Original Article

Factors Influencing Nurses` Intention to Leave Their Job in Benghazi Medical Center

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ABSTRACT

Aims: This study was conducted to identify factors that influence nurses' intention to leave their job in Benghazi Medical Center (BMC), Libya. It was focused on the intrinsic and extrinsic factors of Herzberg's theory that could affect the intention to leave the job. Based on the evidence in this field, there is an inverse relationship between job satisfaction and the intention to leave the job. *Methods*: A descriptive cross-sectional study was carried out. A nonprobability sampling technique was used. In total, 68 questionnaires were distributed and all of them were returned. SPSS was used to analyze the collected data. *Results.* About 30(44.1%) of nurses had an intention to leave their job. Females were more likely to leave their job than males. Additionally, there were significant relations between (gender and years of experience) and the intention to leave the job. Moreover, workload, recognition, and the monthly payment had a significant relationship with the intention to leave the job. *Conclusion*: The results in this study indicated nearly half of nurses had the intention to leave their job, and the main factors contributing to this issue were dissatisfaction with workload, recognition, and salary. Further efforts are recommended by hospital management to develop specific strategies that reduce nurses' intention to leave their job and persuade them to remain in nursing.

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INTRODUCTION

Nurses' Intention to leave their profession is a major problem worldwide, particularly in developing countries. Numerous studies have been recorded concerning nurses' intention to leave [1,2]. Although the nursing profession is essential to the health care delivery system and nurses staff represent a high percentage among healthcare providers in most hospitals around the world; the health facilities faced increased high levels of nurses' intention to leave their profession [2,3]. Insufficient numbers of nurses in many health care institutions have been a global issue, and it is projected that many developed and developing countries will suffer from a nursing shortage that is expected to exacerbate since the demand for health care is growing intensely [4].

Based on the evidence in this field, shortages of nurses in hospitals have an impact on the health care delivery system as well as the consequences negatively affected the quality of nursing care provided to the patient. Furthermore, nurses' intention to leave their profession usually brings loss of qualified nurses and also considered as it is alarming and indicating that nurses do not seem to be committed to their job [1-3].

The concept of intention to leave the job in recent years has generated high interest among researchers, and they explained it in numerous ways. According to Terranova and Henning (2011), Intention to leave is described as the behavioral intention of an individual to voluntarily leave a profession or organization [5]. It is defined as future planning or decision made by an employee to quit working based on a range from initial thinking about leaving to implementing the actual behavior of leaving [6, 7]. Intention to leave the job can be also seen in the negative response of nurses toward their duties and institutions as well as job dissatisfaction and low institutional commitment [8]. On the other hand, when nurses are satisfied with their jobs, they tend to remain with their employers and become more productive in their workplaces [9]. As

well as a person with lower job satisfaction is more likely to leave, whereas a person with greater job satisfaction is less likely to leave a profession [5].

Omar et al. (2018) pointed out that several studies addressed that job satisfaction is negatively associated with intention to leave, and also influenced by job dissatisfaction. Furthermore, they reported that employees were prone to leave their current employment if they felt unsatisfied with their job [4].

Job satisfaction is defined as; the positive emotional response of employees to a particular job [6]. Also, it is the attitude or the feeling that an employee has towards various aspects of his/her job. The attitude develops when an employee feels positive about his/her working conditions and also when there are constructive responses from the organization [9]. Traditional job satisfaction relates to the feeling an individual has about his/her job. It is affected by intrinsic and extrinsic factors, which influence job satisfaction [10].

In order to understand the impact of intrinsic and extrinsic factors on job satisfaction; Herzberg perceived motivational and hygiene factors (intrinsic and extrinsic factors) affecting separate job satisfaction. Hygiene (extrinsic) factors are provided by the workplace, and they are necessary only to avoid bad feelings at work; examples include salary, work status and security, leave allowances, and professional development. And they prevent job dissatisfaction, but they do not lead to satisfaction, rather than providing job satisfaction. i.e., perceived restriction of extrinsic incentives (e.g., inadequate salary for responsibilities expected) has been linked to reduced job satisfaction. On the other hand, motivators (intrinsic) factors are the real factors that motivate employees at work that is the pleasure derived from the work itself. And they increase employee job satisfaction. Examples include personal and professional development, opportunities and recognition, challenge, autonomy, and perceived significance of the work. When employees are well satisfied with motivational needs; their productivity and efficiency will improve [10-12].

Although nurses' intention to leave their job has already been investigated in many countries, little is known about its prevalence and factors that impacted it in Libya. Thus, this study aimed to identify factors that influence nurses' intention to leave their job in Benghazi Medical Center.

METHODS

Study design and setting

A descriptive cross-sectional study was carried out in Benghazi Medical Center (BMC). The target population comprised of all females and male nurses who worked at BMC. A nonprobability sampling technique (convenience sampling method) was used. In the convenience sampling technique, there is no need to determine the sample size exactly, but there is a need to select all those who are available and accessible. Additionally, the study was carried during Covid 19 lockdown, so not all nursing staff was available during the study period. The sample size was 68 nurses who were estimated via Epi info 7 programs (Epi Info™ is a public domain set of software tools used to calculate sample size, it is developed by the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for use by public health professionals and researchers). In total, 68 questionnaires were distributed and all of them were returned, with a response rate of 100%. The basic tool selected to conduct the study was a questionnaire adapted from the previous studies in this area [13].

Data collection procedure

The questionnaire encompassed three parts; the first portion consisted of demographic data of participants such as (gender, age, educational status, years of work experience, marital status, and the number of children). The second portion is concerned with the nurses' intention to leave a job; whereas the third portion is concerned with nurses' job satisfaction. Items in the second and third portions were rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree.

The validity and reliability of the questionnaire confirmed in different strategies included: experts' evaluations, internal consistency analysis, and the literature review. The questionnaire instrument was distributed to the number of teaching staff, who are specialized in health care management in the Faculty of Public Health, University of Benghazi. According to the experts' feedbacks, some questions were added and others were eliminated. An analysis of internal consistency was carried out on 29 questions about the demographic variables, the intention to leave the current job, and the intrinsic and extrinsic factors that affect job satisfaction. The reliability of the tool was tested using Cronbach's Alpha, which values (0.666).

Official permission was received from the heads of departments at BMC before data collection. The questionnaires were distributed to nurses after explaining the purpose of the study. Verbal consent was taken from the participants and assured

anonymity and confidentiality also the withdrawal right was preserved. The questionnaires were left one day with participants and then the filled-out questionnaires were collected again.

The retrieved questionnaires were entered into the SPSS program for analysis. Frequencies, percentages, Weighted Mean, standard deviation, Cronbach's Alpha test, cross-tabulation, and chi-square were used.

RESULTS

Intention to leave the job

Table 1 indicated that about 44.1% of nurses (30 out of 68 participants) had the intention to leave their job. Whereas, 55.9% of the nurses (38 out of 68 nurses) stated that they had no intention to leave the job where they were currently working for.

Table 1 Nurses' intention to leave their job in BMC. (N = 68)

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Intention to leave the job	30	44.1
Not intentional to leave the job	38	55.9

Socio-demographic Characteristics of nurses at BMC

Table 2 illustrated that the vast majority of the participants were females (N=49, 72.1%), whereas the rest of them were males (27.9%, N=19). The mean age (57.3%, N=39) was between (30 to 49 years). A total (45.6%, N=31) of them had a nursing diploma or less, while (41%, N=28) had an undergraduate education level.

Additionally, (41.2%, N=28) of them had experienced less than 5 years while the rest of others had experienced 5 years and more. (52.9%, N=36) were single, and (61.7, N=42) did not have children, and More than half needed about 30 minutes to one hour to travel to their workplace.

Impact of socio-demographic variables of nurses on their intention to leave the job at BMC

The highest percent of nurses who had the intention to leave their job was among female than male, and among those who aged between (30-49 years), had educational level undergraduate and less, and work experience (5-10 years). In addition, nurses who were not married and did not have children and who were spending (30 min - hour) to reach to the workplace were more likely to leave their current job than others.

In the analysis Chi-square test of independence showed that there was a significant relationship between (gender and years of work experience) and the intention to leave the job since the p-values were less than (0.05).

Table 2 Impact of socio-demographic variables of nurses on their intention to leave the job at BMC

Variables	Category	N (%)	Intention to leave		Chi-square tests		
			Yes [N (%)]	No [N (%)]	Value	d.f	Asymp. Sig.
Gender	Female Male	49 (72.1) 19 (27.9)	22 (44.9) 8 (42.1)	27 (55.1) 11 (57.9)	0.043ᵃ	1	.035
Current age (Y)	≤ 29 30 – 49 ≥ 50	25 (36.8) 39 (57.3) 4 (5.9)	11 (44) 18 (46.2) 1 (25)	14 (56) 21 (53.8) 3 (75)	3.761ᵃ	3	.289
Educational status	Diploma Undergraduate Postgraduate	31 (45.6) 28 (41.2) 9 (13.2)	13 (42) 13 (46.4) 4 (44.4)	18 (58) 15 (53.6) 5 (55.6)	0.121ᵃ	2	.941
Work experience	≤ 5 year 5-10 year >10 year	28 (41.2) 24 (35.3) 16 (23.5)	10 (35.7) 12 (50) 8 (50)	18 (64.3) 12 (50) 8 (50)	0.036ᵃ	2	.046
Marital status	Single Married Divorced Widowed	36 (52.9) 28 (41.2) 3 (4.4) 1 (1.5)	17 (47.2) 13 (46.4) 0 (0.0) 0 (0.0)	19 (52.8) 15 (53.6) 3 (100) 1 (100)	3.359ᵃ	3	.339
No. of children	Doesn't have children Have one child ≥ 2 child	41 (61.7) 8 (11.8) 18 (26.5)	19 (45.2) 4 (50) 7 (38.9)	23 (54.8) 4 (50) 11 (61.1)	1.054ᵃ	3	.778
Travel to workplace	< 30 minutes 30 minutes - 1 hour > 1 hour	26 (38.3) 36 (52.9) 6 (8.8)	11 (42.3) 15 (41.7) 4 (66.7)	15 (57.7) 21 (58.3) 2 (33.3)	1.360ᵃ	2	.507

*p< 0.05

Intrinsic factors of satisfaction according to Herzberg theory

As detailed in table 3 according to intrinsic factors of satisfaction and their impact on the nurses' intention to leave their job; recognition at the workplace was considered as a first factor indicted to dissatisfaction followed by the workload, work schedules, and promotion opportunities, respectively. Statistically, there was a significant relationship between (recognition at the workplace and the workload) and the intention to leave the job, since the p-values were less than (0.05) with 0.044 and 0.037 respectively.

Table 3 Intrinsic factors of satisfaction according to Herzberg theory

Variables	Category	Intention to leave		Mean	St.d	Chi-square tests		
		Yes [N (%)]	No [N (%)]			Value	d.f	Asymp. Sig.
Workload	Agree	18 (40)	27 (60)	3.3725	1.0738	1.678ᵃ	1	.044
	Disagree	12 (52)	11 (48)					
Work Schedules	Agree	25 (47)	28 (53)	3.5784	1.1286	1442ᵃ	3	.696
	Disagree	5 (33)	10 (67)					
Recognition at Workplace	Agree	18 (39)	28 (61)	2.8676	1.3714	1.377ᵃ	1	.037
	Disagree	12 (56)	10 (44)					
Promotion opportunity	Agree	25 (44)	32 (56)	3.7647	1.0719	1.563ᵃ	3	.668
	Disagree	5 (45)	6 (55)					

*p< 0.05

Extrinsic factors of satisfaction according to Herzberg theory

The main extrinsic factor of satisfaction that was the impact the intention of nurses to leave their current job was a payment (a financial incentive). By ordering these extrinsic factors according to their impact on the intention to leave the job, the payment (the salary) was considered as a first factor followed by a relationship with supervisors, and group cohesion. Furthermore, there was a statistically significant relationship between the payment and the intention to leave the job; the p-values were less than (0.05) with (0.037).

Table 4 Extrinsic factors of satisfaction according to Herzberg theory

Variables	Category	Intention to leave		Mean	St.d	Chi-square tests		
		Yes [N (%)]	No [N (%)]			Value	d.f	Asymp. Sig.
Supervision	Agree	18 (55)	15 (45)	2.3713	1.1530	3.823[a]	4	.213
	Disagree	12 (48)	13 (52)					
Payment	Agree	24 (47)	27 (53)	1.1422	1.0177	0.621[a]	1	.037
	Disagree	6 (35)	11 (65)					
Group cohesion	Agree	24 (43)	32 (57)	3.3186	1.2157	3.622[a]	4	.460
	Disagree	6 (50)	6 (50)					

*p< 0.05

DISCUSSION

The intention of nurses to leave their profession represents a challenge to healthcare and hospital administration around the world, and in Libya. Therefore, given the increasing overall number of nurses' intention to leave their jobs, it is critical to understand why nurses are leaving healthcare organizations or the profession altogether [2, 14]. The present study aimed to identify factors that impact nurses' intention to leave their job in Benghazi Medical Center.

Based on this study's findings, nurses' overall intention to leave their job was 44.1%. Previous studies demonstrated similar results, with 40% in Malaysia and 39% in China [15, 16]. From another perspective, studies in Greece and Ethiopia showed higher than the current study, with 66% and 77.5% respectively of the nurses intending to leave their profession [2, 17]. On the other hand, the present finding is higher than a study done in China 20.2% of overall nurses reported an intention to leave their current jobs [18]. The difference between countries in nurses' intention to leave the profession refers to a wide variety of measures used to gauge leaving intention in the questionnaires [19].

In the current study, most of the nurses were female 72.1% which is similar to the study conducted in Saudi Arabia 90.4% [20]. On the other hand, the current finding is lower than the study conducted in Ethiopia 45% [21]. The present findings consistent with the previous studies that showed that gender and years of experience had a significant relation with the nurses' intention to leave their job [22, 23]. However, these results are contrary to previous studies [24, 25]. Additionally, nurses who are male more tending to consider leaving the nursing profession and they are more dissatisfied with the profession than women because historically the profession is associated with women [24, 26].

Within the context of the present study, recognition at the workplace and workload were the main factors among the intrinsic factors of job satisfaction, which had a significant effect on the nurses' intention to leave the job. Previous studies demonstrated similar results [11, 27]. In contrast, a previous study conducted by Wilson et al. (2008) found that there is no significant relation between recognition at the workplace and the nurses' intention to leave jobs [28]. Generally, employees prefer to receive recognition at the workplace for what they do to motivate them and increase their job satisfaction level. Therefore, the main reason for nurses' intention to leave their job in this regard might be a lack of acknowledging the efforts and their performance through offering rewards, respect, and thanks [29]. Regarding workload, unfair allocation of duties could contribute to increased workloads, contributing to job dissatisfaction among nurses [13]. Inegbedion et al. (2020) mentioned that given the fact workload levels influences employee job satisfaction and that job satisfaction is crucial to employee intention to leave and performance. i.e., when workload increased; job satisfaction will be decreased [30]. Therefore, Flexibility with work schedules and adequate delegation of duties is important to reduce the workload and could be beneficial for the retention process [13].

Furthermore, the finding of this study also showed that the most obvious extrinsic factor of satisfaction that impacted the intention of nurses to leave their current job was monthly payment (salary). Similar results were found in another study conducted by Wubetie et al. (2020) proved that monthly income was a significant predictive factor of nurses' intention to leave their institutions [17]. Moreover, Potria et al. (2019) stated that (60%) of nurse's intention to leave the nursing profession due to poor salaries; while 90% of the nurse stated that increasing monthly payments prevent them from leaving the nursing profession [2]. As noted by Flinkman et al. (2013) reasoned that dissatisfaction with salary or low pay is associated with greater intention to leave the profession [19].

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study revealed that nearly half of nurses had the intention to leave their job. Further efforts are recommended by healthcare organizations management to improve the level of satisfaction among the nurses through adjustment and distribution of salary in a fair manner, Flexibility with work schedules to make balance at nurses` workload to create a sense of fairness. Showing appreciation and rewarding them appropriately will motivate them and increase their job satisfaction level. This improvement needs the introduction of specific strategies that persuade nurses to retain in nursing. Further researches are needed to measure the level of nurses' intention to leave their job across wide hospitals and to evaluate the extent of this phenomenon in Libya.

Disclaimer
The article has not been previously presented or published and is not part of a thesis project.
Conflict of Interest
There are no financial, personal, or professional conflicts of interest to declare.

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