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Job satisfaction status among Bachelor degree nurses working at a tertiary level hospital, Nepal

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Abstract

Introduction: Nurses are key frontline healthcare professionals, and their job satisfaction critically influences patient care quality. This study aimed to determine job satisfaction status among bachelor's degree nurses at a tertiary-level hospital in Nepal.

Method: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted at Tribhuvan University Teaching Hospital, Kathmandu, from 02 Jul to 28 Jul 2017. The study population comprised all 254 bachelor's degree nurses (BN/BNS or BSc Nursing) with 1-10 years of experience. Using simple random sampling, 136 nurses were selected. Data were collected via a self-administered, semi-structured questionnaire based on Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, assessing eight job dimensions. The tool's reliability was good (Cronbach's alpha=0.80). Ethical approval was obtained from the Institutional Review Board of the Institute of Medicine. Data were analysed using SPSS version 20. Descriptive statistics and chi-square test were used, with $p < 0.05$ considered significant.

Result: Out of 136 sampled nurses, 132 participated (97.1%). More than half, 79 (59.8%), were satisfied with their job. The highest contributing factor was supervision (20.47 ± 4.86), while the lowest was work itself (10.88 ± 2.52). There was no statistically significant association between job satisfaction and socio-demographic variables ($p > 0.05$ for all).

Conclusion: Although a majority of nurses reported satisfaction, a substantial proportion (40.2%) were dissatisfied. The findings highlight areas for improvement, particularly in making the work itself more rewarding and addressing growth opportunities.

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Introduction

Job satisfaction, defined as the extent to which an individual likes or dislikes their work,¹ is a critical determinant of employee well-being and organizational performance. In the nursing profession, the quality of patient care is intrinsically linked to the level of nurses' job satisfaction.² Extensive research has established a positive correlation between job satisfaction and key outcomes such as productivity, quality of care, and reduced turnover intentions.³⁻⁵ Conversely, job dissatisfaction can lead to inefficiency, higher absenteeism, increased staff turnover, and a decline in the quality and dedication of care provided.³⁻⁵

Healthcare is a labor-intensive sector, with nurses representing the single largest group of health professionals globally. As frontline caregivers, nurses have a direct and significant impact on patient outcomes, recovery, and overall satisfaction with healthcare services.^{6,7} Therefore, their motivation and satisfaction are pivotal to the efficiency and effectiveness of hospital operations.⁷

In many developed nations, monitoring and enhancing employee well-being through regular job satisfaction surveys is a standard organizational practice.⁸ However, in Nepal, research focusing specifically on nurses' job satisfaction remains limited. While a few studies have explored this topic among the general nursing population in Nepal,^{9,10} there is a notable gap in the literature. No prior study has exclusively investigated the job satisfaction status of nurses who hold a bachelor's degree—a growing and crucial segment of the nursing workforce with specific roles, expectations, and career trajectories.

Therefore, this study aimed to assess the level of job satisfaction and its contributing factors among bachelor's degree nurses working in a

tertiary-level teaching hospital in Kathmandu, Nepal.

Method

A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted to assess the job satisfaction status among bachelor's degree nurses in Nepal. The study was carried out at Tribhuvan University Teaching Hospital (TUTH) in Kathmandu, Nepal, from 2 Jul to 28 Jul 2017. TUTH is a tertiary-level teaching hospital that manages all types of diseases and serves as a major teaching and research site for the Institute of Medicine.

Ethical approval for this study was obtained from the Institutional Review Board of the Institute of Medicine (Ref: 438 (6-11-E)/073/74). Written permission was secured from the hospital administration. Informed written consent was obtained from all participants prior to data collection. Principles of research ethics, including confidentiality and anonymity, were maintained throughout the study.

The study population included all 254 nurses with a bachelor's degree (BN/BNS or BSc. Nursing) who had 1 to 10 years of work experience at the hospital. The sample size was calculated using Cochran's formula⁹ based on a 50% prevalence of job satisfaction from a previous study in Nepal.¹⁰ This figure was then adjusted for the finite population of eligible nurses and a 10% non-response rate, resulting in a final sample size of 136. A simple random sampling method was used. A complete list of eligible nurses was obtained from the hospital administration to create a sampling frame. Each nurse was assigned a number from 1 to 254, and 136 numbers were selected using a lottery method to recruit participants.

Data were collected using a self-administered, semi-structured questionnaire. The research

instrument consisted of two parts. Part one collected socio-demographic information about the respondents. Part two assessed perceived job satisfaction based on Frederick Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, encompassing eight dimensions: working condition, interpersonal relationship, salary and benefit, supervision, recognition and rewards, work itself, autonomy and responsibilities, and growth and advancement. Each dimension included 4 to 6 items. A final open-ended question gathered suggestions for enhancing job satisfaction.

Content validity was ensured through an extensive literature review and consultations with the research advisor, a statistician, and subject matter experts. A pre-test was conducted with 10% of the calculated sample at a similar tertiary care center prior to the main study. The reliability of the instrument was confirmed by an acceptable Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.80 for the entire set of items.

Collected data were checked, coded, and entered into IBM SPSS Statistics version 20 for analysis. Descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation were used to summarize the data. Inferential statistics, specifically the chi-square test, were employed to assess associations between the level of job satisfaction and socio-demographic variables. A 95% confidence interval was used, and a p-value of less than 0.05 was considered statistically significant. The overall level of job satisfaction was determined using a Likert scale. The mean score of the scale (120) served as the cutoff value; scores equal to or above 120 were categorized as "Satisfied," and scores below 120 as "Dissatisfied."

Result

A total of 132 out of 136 nurses completed the questionnaire, yielding a response rate of 97.1%.

The mean age of the respondents was 27.39 ± 2.92 years, range 21 to 37 years. More than half of the participants, 74(56.1%), were aged between 26 and 30 years. In terms of professional qualification, 79(59.8%) held a BN/BNS degree and 53(40.2%) held a B.Sc. Nursing degree. Regarding marital status, 81(61.4%) were married and 51(38.6%) were unmarried. All participants, 132(100%), were working as staff nurses. Concerning job status, 77(58.3%) were on contract and 55(41.7%) were permanent staff. The mean work experience was 4.27 ± 3.24 years, with 94(71.2%) having 1 to 5 years of experience and 38(28.8%) having 6 to 10 years. The most common assigned wards were the intensive care unit, 25(18.9%), and the cardio-thoracic vascular center, 18(13.6%), Table 1.

The mean satisfaction scores for the eight job dimensions revealed a highest satisfaction score for the dimension of Supervision (20.47 ± 4.86), followed by Working Condition (19.64 ± 3.64). The lowest satisfaction scores were reported for Work Itself (10.88 ± 2.52) and Growth and Advancement (12.23 ± 3.94), Table 2.

The overall level of job satisfaction among the nurses, by using mean grand score of 120 as cut off, revealed more than half of the respondents, 79(59.8%), were satisfied, and 53(40.2%) were dissatisfied, Table 3.

The association between the level of job satisfaction and socio-demographic variables was tested using Pearson's chi-square analysis and there was no statistically significant association found between job satisfaction and any of the socio-demographic variables, including age, professional qualification, marital status, job status, years of work experience, or assigned ward (all $p > 0.05$), Table 4.

Table 1. Socio-demographic characteristics of the nurses, n=132

Characteristics	n(%)
Age in years, 27.39±2.92	
≤25	37(28.0)
26-30	74(56.1)
≥31	21(15.9)
Professional qualification	
BN/BNS	79(59.8)
B.Sc. Nursing	53(40.2)
Marital status	
Married	81(61.4)
Unmarried	51(38.6)
Designation	
Staff nurse	132(100)
Nursing officer	0(0)
Job status	
Contract	77(58.3)
Permanent	55(41.7)
Year of work experience, 27±3.24	
1-5	94(71.2)
6-10	38(28.8)
Assigned ward	
Medical	17(12.9)
Surgical	18(13.6)
Cardio-thoracic vascular centre	18(13.6)
Maternity	17(12.9)
Paediatrics	15(11.4)
Emergency	9(6.8)
Intensive care unit	25(18.9)
Operation theatre	13(9.8)

Table 2. Comparison of level of job satisfaction among different job dimensions, n=132

Factors contributing job satisfaction	Mean±SD
Supervision	20.47±4.86
Working condition	19.64±3.64
Interpersonal relationship	16.36±2.14
Autonomy	15.93±3.16
Salary and benefit	15.52±3.33
Recognition and rewards	14.46±3.77
Growth and advancement	12.23±3.94
Work itself	10.88±2.52

Higher the mean score higher the satisfaction

Table 3. Overall level of job satisfaction of the respondents, n=132

Level of satisfaction	n(%)	Mean±sd	Cut off value
mean score		120±18.6	
Satisfied (≥ mean score)	79(59.8)		≥120
Dissatisfied (≤ mean score)	53(40.2)		<120

Minimum score 74, Maximum score 165, cut off value mean score 120

Table 4. Association between level of job satisfaction and socio-demographic variables, n=132

Variables	Level of satisfaction		χ^2	p-value
	Satisfied n(%)	Dissatisfied n(%)		
Age in years				
≤25	23(62.16)	14(37.83)	3.072	0.215
>25	33(44.59)	41(55.40)		
Professional qualification				
BN/BNS	35(44.30)	44(55.69)	3.279	0.70
B.Sc. Nursing	32(60.37)	21(40.15)		
Marital status				
Married	40(49.38)	41(50.61)	0.159	0.69
Unmarried	27(52.94)	24(47.05)		
Job status				
Contract	43(55.84)	34(44.15)	1.913	0.167
Permanent	24(43.63)	31(56.36)		
Year of work experience				
1-5	51(54.25)	43(45.74)	1.598	0.206
6-10	16(42.10)	22(57.89)		
Assigned ward				
Intensive care unit	10(40.00)	15(60.00)	1.428	0.232
Non-intensive care	57(53.27)	50(46.72)		

Discussion

Our study found that more than half (59.8%) of bachelor's degree nurses at a tertiary hospital in Nepal were satisfied with their jobs. Supervision received the highest satisfaction score, followed by working conditions, whereas the lowest scores were associated with the work itself and opportunities for growth and advancement. No significant association was found between job satisfaction and socio-demographic variables such as age, professional qualification, marital status, job status, or years of work experience.

The high satisfaction with supervision aligns with findings from studies in similar settings, suggesting that supportive leadership is a key factor in nurse retention.¹¹ The relatively positive perception of working conditions may reflect adequate physical resources in this tertiary facility. However, the low satisfaction with the nature of the work itself and growth opportunities is a critical concern. This mirrors results from studies in Tehran and South Africa, where nurses also reported dissatisfaction with professional advancement and the intrinsic aspects of their roles.^{11,12} This may indicate a common challenge in nursing professions

globally, where high workload, limited autonomy, and constrained career pathways diminish intrinsic motivation.

The overall satisfaction rate in this study (59.8%) is consistent with reports from Tanzania and South Africa, where approximately half to slightly more than half of healthcare workers expressed job satisfaction.^{13,14} However, it is lower than rates reported in some earlier Nepali studies focusing on mixed nursing groups, where satisfaction exceeded 75%.^{10,15} This discrepancy may be because bachelor's degree nurses have higher expectations regarding role recognition, autonomy, and career progression, which, if unmet, lead to greater dissatisfaction.

The lack of significant association between job satisfaction and socio-demographic variables such as age, marital status, and experience is consistent with several studies in Nepal and India.^{18,19} This suggests that in this context, satisfaction may be influenced more by organizational and job-related factors than by personal characteristics. However, this contradicts findings from studies in multicultural settings or those with wider age ranges, where such associations were

significant.^{20,21} The homogeneity of our sample in terms of age (most between 26-30 years) and cultural background may explain this divergence.

The absence of a link between professional qualification (BN/BNS vs. BSc. Nursing) and satisfaction is a novel finding, as previous studies often grouped different education levels. Interestingly, one study found that diploma holders were more satisfied than degree holders, possibly due to different role expectations.²² Our results suggest that among bachelor's degree nurses, the specific type of degree may not be a major determinant of satisfaction.

This study has several limitations that should be considered. Its cross-sectional design precludes causal inference. Data were collected from a single tertiary hospital in Kathmandu, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other settings in Nepal. The reliance on self-reported measures may introduce response bias. Future research should employ longitudinal or mixed-methods designs across multiple centers to better understand the causal factors of job satisfaction and to evaluate targeted interventions, particularly those aimed at enriching the nature of nursing work and creating transparent career advancement pathways.

Conclusion

This study found that more than half (59.8%) of bachelor's degree nurses were satisfied with their jobs, with supervision being the highest contributing factor. However, a substantial proportion (40.2%) expressed dissatisfaction, particularly with the nature of the work itself and limited opportunities for growth and advancement. No significant association was found between job satisfaction and socio-demographic variables, suggesting that organizational factors may play a more critical role than personal characteristics. These findings highlight the need for hospital management to focus on enhancing the intrinsic aspects of nursing roles and developing

clear career advancement pathways to improve nurse retention and quality of care..

Author contribution

Conceptualization: PS, SS; Data curation: PS; Formal analysis: PS, SS; Investigation: PS; Methodology: PS, SS; Writing – original draft: PS; Writing – review & editing: PS, SS; Final approval: PS, SS; Accountability: PS, SS

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Conflict of interest

None

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Supplementary material

Data and supplementary material that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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Supplementary material

Semi-structured Questionnaire for data collection

Title of the study: Job satisfaction status among the bachelor degree nurses working at a tertiary level hospital, Kathmandu.

Objectives: To gather information regarding job satisfaction status among bachelor degree nurses working at a tertiary level hospital, Kathmandu.

This questionnaire is solely used for the study purpose. You are requested to provide correct answer of the questions. The valuable information provided by you will be used only for research purpose.

Please read questionnaire carefully and answer each question by placing tick (v) mark on the side of options that describe your best response and write your own answer in the open ended question.

Serial No. (Respondent No.):

Date:

Part I: Socio-demographic data

S.N.	Variables	Response and code
1.1	Age in completed years
1.2	Professional education acquired	a. BNS 1 b. BSc. Nursing 2
1.3	Marital status	a. Married 1 b. Unmarried 2 c. Widow 3 d. Divorce/separated 4
1.4	Designation at present	a. Staff nurse 1 b. Nursing officer 2 c. Others please specify.....
1.5	Job status	a. Contract 1 b. Permanent 2 c. Others please specify.....
1.6	How long have you been working in this hospital
1.7	Your assigned ward

Part II: Questions related to job satisfaction

In this part of the questionnaire I would like to ask you about some aspects of your job with which you may satisfied or dissatisfied. Please place tick (v) mark on the following each statement which you think is the best answer. Each of them has following five alternatives.

5 = Very satisfied (Means I am very satisfied with this aspect of my job)

4 = Satisfied (Means I am satisfied with this aspect of my job)

3 = Neutral (Means I can't decide whether I am satisfied or not with this aspect of my job)

2 = Dissatisfied (Means I am dissatisfied with this aspect of my job)

1 = Very dissatisfied (Means I am very dissatisfied with this aspect of my job)

1. Working condition: How is the working condition in your ward?

S.N.	Statement	5	4	3	2	1
1.1	My working environment is clean.					
1.2	My working space is adequate.					
1.3	Physical environment (Heating, lighting and ventilation) is adequate.					
1.4	Working environment is pleasant.					
1.5	The equipments are adequate for providing good nursing care.					
1.6	The supplies in the ward are adequate.					

2. Interpersonal relationship: What is the situation of interpersonal relationship between nurses and other staffs in your ward?

S.N.	Statement	5	4	3	2	1
2.1	There is a good teamwork in my unit.					
2.2	The personal relationship with my seniors is harmonious, warm and supportive.					
2.3	The personal relationship with my junior is warm, harmonious and supportive.					
2.4	The personal relationship with my co-workers is warm, harmonious and supportive.					

3. Salary and benefit: Does your hospital provide satisfactory Salary and benefits?

S.N.	Statement	5	4	3	2	1
3.1	The salary I am getting is reasonable for the service I am providing to this hospital.					
3.2	My salary is more than sufficient for my qualifications.					
3.3	Performance based incentives system is provided in the hospital.					
3.4	Financial benefits are provided in my organization (eg compensation for overtime, bonus, incentives, and pension).					
3.5	Non financial benefit (medical benefit, leaves) are provided in my organization.					

4. Supervision: What is your feeling about the supervision provided by seniors?

S.N.	Statement	5	4	3	2	1
4.1	My supervisors are supportive to me.					

4.2	My supervisors provide proper guidance to me.					
4.3	My seniors provide fair treatment to all nursing staffs.					
4.4	My supervisors create motivating environment by being positive.					
4.5	My supervisors assess strengths and limitation of all staffs.					
4.6	There is a provision of regular supervision by supervisors.					

5. Recognition and rewards: In your opinion is there any form of recognition and rewards in the hospital?

S.N.	Statement	5	4	3	2	1
5.1	When I do a good work I receive the recognition from my supervisor.					
5.2	I am praised when I do a good work.					
5.3	I am praised by the patients for the services I offer to them.					
5.4	Reward given are specific and relevant to particular performance.					
5.5	The reward we receive is fair and equitable.					

6. Work itself: What is your feeling about the nature of the work?

S.N.	Statement	5	4	3	2	1
6.1	My job is Challenging.					
6.2	I am enjoying my job.					
6.3	The nurse patient ratio (workload) is appropriate.					
6.4	The workload is fairly distributed among all employees.					

7. Autonomy: What is your perception about autonomy?

S.N.	Statement	5	4	3	2	1
7.1	I am free to make nursing decision related to my work.					
7.2	I have chance to try my own standard methods of doing the job.					
7.3	My seniors encourage me to work independently.					
7.4	I get chance to use of my Nursing abilities and skills.					
7.5	My supervisor is supportive to us to make clinical decision making.					

8. Growth and advancement: Please give your opinion about opportunity for Growth and Advancement in your job.

S.N.	Statement	5	4	3	2	1
8.1	There is a provision of promotion for nursing staff in my organization.					
8.2	There is a provision of in-service education for nursing staff.					
8.3	There is a provision of training for nursing staff.					
8.4	My Job position is according to my qualifications.					
8.5	There are enough opportunity for advancement in my career through my organization.					

9. Please give any suggestion for enhancing job satisfaction among the nurses with bachelor degree in your hospital.

Thank you for giving your valuable time and information!!!