

Perception of Occupational Stress and Job Satisfaction

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Objective: To evaluate the factors contributing to work-related stress and job satisfaction among Jordanian nurses.

Setting: AlKarak governmental hospital.

Design: Cross sectional.

Method: Questionnaires distributed to one hundred forty-four nurses, 121 (84%) responded. The questionnaire was composed of 3 scales; the first one included personal characteristics, the second composed of 23 items about occupational stress and the third composed of 15 items about job satisfaction.

Result: The majority of nurses experienced moderate to extreme stress related general working conditions, the stresses were related to shortage of essential resources, 109 (90.1%), staff shortage and unsocial hours, 108 (89.3%). Nurses were generally dissatisfied with their job, 25 (20.7%) of nurses were satisfied with their immediate manager, and more than half of them were very dissatisfied with the hospital management. No significant relationship was identified between the occupational stress and job satisfaction.

Conclusion: Nurses were dissatisfied with their job. The majority of nurses, in this study, were dissatisfied with the rate of pay. The respondents were satisfied with their fellow workers and immediate manager.

Bahrain Med Bull 2012; 34(2):

Growing occupational stress, increased workload, and declining job satisfaction among nurses are major concerns of nursing managers and educators. Many studies have shown that nursing is strenuous job and occupational stress is prevalent among nurses¹⁻⁴.

Strong relationship has been found between nurses' occupational stress and job satisfaction and it has been reported that growing occupational stress is work-related resulting in an increasing turnover rate and causing nurses to leave the profession⁵. Furthermore, studies found that stressful conditions are universal; high level of occupational stress results in reduction of the quality of nursing care⁶⁻¹².

In Jordan, few studies have focused on nurses' job satisfaction and occupational stress. Jordanian nursing practice is characterized by heavy workload, interpersonal conflicts, lack of staff support and non-supportive working environment¹³. Insufficient nursing staff results in inability to meet patient's demands. Nurses become frustrated due to inability to complete their work and express

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wishes to leave the profession¹⁴. Feeling that they were not evaluated properly and profit is given priority over patients are factors contributing to nurses' dissatisfaction and turnover¹⁵⁻¹⁶. Dissatisfied nurses might be distracted from their patients and fail to provide high quality of nursing care.

The aim of this study is to evaluate the factors contributing to work-related stress and job satisfaction among Jordanian nurses.

METHOD

One hundred forty-four nurses were invited to the study, one hundred were registered nurses and forty-four were nurse assistants.

Data were collected from 121 self-administered questionnaires. Personal characteristics were documented: age, sex, educational level, marital status, years of experience, intention to leave work and if nursing profession was the first choice of a career. Nurses' occupational stress scale (NOSS) was composed of 25 items rated on five-point Likert (1= no pressure, 5= extreme pressure)¹⁷. The Cronbach's alpha was 0.93 in this study. Job satisfaction scale was rated on a five-point Likert (1= very dissatisfied, 5 = very satisfied)¹⁸. The reliability of the scale was checked and found to be (0.86). The tool was administered in English for Jordanian nurses; it is the second language in Jordan and it is the official language for university-based education.

The directorate of human resources development, ministry of health, approved the study. Informed consent, a statement assuring anonymity, confidentiality and the right to withdraw were enclosed.

Data were analyzed by using descriptive and inferential statistics. The SPSS version 16 was used to analyze the data.

RESULT

One hundred twenty-one (84%) responded, 31 (25.6%) were males and 90 (74.4%) were females. The age ranged from 20-49 years old. Sixty-one (50.4%) were in the age group of 20-29 and 52 (43%) were in the age group of 30-39. Sixty (53.7%) were married and 50 (41.3%) were single, 4 (3.3%) were divorced and the rest were widowed. Seventy-six (62.8%) had bachelor degree, 32 (26.4%) had associate degree, 11 (9.1%) had diploma and 2 (1.7%) had master degree. Forty (33.1%) had an experience of 3-5 years, 38 (31.4%) had 11-20 years, 23 (19%) had 6-10 years and 20 (16.5%) had 0-2 years. Fifty (41.3%) expressed their intention to leave work in the current hospital and 61 (50.4%) revealed that nursing was their first choice of a career.

Table 1 revealed that most nurses were experiencing occupational stress (mean=3.63, SD=0.73). High scores of moderate to extreme pressure reported about shortage of essential resources, 109 (90.1%). Staff shortages and unsocial hours 108 (89.3%), difficult patients 107 (88.4%), lack of specialized training for present work, 104 (86%) were reported.

Table 1: Means, Standard Deviations, Frequency and Percentage of Each Item in the Occupational Stress Scale

Item	Mean	SD	No	Slight	Moderate	Considerable	Extreme
			Pressure	Pressure	Pressure	Pressure	Pressure
			Number (%)				
Time pressures and deadlines	3.42	1.44	13 (10.7)	29 (24)	15 (12.4)	22 (18.2)	42 (34.7)
Workload	3.60	1.18	5 (4.1)	21 (17.4)	24 (19.8)	38 (31.4)	33 (27.3)
Work underload (needing to look busy)	2.79	1.27	18 (14.9)	42 (34.7)	24 (19.8)	21 (17.4)	16 (13.2)
Task outside of my competence	3.37	1.33	11 (9.1)	26 (21.5)	24 (19.8)	27 (22.3)	33 (27.3)
Fluctuations in workload	3.50	1.10	3 (2.5)	21 (17.4)	38 (31.4)	31 (25.6)	28 (23.1)
Unrealistically high expectations by others of my role	3.44	1.02	2 (1.7)	22 (18.2)	38 (31.4)	39 (32.2)	20 (16.5)
Coping with new situation	3.45	1.06	5 (4.1)	18 (14.9)	35 (28.9)	44 (36.4)	19 (15.7)
Uncertainty about the degree or area of my responsibility	3.26	1.21	13 (10.7)	18 (14.9)	35 (28.9)	25 (20.7)	20 (16.5)
Security of employment	3.43	1.24	8 (6.6)	25 (20.7)	23 (19)	37 (30.6)	28 (23.1)
Involvement with life and death situations	3.48	1.24	10 (8.3)	17 (14)	29 (24)	35 (28.9)	30 (24.8)
Coping with new technology	3.24	1.13	9 (7.4)	22 (18.2)	38 (31.4)	35 (28.9)	17 (14)
Exposure to death	3.47	1.31	12 (9.9)	20 (16.5)	20 (16.5)	37 (30.6)	32 (26.4)
Staff shortages	4.08	1.08	3 (2.5)	10 (8.3)	17 (14)	35 (28.9)	56 (46.3)
Poor physical working conditions	4.09	1.06	3 (2.5)	9 (7.4)	17 (14)	37 (30.6)	55 (45.5)
Lack of support from senior staff	3.89	1.17	7 (5.8)	10 (8.3)	17 (14)	42 (34.7)	45 (37.2)
Lack of privacy	3.75	1.17	7 (5.8)	13 (10.7)	20 (16.5)	44 (36.4)	37 (30.6)
Shortage of essential resources	3.97	1.08	2 (1.7)	10 (8.3)	21 (17.4)	45 (37.2)	43 (35.5)
Poor quality of supporting staff	3.83	1.19	4 (3.3)	15 (12.4)	28 (23.1)	24 (19.8)	50 (41.3)
Unsocial hours	4.01	1.17	5 (4.1)	8 (6.6)	27 (22.3)	22 (18.2)	59 (48.8)
Lack of specialized training for present work	3.85	1.17	5 (4.1)	12 (9.9)	27 (22.3)	29 (24)	48 (39.7)
Lack of participation in planning/decision making	3.79	1.15	5 (4.1)	13 (10.7)	25 (20.7)	37 (30.6)	41 (33.9)
Difficult patients	3.93	1.09	3 (2.5)	11 (9.1)	25 (20.7)	35 (28.9)	47 (38.8)
Dealing with relatives	3.82	1.11	3 (2.5)	15 (12.4)	24 (19.8)	38 (31.4)	41 (33.9)
Overall Stressors	3.63	0.73					

A significant difference in total occupational stress score across the all-educational level programs ($p < 0.05$) was found; although, nurses with a bachelor degree experienced less stress (mean=3.5) than those with associate degree (mean=3.8) or diploma (3 years) (mean=4.01).

Diploma degree nurses were more likely to report stress than bachelor degree nurses or associate degree nurses. Similarly, associate degree nurses were more likely to report stress about staff shortages, involvement with life and death situations and coping with new technology than

bachelor degree nurses or diploma degree nurses. Bachelor degree nurses were less likely to report stress about coping with new situations and exposure to death than diploma degree nurses or associate degree nurses. No significant difference across the all level of educational programs was found ($p<0.05$).

Table 2 shows that, nurses were dissatisfied with their job (mean=2.28, SD=0.63), hospital management 110 (90.9%), management and staff 108 (89.3%), and more than two-thirds of them were dissatisfied 91 (75.2%) with the payment rate. On the other hand, 51 (42.1%) were satisfied with the responsibility given, 47 (38.8%) with their immediate manager, 43 (35.5%) were satisfied with their fellow workers and 6 (5%) had the least satisfaction with future promotion.

Table 2: Means, Standard Deviation, Frequency and Percentage of Each Item in the Job Satisfaction Scale

Item			Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied Nor Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
	Mean	SD	Number (%)				
The physical conditions in which you work	2.40	1.13	22 (18.2)	62 (51.2)	11 (9.1)	19 (15.7)	7 (5.8)
Freedom to choose your own working methods	2.41	1.17	28 (23.1)	49 (40.5)	18 (14.9)	19 (15.7)	7 (5.8)
Your fellow workers	2.82	1.26	19 (15.7)	39 (23.2)	20 (16.5)	31 (25.6)	12 (9.9)
The recognition you get for good work	2.45	1.14	19 (15.7)	65 (53.7)	9 (7.4)	20 (16.5)	8 (6.6)
Your immediate manager	2.98	1.37	15 (12.4)	44 (36.4)	15 (12.4)	22 (18.2)	25 (20.7)
The amount of responsibility you are given	2.86	1.18	15 (12.4)	43 (35.5)	12 (9.9)	46 (38)	5 (4.1)
The rate of pay for nurses	2.22	1.08	30 (24.8)	61 (50.4)	6 (5)	21 (17.4)	3 (2.5)
The opportunity to use your abilities	2.25	1.00	21 (17.4)	72 (59.5)	10 (8.3)	13 (10.7)	5 (4.1)
Relations between management and staff	1.85	0.81	42 (34.7)	63 (52.1)	8 (6.6)	8 (6.6)	0 (0)
Future chance of promotion	1.87	0.84	41 (33.9)	63 (52.1)	11 (9.1)	4 (3.3)	2 (1.7)
The way the hospital is managed	1.66	0.89	62 (51.2)	48 (39.7)	4 (3.3)	4 (3.3)	3 (2.5)
The attention paid to your suggestions	1.84	0.85	45 (37.2)	58 (47.9)	11 (9.1)	6 (5)	1 (0.8)
The hours of work	2.38	1.12	27 (22.3)	57 (47.1)	10 (8.3)	18 (14.9)	9 (7.4)
The amount of variety in your job	2.15	0.95	27 (22.3)	68 (56.2)	8 (6.6)	17 (14)	1 (0.8)
Your job security	2.09	0.97	40 (33.1)	55 (45.5)	12 (9.9)	13 (10.7)	1 (0.8)
Overall Satisfaction	2.28	0.63					

There were no significant differences in total job satisfaction score across the different level of education programs ($p<0.05$), and there were no significant correlation between job satisfaction and occupational stress ($p<0.05$).

DISCUSSION

Workload, time pressures, deadlines and staff shortages stressors were similar to other studies^{19,20}. Furthermore, workload has been emphasized as a major work-related stress or similar to other studies²¹⁻²³. It is possible that the current global nursing shortage might increase nurses' workload,

and Jordan is not an exception. Dealing with relatives and patients from the same region is another source of stress for most nurses.

In this study, most respondents reported moderate to extreme stress related to lack of support from senior staff and poor quality of supporting staff similar to other studies^{24,25}.

This study found that most nurses were dissatisfied with their job; this is consistent with the findings of another study, which found that nurses reported even more dissatisfaction²⁶.

CONCLUSION

Nurses were dissatisfied with their job. The majority of nurses, in this study, were dissatisfied with the rate of pay. The respondents were satisfied with their fellow workers and immediate manager.

Author contribution: All authors share equal effort contribution towards (1) substantial contributions to conception and design, acquisition, analysis and interpretation of data; (2) drafting the article and revising it critically for important intellectual content; and (3) final approval of the manuscript version to be published. Yes

Potential conflicts of interest: No

Competing interest: None **Sponsorship:** None

Submission date: 15 September 2011 **Acceptance date:** 31 March 2012

Ethical approval: The Directorate of Human Resources Development, Ministry of Health.

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