SCIENTIFIC REVIEW

JOB SATISFACTION AND ECONOMIC MIGRATION IN NURSING: A SURVEY REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Economic migration is an integral part of international trade transactions in the modern world. Globally, healthcare professionals constitute a significant part of overall economic migration flows. Worldwide, nurses are the most numerous group of healthcare professionals, and the quality of care is closely related to the effectiveness of the entire health system. As healthcare systems across the world grapple with staffing shortages, understanding how job satisfaction influences nurse retention and migration patterns becomes increasingly crucial. This review article explores the available literature on aspects of job satisfaction, the factors that lead to economic migration, and their implications for the nursing workforce. The findings underscore the importance of effective strategies for fostering nurses' job satisfaction and addressing the challenges of economic migration in the healthcare sector.

Keywords: *Nursing, Job Satisfaction, Economic Migration, Healthcare*

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INTRODUCTION

CONCEPT OF JOB SATISFACTION AND ECONOMIC MIGRATION

Economic migration driven by globalization is a significant social phenomenon in the modern world[1]. Most countries today face challenges related to population mobility whether as countries of migrants' origin, countries of final destination, or countries of transit. Migration often occurs due to economic reasons such as job opportunities and better living conditions. These movements influence the labor market and contribute to global economic development.

International migration has increased in recent decades, with 169 million economic migrants in 2019 alone [2]. However, migrations also have both positive and negative aspects for origin and destination countries, necessitating careful management of migration policies [3]. For example, returning citizens can contribute to their countries of origin through innovations and investment capacities acquired abroad [4]. Negative attitudes often relate to the fact that migration in countries of origin contributes to poverty and underdevelopment due to the departure of young, working-age populations, often highly educated, which represents an obstacle to economic growth and the modernization of society and the state [5].

As a result, migration today represents one of the greatest challenges for modern economies, and some authors rightly call our era "The Age of Migration"[6].At the same time, in the context of increasing competition in the global labor market, human capital is becoming its most important resource. Population migration, as part of human experience throughout history, can be a source of progress, innovation, and sustainable development, and its positive effects can be optimized through better migration management aimed at achieving the so-called "win-win" effect.

The basic resource of every organization is its people and their abilities, which contribute to the achievement of organizational goals. Their creativity, innovation, motivation, and awareness are qualities that distinguish them from other organizational resources. Therefore, employees represent one of the most important assets in creating added value for the company.

In the literature, we find that job satisfaction, along with marital and family satisfaction, is one of the most important factors for the general well-being and a happy life [7]. Job satisfaction, as a complex phenomenon that affects motivation and career, health, and relationships with colleagues, plays a large role in overall productivity and quality of work in every organization [8].

There are numerous different opinions regarding the definition of job satisfaction. While some authors simply define it as an employee's relationship with their job and profession, others believe that the definition is more complex and represents a multidimensional psychological response to everything related to work and the work environment.

American psychologist Edwin A. Locke provided one of the most widely used definitions, describing job satisfaction as a pleasant or positive emotional state resulting from an appraisal of a job or work-related experiences [9].

In the following years, the holistic and additive concepts were developed as the two most important approaches to job satisfaction [8]. The main difference is that the holistic approach considers job satisfaction as a general attitude toward work more precisely, a feeling that is not divided into individual aspects while the additive concept defines job satisfaction as satisfaction with individual aspects of work [10].

The theoretical basis of the additive concept is the theory of Paul Spector [11], which emphasizes that job satisfaction is "what a person feels about their job and the various aspects of their job." Spector describes several aspects: recognition, communication, coworkers, compensation (salary), working conditions, nature of the job, advancement, opportunities for personal promotion, organizational policies and procedures, occupational safety, and supervision.

JOB SATISFACTION IN NURSING

Research on job satisfaction among nurses over the last two decades has occupied an important place in defining various aspects of contemporary nursing and healthcare. As one of the indicators of healthcare quality, nurses' job satisfaction significantly influences the satisfaction of healthcare users and the overall quality of healthcare services [12].

The results of an analysis of more than one hundred studies conducted between 1966 and 2011 indicate that clinical nurses' job satisfaction is significantly related to organizational policies and environment, job stress, conflicts, self-perception of the profession, and commitment to work [13]. Changes in the healthcare system also have a significant impact on nurses' job satisfaction, according to a study on sources of satisfaction among clinical nurses [14].

A range of findings derived from both quantitative and qualitative studies has been reported in the literature regarding sources of job satisfaction among nurses. These sources include working conditions[15][16], interactions with patients, co-workers, and managers [17] , the nature of the work itself [18][19] remuneration [20][21], self-growth and promotion [22][23], praise and recognition [16][18], control and responsibility [24][20], job security [16][25] and leadership styles and organizational policies [24][22][23].

Almost half of nurses in tertiary healthcare institutions are dissatisfied with their salaries, nurse-to-patient ratio, the constant increase in work tasks, and communication with nursing managers, according to a study conducted in 2013 [26]. Research results in most studies also highlight shift organization and overtime work as significant predictors influencing nurses' job satisfaction and decisions to leave the profession.

Job satisfaction among nurses has been identified as a key factor in nurses' turnover, with the empirical literature suggesting that it is related to a number of organizational, professional, and personal variables [13]. Organizational commitment refers to identification with and loyalty to the organization and its goals [27]. Organizational commitment has been found to be positively related to job satisfaction among hospital nurses [28][29] and could explain 41% of the variance in job satisfaction [30].

Professional commitment is a person's involvement, pledge, promise, or resolution toward his or her profession [31]. It has an incremental effect on a person's intention to leave the organization [32] and is positively associated with the job satisfaction of nurses [33][34].

Occupational stress has also been found to be a major factor related to the job satisfaction of nurses [28], as have role conflict and role ambiguity [35]. Role conflict occurs when a nurse attempts to satisfy multiple incompatible demands arising from others' expectations of his or her role [36]. Inadequate or unclear information about what work the nurse should perform, the limits of the role, and how the nurse's role aligns with others' expectations produces role ambiguity.

Positive factors associated with high job satisfaction such as improved sense of belonging, self-confidence, work efficiency, and organizational work atmosphere contribute to high-quality healthcare services and safe patient care. Conversely, negative factors that increase job dissatisfaction such as work errors, absenteeism, and nurse turnover can lead to operational difficulties, poor productivity, and reduced service quality. Job satisfaction is essential in evaluating the work environment, service quality, work performance, and general health, and should be appropriately addressed to prevent a vicious cycle [37][38].

The importance of effective communication cannot be overstated in the context of nursing job satisfaction [39]. Nurses rely on clear and timely communication to collaborate with colleagues, convey critical patient information, and navigate complex healthcare scenarios. Communication serves as a channel for expressing concerns, providing feedback, and fostering professional growth [40].

The profession of nursing involves comprehensive healthcare delivery aimed at maintaining and improving individuals' health or supporting their recovery, regardless of illness or disability [41]. Shift and night work are important aspects of nursing organization, and numerous studies highlight their significant impact on nurses' health and job satisfaction. While research suggests that shift work can lead to health problems, decreased efficiency, job dissatisfaction, and social isolation among nurses, there is limited evidence regarding its influence on patient safety, reported incidents, and professional errors [42]. Despite this, many hospitals implement 12-hour shifts for nurses, yet little is known about the effects of such scheduling on stress levels and job satisfaction [43]. Studies in the United Kingdom [44] and Sweden [45] emphasize the importance of considering the impact of shift work on nurses' work-life balance and commitment to the profession.

Job satisfaction significantly impacts patient satisfaction and the overall quality of healthcare services [46]. Individual and environmental factors such as gender, age, education level, work experience, work organization, working conditions, material compensation, working hours, promotion expectations, stress levels, and job dedication influence nurses' job satisfaction [47]. The nature of nursing as a profession exposes nurses to various workplace hazards and stressors, contributing to burnout syndrome and dissatisfaction.

In addition to individual factors, organizational policies and the work environment, communication dynamics also influence nurses' job satisfaction and their propensity to migrate for better opportunities [48]. Research indicates a significant association between job satisfaction, organizational policies, the work environment, conflicts, personal perceptions of the profession, and job dedication among clinical nurses. Changes in the healthcare system affect nurses' job satisfaction. Job dissatisfaction, stress, and burnout syndrome are major factors contributing to turnover in oncology departments [49]. Shift work and overtime are identified as influencing nurses' job satisfaction and retention in the profession [50].

According to the literature, job satisfaction can be influenced by various factors. Some authors classify them as hygiene (extrinsic) and motivator (intrinsic) factors [51][52]. Hygiene (extrinsic) factors are associated with socioeconomic and environmental conditions, while motivator (intrinsic) factors are linked to personal perceptions of achievement and expectations [51][52].

By reducing extrinsic factors and improving motivator (intrinsic) factors, healthcare organizations can create a positive work environment that supports nurses' needs and values, promoting job satisfaction, retention, and quality patient care.

ECONOMIC MIGRATION AMONG NURSES

In the context of healthcare, economic migration is particularly relevant, with healthcare professionals, including nurses, often seeking opportunities abroad [53] due to job dissatisfaction and challenging working conditions. This trend has resulted in a widespread shortage of nurses, affecting countries across Europe both Western and Eastern Europe [54] as well as Serbia.

Challenges such as aging populations, extended work hours, and insufficient public understanding of nursing further exacerbate the situation [55]. The demands of shift and night work, along with high physical and cognitive requirements, worsen the issue of low job satisfaction and negative health outcomes for nurses [42]. Thus, addressing these challenges is important for retaining healthcare professionals and ensuring adequate patient care.

Communication dynamics also significantly influence nurses' job satisfaction and their decision to migrate for better opportunities, helping foster a supportive work environment and ensuring quality patient care [56]. In today's interconnected world, the healthcare sector stands as a dynamic environment where communication shapes nursing job satisfaction and influences patterns of economic migration [57].

Therefore, understanding the effectiveness of communication, along with nurses' levels of job satisfaction and the prevalence of economic migration, becomes of prime importance in addressing the challenges faced by the healthcare sector.

Worldwide, healthcare systems are faced with shortages of healthcare professionals, the phenomenon of 'dual practice', and the migration of healthcare workers [58]. Future projections of healthcare workforce demand clearly indicate that their international mobility will continue to accelerate [59].

A decade ago, at the Third Global Forum on Human Resources for Health, the World Health Organization (WHO) warned about a deficit of healthcare workers (7.2 million professionals). Additionally, expert projections estimated that by 2035 this number would reach 12.9 million healthcare workers.

The emigration of highly skilled healthcare professionals is disproportionately higher in lower- and middle-income countries. The immigration of healthcare professionals into industrialized economies has long been a challenge [60][61]. As nurses emigrate to these higher-income and industrialized countries, a vacuum is created in their home countries, leaving insufficient professionals to address already strained healthcare systems. It is therefore critical that research evaluate the factors associated with nurse emigration, especially from lower-resource settings.

In the past decade, low-income countries have lost many healthcare professionals, especially nurses, to advanced industrial countries[62]. Registered nurses from donor countries frequently choose to work in developed industrial countries, compromising the optimal functioning of health systems in their countries of origin [62][63].

According to [62][63] the negative impacts of nurse emigration in middle- and lower-income countries are detrimental to the development of the health sector. Socioeconomic factors, beyond the shortage of skilled workforce including nurses affect the supply of critical healthcare personnel [63].

The continued emigration of a critical workforce such as nurses from developing countries may also lead to a loss of tax revenue and the depletion of a vital professional group needed to advance the healthcare sector [64][65]. Additionally, it may lead to a decline in international competitiveness due to the loss of skilled professionals, which affects the international exchange rate and the local threshold for basic wages [66]. Nurse emigration also results in a loss of potential investment in the country and may discourage international aid donors due to a lack of personnel capable of supporting and implementing essential policy and social change [61].

THE FACTORS THAT ARE ASSOCIATED WITH NURSE IMMIGRATION

Emigration factors that force nurses to relocate from their country of origin to work in developed nations mainly include: poor salary [67][68][69][70] outdated healthcare technologies (*Dimaya [67][68]* lack of employment opportunities [71][67][68][72][70] and poor healthcare infrastructure [70].

Other factors associated with nurses' migration were social factors, described as family and social pressures [71][67]. Additionally, readily available recruitment agencies that vigorously advertise their services influenced migration [71][73][74].

Some demographic factors that significantly affect nurses' and healthcare providers' intentions to migrate were work experience, age, employment status, marital status, knowledge of a foreign language, possession of foreign language skills, and enrolment in a foreign language course [75][68][72].

Having relatives living abroad [71][75][86] and having prior work experience abroad [71] were also important emigration factors. Healthcare professionals working in tertiary- or secondary-level facilities were more likely to migrate than those working in primary healthcare facilities [68].

Multiple and interrelated factors attract nurses to destination countries, such as relief policies and better service conditions offered by developed countries [75][87][70].

An important factor motivating nurse migration was the employment opportunities available in destination countries [71][75][72][70][74] as well as payment, career development, and working conditions [75][69].

Certain personal factors, such as divorce or unhappy family life, influenced migration decisions among some nurses [73][74]. In some cases, a push factor was the disproportionate training of professionals in lower- and middle-income countries, where some trained professionals have limited job prospects [71][75][58].

SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT OF NURSES EMIGRATION

The emigration of nurses to developed countries has several socio-economic repercussions for their countries of origin. One significant positive impact of migration is the remittances sent home by migrants [70]. Another benefit of migration is the acquisition of research skills [75]. Migrant professionals often remained registered with the professional regulatory bodies in their home countries[74]. It has been suggested that by assisting with health education and social structures, migrant health workers maintain professional ties with their home countries [74]. Many migrant workers also collaborated with non-governmental organizations in their countries of origin and supported community members [73][74].

A significant socio-economic challenge arises from the difficulties returning migrants face when confronted with inadequate equipment and poor salary conditions in their home countries [70]. Migrants also reported challenges in maintaining contact with their country of origin due to political circumstances [73][74].

Some migrants experienced short-, mid-, and long-term difficulty securing work as healthcare professionals upon reaching their destination countries [75][74]. Discrimination in host countries affected their job prospects[74]. In destination countries, migrants were expected to learn a foreign language, which was associated with challenges and long waiting periods [73][74]. As a result, some healthcare professionals had to change their career paths [74].

Another important factor identified was the deskilling associated with the prolonged non-use of professional skills, as some individuals had to wait between 2 and 10 years before securing appropriate employment [75][73][74]. Healthcare workers also reported disappointment upon arriving in the destination country [75].

CONCLUSION

The constant increase in work demands, the insufficient number of nurses, and inadequate organizational structures, along with the expected decline in work ability due to aging, represent significant determinants of the global nursing landscape today. Therefore, it is necessary to consider all circumstances that may affect the job satisfaction of clinical nurses, while taking into account the balance between family and work.

As shift work is one of the fundamental characteristics of nursing organization—and its negative impacts cannot be completely eliminatedit is extremely important to determine and implement appropriate measures to mitigate them.

From a human resources perspective, in terms of planning, recruitment, training, and education, it should be emphasized that nurses represent the most numerous professional group in all health systems worldwide and provide more than 60% of health services [44], which significantly affects the health and well-being of the population.

In light of the global migration of these health professionals, it is necessary to further investigate the circumstances that influence these migrations, as well as to provide the necessary conditions for the development and improvement of the nursing profession.

This paper highlights the important role of job satisfaction among nurses and its subsequent impact on economic migration patterns.

Based on the survey review findings, several important steps can be taken to enhance job satisfaction among nurses and address economic migration trends. First, it is vital to implement comprehensive communication strategies [76] within healthcare settings. By introducing robust communication training programs and establishing effective feedback mechanisms [77], interactions between nurses and their supervisors can be significantly improved. Regular workshops, seminars, and the adoption of communication tools will facilitate clearer and more productive exchanges, fostering a positive work environment [78].

Recognizing and addressing the distinct needs of nurses across different age groups is important for improving job satisfaction. Tailoring interventions to the specific challenges faced by each cohort can significantly enhance their professional experience. For younger nurses, implementing mentorship programs and career development opportunities can be particularly beneficial. In contrast, older nurses may require targeted support to manage stress and prevent burnout. By adopting a nuanced approach that considers these age-specific needs, healthcare organizations can create a more supportive and fulfilling work environment for all nursing staff.

Revising shift work policies is another critical area of focus. Balancing flexibility with job stability is key to improving job satisfaction among nurses who work irregular hours. Options such as more predictable scheduling, flexible shifts, and additional support for staff engaged in shift work can help address the complexities associated with non-traditional work hours.

Healthcare organizations should develop comprehensive retention strategies to address the underlying causes of job dissatisfaction. Offering competitive salaries, better career advancement opportunities, and improved working conditions can help reduce the inclination to migrate and retain valuable staff members.

To build upon the insights gained from this paper, future research should prioritize longitudinal studies that track changes in job satisfaction over time and their correlation with economic migration patterns. Long-term data can offer valuable perspectives on how job satisfaction evolves and its impact on workforce stability. Qualitative research methods, such as interviews and focus groups, should also be employed to

explore nurses' personal experiences in greater depth. This approach could provide a richer understanding of job satisfaction and nurse migration beyond what quantitative data can reveal, leading to more targeted and effective interventions.

By addressing these recommendations and pursuing further research, healthcare organizations can improve job satisfaction among nurses and better manage economic migration trends, ultimately contributing to a more stable and satisfied nursing workforce and, consequently, better healthcare service delivery.

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