



The Relationship between Bachelor's-Level Nursing Roles and Job Satisfaction in Nursing Homes: A Descriptive Study

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General Nursing

Abstract:

The nursing discipline faces significant shortages, especially in nursing homes. Job satisfaction plays a crucial role in retaining Bachelor's-level nurses (BNs), yet the relationship between daily BN roles and job satisfaction remains unclear. This study employed a cross-sectional, descriptive, questionnaire-based approach using a convenience sample. A self-developed questionnaire assessed the extent of seven BN roles performed daily. Satisfaction levels were examined across three dimensions: satisfaction with BN role performance, satisfaction with the overall work packet (comprising all roles), and satisfaction with job function holistically. The study involved 78 respondents who reported satisfaction with all BN roles (range 3.71–4.42). They generally expressed satisfaction with the work packet ($M = 3.96$; $SD = 0.96$) but were neutral about job function ($M = 3.15$; $SD = 1.12$). No individual BN role significantly correlated with job satisfaction, whereas the work packet, as a composite measure, showed a significant positive relationship with job satisfaction ($r = 0.551$; $p = 0.000$). Four BN roles were significantly correlated with satisfaction with the work packet: Reflective Evidence-Based Practice professional ($r = 0.476$; $p = 0.000$), Organiser ($r = 0.364$; $p = 0.001$), Communicator ($r = 0.224$; $p = 0.049$), and Professional and Quality Enhancer ($r = 0.261$; $p = 0.021$). This study underscores the importance of nurses curating engaging combinations of BN roles. It highlights the need for nurses and care managers to develop compelling BN role descriptions, emphasizing identifiable roles within the work packet, and fostering a supportive work environment to enhance overall job satisfaction.

Keywords: nurses, nursing homes, nursing roles, job satisfaction

Introduction:

The World Health Organization (WHO) predicts a significant shortage of 5.7 million nurses and midwives by 2030, with the most acute shortages expected in nursing homes and home healthcare settings. Strategies to mitigate these shortages include staff retention through career development opportunities, social support, creating a positive work environment, reducing emotional distress, and addressing hierarchical and discriminatory cultures. Central to staff retention is job satisfaction, defined as nurses' positive feelings toward work conditions that meet their needs. (Orgambidez et al., 2022)

Job satisfaction is influenced by various factors, including extrinsic (e.g., salary) and intrinsic factors (e.g., professional identity), as well as patient care, working conditions, and job value. In nursing homes, the workforce comprises certified nurse assistants, registered nurses, and Bachelor's-level nurses (BNs). Retaining BNs is crucial, yet literature on their professional identity, tasks, and competencies in nursing homes is limited. (Ooijen et al., 2023)

Professional identity, shaped during academic training and practice, significantly impacts job satisfaction. However, the role differentiation and collaboration between BNs and lower-educated staff remain evolving,

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with tasks often allocated inadequately. BNs' competencies are essential, particularly given the increasing complexity of nursing home care. (de Vries et al., 2023)

Despite the importance of job satisfaction and professional identity in BN retention, no prior studies have investigated the relationship between BN role performance and job satisfaction in nursing homes. This study aims to address this gap by examining how the performance of BN roles relates to job satisfaction among BNs in nursing homes, providing valuable insights amid anticipated staffing challenges in this sector. (Niskala et al., 2020)

Materials and Methods

Setting and Sample

This cross-sectional, descriptive study aimed to explore the relationship between the performance of Bachelor's-level nurses (BNs) roles and job satisfaction in nursing homes. The study used a quantitative questionnaire administered to BNs working in the Netherlands. Data collection occurred . The sample comprised BNs from the general population estimated at 2000 BNs. Inclusion criteria at least one year of experience in a nursing-home setting. Participants were recruited through convenience sampling via nursing homes affiliated with six academic elder-care networks

Questionnaire

The questionnaire assessed two main parameters: the extent of BNs' role performance and job satisfaction. BN roles were based on the BN education program, covering seven roles and 23 competencies. Participants rated the time spent on each competency using a five-point Likert scale.

Job satisfaction was measured at three levels: satisfaction with specific competencies, satisfaction with the overall work packet (combination of roles), and satisfaction with job function. The questionnaire included demographic questions and open-ended inquiries about job titles and descriptions.

Pilot Study

Before distribution, the questionnaire underwent a pilot test involving five BNs and two nurse researchers. Feedback led to improvements in language clarity, question comprehensibility, and questionnaire length. A satisfaction level was added to gain deeper insights into job satisfaction mechanisms.

Reliability

Internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, indicating good reliability ($\alpha > 0.70$). Intrarater reliability was determined through retesting, with participants voluntarily participating after three weeks. The questionnaire's reliability was also assessed using the intraclass correlation coefficient (ICC).

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics described the sample demographics, BN role performance, and job satisfaction levels. Spearman's Rho correlation analysis examined the relationship between role performance and satisfaction levels, considering p -values < 0.05 as significant. Ethical considerations included approval from the research ethics committee and adherence to the Declaration of Helsinki and GDPR guidelines.

Ethical Considerations

The study received approval from the research ethics committee and followed ethical guidelines, including informed consent and data protection regulations. Data were stored securely and anonymously, with participant consent required before questionnaire completion. Participants could withdraw from the study at any time without consequences.

Results

Participants and Response Rate

A total of 85 questionnaires were completed, with 78 meeting the inclusion criterion of having a Bachelor's degree in nursing. The questionnaire's completion rates varied across stages: 27 respondents completed up to informed consent, 18 up to demographic data, and 16 filled out halfway through the questionnaire. Nineteen participants completed the questionnaire twice for reliability testing.

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Demographic Data

The final sample consisted of 78 BNs working in nursing homes, predominantly women (89.7%). The age of respondents ranged from 22 to 64 years, with a mean age of 38 years. Almost half (47.5%) had obtained their Bachelor's degree within the past five years, and 39.7% had been working as BNs for 2–5 years. The majority described their position as 'BN,' working mostly as 'quality nurse' or with a specialisation. Some respondents held positions lower or higher than their trained level.

Reliability

The internal consistency of the questionnaire items regarding time spent on competence and satisfaction was positive ($\alpha \geq 0.910$). However, consistency for items on satisfaction with the work packet and job function was lower ($\alpha = 0.697$). Intra-rater reliability for each BN role ranged from fair to moderate.

Extent of BN Role Performance

Respondents performed all BN roles to varying extents. The most performed role was Professional and Quality Enhancer, while the least performed was Health Advocate. Specific competencies within roles also varied significantly.

Satisfaction in Performing Roles, Work Packet, and Job Function

Performing the Professional and Quality Enhancer role contributed the most to satisfaction, while the Healthcare Provider role contributed the least. Satisfaction with specific competencies varied. Participants were generally satisfied with the work packet but less satisfied with the job function. Significant correlations were found between certain BN roles and satisfaction with the work packet but not with satisfaction with the job function.

Table 1 Characteristics of respondents (N = 78).

Frequency (%)	M (SD)
Gender	
Male	8 (10.3)
Female	70 (89.7)
Age	
20–29	21 (26.9)
30–39	29 (37.2)
40–49	7 (9.0)
50–59	17 (21.8)
60 and older	4 (5.1)
Years of Diploma	
2017–2022	37 (47.5)
2012–2016	14 (17.9)
2007–2011	11 (14.1)
2002–2006	3 (3.8)
1997–2001	5 (6.4)
1992–1996	3 (3.8)
1987–1991	3 (3.8)
1982–1986	X
1977–1981	2 (2.6)
Years of Working	
>1	8 (10.3)
2–5	31 (39.7)
6–10	16 (20.5)
11–15	9 (11.5)

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16–20	3 (3.8)
>21	11 (14.1)
Function Name	
Bachelor's-level nurse	20 (25.6)
Quality nurse	13 (16.7)
Bachelor's degree specialisation	11 (14.1)
Senior nurse	9 (11.5)
Coordinating nurse	4 (5.1)
Management nurse	4 (5.1)
Secondary vocational nurse	3 (3.8)
Network nurse	2 (2.6)
Practice nurse	2 (2.6)
Other	10 (12.8)

Table 2: Internal Consistency (N = 78)

Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Performances of BN roles 'I spent a lot of time on this'	0.910
Performances of BN roles contributing to satisfaction 'Performance contributes to satisfaction'	0.925
Satisfaction with work packet and job function	0.697

Table 3: Intra-rater Reliability (N = 19)

Role:	'I Spend a Lot of Time on This'	'Performance Contributes to Satisfaction'	Satisfaction
Healthcare Provider	0.701	0.752	
Communicator	0.628	0.741	
Collaborator	0.423	0.747	
Reflective Professional EBP	0.693	0.639	
Health Advocate	0.475	0.553	
Organiser	0.304	0.391	
Professional and Quality Enhancer	0.585	0.581	
Satisfaction:			
With work packet			0.709
With job function			0.803

Table 4: Extent of Competency and Role Performance and Contribution to Satisfaction (N = 78)

BN Role	Competency	'I Spent a Lot of Time on This' (M SD)	Mod e	Mi n	Ma x	'Performance Contributes to Satisfaction' (M SD)	Mod e	Mi n	Ma x
Healthcare Provider		3.51 (0.90)				3.71 (0.79)			

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Clinical Reasoning		3.77 (1.01)	4.00	1.00	5.00	4.23 (0.82)	4.00	1.00	5.00
Performing Care		3.55 (1.25)	4.00	1.00	5.00	3.51 (1.17)	4.00	1.00	5.00
Strengthen Self-management		3.54 (1.15)	4.00	1.00	5.00	3.78 (1.00)	4.00	1.00	5.00
Indicating Care		3.18 (1.32)	4.00	1.00	5.00	3.31 (1.26)	4.00	1.00	5.00
Communicator		3.62 (0.82)				3.80 (0.77)			
Individual-focused Communication		4.16 (0.96)	5.00	1.00	5.00	4.15 (0.89)	5.00	1.00	5.00
Use of ICT		3.09 (1.11)	3.00	1.00	5.00	3.45 (1.03)	3.00	1.00	5.00
Collaborator		3.99 (0.79)				4.13 (0.75)			
Professional Relationship		3.82 (0.99)	4.00	1.00	5.00	3.91 (0.91)	4.00	1.00	5.00
Joint Decision Making		3.76 (1.10)	4.00	1.00	5.00	3.00 (0.97)	4.00	1.00	5.00
Multidisciplinary Collaboration		4.32 (0.89)	5.00	1.00	5.00	4.49 (0.83)	5.00	1.00	5.00
Continuity of Care		4.05 (1.02)	4.00	1.00	5.00	4.15 (1.05)	5.00	1.00	5.00
Reflective EBP professional		3.76 (0.96)				4.29 (0.85)			
Investigative Ability		3.67 (1.32)	5.00	1.00	5.00	4.31 (1.01)	5.00	1.00	5.00
Use of EBP		3.40 (1.20)	4.00	1.00	5.00	4.19 (0.97)	5.00	1.00	5.00
Professional Development		4.00 (1.08)	5.00	1.00	5.00	4.42 (0.919)	5.00	1.00	5.00
Professional Reflection		3.96 (1.00)	4.00	1.00	5.00	4.22 (0.921)	5.00	1.00	5.00
Health Advocate		3.47 (1.05)				3.78 (0.98)			
Preventive Analysis		3.64 (1.18)	4.00	1.00	5.00	3.94 (1.06)	4.00	1.00	5.00
Promoting a Healthy Lifestyle		3.29 (1.15)	4.00	1.00	5.00	3.62 (1.08)	4.00	1.00	5.00
Organizer		3.96 (0.61)				4.16 (0.50)			
Nursing Leadership		4.35 (0.82)	5.00	2.00	5.00	4.63 (0.54)	5.00	3.00	5.00
Coordination of Care		3.92 (1.02)	4.00	1.00	5.00	4.18 (0.88)	4.00	1.00	5.00

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Promoting Safety		4.13 (0.69)	4.00	2.00	5.00	4.28 (0.66)	4.00	2.00	5.00
Entrepreneurship in Nursing		3.44 (1.08)	4.00	1.00	5.00	3.55 (1.05)	4.00	1.00	5.00
Professional and Quality Enhancer		4.21 (0.68)				4.42 (0.58)			
Providing Quality of Care		4.31 (0.87)	5.00	1.00	5.00	4.49 (0.79)	5.00	1.00	5.00
Participating in the Quality Process		4.10 (1.03)	4.00	2.00	5.00	4.41 (0.75)	5.00	2.00	5.00
Professional Conduct		4.23 (0.77)	4.00	1.00	5.00	4.37 (0.65)	4.00	1.00	5.00

Note: EBP: Evidence-Based Practice. 1: strongly disagree, 2: disagree, 3: neutral, 4: agree, 5: strongly agree. 1: highly unsatisfied, 2: unsatisfied, 3: not unsatisfied/not satisfied, 4: satisfied, 5: highly satisfied.

Table 6: Extent of BN Role Performance, Contribution to Satisfaction, and Correlations (N = 78)

BN Roles	Spending a Lot of Time (M SD)	Satisfaction with Performance (M SD)	r (Sig.)	r (Sig.)
Healthcare Provider	3.51 (0.90)	3.71 (0.79)	0.098	- 0.083
Communicator	3.62 (0.82)	3.80 (0.77)	0.224*	- 0.090
Collaborator	3.99 (0.79)	4.13 (0.75)	0.125	- 0.071
Reflective Professional EBP	3.76 (0.96)	4.29 (0.85)	0.476**	0.137
Health Advocate	3.47 (1.05)	3.78 (0.98)	0.056	- 0.044
Organiser	3.96 (0.61)	4.16 (0.50)	0.364**	0.108
Profes. and Quality Enhancer	4.21 (0.68)	4.42 (0.58)	0.261*	0.160

Note: 1: strongly disagree, 2: disagree, 3: neutral, 4: agree, 5: strongly agree. 1: highly unsatisfied, 2: unsatisfied, 3: not unsatisfied/not satisfied, 4: satisfied, 5: highly satisfied. * indicates significant correlation < 0.05. ** indicates significant correlation < 0.01.

Discussion

In this study, we explored the relationship between nurses' performance of BN roles in nursing homes and their job satisfaction. We assessed job satisfaction across three levels: satisfaction with BN role performance, with the work packet (all daily practices), and with the overall job function (including factors like salary, workload, and career prospects). Respondents reported engaging in various BN roles regularly, with these roles contributing to their satisfaction. They also expressed satisfaction with their work packets and a neutral stance regarding job function satisfaction. (Van Kuppenveld et al., 2023)

Among the BN roles studied, one stood out significantly in its correlation with satisfaction with the work packet: the Reflective Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) Professional role. Nurses performing competencies within this role reported higher satisfaction levels. This finding underscores the importance of promoting BNs as professionals who actively engage in reflection, evidence-based practices, and team-based care

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cultures. While the role of Professional and Quality Enhancer also showed a significant correlation with work packet satisfaction, it was not as strong as the Reflective EBP Professional role. (Aloisio et al., 2021) Surprisingly, the Healthcare Provider role, typically fundamental in nursing, did not correlate significantly with job satisfaction. This discrepancy might be due to how this role was operationalized, including competencies less relevant to nursing homes' context. However, given the increasing complexity of patient care, BNs' competency in direct patient care and care indication is crucial, despite these findings. (Hanum et al., 2022)

The study also highlighted the importance of the overall work environment in influencing job satisfaction. While specific BN roles contributed to work packet satisfaction, no individual role significantly impacted overall job function satisfaction. This suggests that factors beyond BN roles, such as work environment and team dynamics, play a significant role in job satisfaction. (Rommets & Roelvink, 2022)

It's worth noting that the study had limitations, including a small sample size and potential biases in the sample's representativeness. Additionally, the operationalization of BN roles and the work packet concept may not have fully captured the nuances of nursing activities in daily practice. Future studies could benefit from qualitative methods to delve deeper into nurses' experiences and perceptions of their roles and job satisfaction. (Tuinman et al., 2016)

In conclusion, while BN roles contribute to work satisfaction, a holistic approach that considers the broader work environment is essential for understanding and enhancing nurses' job satisfaction in nursing homes. This includes promoting reflective practices, evidence-based care, and fostering supportive work cultures. (Backhaus et al., 2018)

Conclusion

The findings from this study suggest that nurses (BNs) in nursing homes generally reported satisfaction with their roles and work packets. However, the correlation analysis revealed that while several BN roles were performed satisfactorily, only the Reflective Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) Professional role showed a significant and meaningful correlation with satisfaction with the work packet. This underscores the importance of promoting reflective practices and evidence-based care among nurses, as these aspects significantly contribute to overall job satisfaction.

Interestingly, the study also highlighted that job satisfaction among BNs was relatively neutral when considering the job function as a whole. This indicates a potential gap between the satisfaction derived from specific roles and the overall job experience. To address this, it's crucial for nurses and care managers to craft work packets that clearly define BN roles and responsibilities, ensuring they align with nurses' professional aspirations and interests.

Moving forward, there is a need for deeper qualitative studies to understand the factors influencing job satisfaction comprehensively and to explore the nuanced relationships between these factors and the performance of BN roles. Such qualitative investigations can provide valuable insights into nurses' experiences, perceptions, and the organizational dynamics affecting their job satisfaction, ultimately aiding in the development of strategies to enhance job satisfaction and retention among BNs in nursing-home settings.

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