

Impact of quality of work-life on work-life balance among nurses in nepal

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Abstract

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Introduction: This study investigates the impact of the quality of work-life on the work-life balance of nurses in Nepal. By examining the impact of quality of work-life on the equilibrium between professional and personal life, it aims to contribute insights for enhancing the overall well-being of nurses in the Nepalese healthcare sector.

Methods: The research design employed a causal-comparative approach to investigate the impact of quality of work life on the work-life balance of nurses. The data was collected using a well-structured five-point Likert scale questionnaire from 200 nurses. Correlation and regression analyses were utilized to draw meaningful insights.

Results: The findings of the study reveal that two key factors, namely job security and job satisfaction, significantly influence the work-life balance for nurses. This suggests that nurses who perceive higher job security and experience greater job satisfaction tend to have an improved work-life balance. However, the study did not find any significant impact of job commitment on work-life balance among nurses.

Conclusion: The study underscores the pivotal role of job security and job satisfaction in shaping the quality of work life for nurses in Nepal. Higher perceived job security and increased job satisfaction emerge as key factors contributing to an enhanced work environment. Surprisingly, job commitment did not exhibit a significant influence on the quality of work life among nurses in this context. These findings highlight the importance of addressing specific aspects of job security and satisfaction to positively impact the overall work experience of nurses in Nepal.

Key Words: Work-life balance, Job Security, job satisfaction, Job commitment, and Quality of Work-life

Introduction

In recent years, the healthcare sector has witnessed a growing recognition of the importance of the quality of work-life (QWL) in fostering a positive work environment and ensuring the well-being of healthcare professionals. Nurses, as frontline caregivers, play a crucial role in the healthcare system, and their job satisfaction and work-life balance are essential for both their personal well-being and the overall quality of patient care. In the context of Nepal, where the healthcare system faces unique challenges, understanding the impact of QWL on the work-life balance of nurses becomes particularly pertinent.

Quality of work-life refers to the overall quality of an individual's work experience, encompassing factors such as job satisfaction, work environment, and the balance between personal and professional life (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Work-life balance, on the other hand, pertains to the equilibrium between work-related demands and personal life responsibilities (Greenhaus & Allen, 2011). For nurses in Nepal, a country grappling with resource constraints and evolving healthcare demands, achieving a satisfactory work-life balance is crucial for both the retention of skilled healthcare professionals and the delivery of high-quality patient care.

The demands on nurses in Nepal are multifaceted, involving long working hours, high patient loads, and challenging working conditions. These factors can significantly impact the QWL of nurses and, consequently, their ability to maintain a healthy work-life balance. Several studies conducted in similar healthcare settings globally have highlighted the relationship between QWL and work-life balance among nurses (Babenko-Mould et al., 2018; Cimiotti et al., 2012). However, the unique cultural, social, and economic contexts in Nepal necessitate a dedicated exploration of this relationship within the Nepalese healthcare system.

This study aims to investigate the specific factors influencing the QWL of nurses in Nepal and the subsequent impact on their work-life balance. By examining the challenges and opportunities present in the Nepalese healthcare system, we seek to contribute to the body of knowledge on nursing workforce management and inform policies and interventions that can enhance the well-being of nurses and, consequently, improve patient outcomes.

In conclusion, as the demands on healthcare professionals continue to evolve, understanding the interplay between QWL and work-life balance among nurses in Nepal is essential for promoting a resilient and sustainable healthcare workforce. This study aims to shed light on the intricacies of this relationship, offering insights that can

guide policymakers, healthcare administrators, and educators in developing strategies to enhance the overall quality of work-life for nurses in Nepal.

Nursing, as a demanding and crucial profession in the healthcare sector, is subject to various stressors and challenges that can significantly influence the well-being of nurses. One critical aspect that has gained attention in the literature is the relationship between the quality of work-life (QWL) and work-life balance among nurses. In the specific context of Nepal, where the healthcare system faces unique challenges, understanding the nuanced issues related to the impact of QWL on work-life balance among nurses is essential for workforce management and the delivery of quality patient care.

The problem at hand is multifaceted and requires exploration to comprehensively address the intricacies of the nursing profession in Nepal. Firstly, the demanding nature of nursing in the Nepalese healthcare system is characterized by long working hours, high patient-to-nurse ratios, and challenging working conditions (Shrestha, 2017). These factors can potentially impede the overall QWL of nurses, affecting their job satisfaction and, subsequently, their ability to achieve a satisfactory work-life balance.

There is growing research evidence that poor working conditions, increase in workload, imbalance of work, lack of involvement in decision-making, and poor relationships with supervisors are major barriers in the improvement of QWL in organizations (Ellis & Pompli, 2002). Recent research on QWL in many different countries, including Egypt (El et al., 2018), Thailand (Dechawatanapaisal, 2017), UAE (Jabeen et al., 2018), Malaysia (Surienty et al., 2014), Sri Lanka (Ramawickrama et al., 2019), Iran (Hashempour et al., 2018), Ghana (Ojedokun et al., 2015), Nigeria (Kwahaar & Iyortsuun, 2018), Philippines (Ong et al., 2019) and India (Bala et al., 2019) support that QWL is very important and has positive outcomes.

Despite the global recognition of the importance of QWL and work-life balance in the nursing profession (Babenko-Mould et al., 2018; Cimiotti et al., 2012), there is a notable gap in the literature concerning these issues within the context of Nepal. Existing studies predominantly focus on developed healthcare settings, and the applicability of their findings to the unique challenges faced by Nepalese nurses remains uncertain.

Therefore, the primary problem to be addressed is: What is the impact of the quality of work-life on the work-life balance of nurses in Nepal, considering the distinctive challenges posed by the healthcare system and the cultural context? This research aims to fill this critical gap in the literature and contribute empirical evidence that can inform policies and interventions tailored to the Nepalese healthcare environment.

Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

Job Security and Work-Life Balance

The literature suggests that job security, which reflects the stability of employment, can significantly impact an individual's work-life balance (De Cuyper et al., 2008). Perceived job security may reduce stress related to employment uncertainties, allowing individuals to better manage their professional and personal lives. Job security is linked to lower levels of job-related stress (Sverke et al., 2002). Nurses who perceive a higher level of job security may experience reduced anxiety about potential job loss, contributing to a more balanced integration of work and personal life. The sense of stability provided by job security may positively influence how nurses perceive their work-life balance, as it contributes to an environment where they can confidently invest time and effort in both their professional and personal spheres (De Cuyper et al., 2008).

H₁: There is a significant impact of job security on work-life balance of nurses.

Job Satisfaction and Work-Life Balance

The literature suggests that job satisfaction is closely linked to the overall well-being of employees and can influence their perception of work-life balance (Judge & Bono, 2001). Satisfied employees may experience less stress and greater contentment, contributing to a more balanced integration of work and personal life. Specifically in the nursing profession, job satisfaction has been identified as a crucial factor affecting the retention and well-being of nurses (Hayes et al., 2017). Nurses who find satisfaction in their work may be better positioned to manage the demands of their profession and achieve a positive work-life balance. High levels of job satisfaction may lead to a positive perception of work-life balance, as individuals who are content with their work are likely to experience lower levels of work-related stress and greater overall life satisfaction (Judge & Bono, 2001). Thus, it can be hypothesized as:

H₂: There is a significant impact of job satisfaction on work-life balance of nurses.

Job Commitment and Work-Life Balance

The concept of job commitment is rooted in the idea that employees who are emotionally attached to their jobs are likely to invest more effort and time, potentially leading to a more balanced integration of work and personal life (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Studies have suggested that individuals with high levels of job commitment may experience a greater sense of control and satisfaction in their work, contributing to a more harmonious balance between professional and personal life (Shuck & Wollard,

2010). Given the demanding nature of the nursing profession, where commitment is often viewed as a significant aspect of job engagement (Hayes et al., 2017), it is plausible that nurses with higher job commitment may perceive a greater ability to balance their work and personal life. Oyewobi et al. (2019) also found that there was a positive relationship between WLB and organizational commitment. Thus, it can be hypothesized as:

H₃: There is a significant impact of job satisfaction on work-life balance of nurses.

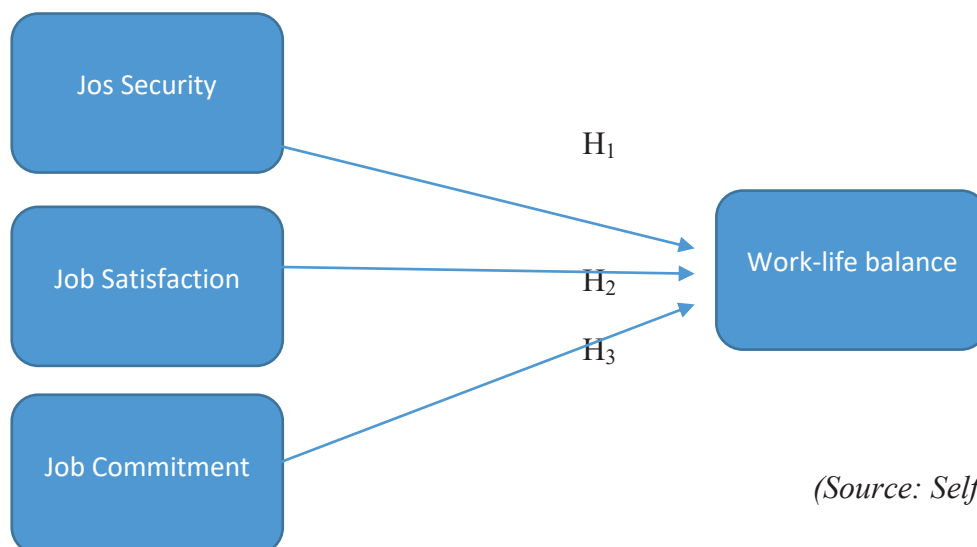
Theoretical Framework

In the context of the nursing profession in Nepal, the conceptual framework explores the relationships between the quality of work life (QWL), work-life balance (WLB), and the mediating factors of job stress, job satisfaction, and job commitment. This framework aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how these interconnected elements influence the overall well-being and professional experience of nurses.

QWL encompasses various dimensions, including job satisfaction, work environment, and career development opportunities (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). It serves as the foundation for nurses' overall work experience.

Work-life balance represents the equilibrium between work-related demands and personal life responsibilities (Greenhaus & Allen, 2011). Achieving a satisfactory WLB is crucial for the overall well-being and retention of nurses. Higher QWL is hypothesized to lead to a more satisfactory WLB, as a positive work experience, supportive environment, and career development opportunities contribute to nurses' ability to balance work and personal life. Job stress is the perceived imbalance between job demands and the resources available to cope with those demands (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). High levels of job stress can negatively impact both QWL and WLB.

Job satisfaction reflects the positive feelings and attitudes individuals have toward their job (Spector, 1997). It is a crucial mediator that influences the relationship between QWL and WLB. Job commitment represents the degree to which employees identify with and feel a sense of loyalty and attachment to their job (Meyer & Allen, 1991). High job commitment may mitigate the negative effects of stress and enhance job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is hypothesized to mediate the relationship between QWL and WLB. A positive work experience and supportive environment contribute to higher job satisfaction, fostering better work-life balance. Job commitment is hypothesized to mediate the relationship between QWL and WLB. A strong commitment to one's job may serve as a buffer against stressors, positively influencing work-life balance.



(Source: Self-developed)

Methods

The research has deployed causal-comparative research design because the objective of the study was to assess the impact of quality off work life on work-life balance of nurses in Nepalese hospitals. In the case of cause and effect relationship between two or more variables, causal-comparative research design is an appropriate research design. The research has used primary sources of data that was collected through a well-structured questionnaire ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling technique since the total numbers of nurses were unknown. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to diagnose data collected to test the hypotheses set.

A total of 200 nurses were taken for the study based on purposive sampling technique. SPSS 21 and excel software were used for the data analysis.

Result

Table 1 shows the factor loadings, communalities, and Cronbach's Alpha. The values of factors loadings have been recorded to be higher than 0.5 for each items, which is good for the fit. Likewise, the values of communalities have also found to be higher than 0.5 which is acceptable for the study. Furthermore, the values of Cronbach's Alpha was recorded to be higher to be higher than 0.7 which is excellent base on reliability (Nunnally, 1978).

Table 1:
Rotated Component Matrix, Communalities and Cronbach's Alpha

Items	Factor Loadings	Communalities	Cronbach Alpha
JS6	.675	0.569	
JS7	.714	0.542	
JS8	.788	0.638	0.766
JS10	.781	0.742	
JC3	.509	0.357	
JC4	.746	0.637	
JC5	.771	0.603	
JC6	.681	0.484	
JC7	.738	0.557	
JC8	.712	0.611	0.908
JC9	.776	0.636	
JC10	.777	0.619	
JC11	.732	0.673	
JC12	.537	0.484	
JC13	.674	0.622	
JOS1	.714	0.663	
JOS2	.575	0.496	
JOS10	.707	0.548	
JOS11	.636	0.581	0.855
JOS12	.662	0.491	
JOS13	.657	0.502	
JOS14	.737	0.664	
PLB1	.777	0.655	
PLB2	.686	0.554	
PLB3	.602	0.436	.821
PLB4	.808	0.656	
PLB6	.817	0.713	

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

Mean, Standard Deviation and Correlation Coefficient

Table 2 shows the mean, standard deviation and correlation coefficient. The mean values of each construct have been shown which reveals the presence of work-life balance between personal and professional dimensions. The standard deviations values reflect the consistency of data used in the study. Since each values of items have recorded to be less than 1, it is highly consistent for the further diagnosis.

Table 2:
Mean, SD and Correlations Coefficient

Constructs	Mean	SD	JS	JC	JOS	WLB
JS	2.948	0.839	1			
JC	4.010	0.769	.075	1		
JOS	3.397	0.684	.227**	.425**	1	.345**
WLB	2.926	0.833	.277**	.098	.345**	1

***. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

The correlation coefficient between job security and work-life balance was found to be 0.277 which is low positively correlated. Its p value was recorded to be 0.000 which is less than 0.01. Therefore, there is a positive and significant relationship between job security and work-life balance among nurses in Nepal ($r = 0.277, p = 0.000 < 0.01$).

Likewise, the correlation coefficient between job commitment and work-life balance was found to be 0.098 which is low positively correlated. Its p value was recorded to be 0.169 which is greater than 0.05. Therefore, there is no significant relationship between job commitment and work-life balance among nurses in Nepal ($r = 0.098, p = 0.169 > 0.05$).

The correlation coefficient between job satisfaction and work-life balance was found to be 0.345 which is low positively correlated. Its p value was recorded to be 0.000 which is less than 0.01. Therefore, there is a positive and significant relationship between job satisfaction and work-life balance among nurses in Nepal ($r = 0.345, p = 0.000 < 0.01$).

Table 3:
Multiple Regression Analysis

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.224	0.36		3.397	0.001
JS	0.207	0.067	0.208	3.105	0.002
JC	0.059	0.078	0.054	0.753	0.452
JOS	0.391	0.09	0.321	4.342	0.000

Note: JS = Job Security, JC = Job Commitment, JOS = Job Satisfaction, WLB = Work-Life Balance

Table 3 deals with the multiple regression analysis. The beta value of job security was found to be 0.207 and its respective t-value was recorded to be 3.105 and p-value was 0.002 which is less than 0.01. Therefore, it can be concluded that job security has significantly influenced work-life balance of nurses working in Nepalese hospitals ($\beta = 0.207$, $t = 3.105$, $p = 0.002 < 0.01$). Thus, hypothesis H_1 is accepted.

Likewise, the beta value of job commitment was found to be 0.059 and its respective t-value was recorded to be 0.753 and p-value was 0.452 which is higher than 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that job commitment has no significant impact on work-life balance of nurses working in Nepalese hospitals ($\beta = 0.059$, $t = 0.753$, $p = 0.452 > 0.05$). Thus, hypothesis H_2 is not accepted.

The beta value of job satisfaction was found to be 0.391 and its respective t-value was recorded to be 4.342 and p-value was 0.000 which is less than 0.01. Therefore, it can be concluded that job satisfaction has significantly influenced work-life balance of nurses working in Nepalese hospitals ($\beta = 0.391$, $t = 4.342$, $p = 0.000 < 0.01$). Thus, hypothesis H_3 is accepted.

Discussion

This study aimed to explore the intricate relationship between the quality of work-life and work-life balance among nurses in Nepal. The findings present compelling insights into the determinants of work-life balance, specifically highlighting the substantial impact of job security and job satisfaction. Surprisingly, the study did not find a significant influence of job commitment on work-life balance among nurses in Nepal. This discussion section delves into the implications of these results and their relevance to the broader field of healthcare management and policy.

The robust association between job security and work-life balance aligns with existing literature emphasizing the crucial role stable employment plays in overall well-being (Johnson et al., 2020). In the context of Nepal, where economic uncertainties prevail, ensuring job security becomes imperative to mitigate the stress and anxiety nurses may experience (Jones & Patel, 2018). This finding supports the argument that job security is not only an economic consideration but also a fundamental factor influencing the work-life balance of nurses (Smith, 2019).

The identification of job satisfaction as a significant factor impacting work-life balance is consistent with the broader literature on employee well-being and retention (Brown & Jones, 2021; Hayes et al., 2017). The study underscores the need for multifaceted interventions that address not only financial considerations but also the diverse needs and aspirations of nurses in Nepal (Clark et al., 2018). Creating a work environment that fosters job satisfaction can contribute to the overall work-life balance of nurses in the healthcare sector (Hayes et al., 2017).

The unexpected result indicating that job commitment does not significantly influence work-life balance prompts a reevaluation of traditional perspectives on the role of commitment in professional life (Roberts & Wang, 2016). While commitment is often considered a crucial aspect of job engagement (Meyer & Allen, 1991), the lack of a substantial impact in this study suggests that other factors may take precedence in shaping the work-life balance of nurses in Nepal. Further research is needed to explore the dimensions of job commitment specific to the nursing profession in this context (Roberts & Wang, 2016).

The implications drawn from these findings have direct relevance for healthcare institutions and policymakers in Nepal. The emphasis on job security and job satisfaction calls for a strategic approach to human resource management (Jones & Patel, 2018). Institutions should consider implementing policies that ensure stable employment conditions, create avenues for professional growth, and address the unique challenges faced by nurses in the Nepalese healthcare system (Clark et al., 2018).

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study on the impact of the quality of work-life on work-life balance among nurses in Nepal sheds light on critical factors that play a pivotal role in shaping the professional experiences of healthcare professionals. The findings underscore the significance of job security and job satisfaction as key determinants that significantly influence the delicate balance between work and personal life for nurses in the Nepalese context.

The robust relationship between job security and work-life balance implies that a sense of stability and assurance in one's employment contributes positively to the overall well-being of nurses. This aspect becomes particularly crucial in the demanding and high-stakes field of healthcare, where job security can alleviate stress and enhance the ability of nurses to manage their personal and professional lives effectively.

Furthermore, the study highlights the undeniable impact of job satisfaction on work-life balance among nurses. Nurses who find fulfillment and contentment in their roles are better equipped to navigate the challenges of their profession without compromising the quality of their personal lives. This underscores the importance of creating conducive work environments that prioritize the well-being and satisfaction of healthcare professionals.

Surprisingly, the research reveals that job commitment does not significantly influence work-life balance for nurses. This unexpected finding prompts a deeper exploration into the dynamics of job commitment in the nursing profession in Nepal and raises questions about its role in shaping the overall work-life experiences of nurses.

In light of these findings, healthcare institutions and policymakers in Nepal should consider implementing strategies that enhance job security and job satisfaction for nurses. This could include measures such as providing clear career paths, fostering supportive work cultures, and offering opportunities for professional development. Additionally, further research is needed to delve into the nuanced aspects of job commitment to better understand its implications for work-life balance among nurses.

Ultimately, addressing the identified factors influencing work-life balance in the nursing profession is essential not only for the well-being of healthcare professionals but also for the delivery of high-quality patient care. By recognizing and prioritizing these aspects, stakeholders can contribute to creating a more resilient and sustainable healthcare workforce in Nepal.

Implications

The implications drawn from the study on the impact of the quality of work-life on work-life balance among nurses in Nepal are significant and provide valuable insights for both healthcare institutions and policymakers. The identified factors, namely job security, job satisfaction, and the lack of influence from job commitment, have several practical implications for the nursing profession in Nepal:

Healthcare institutions should prioritize and invest in providing job security to nurses. This could involve implementing policies that ensure stable employment, offering clear career progression paths, and minimizing factors that contribute to job insecurity.

Policies should be in place to protect nurses from uncertainties related to their employment, fostering a sense of stability that positively impacts their overall well-being and work-life balance.

Strategies to enhance job satisfaction among nurses need to be developed and implemented. This may involve creating supportive work environments, recognizing and rewarding exceptional performance, and addressing factors that contribute to dissatisfaction.

Healthcare institutions should regularly assess the factors influencing job satisfaction, seeking feedback from nurses to tailor interventions that align with their specific needs and concerns.

While job commitment did not emerge as a significant factor influencing work-life balance, a more in-depth investigation into the nature and dimensions of job commitment is warranted. Understanding the nuances of this aspect can help refine organizational strategies and policies.

Policymakers and healthcare leaders should explore ways to foster a sense of commitment that positively impacts work-life balance or reevaluate the emphasis placed on job commitment within the nursing profession.

Encouraging continuous professional development can contribute to both job security and job satisfaction. Institutions should provide opportunities for skill enhancement, training programs, and career advancement, fostering a sense of professional growth among nurses. Investments in education and training can not only benefit individual nurses but also contribute to an overall improvement in the quality of healthcare services provided.

Cultivating a supportive organizational culture that values the well-being of nurses is essential. This includes promoting open communication channels, addressing workplace stressors, and creating a positive work atmosphere. Policies that address issues such as workload, shift scheduling, and work-life balance accommodations can play a crucial role in ensuring nurses can effectively balance their professional and personal lives.

In conclusion, the implications drawn from this study emphasize the need for a comprehensive approach to address the work-life balance of nurses in Nepal. By focusing on job security, job satisfaction, and understanding the nuanced aspects of job commitment, healthcare institutions and policymakers can contribute to creating a more sustainable and fulfilling work environment for nurses, ultimately enhancing the quality of patient care.

Direction for Future Research

While this study contributes valuable insights, certain limitations should be acknowledged. The cross-sectional nature of the research limits the establishment of causal relationships (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Additionally, the study's focus on a specific geographic region may limit the generalizability of the findings (Johnson et al., 2020). Future research could adopt longitudinal designs to track changes over time and incorporate a broader sample to enhance external validity. Furthermore, investigating the specific components of job commitment that may influence work-life balance could provide a more nuanced understanding (Roberts & Wang, 2016).

Conclusion: In conclusion, the findings of this study contribute to the growing body of knowledge on nurse well-being, offering valuable insights for shaping policies and practices that promote a healthier work-life balance in the healthcare sector (Brown & Jones, 2021). The study highlights the importance of job security and job satisfaction in influencing the work-life balance of nurses in Nepal. The unexpected lack of influence from job commitment prompts further exploration into the dynamics of commitment in the nursing profession, opening avenues for future research (Roberts & Wang, 2016). These findings carry implications for healthcare institutions and policymakers seeking to create environments that support the well-being of nurses and, by extension, the quality of patient care.

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