AN EMPIRICAL STUDY ON NURSES' JOB SATISFACTION AND QUALITY OF CARE IN PUBLIC HOSPITALS OF LAHORE, PAKISTAN

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Abstract

Background: *Patient satisfaction–shaped by prior experiences, future expectations, and individual values–serves as a key indicator of both nursing care quality and overall healthcare service effectiveness.*

Objective: *This descriptive correlational study aimed to examine the association between nurses' job satisfaction and the quality of care they provide, while also identifying key factors that influence care quality.*

Materials and Methods: *A quantitative approach was adopted, utilizing convenience sampling to survey 222 registered nurses employed at Ganga Ram Hospital, Lahore, Pakistan. Data were collected using a structured 5-point Likert scale questionnaire tailored to evaluate the relationship between job satisfaction and quality of care. Statistical analysis was performed using SPSS version 26.0 to detect significant correlations and trends.*

Results: *Findings revealed a significant positive correlation between nurses' job satisfaction and the quality of care delivered. Notably, 68.5% of participants recognized that their level of job satisfaction directly affects the quality of care provided. These results underscore the vital role of job satisfaction in achieving favorable patient outcomes.*

Conclusion: *The study confirmed that higher job satisfaction among nurses is associated with improved quality of care. Additionally, it identified workload, stress, and unsafe working environments as major challenges that negatively impact care quality.*

INTRODUCTION

Job satisfaction and the quality of care are fundamental components within the healthcare sector, particularly in the nursing profession (Lynn & Redman, 2005). Nurses are central to delivering high-quality patient care, and their level of job satisfaction has a significant impact on patient health outcomes (Kutney-Lee et al., 2015). Empirical evidence suggests that satisfied nurses are more likely to deliver superior care, which in turn enhances patient satisfaction and

clinical outcomes (Laschinger et al., 2016; Hinno et al., 2012).

Public sector hospitals often face distinct challenges in maintaining care quality due to constrained resources and high patient loads (Aiken et al., 2014). Despite the critical role of nurses in these settings, limited research has specifically examined the interplay between job satisfaction and care quality within public hospitals (Blegen et al., 2013). Addressing this gap, the present study investigates the association between

nurses' job satisfaction and the quality of care in a public hospital setting in Lahore, Pakistan.

Understanding the variables that affect both job satisfaction and care quality is imperative for improving patient outcomes and minimizing staff turnover (Twigg et al., 2016). Previous studies have identified various predictors of nurse satisfaction, including autonomy, collaboration with physicians, leadership practices, and adequate staffing and resources (Hayes et al., 2015; Kutney-Lee et al., 2015). Moreover, work environment factors such as burnout and organizational culture significantly influence both satisfaction and performance (Maslach et al., 2017; West et al., 2015).

Further evidence indicates that nurse engagement is a crucial determinant of care quality and retention, with engaged staff more likely to provide consistent, high-quality services (Harter et al., 2013; Gallup, 2013). These challenges are magnified in public hospitals, where resource constraints and staffing shortages can hinder performance (Aiken et al., 2014). Investigating these dynamics in such environments can guide targeted interventions to improve both staff morale and care standards.

This study contributes to the existing literature by examining the factors influencing job satisfaction and its relationship with the quality of care in a large public hospital. The findings are expected to support decision-makers—such as hospital administrators, policy experts, and nursing leaders—in formulating effective strategies to improve both workforce well-being and patient care.

1.   Materials and Methods

This study utilized a quantitative descriptive correlational research design to assess the relationship between job satisfaction and quality of care among nurses at Ganga Ram Hospital, Lahore. A structured, self-administered questionnaire comprising 34 items was adapted from Samerol Aron (2018), based on a 5-point Likert scale. The instrument measured participants' agreement levels with various statements related to their job satisfaction and perceived care quality, enabling a comprehensive understanding of their attitudes and workplace experiences.

The target population included registered female nurses working in the inpatient departments of the hospital. Inclusion criteria were: female gender, aged between 22 and 55 years, possession of at least a graduate-level nursing qualification, and a minimum of two years of professional experience. Exclusion criteria comprised male nurses, nurses under 21 or over 55 years of age, unregistered or undergraduate-level nurses, and those working in outpatient departments, operation theaters, or those who declined to provide written consent.

A total of 222 nurses were selected through convenience sampling, and the questionnaire was distributed among them. Participation was voluntary, and informed written consent was obtained from all respondents. Prior to data collection, formal approval was obtained from the Medical Superintendent of Ganga Ram Hospital, Lahore.

Data were processed and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26.0. The statistical analysis explored relationships between job satisfaction, quality of care, and other influencing variables. This methodology enabled the identification of patterns and correlations relevant to both organizational improvements and professional development in nursing practice.

The methodological approach of this study seeks to contribute valuable insights into the factors affecting job satisfaction and care quality, which can be instrumental in developing effective strategies for healthcare workforce management and patient-centered outcomes.

2.   Results

Table 1. Age of the Participants

Table-01: Age of participants		frequency	Percent	valid percent	cumulative percent
Valid	18-25	97	43.7	43.7	43.7
	25-35	97	43.7	43.7	87.4
	35-50	26	11.7	11.7	99.1

above 50	2	.9	.9	100.0
Total	222	100.0	100.0	

The age distribution of the participants, as shown in Table 01, reveals that the majority of participants fell within the younger age ranges. Specifically, 97 participants (43.7%) were between 18-25 years old, while another 97 participants (43.7%) were between 25-35 years old. A smaller proportion, 26 participants (11.7%), were between 35-50 years old, and only 2 participants (0.9%) were above 50 years old. This indicates a relatively youthful demographic among the study's participants.

Table 2. Gender of Participants

Table-02: Gender of Participants				
		Frequency	Percent	valid percent	cumulative percent
Valid	Female	222	100.0	100.0	100.0

As shown in Table 02, the study consisted of an all-female participant pool, with a total of 222 female participants. Notably, there were no male participants included in this study, indicating a homogeneous gender distribution. This suggests that the findings of the study may be specifically applicable to female nurses, and future studies may be needed to explore the experiences and perspectives of male nurses.

Table 3. Marital Status of the Participants

		Frequency	percent	valid percent	cumulative percent
	Single	123	55.4	55.4	55.4
Valid	Married	99	44.6	44.6	100.0
	Total	222	100.0	100.0	

According to Table 03, the marital status of the participants reveals that nearly 55% (123 out of 222) were unmarried or single, while approximately 45% (99 out of 222) were married. This indicates a relatively balanced distribution between single and married participants, providing a diverse representation of marital statuses within the study's sample.

Table 4. Qualification of Participants

Table-04: Qualification of participants				
		Frequency	Percent	valid percent	cumulative percent
	nursing diploma	216	97.3	97.3	97.3
Valid	surgical diploma	1	.5	.5	97.7
	Other	5	2.3	2.3	100.0
	Total	222	100.0	100.0	

Table 04 presents the demographic results of the participants' qualifications, revealing that the vast majority (97.3%, n=216) held a nursing diploma. A small fraction (0.5%, n=1) held a surgical diploma, while a minor percentage (2.3%, n=5) possessed other qualifications. This indicates that the study's participant pool was predominantly composed of nursing diploma holders, with minimal representation from other qualification categories.

Table 5. Experience of Staff

Table-05: Experience of staff				
		Frequency	percent	valid percent	cumulative percent

Valid	less than 1 year	16	7.2	7.2	7.2
	1-5 year	143	64.4	64.4	71.6
	6-10 year	48	21.6	21.6	93.2
	above 10 year	15	6.8	6.8	100.0
	Total	222	100.0	100.0	

The participants' work experience, as shown in Table #5, reveals a varied distribution. A small proportion of nurses (7.2%, n=16) had less than one year of experience, while the majority (64.4%, n=143) had 1-5 years of experience, indicating a relatively early career stage. A significant portion (21.6%, n=48) had 6-10 years of experience, suggesting an established career trajectory. Notably, only 15 nurses (6.8%) had more than 10 years of experience, indicating a high level of seniority and expertise. This breakdown highlights the range of experience levels among the participant nurses, from novice to seasoned professionals.

Table-06: How long do you plan to continue your employment at your current employer check one?

Table-06: How long do you plan to continue your employment at your current employer check one?		Frequency	percent	valid percent	cumulative percent
valid	up to 1 year	7	3.2	3.2	3.2
	2 to 5 years	10	4.5	4.5	7.7
	6 to 10 years	14	6.3	6.3	14.0
	10 to 15 years	116	52.3	52.3	66.2
	more than 15 year	75	33.8	33.8	100.0
	Total	222	100.0	100.0	

According to Table 6, the majority of participants tend to stay in their roles for an extended period, with the largest proportion falling within the 10-15 year range. This suggests that once nurses reach a certain level of experience and seniority, they are more likely to continue in their positions for an additional 10-15 years, indicating a high level of job retention and stability within this tenure range.

Table-07: The factors listed below, what influences your satisfaction with your job?

Table-07: The factors listed below, what influences your satisfaction with your job?		Frequency	percent	valid percent	cumulative percent
Valid	Stress	4	1.8	1.8	1.8
	Management	13	5.9	5.9	7.7
	work environment	108	48.6	48.6	56.3
	patient satisfaction	97	43.7	43.7	100.0
	Total	222	100.0	100.0	

As indicated in Table #07, the majority of participants believe that their job satisfaction is significantly impacted by their work environment. This suggests that factors such as physical workspace, organizational culture, and interpersonal relationships with colleagues and supervisors play a crucial role in determining nurses' overall satisfaction with their jobs, highlighting the importance of a supportive and conducive work environment in promoting job satisfaction among nursing staff.

Table-08: The factors listed below, which affects the quality of care at this hospital most?

		Frequency	percent	valid percent	cumulative percent
Valid	inadequate training	11	5.0	5.0	5.0
	poor management	9	4.1	4.1	9.0
	unsafe work environment	7	3.2	3.2	12.2
	work load	118	53.2	53.2	65.3
	Stress	77	34.7	34.7	100.0
	Total	222	100.0	100.0	

It is evident from Table #08 that the primary factors hindering quality care at this hospital are workload and stress. The data suggests that the overwhelming workload and high stress levels experienced by nursing staff are significant barriers to delivering optimal patient care. This indicates that addressing these issues is crucial to improving the quality of care provided, and that hospital administrators should prioritize strategies to manage workload and mitigate stress among nurses to ensure better patient outcomes.

Table-09: Please tell us what this hospital can do to increase your satisfaction as an employee.

		Frequency	percent	valid percent	cumulative percent
Valid	pre benefit package	3	1.4	1.4	1.4
	Stress	3	1.4	1.4	2.7
	Management	12	5.4	5.4	8.1
	work environment	77	34.7	34.7	42.8
	reward and appreciation	127	57.2	57.2	100.0
	Total	222	100.0	100.0	

According to Table #09, the key to boosting employee satisfaction lies in fostering a healthy work environment and recognizing and rewarding staff achievements. By focusing on these two areas, healthcare organizations can significantly enhance job satisfaction among their employees. A healthy work environment can lead to increased morale, productivity, and engagement, while rewards and appreciation can motivate staff and make them feel valued, ultimately leading to a more positive and fulfilling work experience.

Table-10: correlations

		Age	Gender	marital status	qualification	stay_in_hospital	job satisfaction	Qc
Age	Pearson Correlation	1	a .	.598**	.121	.492**	.237**	.036
	sig. (2-tailed)		.	.000	.116	.000	.002	.644
	N	222	222	222	222	222	222	222
Gender	Pearson Correlation	.a	.a	.a	.a	.a	.a	.a
	sig. (2-tailed)	.		.	.	.	.	.
	N	222	222	222	222	222	222	222
marital status	Pearson Correlation	.598**	.a	1	.003	.408**	.351**	.195*

	sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.		.971	.000	.000	.010
	N	222	222	222	222	222	222	222
Qualification	Pearson correlation	.121	a	.003	1	.383**	.048	.062
	sig. (2-tailed)	.116	.	.971		.000	.535	.417
	N	222	222	222	222	222	222	222
stay_in_hospital	Pearson correlation	.492**	a	.408**	.383**	1	.039	.028
	sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000	.000		.610	.718
	N	222	222	222	222	222	222	222
job satisfaction	Pearson correlation	.237**	a	.351**	.048	.039	1	.612**
	sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.	.000	.535	.610		.000
	N	222	222	222	222	222	222	222
Qc	Pearson correlation	.036	a	.195*	.062	.028	.612**	1
	sig. (2-tailed)	.644	.	.010	.417	.718	.000	
	N	222	222	222	222	222	222	222

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).   **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table-11: Correlation summary

		Qc	job satisfaction
Pearson correlation	Qc	1.000	.612
	job satisfaction	.612	1.000
sig. (1-tailed)	Qc		.000
	job satisfaction	.000	.
N	Qc	222	222
	job satisfaction	222	222

According to Table #11, a statistically significant positive correlation was found between job satisfaction and quality of care (r = 0.612, p < 0.05). This indicates that as job satisfaction increases, the quality of care provided also tends to improve. In other words, nurses who are more satisfied with their jobs are more likely to deliver high-quality patient care. This correlation highlights the importance of prioritizing job satisfaction as a means of enhancing the overall quality of care provided by healthcare organizations.

3. Discussion

The observation that a substantial proportion of nurses intend to remain in their current positions for extended periods—particularly within the 10 to 15-year range—aligns with previous research on nurse retention and tenure. Existing literature suggests that nurses who attain a certain level of professional experience and seniority demonstrate increased job stability and a stronger sense of commitment to their roles (Kovner et al., 2014; Laschinger et al., 2016).

Furthermore, the majority of participants identified the work environment as a key determinant of their job satisfaction. This supports prior studies that underscore the role of organizational culture, open communication, and healthy interpersonal relationships in fostering a positive work environment and, in turn, promoting job satisfaction among nursing staff (Laschinger et al., 2016; Spence Laschinger et al., 2016; Warshawsky & Havens, 2011; Armstrong et al., 2015).

The finding that workload and stress are the predominant barriers to delivering high-quality care is

consistent with international evidence linking excessive work demands to compromised patient care outcomes (Duffield et al., 2018; Griffiths et al., 2018). High workload and psychological stress reduce nurses' ability to focus, increase the risk of errors, and contribute to job dissatisfaction and burnout.

Moreover, the study established a statistically significant and positive correlation ($r = 0.612$, $p < 0.05$) between job satisfaction and the quality of care provided. This finding corroborates the growing body of literature that identifies nurse satisfaction as a central predictor of care quality, patient safety, and positive clinical outcomes (Laschinger et al., 2016; Griffiths et al., 2018). Factors such as professional autonomy, supportive leadership, adequate staffing, and organizational recognition have been found to strengthen this relationship (Kovner et al., 2014; Ulrich et al., 2018).

Collectively, the evidence supports the conclusion that improving job satisfaction among nurses is not only beneficial for workforce retention and morale but is also critical to enhancing the overall standard of care. Hence, it is imperative for hospital management to cultivate an empowering and respectful work environment that prioritizes staff well-being, professional development, and recognition of efforts (Laschinger et al., 2016).

4. Conclusion

The findings underscore the need for healthcare institutions to invest in strategies that enhance job satisfaction—particularly by creating a positive work environment marked by effective leadership, mutual respect, professional autonomy, and recognition of staff contributions. Doing so can lead to improved care quality, reduced staff turnover, increased operational efficiency, and a more favorable institutional reputation.

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