AN INVESTIGATION OF JOB SATISFACTION AMONG NURSES IN THE EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT

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Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Science in Nursing Degree in the College of Sciences & Health Professions Albany State University
Spring, 2017
ABSTRACT

The purpose of this descriptive study was to determine the overall job satisfaction among Emergency Department (ED) nurses. Job satisfaction is an important factor linked to nursing turnover. With the amount of ED nursing turnover on the rise, as well as ED visits increasing, it is important to understand factors that affect job satisfaction in efforts to retain knowledgeable and experienced ED nurses. A satisfaction survey containing specific job factors that affect job satisfaction was designed and utilized to survey ED nurses. These job factors were adopted from the McCloskey-Mueller Satisfaction Survey (MMSS), which is a reliable and validated survey used in many job satisfaction studies similar to this one. An online company called Survey Monkey hosted the satisfaction survey. A social media flyer that contained the survey link was posted to ED nurse’s social media groups on Facebook, in efforts to advertise the survey to ED nurses across the United States. Basic demographic information along with responses to seven satisfaction questions were collected. A total of 89 respondents from 31 different states were represented in this study. There were 75 females and 14 males that completed the survey. The majority of respondents had their BSN, while 33 held an ASN, and 8 held an MSN. Seventy-two percent of ED nurses were satisfied overall with their current ED job. Males and females were found to have almost the exact same overall job satisfaction rates. Associate degree nurses were found to have the highest overall job satisfaction. Respondents were most satisfied with the job itself and working relationships while working conditions, achievement/recognition, and company policies were found to have the lowest satisfaction scores.
APPROVAL OF PROPOSAL

The proposal for this study was approved by the Student’s Thesis Committee, Department of Nursing, College of Sciences and Health Professions, Albany State University on September 27th, 2016.
THESIS APPROVAL FORM

Approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Albany State University and accepted by the faculty of the College of Sciences and Health Professions, Albany State University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Science in Nursing Degree on September 27th, 2016.

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Acknowledgements

We thank our thesis chair, Dr. Linda Amankwa, for her time, encouragement, and guidance throughout this process. Without her support, this thesis would not have been possible. We also thank our family and friends who have been there for us to lend an ear, give a word of encouragement, and for motivating us to complete this journey. To our husbands, we thank you for your unselfish support, as you have sacrificed just as much as we have during this process. We thank you for believing in our success and for your unconditional love, for without it, we would never have been able to accomplish this dream.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate job satisfaction among nurses who work in the Emergency Department (ED). Recent health care reforms brought forth a rise in the utilization of health care services, amplifying the concern of nursing shortages and turnover. Job satisfaction is recognized as an important factor in the retention of nurses (Liu, Zhang, Ye, Zhu, Cao, Lu & Li, 2012). Several studies on job satisfaction of nurses have utilized the McCloskey-Mueller Satisfaction Scale (MMSS) to measure levels of job satisfaction. For this thesis, the MMSS was used to identify job factors that affect job satisfaction and this information was used to create a Satisfaction Survey (Appendix A).

The survey was used to explore the current level of job satisfaction among ED nurses. Data was analyzed to explore the current overall job satisfaction of ED nurses, as well as determine which job factors nurses are satisfied with. Data collected for this study will help employers strategize ways to attract and retain nurses by focusing on and improving nurse satisfaction, which ultimately addresses the nursing shortage and turnover rates.

Herzberg’s Theory of Motivation-Hygiene Factors (hereinafter referred to as “Herzberg’s theory”) was used to direct this study as it relates to job satisfaction. Results of this descriptive study will add to existing data on this subject and identify areas in need of further research. The current level of satisfaction and factors affecting satisfaction are invaluable pieces of information for nursing leadership and management in order to
develop strategies to increase employee retention and ensure experienced ED nurses remain in their current positions.

Background

Nursing turnover is a recurring problem for healthcare facilities and is associated with high costs for the organization and lower safety and satisfaction of both patients and nurses (Jones & Gate, 2007). Nursing turnover continues to be a problem and will only worsen in the coming years with the growing healthcare industry. According to the 2014 National Healthcare & RN Retention Report, the overall rate of nursing turnover for bedside nurses is 14.2% (Nursing Solutions, Inc. [NSI], 2014). A feeling of being overworked, lack of advancement opportunities, decreased recognition or respect, lack of role clarity, lack of trust in or collaboration with coworkers, and poor communication with management are factors that have been identified as most affecting this turnover (Hunt, 2009).

The nursing shortage is reaching crisis levels in North America and other parts of the industrialized world and continues to worsen (Sawatzky & Enns, 2012). It is projected that by 2020, there will be a shortage of one million nurses (Hunt, 2009). This crisis affects specialty areas, such as the Emergency Department (ED), at a higher rate than other nursing areas. Reasons for the decrease in supply of Registered Nurses (RNs) are well researched and include an aging workforce and a decreased enrollment in nursing programs, among other recruitment/retention issues (Sawatzky & Enns, 2012). According to the 2014 National Healthcare & RN Retention Report, ED nurse turnover is among the top three of all specialties with a rate of 20.3% (NSI, 2014).
The ED has a unique work environment due to its’ unpredictable nature, lack of established patient care loads, increasing nurse-patient ratios, wide range of diseases/injuries, caring for admitted patients when beds are full in the hospital, and overcrowding (Sawatzky & Enns, 2012). There is also a higher risk of violence associated with working in the ED. According to Sawatzky and Enns (2012), 82% of nurses responding to a survey reported having been assaulted at some point during their career in the ED (p. 697). Between 1992 and 2002, ED visits in the US increased by 23% to over 110 million visits every year. In addition to the increase in the number of patients being seen in the ED, there is also an increase in the average acuity with patients presenting sicker than in the past (Sawatzky & Enns, 2012, p.697). This has both increased the demand of nurses, while contributing to some of the cause of the decreased supply. EDs with high nursing vacancy rates are more likely to be overcrowded, have longer wait times, and have an increased number of people leaving the facility without seeing a practitioner. With the average RN being 50 years of age, around 70% of the current nursing workforce will be at retirement age by 2025 (Sawatzky & Enns, 2012). It has been found that older nurses prefer to work in areas that do not require shift work which further intensifies the negative effect of the aging workforce in areas such as the ED (Sawatzky & Enns, 2012).

Turnover of nurses has a huge impact on the quality of care being delivered. Healthcare organizations with high turnover rates (22%-44%) also had higher rates of risk-adjusted mortality and longer lengths of stay for patients (Jones & Gates, 2007). When there is a high rate of nurse turnover, which can be indicative of lower job satisfaction, the structure of the entire unit is affected and can result in additional
turnover and detachment of employees. Patient satisfaction is often used as an indicator of quality of care and is affected by the cohesion of the staff in the unit. When nurse turnover is high, cohesion is low resulting in lower patient satisfaction (Bae, Mark, & Fried, 2010). Financial costs are also associated with nurse turnover. Losing only one nurse can cost the organization twice the nurse’s annual salary (Hunt, 2009). According to Hairr et al. (2014) the cost to retrain a specialty nurse, such as an ED nurse, could cost an organization up to $80,000, and retaining one nurse could save the organization $140,000.

The amount of savings to a hospital by retaining just one nurse is a crucial reason to explore ways to retain nurses by increasing job satisfaction. Not only does nurse turnover have a detrimental impact on the financial aspect of the organization, it also negatively impacts the existing nursing staff. Current staff will experience increased patient workload which then leads to increased stress that ultimately results in lower job satisfaction (Ramoo et al., 2013). A lower level of satisfaction exacerbates the negative impacts of turnover on the organization as a whole, such as additional nursing turnover, additional increased workloads for existing staff, and decreased patient satisfaction and quality of care. Economic costs include the effects of the initial decrease in new employee productivity, decreased staff morale, and decreased productivity caused by staff turnover (Sawatzky & Enns, 2012). Other potential detrimental effects of nurse turnover include decreased quality of care, increased staffing costs, loss of patients, increased turnover of ancillary staff, and increased rates of accidents and absenteeism (Hunt, 2009). All of these negative effects to the health care facility and its’ employees
related to turnover suggest the need to explore current levels of satisfaction in order to
develop effective strategies to combat turnover in the ED.

Job satisfaction has been identified as the most consistent predictor of nurses’
intent to stay and is a complex element affected by many factors (Liu, Zhang, Ye, Zhu,
Cao, Lu & Li, 2012). Job satisfaction is defined by Liu et al. (2012) as “all the feelings
that an individual has about his/her job” (p. 256) and by Wang et al. (2012) as “the
degree of positive affect an employee feels about his/her employment” (p. 540). There
are many studies that report positive relationships between satisfaction and intent to stay
(Liu et al., 2012), but few that focus primarily on nurses in the Emergency Department.
Information on job satisfaction specific to the ED is vital in helping nurse leaders develop
strategies for retaining ED nurses. Ramoo et al. (2013) discuss the complex concept of
job satisfaction and the difficulty in its definition as it can vary from person to person.
Job satisfaction is a subjective variable as it depends on the nature of the job-itself and
the expectation by the individual of what the job should provide (Ramoo et al., 2013).
Since job satisfaction is dependent upon an individual’s expectations, it is important to
include demographic factors when determining job satisfaction. Ramoo et al. (2013)
discuss that age, educational level, work experience, and gender are often linked to job
satisfaction. For this reason, demographic factors that are related to job satisfaction were
also explored in this study.

Research Problem/ Significance

Nursing turnover is a growing problem that must be addressed as the nursing
shortage is already reaching crisis levels. Specialty areas such as the ED have unique
working environments that cause increased nurse turnover rates and higher nurse vacancy
rates which results in negative effects for the facility, its’ employees and the patients they treat. According to the 2014 National Healthcare & RN Retention Report (NSI, 2014), the turnover rate for ED nurses is just over 20% and has steadily increased over the past several years. With the number of patients being seen in the ED on the rise, the nursing shortage in the ED must be addressed (Sawatzky & Enns, 2012).

Job satisfaction is considered the key predictor of nurses’ intent to leave their current position (Liu et al., 2012). There are many studies that focus on job satisfaction of nurses in general, but not enough information is available on the current satisfaction levels of nurses in the ED. Information on job satisfaction of current nurses in the ED and the reasons they are or are not satisfied can be invaluable to nursing leaders in working to combat the crisis of the nursing shortage and keep ED nurses in their current positions.

Research Purpose

The purpose of this study was to examine the current job satisfaction of nurses in the ED. Data collected included overall satisfaction, satisfaction of certain job variables, and demographic information. A descriptive design was utilized for this study and a satisfaction survey was created using variables from the McCloskey-Mueller Satisfaction Scale (MMSS), which is a validated tool used in many nurse satisfaction studies cited in this thesis. Demographic data collected included age, gender, level of education, years of nursing experience, and years of ED experience.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework used to guide this study was Herzberg’s Theory of Motivation-Hygiene Factors (1959). Herzberg’s theory is also known as the dual-factor
theory and it identifies elements within a work place environment that lead to satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Herzberg identified hygiene factors as basic needs that are necessary in order to avoid dissatisfaction. Hygiene factors are extrinsic factors that include: company policy, supervision, salary, benefits, job security, working conditions, interpersonal relationships, and administrative policy (Pasaron, 2013). Hygiene factors are not motivators, but the absence of these often results in dissatisfaction among employees. Herzberg identified intrinsic factors as the motivating factors (satisfiers), which were strongly linked to job satisfaction and include: achievement, recognition, the work-itself, responsibility and advancement (Gawel, 1997). Motivating factors deal with the job that is being performed and the tasks associated with that job, while hygiene factors deal with the environment and situation in which the job is performed (Gawel, 1997). Herzberg identified a unidirectional effect on determining job attitudes, which means that satisfaction and dissatisfaction are not opposite ends of the spectrum. Job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction are affected by different factors and should be measured on separate scales. Therefore the opposite of job satisfaction is no job satisfaction and the opposite of dissatisfaction is no dissatisfaction (Pasaron, 2013).

Herzberg’s theory guided this study as it helped to identify which job factors affect satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Measuring job satisfaction of ED nurses and identifying which factors of the job they are or are not satisfied with was the focus of this study. Knowledge of the motivating and hygiene factors from Herzberg’s theory helped to identify which aspects of the job should be addressed when determining job satisfaction. This, in part, helped make the decision to use the MMSS as a guide to create
the Satisfaction Survey, as it has questions related to both the motivation and hygiene factors identified by Herzberg.

**Conceptual Definitions**

1. **Job satisfaction** is the employee’s perception that his or her job allows for fulfillment through adequate motivation factors (Pietersen, 2005).

2. **Job dissatisfaction** is when employees are unhappy with their current job due to inadequate hygiene factors (Pietersen, 2005).

3. **Motivation or Intrinsic factors** are achievement, recognition, and the job-itself (Pasaron, 2013).

4. **Hygiene or Extrinsic factors** are salary, benefits, company policy, and working conditions (Pasaron, 2013).

5. **Emergency Department nurse** is defined as a full time, part time, or as needed (PRN) registered nurse (RN) who performs direct patient care in the emergency care area of a hospital.

**Research Questions/Hypothesis**

The goal of this study was to answer the following research question: What is the current level of job satisfaction among nurses working in the Emergency Department?

It is hypothesized that overall job satisfaction will be moderate as measured by the satisfaction survey as 34-67% of respondents answering “yes” to satisfaction question #1. Other hypotheses are that working conditions and salary/benefits will have the lowest satisfaction scores, and that the work-itself and work relationships will have the highest satisfaction scores.
Operational Definitions

The following operational definitions will be used for this study:

1. Satisfaction is defined as answering “yes” to any survey question.
   a. Low satisfaction: 0-33% of respondents answering “yes” to the survey question.
   b. Moderate satisfaction: 34-67% of respondents answering “yes” to the survey question.
   c. High satisfaction: 68% or more of respondents answering “yes” to the survey question.

2. Overall job satisfaction is defined as responding “yes” to satisfaction question #1.

3. Not satisfied overall is defined as responding “no” to satisfaction question #1.

4. Motivation or Intrinsic factors include:
   A) Achievement/recognition which was measured by satisfaction question #2.
   B) The work-itself which was measured by satisfaction question #3.

5. Hygiene or Extrinsic factors include:
   A) Working conditions which was measured by satisfaction question #4.
   B) Salary/benefits which was measured by satisfaction question #5.
C) *Company policies* which was measured by satisfaction question #6.

D) *Work relationships* which was measured by satisfaction question #7.

6. *Emergency Department nurses* are the respondents that are currently employed full time, part time, or PRN in an ED and returned a completed survey.

**Summary**

The increasing problem of nurse turnover and vacancy has influenced the need to investigate the current job satisfaction of nurses in the ED. Previous research has been done on satisfaction of nurses in general; however, little research has been dedicated to ED nurses. The nursing shortage is hitting areas such as the ED the hardest, and research must focus on job satisfaction of nurses who work in this specialty area. Job satisfaction levels among current full time, part time, and PRN ED nurses was determined by utilizing a satisfaction survey derived from concepts found in the MMSS. Questions related to overall job satisfaction as well as important aspects of the job that affect satisfaction identified by Herzberg were included in the satisfaction survey. Data collected in this study can be added to the existing literature and assist with the creation of strategies that increase satisfaction of ED nurses.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to explore current literature available on the topic of nurse’s job satisfaction, specifically in the Emergency Department. EDs are fast paced, ever changing, high volume, critical care areas. In today’s economy, EDs play a major role in the communities they serve. Not only do they treat emergent situations, but EDs have become the primary source for basic, non-urgent healthcare needs for many patients. EDs are unfortunately among the hospital departments with the highest nursing turnover. A shortage in ED nurses can have a detrimental effect on patient outcomes, the hospital system, and their communities. For these reasons it is important to retain experienced ED nursing staff. Nurse leaders must focus efforts on retaining their current employees in order to deal with the nursing shortage in the ED. Understanding factors that affect job satisfaction and promote nurses to stay in their current positions is the foundation of retention programs. Literature continues to support the theory that job satisfaction is a key predictor of nurse’s intent to stay in or leave their current position and reveals that nurse’s intent to leave correlates with actual turnover. Factors that lead to job satisfaction among ED nurses will be invaluable to nursing leadership in developing retention programs. In reviewing relevant literature, job satisfaction was explored from an Emergency Department point of view.
Empirical Literature

This section is a review of relevant studies that pertain to the major concept that was addressed in this thesis, which is job satisfaction among nurses in the Emergency Department.

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is an important factor in retention of nurses. This is especially significant when addressing the high turnover of nurses in Emergency Departments. Specialty areas such as the ED suffer from higher turnover rates than other nursing units. Understanding specific factors that lead to job satisfaction will assist ED management in retaining ED nurses.

Ramoo, Abdullah and Piaw (2013) conducted a study at a teaching hospital in Malaysia that focused on job satisfaction and intent to leave. A self-administered questionnaire was given to 141 RNs and results indicated that nurses had a moderate level of job satisfaction overall and that motivating factors and professional development lead to higher levels of job satisfaction. This was consistent with their framework, Herzberg’s Theory of Motivation-Hygiene Factors that states jobs which are more “challenging, interesting and enriching” lead to higher levels of job satisfaction among employees (Ramoo et al., 2013). Ramoo et al. (2013) found that decision-making, pay/benefits, work schedules, staffing, and workload had the lowest satisfaction scores. They also found that demographic factors such as age, nursing education and work experience had an impact on job satisfaction and were consistent with the findings of previous studies in the area. Another key finding was that job satisfaction was a
significant factor in predicting intent to leave among nurses in their study (Ramoo et al., 2013).

Yen-Ju Lin et al. (2012) conducted employee satisfaction surveys on 442 ED physicians and nurses from 119 hospital-based EDs in Taiwan. Authors of this study compared ED culture as it relates to job satisfaction and intent to leave. Conclusions made from this study were that culture did not affect intent to leave among ED nurses, but did affect job satisfaction and that nurses associated job satisfaction with adhocracy culture. Adhocracy is “characterized by a dynamic, entrepreneurial and creative workplace, emphasizing leaders as innovative and visionary, and success as rapid growth and acquiring new resources” (Yen-Ju Lin et al., 2012). Yen-Ju Lin et al. (2012) found that most EDs are saturated with hierarchy and market culture which nurses associated with negative job satisfaction. They encouraged ED leadership to incorporate adhocracy into their culture in order to increase job satisfaction.

Hairr, Salisbury, Johannsson, and Redfern-Vance (2014) conducted a study to explore the relationship between nurse staffing, job satisfaction, and nurse retention. They collected data through an online survey of 70 participants. Of the 70 participants, only nine worked in an ED setting. Authors found a weak relationship between nursing workload and job satisfaction. They also found an inverse relationship between job satisfaction and retention. This indicates the lower the job satisfaction the more likely the nurse will have intent to leave their position.

Gaki, Kontodimopoulos, and Niakas (2013) conducted a study of 152 nurses from a university hospital in Greece. The purpose of their study was to explore how demographics and work-related factors impact motivation among nurses. Authors also
investigated the relationship between job satisfaction and motivators, and used Maslow and Herzberg’s theories as a framework. Gaki et al. (2013) found that “achievements” was the key predictor of motivating nurses. Higher job satisfaction was found among nurses in a higher position hierarchically, those with more work experience and those that were older. Low compensation and limited career advancement were factors that lead to low satisfaction among nurses (Gaki et al., 2013).

El-Jardali, Dimassi, Dumit, Jamal, and Mouro (2009) conducted a study on job satisfaction and intent to leave among 1,739 nurses employed in 69 hospitals in Lebanon. The study was designed to specifically examine the impact of job satisfaction on intent to leave. Their data was collected using a demographic questionnaire, a question on intent to leave, and the McCloskey-Mueller Satisfaction Scale (MMSS). Their results were that 67.5% of nurses surveyed had the intent to leave their current positions within the next 1-3 years with 29.4% intending to leave the nursing profession altogether. They found that nurses were least satisfied with extrinsic rewards and that these same factors influenced their intent to leave their current position and the profession (El-Jardali et al., 2009).

Pietersen (2005) examined job satisfaction among 109 staff nurses in a government hospital in South Africa. Herzberg’s theory guided this study and examined intrinsic and extrinsic factors that affected job satisfaction. Pietersen (2005) utilized the Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (JSQ) which examined job satisfaction from an “attitudinal point of view” (p. 22). The results of Pietersen’s study were that more than half the respondents (56%) were dissatisfied with their job, and most respondents were dissatisfied with extrinsic factors. Items that had the highest dissatisfaction score were working conditions, pay, supervisor support and support from the organization. Items that
had the highest satisfaction scores were the job-itself and the majority of respondents felt that their job was “worthwhile” and enjoyed caring for their patients (Pietersen, 2005).

**Summary**

There is well-documented literature on job satisfaction and intent to leave among nurses in general in countries all over the world. However, there is little information on this topic as it pertains explicitly to Emergency Department nurses in the United States (US). There were only two studies in the literature review that addressed the ED specifically, and the one conducted by Hairr et al. (2014) only had nine participants from the ED, which is 12% of the total participants for their study. The other study based on ED nurses had 442 participants (Yen-Ju Lin et al., 2012); however, this number also includes physician participants and it was conducted outside of the US. Authors of this paper viewed the lack of information pertaining to the ED, and specifically EDs in the US, as a gap in nursing information and therefore identified this as an area in need of further research. The studies conducted by Ramoo et al. (2013), Gaki et al. (2013) and Pietersen (2005) utilized Herzberg’s Theory of Motivation-Hygiene Factors to guide their studies. Herzberg’s theory was found to be of value, specifically in categorizing factors that lead to job satisfaction as either intrinsic or extrinsic. For these reasons Herzberg’s theory was used as the framework to guide this thesis. The study conducted by El-Jardali et al. (2009) was important for authors of the current study because the key concepts of intent to leave and job satisfaction were examined utilizing the MMSS. This led to the exploration of the benefits of using the MMSS and ultimately utilizing it as a tool to develop the Satisfaction Survey (Appendix A) for this study. Research conducted by Liu et al. (2011) was important to this study, as it explored relationships on job satisfaction
and demographic variables, as well as job satisfaction and intent to leave. Even though results of the Liu et al. (2011) study are not ED or US specific, they were important to consider as they provided data to develop and support the hypotheses of the current study. Liu et al. (2011) utilized the MMSS to evaluate job satisfaction based on seven sub-scales that include: extrinsic rewards, scheduling, coworkers, interaction, family/work balance, praise/recognition and control/responsibility. Many of the factors that make up the seven sub-scales along with demographic variables align with the researcher’s intentions for this study and confirmed utilization of a satisfaction survey created from the MMSS.

Job satisfaction is one of the key predictors that a nurse will remain in their current position. Understanding factors that lead to job satisfaction among ED nurses is the first step in retaining ED nurses. Nursing turnover is not only expensive for the department and hospital system, it also increases the workload and stress on the remaining nurses which leads to additional turnover. Data from this study will add to the existing nursing knowledge that job satisfaction is a predictor of nurse retention. It will also reveal the key intrinsic and extrinsic factors that lead to job satisfaction among ED nurses in the United States. Factors that lead to job satisfaction will assist nursing leadership in developing nurse retention programs in the ED which is vital in battling the current nursing shortage in this critical care area. Data provided in this paper will be invaluable for assessing future ED shortages.
CHAPTER III
RESEARCH METHODS

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the research methods used to complete this study. The research design, participants, and instruments used to conduct the survey are discussed at length. A copy of the Satisfaction Survey created and used for this study is included as Appendix A. Procedures used to complete this study are explained, as well as results of the pilot testing. How data was collected and analyzed is also discussed at length including the software and statistical tests utilized. Assumptions and/or limitations of this study are also included in this chapter.

Research Design

A descriptive design was used in this cross-sectional study to survey nurses currently practicing in an Emergency Department. This study was conducted through a one-time interaction via a survey completed online anonymously by voluntary participants. This allowed a large amount of data to be collected in a short period of time and the findings to be described in a simple way. For this study, variables included job satisfaction, intrinsic and extrinsic job factors, and demographic characteristics.

Participants

A sample of RNs who work in the ED was utilized for this study. Participants were invited to take the survey via flyers (Appendix D) posted on social media. The actual sample size was determined by the number of ED nurses that returned a completed
survey before the end of data collection. A potential limitation of this study was a small sample size or one that only represented a certain geographic area or demographic. Authors felt that a minimum sample size of 30 respondents from at least 5 states was needed to ensure the accuracy and generalizability of this study. This potential limitation was not realized as there were over 89 respondents from 31 different states which increased the generalizability of the results.

Instrumentation

Several instruments to measure job satisfaction were revealed during the literature review and of those identified, the McCloskey-Mueller Satisfaction Scale (MMSS) was determined to be the best fit for the purposes of this study. The MMSS measures all aspects of job satisfaction that were identified by Herzberg in his Theory of Motivation-Hygiene Factors and so fits the theoretical framework of this study as well. The MMSS was used as a model to create the Satisfaction Survey for this thesis. The Satisfaction Survey (Appendix A) includes five demographic questions and seven satisfaction questions.

Research Procedures

Pilot Study

A pilot study using five nurses was conducted prior to data collection in order to determine the approximate length of time needed to complete the survey and the comprehension of questions on the Satisfaction Survey. Results of the pilot study showed that the survey could be completed in less than ten minutes and questions were easily
understood by participants. The pilot study revealed no need for any adjustments to the
survey or its delivery method for better utilization during data collection.

Data Collection

Data collection began once approval was received from the Institutional Review
Board (IRB) at Albany State University (ASU). A copy of this approval is included as an
appendix (Appendix B). The Satisfaction Survey (Appendix A) was placed on the Survey
Monkey website (surveymonkey.com) to be delivered to consenting participants. Survey
Monkey is an internet site commonly used to safely deliver surveys and store collected
data. The site has security options that were enabled for this survey including secure
connections and opting not to collect IP addresses of respondents to ensure anonymity of
participants as well as safety of the collected data. Surveymonkey.com allowed data
collection over secured and encrypted connections ensuring that user data in transit was
safe, secure, and available only to researchers of this study. The collected data is stored
on servers in the United States and Luxembourg that are staffed and surveilled around the
clock. Access to these data centers is controlled by security guards, visitor logs, and entry
requirements including pass cards and biometric recognition. The servers are kept in
climate controlled locked cages. Network security includes weekly third party security
scans, firewalls, timely security patching for any vulnerabilities identified, controlled
access, and logging and auditing of logins including failed attempts. Permission to use
the site for research was given by Survey Monkey and a copy of the permission letter is
included (Appendix C).

Social media was utilized to inform ED nurses of the survey and to request their
voluntary participation with instructions on how to do so. The flyer (Appendix D) was
posted in the groups “All ER Nurses” and “ER Nurses Only” on Facebook. The Consent Cover Letter (Appendix E) was included as question #1 on the survey to explain and inform the potential participants of the research study. Completion of the survey with “yes I consent” checked on question #1 indicated consent by the participant. Only those surveys with affirmative consent on question #1 were analyzed. Personal information of the invited participants was not retained, and no link was made between the participant and completed surveys to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. The survey remained active on Survey Monkey for eight weeks of data collection. Data from the completed surveys has been kept in a secure location accessible only by the researchers and their research advisor at all times. Survey data will be deleted from Survey Monkey three years from the date of completion of the survey.

Data Analysis

A total of 89 surveys were returned, all of which indicated an affirmative response to question #1 consenting to take part in this voluntary research study. Of these 89 surveys, the majority were completed in their entirety; however there were three surveys with one skipped response each included in the data. Survey Monkey has a data analysis feature that was purchased and used to quantify and evaluate data collected from the completed surveys. This feature also presents data in the form of graphs and tables, some of which are included in this text. Data was analyzed to answer our research question, “What is the current level of job satisfaction among nurses working in the Emergency Department?” Univariate descriptive statistics including frequency distribution and percentage were calculated to analyze data on overall satisfaction and satisfaction of each of the job variables surveyed as well as the demographic data of respondents. Data was
filtered by demographics to determine differences in satisfaction based on age, gender, years of nursing experience, years of ED experience, and highest level of education.

Assumptions of the Study

One assumption of this study is that respondents answered the survey questions as accurately and honestly as possible to provide reliable data to analyze. Another assumption is that respondents are all current ED RNs as the flyer (Appendix D) specified this as a requirement; however this information was not verified.

Limitations of the Study

One limitation of this study is that only ED nurses that could be reached through social media and those with access to the internet were included in the study since the survey was delivered via the internet. This potentially limits the generalizability of the study. Another limitation is the validity of the questionnaire survey used for the study. While it has not been validated, it was modeled after the MMSS which is a validated satisfaction tool and aligns with the theoretical framework utilized for this thesis. A third limitation is the possibility that some of the respondents were not truly ED RNs as this information was not verified. Other limitations include the effect of the participants’ mood when completing the survey as well as participants hesitation to be honest about their level of job satisfaction.

Summary

This study on job satisfaction among ED nurses in the US was completed utilizing a descriptive design. ED nurse participants were invited/recruited via postings on social media sites in groups for ED nurses. Surveys were delivered through the Survey Monkey
website with anonymity and confidentiality of information maintained throughout the entire process. A basic demographic questionnaire and seven yes/no questions related to satisfaction were included in the satisfaction survey. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics to answer the research question and the results are summarized in text and tables in the next chapter. Researchers of this study assume honest and accurate answers were given, but may be limited by both the tool used and the delivery method.
CHAPTER IV
RESEARCH FINDINGS

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the research findings of this study on job satisfaction among ED nurses. The overall level of satisfaction and satisfaction of different aspects of the job has been determined, and will be broken down based on demographic data. Differences in satisfaction based on age, gender, years of nursing experience, years of ED experience, and level of education will be discussed.

Results

Demographics

There were a total of 89 respondents to the survey, 75 of which were female and 14 were male. 31 different states from all regions of the US were represented in the study (Table 1). 27% of respondents were 21-30 years old, 44% were 31-40, 16% were 41-50, 10% were 51-60, and 3% were 61 or older (Figure 1). Thirty-three of the respondents held an Associate’s degree, 48 held Bachelor’s degrees, and there were 8 with Master’s degrees. The majority of nurses surveyed had 1-5 (40%), or 6-10 (28%) years of nursing experience, while the rest had 11-15 (11%), 16-20 (9%), or 21 or more (11%) years (Figure 2). In terms of ED experience, 58% of those surveyed had 1-5 years, 21% had 6-10 years, 11% had 11-15 years, 7% had 16-20 years, and 2% had more than 20 years (Figure 3).
TABLE 1- 

Participants by US Geographical Location

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th># of Participants</th>
<th>Percentage of total Survey participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alaska</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colorado</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louisiana</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mississippi</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nebraska</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Hampshire</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Mexico</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oklahoma</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oregon</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennessee</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FIGURE 1 - *Demographics: Age*

![Bar chart showing age distribution.]

FIGURE 2 - *Demographics: Years of Nursing Experience*

![Bar chart showing years of nursing experience.]

Q2 What is your age?
Answered: 89  Skipped: 0

Q4 How many years of Nursing experience do you have?
Answered: 89  Skipped: 0
Statistical Findings

The primary research question posed in this study is “What is the current level of job satisfaction among nurses working in the Emergency Department?” This question was answered by the percentage of nurses surveyed that answered “yes” to satisfaction question #1 “Are you satisfied with your current nursing position overall?” Of the 89 ED nurses that responded, 72% were satisfied and 28% were not satisfied (Figure 4). This represents a high level of overall satisfaction among current ED nurses. While it was posited that there would be a moderate level of satisfaction (34-67% of respondents satisfied), results indicated that there is actually a high level (68% or more respondents satisfied) of overall satisfaction among current ED nurses.
Of the 75 female respondents, 54 (72%) were satisfied overall while 21 were not. Of the 14 males surveyed, 10 (71%) were satisfied and 4 were not. This means that males and females had an almost identical rate of satisfaction (Figure 5).

FIGURE 5 - Overall Satisfaction: Male vs. Female
There was quite a bit of variation of overall satisfaction based on age and level of education. Those aged 41-50 had the highest rate of overall satisfaction (79%) compared with other age groups while those aged 51-60 had the lowest rates of satisfaction (56%). Those with an Associate’s degree had higher than average rates of satisfaction at 82% while only 67% of those with a Bachelor’s degree and 63% of those with a Master’s degree were satisfied overall (Figure 6).

FIGURE 6- Overall Satisfaction by Level of Education

Those with 1-5 years of total nursing experience were 72% satisfied, those with 6-10 and 11-15 years were 80% satisfied, while those with more experience had significantly lower rates (Figure 7). Nurses with 1-5 years of ED experience had the highest rate of satisfaction (77%), and all other groups were at or slightly below average with the exception that none of nurses with 21 or more years of ED experience reported satisfaction (Figure 8).
In addition to overall satisfaction, questions about satisfaction related to six intrinsic and extrinsic factors of the job including the working conditions, the work-itself, achievement/recognition opportunities, company policies, work relationships, and salary/benefits were also on the survey. Of the six job components included in the survey,
the majority of respondents were satisfied with the work-itself (74% satisfied) and work relationships (82% satisfied). Respondents were least satisfied with working conditions (31% satisfied), achievement/recognition opportunities (38% satisfied), company policies (39% satisfied), and salary/benefits (44% satisfied). These results are in line with one of the hypotheses, although satisfaction with salary/benefits was higher than expected.

Males reported higher levels of satisfaction than females in all six components of the job surveyed (Table 2). Those aged 41-50 were significantly less satisfied with achievement/recognition opportunities (Figure 9) and company policies (Figure 10) than those in the other age groups. Those with more than 15 years of nursing experience were less likely to be satisfied with company policies (Figure 11) and work relationships (Figure 12) than those with less experience. Satisfaction with working conditions (Figure 13) and company policies (Figure 14) decreased as years of experience and time in the ED increased.

### TABLE 2 - Satisfaction of Job Components by Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Satisfied with job Components:</th>
<th>Males Satisfied</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied with Achievement/ recognition opportunities</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied with the work itself</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied with current conditions</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied with current salary and benefits</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied with current company policies</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied with current work relationships</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 9- *Satisfaction with Achievement/Recognition Opportunities by Age*

![Figure 9](image1)

Figure 10- *Satisfaction with Company Policies by Age*

![Figure 10](image2)
Figure 11- *Satisfaction with Company Policies by Years of Nursing Experience*

![Bar chart showing satisfaction with company policies by years of nursing experience.](image)

Figure 12- *Satisfaction with Work Relationships by Years of Nursing Experience*

![Bar chart showing satisfaction with work relationships by years of nursing experience.](image)
There was some significant variation between levels of satisfaction in some categories depending on the level of education of the respondent. Eighty-five percent of Associate degree nurses were satisfied with the work-itself, followed by 75% of Master’s prepared nurses and 67% of those with a Bachelor’s degree (Figure 15). Associate
prepared ED nurses were almost twice as likely (42%) to be satisfied with working conditions as Bachelor’s prepared nurses (23%) (Figure 16). Master’s prepared nurses had significantly lower rates of satisfaction related to achievement/recognition (13%), salary/benefits (29%), and company policies (13%) than those with Associate’s or Bachelor’s degrees (Table 3).

**TABLE 3- Satisfaction of Job Components by Level of Education**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Satisfaction with job Components:</th>
<th>Associates Degree Nurses</th>
<th>Bachelors Degree Nurses</th>
<th>Masters Degree Nurses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied with Achievement/ recognition opportunities</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied with the work itself</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied with current working conditions</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied with current salary and benefits</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied with current company policies</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied with current work relationships</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FIGURE 15- Satisfaction of the Work-Itself by Level of Education**

Q10 *Are you satisfied with the work itself?*

Answered: 89  Skipped: 0

![Bar chart showing satisfaction levels for Associates, Bachelors, and Masters degree nurses.](image)
Summary

There were a total of 89 respondents to the survey comprised of both males and females from 31 different states representing all regions of the United States. The majority of those surveyed were Bachelor’s prepared nurses, but there were many with their Associate’s degree and several with their Master’s degree. Seventy-percent of respondents had 10 or less years of nursing experience and 80% had 10 or less years of ED experience. Data analysis showed that 72% of the ED nurses surveyed were satisfied with their current position overall with an almost identical satisfaction rate between males and females. Of the six intrinsic and extrinsic job variables, respondents were most satisfied with the work-itself and work relationships. Associate’s prepared nurses had higher rates of overall satisfaction as well as in all categories other than company policies when compared with those with higher degrees. Males responded with higher levels of satisfaction in all six of the categories. Those aged 41-50 had the highest rates of overall
satisfaction compared to other age groups, however they reported significantly lower rates of satisfaction with achievement/recognition and company policies. Satisfaction with working conditions, company policies, and work relationships decreases as years of nursing and ED experience increases.
CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Discussion and Interpretation of Major Findings

Data interpretation began by analyzing the demographics of nurses who participated in the satisfaction survey. There were a total of 89 respondents; 75 female nurses and 14 male nurses. The reported age of respondents were as follows: 44% were 31-40 years old, 27% were 21-30 years old, 16% were 41-50 years, 10% were 51-60 years and 3% were 61 years old or older. Data interpretation for nurses in older age groups presented difficulty due to the small sample size, particularly in the 61+ age group, as there were only 3 survey participants. Additional demographic questions included nursing experience and education. The majority (54%) of respondents held a Bachelor’s degree of nursing, while 37% had an Associate’s degree and 9% had a Master’s degree in nursing. Nursing experience was evaluated by asking total years of nursing experience and total years of ED nursing experience. Forty percent of the respondents had 1-5 years total nursing experience, 28% had 6-10 years, 11% had 11-15 years, 9% had 16-20 years and 11% had 21 or more total years. When analyzing total years of ED nursing experience 58% had 1-5 years, 21% had 6-10 years, 11% had 11-15 years, 7% had 16-20 years, and 2% had more than 20 years in the ED.

After the demographics were analyzed, authors interpreted the survey responses pertaining to job satisfaction. Overall job satisfaction results were higher than originally hypothesized; seventy-two percent of nurses reported overall satisfaction in their current ED position, and only 28% reported lack of satisfaction. As for overall job satisfaction as
it relates to gender, findings were relatively equal with 71% of males and 72% of females being satisfied overall in their current ED nursing position. This supported the idea that gender was not an influence on overall job satisfaction. On the contrary, level of education was found to affect overall job satisfaction, specifically nurses with lower education reported higher job satisfaction. Associate degree nurses had the highest level of overall job satisfaction with 82% being satisfied, while 67% of Bachelor’s degree nurses and 63% of Master’s degree nurses reported overall satisfaction with their current position.

The age of the nurse was also found as an important predictor in overall job satisfaction. Younger and middle aged ED nurses reported higher levels of overall job satisfaction. Data analysis showed respondents aged 41-50 years old had the highest level of overall job satisfaction (79%), followed by 75% of those 21-30 years old, 72% of those 31-40 years old, 67% of those 60+ years old, and 56% of 51-60 years old. The older ED nursing population had the lowest overall job satisfaction. One assumption as to why the older ED nurses reported less satisfaction is that nurses who have more years of practice in the field are more likely to experience nursing “burnout”, which leads to lower job satisfaction. Data supported this assumption by comparing overall years of experience as an ED nurse with overall job satisfaction. Nurses with the highest level of overall job satisfaction were those with 1-5 years (77%) of ED experience. Nurses with the lowest level of overall job satisfaction were nurses with 16-20 years (67%) and 21+ years (0%) of total ED nursing experience. These findings were in contrast to the study conducted by Gaki et al. (2013) which found higher job satisfaction was among nurses in a higher
position hierarchically, those with more work experience and those that were older in age.

Six additional questions on the Satisfaction Survey pertained to specific job factors that influence job satisfaction. These six questions were based on the theoretical framework that guided this study, Herzberg’s Theory of Motivation-Hygiene Factors. Herzberg’s theory was used to specifically categorize factors that lead to job satisfaction as either intrinsic or extrinsic. Intrinsic factors addressed in the Satisfaction Survey were achievement/recognition and the job-itself. Extrinsic factors assessed in the survey were salary/benefits, company policy, working conditions and work relationships. The extrinsic factor that had the highest satisfaction score was work relationships, with 82% of the survey participants being satisfied in this area. The other three extrinsic factors resulted in the lowest satisfaction scores. Only 31% of respondents were satisfied with working conditions, 39% were satisfied with company policies and 44% were satisfied with salary and benefits. The intrinsic factor that had the highest satisfaction score was the work-itself. Seventy-four percent of respondents revealed they were satisfied with the work-itself. The other intrinsic factor, achievement and recognition, resulted in a low satisfaction score; only 37% of nurses reported satisfaction with achievement and recognition.

The job factors were ranked in order of most satisfied to least satisfied: work relationships, the work-itself, salary/benefits, company policies, achievement/recognition, and working conditions. Male respondents reported higher satisfaction rates among all the six job factors, intrinsic and extrinsic, when compared to the female nurses who completed the survey. When comparing years of experience with the extrinsic and
intrinsic factors, satisfaction was found to decrease with working conditions, company policies and work relationships as the number of years of nursing and ED nursing experience increases. Associate’s degree nurses had higher rates of satisfaction among the six job factors with the lowest satisfaction in the area of company policies. Bachelor’s degree nurses were most satisfied with work relationships, and least satisfied with current working conditions. Master’s degree nurses were most satisfied with work relationships (88%) and least satisfied with company policies and achievement/recognition (13% satisfied in both areas).

Methodological Limitations

There were a few methodological limitations associated with this study. There were a low number of male ED nurses (14) that completed this survey as compared to females (75). This disproportionate response rate between males and females may create a limitation to the study, although it may also mimic the male to female ratio currently employed in the ED. The administration of the survey via social media is another limitation of this study. Although the use of social media assisted in reaching a larger, more diverse population of ED nurses from many different states, it unintentionally excluded ED nurses who do not have the internet, social media or are not part of the ED nursing groups where the survey flyer (Appendix D) was advertised. This particular limitation may be the reason for the lower representation of older ED nurses, as only 10% of respondents were 51-60 years old, and only 3% were 61 years old or older. This age group is historically not as active on social media as younger age groups. Another limitation of this study from using social media is the inability to verify that respondents are actively employed as an ED nurse.
Recommendations for Nursing Practice

The work-itself and work relationships were found to have the highest level of job satisfaction. By maintaining positive work relationships, nurses can be successful and satisfied in the team-type of environment that is essential for the success of an ED. Encouraging and sustaining positive work relationships can also increase overall job satisfaction which is beneficial in decreasing ED nurse turnover.

Lower levels of job satisfaction resided in work conditions, achievements/recognition, and company policies. By remedying these issues, hospital and nursing administration can maximize job satisfaction and minimize turnover. Involving ED nurses in the decisions of the company policies that pertain to their everyday clinical practice may also increase job satisfaction. Similarly, including ED nurses in discussions and/or decisions regarding working conditions can lead to more job satisfaction. Increasing recognition of employees who have done an outstanding job, or provided exceptional patient care is one way to increase job satisfaction in this area.

Identification and recognition of job factors that have low levels of job satisfaction are of utmost importance for hospital administration teams. Hospital administrative teams are usually responsible for the development of employee retention programs. Developing solutions that address areas with low satisfaction in the ED will improve job satisfaction, and ultimately increase nurse retention.

Recommendations for Nursing Research

A larger scale survey is recommended to include more male ED nurses and older aged ED nurses in efforts to capture the overall job satisfaction of these demographics. It
is suggested that future studies should verify respondent’s employment as Emergency
Department nurses. One potential approach to do so would be to survey members of the
Emergency Nurses Association (ENA) on job satisfaction as this would verify their ED
employment. This strategy can also help reach more of the demographics that were
limited and unable to participate in this study.

Only six intrinsic and extrinsic factors that contribute to overall job satisfaction
were addressed in this study. This warrants future research into other components that
affect job satisfaction and even more so, how ED nurses perceive and measure each
factor on an intent to leave and intent to stay spectrum. By further correlating job
satisfaction among ED nurses with intent to leave and/or intent to stay, it will assist
hospitals and administrative teams in combating the increasing turnover among ED
nurses and retain the experienced nurses they currently employ.

Recommendations for Nursing Education

High levels of job satisfaction were associated with the work-itself and work
relationships. Low levels of job satisfaction were found to be associated with: work
conditions, achievement/recognition, and company policies. It is suggested that nursing
education focus on building positive work relationship and the real demands that come
with entering the work force. Nursing schools often present scenarios for students that
involve ideal hospitals where working conditions are superb and there are endless
amounts of resources. This is far from the real world experiences they are likely to
encounter as a nurse in the Emergency Department. Education that is forthcoming about
specific areas where job satisfaction is low may better prepare students for the actual
conditions they will experience upon entering the work force. It is also important for
educators to understand that the highest level of job satisfaction is with the work-itself. This is important for nursing schools to consider when directing admission into nursing programs. As the job of a nurse is quite difficult and demanding at times, it can be the most rewarding and is what retains many nurses in their particular field. Students that do not exhibit satisfaction with the nursing work-itself are likely to have lower overall job satisfaction once entering the work force and an increased likelihood of leaving the field altogether. Results of this study are also beneficial in the education of nurse leaders, managers and administrators. Programs that are providing advanced education to future nursing leaders should include recent research related to job satisfaction of nurses, particularly areas that are affected by critical nursing shortages, such as the ED.

Conclusion

The general profile of the ED nurse survey participants were females between the ages of 31-40 years old who hold a Bachelor’s degrees in nursing, and who have 1-5 years total nursing experience and 1-5 years ED nursing experience. Seventy-two percent of participants in this study were satisfied overall with their current nursing position, which is in contrast to the study conducted by Pieterson (2005) that found 44% of nurses surveyed were satisfied. The increase in satisfaction among the survey participants in the current researcher’s study could be due to increased pay and advancement in the nursing career compared with the Pieterson study which was conducted 12 years earlier. Respondents were most satisfied with the work-itself and work relationships and least satisfied with current work conditions and achievement/recognition. Extrinsic job factors were most associated with lower satisfaction rates, which is comparable with other studies. There was one intrinsic (the work-itself) and one extrinsic (work relationships)
factor that had the highest satisfaction scores. The work-itself having the highest satisfaction level is comparable with other studies on job satisfaction. The findings from the study encourage hospital and nursing administration to understand specific job factors that lead to satisfaction, including the nurses’ demographics. Job satisfaction is a well-studied component of retaining nurses, but further larger scale studies that focus on specialty areas such as the ED are warranted. Identifying and understanding job satisfaction factors create a strong foundation for successful ED nursing retention programs. Retention programs benefit the hospital by keeping experienced and knowledgeable ED nurses in their current position, and most importantly, benefit the communities and patients that rely on the ED to provide high quality patient care.
REFERENCES


Appendix A

Satisfaction Survey:

A. Demographic Questions

1. Age:  a) 21-30  b) 31-40  c) 41-50  d) 51-60  e) 60+
2. Gender:  a) Male  b) Female
3. Years of nursing experience:  a) 1-5  b) 6-10  c) 11-15  d) 16-20  e) 21+
4. Years of ER nursing experience:  a) 1-5  b) 6-10  c) 11-15  d) 16-20  e) 21+
5. Highest Level of Education:  a) Associates  b) Bachelors  c) Masters

6. State in which you are currently employed_______________________________

B. Satisfaction Questions

1. Are you satisfied with your current nursing position overall?  a) Yes
   b) No
2. Are you satisfied with achievement/recognition opportunities?  a) Yes
   b) No
3. Are you satisfied with the work-itself?  a) Yes
   b) No
4. Are you satisfied with your current working conditions?  a) Yes
   b) No
5. Are you satisfied with your current salary and benefits? a) Yes  
    b) No

6. Are you satisfied with your current company policies? a) Yes  
    b) No

7. Are you satisfied with your current work relationships? a) Yes  
    b) No
OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND SPONSORED PROGRAMS

DATE: October 19, 2016

TO: Michelle Teems/Erin Helbing - Amankwaa

FROM: Albany State University IRB

PROJECT TITLE: [956351-1] AN INVESTIGATION OF JOB SATISFACTION AMONG NURSES IN THE EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT

REFERENCE #: SUBMISSION TYPE: New Project

ACTION: DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT STATUS

DECISION DATE: September 27, 2016

REVIEW CATEGORY: Exemption category # 2ii

Thank you for your submission of New Project materials for this project. The Albany State University IRB has reviewed your protocol and is approving this project as exempt under Category #2ii:

Research involving one or more of the following: Survey or interview procedures (this exemption category does not apply to research activities with minors/children):

1. If the information is recorded in a manner that individuals cannot be identified (directly or through identifiers linked to the individual), OR
2. If the information may be recorded in a manner that individuals can be identified (directly or through identifiers linked to the individual), but disclosure of the information could NOT reasonably place the participants at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to their financial standing, employability, or reputation.*

We will retain a copy of this correspondence within our records.

If you have any questions, please contact Melisa Widner at 229-430-3690 or melisa.widner@asurams.edu. Please include your project title and reference number in all correspondence with this committee.

This letter has been electronically signed in accordance with all applicable regulations, and a copy is retained within Albany State University IRB's records.
Re: Permission to Conduct Research Using SurveyMonkey

To whom it may concern:

This letter is being produced in response to a request by a student at your institution who wishes to conduct a survey using SurveyMonkey in order to support their research. The student has indicated that they require a letter from SurveyMonkey granting them permission to do this. Please accept this letter as evidence of such permission. Students are permitted to conduct research via the SurveyMonkey platform provided that they abide by our Terms of Use, a copy of which is available on our website.

SurveyMonkey is a self-serve survey platform on which our users can, by themselves, create, deploy and analyze surveys through an online interface. We have users in many different industries who use surveys for many different purposes. One of our most common use cases is students and other types of researchers using our online tools to conduct academic research.

If you have any questions about this letter, please contact us through our Help Center at help.surveymonkey.com.

Sincerely,

SurveyMonkey Inc.
Appendix D

Social Media Flyer

**Attention ER Nurses:**

**We Need YOU!**

You are invited to participate in an important research study,
Measuring your overall job satisfaction.
Please follow the link listed below to complete a
Short survey.

[https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ERSatisfactionSurvey](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ERSatisfactionSurvey)

***consent and survey instructions are listed at the start of the survey. Please follow all instructions as listed on Survey Monkey***
Appendix E

Informed Consent Cover Letter

Albany State University

An Investigation of Job Satisfaction Among Nurses in the Emergency Department

Investigators: Michelle Teems & Erin Helbing

Academic Advisor: Dr. Linda Amankwaa

Dear Participant,

You are being invited to participate in a research study. It is important that you read the information below and understand what you are being asked to do, before you voluntarily participate in this study.

You are being invited to participate in a research study that is investigating job satisfaction among nurses in the Emergency Department. The reason you have been invited to participate in this study is because you are currently working as a nurse in an Emergency Department. The process of being involved in this study involves completing a survey that should take no longer than 15 minutes. The survey questions will be about job satisfaction with regards to your satisfaction overall as well as with certain aspects of your current job.

This survey is anonymous, and we will not collect information that will personally identify you, including your name or place of employment. We will be
collecting demographic information, such as your age, gender, level of education, years of nursing experience and emergency room experience. Absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed due to protection limitations of internet access, however the information collected during this survey will be kept in a secure location accessible only by the authors of this research study and their research advisors. The risks associated with participating in this study are similar to those related to everyday use of the internet.

This project is pending approval by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Albany State University. If you have any questions about completing this survey or your rights about being in this study, you may contact us at mteems@students.asurams.edu or ehelbing@students.asurams.edu. You may also contact our research advisor, Dr. Linda Amankwaa at lamankwaa@asurams.edu

Participating in this survey is completely voluntary and there is no consequence if you choose not to participate. At any point in time you may stop the survey or skip questions you do not wish to answer. Completing this survey indicates that you are at least 18 years old, have read this correspondence in full, have had an opportunity to have your questions answered, and willingly agree to participate in this research. A copy of this consent may be printed for your personal records.

Sincerely,

Michelle Teems and Erin Helbing
Graduate Students, Albany State University