005). The shortage of nurses and the numerous nurses quitting this profession is considered a global problem found both in developed and developing countries (Ureshi, H. *et al.*, 2017; Vermeir, P. *et al.*, 2017), and is one of the most important factors reducing the quality of health care (Biganeh, J. *et al.*, 2018). One third of the nurses in the UK and Scotland and more than one-fifth of the nurses in the United States tend to quit the profession, an important reason for which is job dissatisfaction (Vermeir, P. *et al.*, 2017). In Iran, 80% of the health care personnel are nurses, doing 80% of the tasks (Rezaiee Ahvanuiee, M. *et al.*, 2018).

Previous studies reported that the job satisfaction of nurses in Iran and around the world was moderate to low (asghari, E. *et al.*, 2010). In the study by Mogharab *et al.*, only 3.2% of the nurses had high job satisfaction (20). The results of the study by Mirza Beigi *et al.*, (2009) showed that only about one third of Iranian nurses (34.3%) were satisfied with their job (Mirzabeigi, G. *et al.*, 2009). Al-Enezi *et al.*, in Kuwait indicated that the majority of nurses had moderate job satisfaction (Al-Enezi, N. *et al.*, 2009).

Among various sections of a hospital or health center, the emergency department is considered to be the busiest and one of the most important and sensitive ones, because this section is the first place a majority of patients meet the hospital (Tiemann, J. *et al.*, 2017). Therefore, given the importance of the emergency department, job satisfaction of the employees in this section has a direct impact on improving the quality of services and the level of patient satisfaction. In this ward, the issue of employees' job satisfaction is more widely considered due to hard work, long working hours, unwanted overtime, etc. Hence, this study aimed to investigate the effective factors on job satisfaction of emergency staff in Shiraz public hospitals.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

This is a descriptive cross-sectional study carried out on all the nurses working in the emergency departments of 5 hospitals affiliated to Shiraz University of Medical Sciences. The five hospitals were randomly selected using stratified random sampling, and 400 nurses were also randomly selected from the list of nurses working in the emergency departments of the hospitals based on the inclusion criteria. The sample size was determined according to the information from previous studies on personnel job satisfaction (Hassani, M. *et al.*, 2017).

The inclusion criteria for entering the study were the employment of the individuals in the emergency department and their consent to participate in the study. Those who were working in other sections of the hospitals or were reluctant to participate in the study were not included.

The data were collected using a demographic questionnaire including 8 questions on gender, educational level, work experience, marital status, type of employment, organizational status, and monthly income. The standard Job Descriptive Index (JDI) questionnaire was also used. The JDI questionnaire was first designed by Smith Kendall and Hulin in 1969 and included 70 questions to evaluate job satisfaction in 6 dimensions as follows: the nature of work (22 questions), supervision (14 questions), colleagues (11 questions), promotion (7 questions), salary (9 questions) and work environment (7 questions). The questions were scored 1 to 5 based on the Likert scale.

The validity of the questionnaire was assessed and confirmed by related experts. Besides, the reliability of the questionnaire had been confirmed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient (93%) in previous studies (Alavi, S., & Ghafoori, H. 2015; Turkmen, S., & Fathi, S. 2017).

The overall satisfaction as well as satisfaction with each dimension was determined based on the sum of the mean scores of the responses to the questions on each dimension and, finally, the whole questions. To do so, the total mean scores of 0-2, 2.5-3.5, and 3.5-5 were considered low, moderate and high job satisfaction, respectively. The statistical analysis was done using SPSS 16 software. Frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation were used to describe the data, and the data analysis was done using Chi-square test, ANOVA and t-test.

## RESULTS

Of the 400 nurses involved, 274 (68.5%) were female and 211 (52.8%) were married. In terms of education, most of the subjects (298 individuals = 74.5%) had a bachelor degree. The most common type

of employment was contractual (148 subjects = 36.9%), and the work experience of the majority of participants (229 ones = 57.3%) was lower than 10 years. The

salary of 251 subjects (62%) was 1.5 to 2.5 million Tomans and 64.3% had a rotating shiftwork (Table 1).

**Table 1:** Demographic characteristics of the participants in the study

Variables	Groups	N (%)
Gender	Female	275 (68.7)
	Male	125 (31.3)
Marital status	Single	161 (40.3)
	Married	211 (52.8)
	Divorced	19 (4.8)
	Widow	9 (2.3)
Work experience	<10 years	229 (57.3)
	10 – 20 years	66 (36.5)
	Over 20 years	25 (6.2)
Salary	1.5-2.5 million Tomans	251 (62.8)
	2.5-3.5 million Tomans	130 (32.5)
	Over 3.5 million Tomans	19 (4.8)
Education	Practical Nursing diploma	(18.5) 74
	Bachelor	298 (74.5)
	Master	28 (7)
	Conscription law's conscripts	95 (23.8)
Employment status	Contractual	148 (36.9)
	Temporary-to- permanent	52 (13)
	Permanent	105 (26.3)
	Head of department	14 (3.5)
Organizational position	Shift supervisor	38 (9.5)
	Rotating shift	257 (64.3)
	Others	91 (22.8)

The nurses' overall satisfaction with their job was moderate ( $2.91 \pm 0.39$ ). Table 2 shows the mean and standard deviation of the dimensions of the nurses'

job satisfaction. According to this table, the highest and the lowest satisfaction indices were those of supervision ( $3.49 \pm 0.61$ ) and salary ( $2.35 \pm 0.75$ ), respectively.

**Table 2:** The mean and standard deviation of job satisfaction dimensions in subjects

Job satisfaction dimensions	Mean $\pm$ standard deviation
Nature of work	2.73 $\pm$ 0.61
Supervision	3.49 $\pm$ 0.61
Colleagues	3.47 $\pm$ 0.73
Promotion	2.8 $\pm$ 0.73
Salary	2.35 $\pm$ 0.75
Work environment	2.63 $\pm$ 0.7
Total score	2.91 $\pm$ 0.39

The ANOVA and independent t-test results showed that there was no significant relationship between job satisfaction and gender, employment status, position and marital status ( $p > 0.05$ ). However, based on the ANOVA results, job satisfaction had a significant relationship with educational level ( $p = 0.006$ ), work experience ( $p = 0.014$ ) and salary ( $p = 0.003$ ). The results of Tukey's post hoc test also showed that there was a significant difference between the master-bachelor group ( $p = 0.031$ ) and the associate-practical nursing diploma one ( $p = 0.003$ ). Regarding work experience, a significant difference was found between the nurses with over 20 or lower than 10 years

of experience ( $P = 0.016$ ) and those with over 20 and 10-20 years ( $p = 0.011$ ). Besides, the Tukey's test showed that there was a statistically significant difference between the salaries less than 2.5 million Tomans and more than 3.5 million Tomans ( $p = 0.014$ ), and less than 2.5 million Tomans and 2.5 - 3.5 million Tomans ( $p = 0.047$ ), as well. Accordingly, the satisfaction of the subjects with a higher-than-bachelor's degree was more than those with a lower-than-bachelor's degree, and the individuals with a work experience of over 20 years and greater salaries than 3.5 million Toman had higher job satisfaction (Table 3).

**Table 3: Mean and standard deviation of job satisfaction in terms of subjects' demographic variables**

Variables	Groups	Mean $\pm$ standard deviation	p-value
Gender	Female	2.90 $\pm$ 0.39	P: 0.936
	Male	2.95 $\pm$ 0.4	
	Single	2.94 $\pm$ 0.41	
Marital status	Married	2.90 $\pm$ 0.38	P:0.749
	Divorced	2.87 $\pm$ 0.4	
	Widow	2.97 $\pm$ 0.38	
Work experience	<10 years	2.91 $\pm$ 0.4	P:0.014
	10 – 20 years	2.89 $\pm$ 0.39	
	Over 20 years	3.14 $\pm$ 0.28	
Salary	1.5-2.5 million Tomans	2.87 $\pm$ 0.4	P:0.003
	2.5-3.5 million Tomans	2.97 $\pm$ 0.36	
	Over 3.5 million Tomans	3.10 $\pm$ 0.29	
Education	Practical Nursing diploma	2.83 $\pm$ 0.41	P:0.003
	Bachelor	2.92 $\pm$ 0.38	
	Master	3.13 $\pm$ 0.35	
Employment status	Conscription law's conscripts	2.95 $\pm$ 0.4	P:0.228
	Contractual	2.86 $\pm$ 0.4	
	Temporary-to- permanent	2.95 $\pm$ 0.31	
Organizational position	Permanent	2.94 $\pm$ 0.4	P:0.135
	Head of department	2.98 $\pm$ 0.41	
	Shift supervisor	3.02 $\pm$ 0.34	
	Rotating shift	2.92 $\pm$ 0.4	
	Others	2.85 $\pm$ 0.37	

## DISCUSSION

The present study was a cross-sectional research aimed at evaluating job satisfaction among the nurses working in emergency departments of Shiraz public hospitals. According to the findings of this study, 20.9% of the nurses had low job satisfaction, 75.3% had moderate and 3.8% had high job satisfaction levels. In general, two third of the nurses had a moderate job satisfaction level, which is consistent with the results of the studies by Mirfarhadi *et al.*, Asghari *et al.*, and Lorber *et al.*, who evaluated the overall score of the nurses' job satisfaction as moderate (asghari, E. *et al.*, 2010; Lorber, M., & Skela Savič, B. 2012; Mirfarhadi, N. *et al.*, 2014). However, it is inconsistent with the results of the study by Mogharab *et al.*, who reported a low level of job satisfaction among more than half of the nurses (58.9%) (Mogharrab, M. *et al.*, 2005). Considering the effect of different dimensions of occupation on nurses' job satisfaction, and given that these dimensions vary in different countries, cities and hospitals, the differences in job satisfaction could be justifiable.

The results showed that the nurses had a high level of satisfaction with supervisors and co-workers but their satisfaction with their salaries was low. It was also found out that the highest scores of the nurses' satisfaction were those of supervision (3.49  $\pm$  0.61) and colleagues (3.47  $\pm$  0.73), which is consistent with results of the studies by Zahedi *et al.*, and Asghari *et al.*, (asghari, E. *et al.*, 2010; Zahedi, M. R. *et al.*, 2000). In their study, Zahedi *et al.*, showed that most of the

employees had a desirable job satisfaction with their supervisors and colleagues (Zahedi, M. R. *et al.*, 2000). On the other hand, Asghari *et al.*, stated that in terms of colleagues, the nurses were "very satisfied" (16.9%) and "satisfied" (67.8%), and in terms of supervision they were also "very satisfied" (16.1%) and "satisfied" (63.4%) (19). The study by Daniali *et al.*, showed that the highest level of satisfaction was related to colleagues, which is consistent with the results of the present study (Daniali, SS. *Et al.*, 2011). Several studies found that good relationship with colleagues and supervisors, teamwork, and collaboration with doctors in decision-making on patient care were the factors affecting the nurses' job satisfaction (AbuAIRub, R. F. *et al.*, 2009; Curtis, E. A. 2007). Therefore, according to the theories by Robbins and Judge, the more effective the relationships between employees in an organization, the lower their stress and the higher their satisfaction will be (Hassani, M. *et al.*, 2017). On the other hand, nurses' and doctors' cooperative relationships and communications might have a positive impact on the quality of healthcare and the nurses' job satisfaction (Spence Laschinger, H. K. *et al.*, 2016).

In the present study, there was a significant relationship between job satisfaction and work experience, and the nurses with a work experience of over 20 years had a higher level of satisfaction than those with a lower work experience. This is consistent with the results of the studies by Cho *et al.*, (2012), Chien *et al.*, and Iwu (Chien, W. T., & Yick, S. Y. 2016; Cho, S. H. *et al.*, 2012; Iwu, E. N., & Holzemer,

W. L. 2017). Cho *et al.*, showed that nurses were more dissatisfied in the first three years of the work, but less dissatisfaction was reported after three years (Cho, S. H. *et al.*, 2012). In the study by Chien *et al.*, nurses with higher work experience reported a high level of job satisfaction (Chien, W. T., & Yick, S. Y. 2016). Iwu *et al.*, observed a positive correlation between job satisfaction and work experience (Iwu, E. N., & Holzemer, W. L. 2017).

To justify this result, it can be said that low-experienced and novice people had their own ideals that are not consistent with the busy environment of today's organizations. Therefore, they feel dissatisfied with their job, but over time, they will find their job more enjoyable and feel more satisfied by finding a realistic view of their job, or possibly getting used to their working conditions, and/or gaining more skills. Hence, the first few years of professional experience have a significant role in nurses' job satisfaction and their willingness to remain.

The results of this study showed that there was a significant relationship between job satisfaction and income, and nurses with higher salaries had higher levels of job satisfaction. Besides, the lowest satisfaction was with salary ( $2.35 \pm 0.75$ ), which is consistent with the results of the studies by Daniali *et al.*, Mirfarhadi *et al.*, and Shahbazi *et al.*, in which the highest levels of dissatisfaction were with salaries and benefits received (Shahbazi, L., & Salimi, T. 2002; Mirfarhadi, N. *et al.*, 2014; Daniali, S.S. *et al.*, 2011). In some studies, payment was mentioned as one of the most important factors causing job satisfaction (Lu, H. *et al.*, 2007; Best, M. F., & Thurston, N. E. 2006). Although sufficient payments alone could not increase job satisfaction, insufficient payments would certainly cause job dissatisfaction.

The results of the present study also showed that there was a significant relationship between job satisfaction and education level, so that the highest and the lowest satisfaction scores were given by the subjects with a master's degree and those with a practical nursing diploma, respectively, which is consistent with the studies by Mirzabeigi *et al.*, and Mogharab *et al.*, (2005; 2009). In his study, Hwang (2007) concluded that specialism was a common factor affecting job satisfaction both in Korean and Chinese nurses, and had a positive relationship with job satisfaction in both groups of nurses (Hwang, J. I. *et al.*, 2009). However, it is not consistent with the results of the studies by Moneke (2013) and Adriaenssens (2015) who found no significant relationship between education level and job satisfaction (Adriaenssens, J. *et al.*, 2015; Moneke, N., & Umeh, O. J. 2013).

In this study, there was no significant relationship between job satisfaction and marital status, which is consistent with the results of the studies by

Mohsenpour *et al.*, and Movahed (MOHSEN, P. L. *et al.*, 2005; Movahhed, M. A., & Moghaddam, Y. H. 2004). However, Asghari *et al.*, reported that job satisfaction of married nurses was 1.5% higher than that of single ones (asghari, E. *et al.*, 2019). The relationship between job satisfaction and marital status is likely influenced by cultural differences, conditions of the studied communities, economic issues, etc.

In our study, there was no significant relationship between job satisfaction and position ( $p = 0.135$ ). Although the satisfaction scores of rotating shift nurse to shift supervisors were ascending, the relationship was not significant. This is consistent with the findings of Abbaschian *et al.*, who found no significant relationship between job satisfaction and job position (Abbaschian, R. *et al.*, 2011). Higher satisfaction among the employees' at higher organizational positions is probably due to their greater benefits and social values, or perhaps those who like their job more, try harder to promote to higher positions.

In the present study, there was no significant relationship between gender and job satisfaction, which is consistent with the study by Donohue *et al.*, (2004). However, in the studies by Asghari *et al.*, and Iwu *et al.*, job satisfaction was higher in males than in females (asghari, E. *et al.*, 2010; Iwu, E. N., & Holzemer, W. L. 2017), while in Kolagari's study, the satisfaction of females was higher than that of males (Kolagari, S., & Khodam, H. 2007). The relationship between job satisfaction and gender is likely to be influenced by cultural differences and conditions such as being a household head, having an independent life, expectations of women and men from their jobs, etc.

In this study, there was no significant relationship between employment status and job satisfaction, which is consistent with the results of the study by Feather *et al.*, who found no relationship between employment type and job satisfaction (Feather, N. T., & Rauter, K. A. 2004). However, Abbaschian *et al.*, reported that job satisfaction in nurses whose employment status was permanent was higher than in those working contractually (Abbaschian, R. *et al.*, 2011). In their study, Asghari *et al.*, showed that the nurses working on a contractual basis had higher job satisfaction than those working on a conscription law's conscripts or temporary-to-permanent basis (asghari, E. *et al.*, 2010). The reason for the differences in the factors affecting job satisfaction scores in various studies could be the differences in working conditions and management policies in various cities and hospitals.

One limitation of this research could be the psychological and physical conditions of the nurses when answering the questions, which might affect the overall results.

## CONCLUSION

According to the results of this study, it could be said that individuals with higher work experience, higher education and higher income reported higher job satisfaction. Therefore, providing the situation for nurses to continue their education, raising their salaries and benefits, training them continuously, and making the culture of nursing profession might be important measures to increase nurses' job satisfaction. Given that the present study was carried out to investigate the effective factors on job satisfaction of emergency department staff in Shiraz public hospitals, conducting more research in other hospital sections and in other parts of the country can provide better results.

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### Authors' Contribution:

All the authors had the standard writing criteria based on the recommendations by the International Committee of Medical Journal Publishers.

### Conflict of Interest:

The authors declared that there was no conflict of interest.

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