

Factors Influencing Nurse Job satisfaction and the Consequent Effects on Patient Care Quality: A Scoping Review

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LITERATURE REVIEW

Submitted: 24 June 2025

Accepted: 23 July 2025

Keywords:

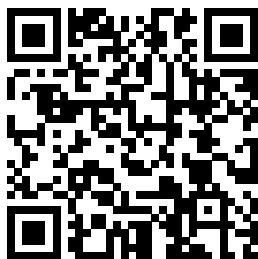
Job Satisfaction, Nurses, Patient Care, Patient Service Quality, Quality of Service

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ABSTRACT

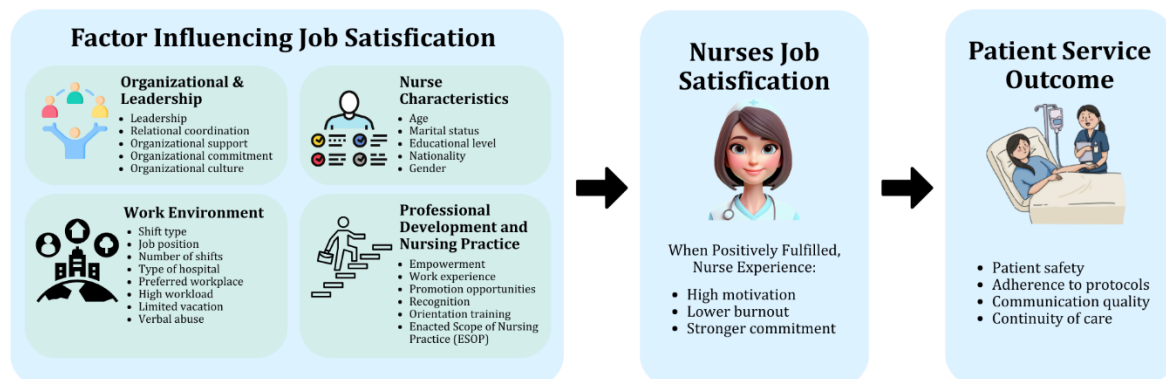
Nurses play a pivotal role in determining the quality of healthcare services. Job satisfaction among nurses not only influences their professional performance but also directly affects the quality of patient care. Dissatisfaction may lead to burnout, errors, and decreased patient safety. This study aimed to identify and analyze the factors related to nurses' job satisfaction and to explore how these factors impact the quality of patient services. A scoping review was conducted using the PRISMA-ScR guidelines. Literature searches were performed through PubMed, CINAHL, and Google Scholar based on the PCC framework. Articles were selected through a systematic screening process, and data were extracted and analyzed thematically. The review identified 25 key factors associated with nurses' job satisfaction, categorized into four main domains: (1) organizational and leadership factors, (2) individual nurse characteristics, (3) work environment, and (4) professional development and practice. Supportive leadership, organizational commitment, and recognition were strongly associated with higher satisfaction. Improving nurses' job satisfaction through targeted strategies is a critical component for ensuring high-quality patient care and favorable outcomes. Strategies such as enhancing work conditions, fostering leadership support, and providing development opportunities are vital for strengthening both nurses' well-being and patient outcomes.

Key Messages:

- Nurses' job satisfaction is influenced by a combination of organizational factors, individual characteristics, work environment, and professional development opportunities.
- High job satisfaction is positively correlated with better patient care outcomes, including adherence to clinical standards, effective communication, and patient safety.

GRAPHICAL ABSTRACT

Analysis of Factors Affecting Nurses' Job Satisfaction on Patient Service Quality: A Scoping Review



INTRODUCTION

The quality of health services to patients is measured from the quality of nursing services because nurses are the profession with the largest number of health services (1). In addition, nursing services are also an integral part of health services that are based on nursing knowledge and tips in the form of comprehensive bio-psycho-socio-spiritual and cultural services that not only focus on medical treatment, namely biological, but also on the psychological, social, spiritual and cultural aspects of patients (2).

The quality of service provided to patients can be influenced by the job satisfaction of nurses. However, the reality is that many complaints arise from nurses who are demanding the efforts they have made in serving patients, and this condition shows that the job satisfaction of nurses plays an important role in ensuring the quality of health services. When nurses feel unappreciated, experience a heavy workload, or face an unsupportive work environment, it can have an impact on the quality of service they provide. Dissatisfied nurses tend to experience decreased motivation and enthusiasm in carrying out their duties, which in turn can reduce concern and empathy for patients (3).

A previous study reported that an imbalance between work and personal life can adversely affect nurse satisfaction. When nurses find it difficult to balance the demands of work with personal time, they tend to experience increased stress and burnout. Research conducted by Katarzyna Serewa et al. (2024) in Poland found that factors that led to decreased satisfaction included negative relationships with management, lack of time for immediate care, and inadequate compensation (4). Strong support from management, including good communication and recognition of nurses' efforts, plays an important role in maintaining motivation and job satisfaction. Additionally, nurses who feel they have enough time to focus on overall patient care tend to be more satisfied with their jobs, as they can provide quality service. Fair rewards and compensation also increase their sense of appreciation and satisfaction in carrying out their duties.

Further research by Domenic Sommer et al. (2024) in Germany showed that nurses who were older and had satisfactory working hours tended to be more likely to stay afloat, while dissatisfaction with emotional support made them more likely to leave the profession. Research shows the need for improvement in several areas and suggests measures to support young nurses as well as those in aged care (5). Similar research in Australia by Fitzpatrick et al. (2020) revealed that nurses' involvement in research or Quality Improvement Projects (QIPs) significantly had a positive impact on various aspects in the workplace. Nurses who participate in these initiatives tend to report higher levels of patient care, better well-being, and higher job satisfaction. In addition, they also experience a lower rate of unscheduled work breaks. Thus, involving nurses in quality improvement research and projects not only improves their experience in the workplace but can also help reduce workforce instability (6).

In Indonesia, there is a lot of research on nurses' job satisfaction and there are also several studies that show that nurses in hospitals face similar challenges as their counterparts in other countries. Research conducted by Oktizulvia and Kesuma (2023) shows that there are several main factors that affect job satisfaction, namely the nature of work, relationships with colleagues, compensation, and additional benefits. By focusing on improving the positive aspects of the nature of work, strengthening relationships between colleagues, and providing appropriate compensation and additional benefits, hospitals can achieve a better and satisfactory quality of service from nurses (7).

Therefore, it is important to understand the factors that affect nurses' job satisfaction and their impact on the quality of service they provide. This article aims to review the literature on job satisfaction among nurses, identify the factors that contribute to such satisfaction, and explore the relationship between job satisfaction and patient health outcomes. With a deeper understanding of these aspects, it is hoped that effective strategies can be found to improve nurses' job satisfaction, which in turn will have a positive impact on the overall health service.

METHODS

Study design

This study was designed as a scoping review based on the PRISMA Extension for Scoping Reviews (PRISMA-ScR) guidelines (8). This review aims to systematically and comprehensively map the scientific literature that discusses factors that influence nurse job satisfaction and their implications for the quality of patient care. This approach was chosen considering the heterogeneity of methodological approaches and terminology in the related literature, as well as the need to understand the knowledge landscape in a broader sense (8).

Inclusion and exclusion criteria

The conceptual framework used in this study refers to the PCC (Population, Concept, and Context) approach. In this study, the population in focus is nurses in various health service contexts, both in hospitals, primary care centers, and long-term care facilities. The main concept studied is nurse job satisfaction. Meanwhile, the context that is the realm of exploration is the factors that influence it, which can include internal dimensions such as intrinsic motivation and perception of the meaning of work, as well as external dimensions such as workload, managerial support, rewards, and work environment conditions. This PCC framework is used as a basis for developing search strategies, selection criteria, and compiling and interpreting review data.

The inclusion criteria used in this study include empirical research articles, both quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods studies that explore factors that influence nurse job satisfaction. Studies published in English have gone through a peer-reviewed process. Conversely, articles that do not discuss the main variables explicitly, publications in the form of opinions, editorials, or non-academic documents such as theses or institutional reports that are not officially published, are excluded from this review.

Search Strategy

The literature search strategy was conducted systematically using several major academic databases, namely PubMed, CINAHL, and Google Scholar as an additional source for grey literature. The search formula was designed using a combination of keywords and Boolean operators, including ("nurses" OR "nursing staff") AND ("job satisfaction" OR "employee satisfaction" OR "workplace satisfaction") AND ("patient service quality" OR "healthcare quality" OR "quality of care") AND ("factors" OR "determinants" OR "influencing variables"). This strategy was adjusted to the characteristics of each database and validated through initial trials to ensure the sensitivity and specificity of the search results.

Study Selection

The study selection process was conducted strictly and in stages. All search results are exported to reference management software (such as Mendeley) to eliminate duplication. Next, two independent researchers conducted a parallel title and abstract screening process based on the established inclusion

and exclusion criteria. Articles deemed relevant then underwent a full-text review. To maintain the objectivity and reliability of the selection process, any discrepancies in the assessments were resolved through discussion until consensus was reached, and if necessary, involving a third researcher as an arbitrator.

Data Extraction and Analysis

Data extraction was carried out using extraction tables as needed according to the research objectives to ensure consistency and completeness of information. Variables collected included publication identity (author and year), methodological characteristics (research design, study location, sample size), and main findings. Data were analyzed descriptively and classified based on conceptual themes. A thematic analysis approach was applied using a deductive method, where data were coded and categorized into pre-defined domains derived from the PCC framework and theoretical constructs identified in the literature. This ensured alignment between extracted data and the study's conceptual scope.

P (Population) : Registered nurses working in various healthcare settings

C (Concept) : Job satisfaction

C (Context) : Healthcare service settings, with specific focus on how job satisfaction impact the quality of patient care

The final results will be presented in the form of summary tables, thematic diagrams, and interpretive narratives to identify patterns, knowledge gaps, and potential directions for further research that are practically and theoretically meaningful.

RESULTS

Study Selection

Figure 1 presents the flow of the article selection process. From several databases, a total of 20,341 articles were initially identified. After removing 182 duplicate entries, 20,159 articles remained. The next screening phase, which focused on titles and abstracts, led to the exclusion of 19,986 articles that were not relevant to the topic, leaving 173 articles for further evaluation. In the full-text review stage, 152 articles were excluded, 109 of them due to unsuitable population or study design, and 53 because they did not specifically explore the link between nurses' job satisfaction and the quality of patient care. After applying all inclusion criteria and ensuring methodological quality based on the JBI checklist (with a minimum score of 75%), studies with a JBI critical appraisal score above 69% are generally considered to demonstrate acceptable methodological quality (9). In this review, a threshold of 75% was applied to ensure that only studies with relatively high and methodologically sound designs were included, with a total of 11 articles were included in this scoping review.

Characteristics of Included Studies

This review included 11 studies originating from diverse geographic regions, reflecting a wide range of healthcare systems and nursing work environments. The studies were conducted in South Africa, Iran, Canada, Saudi Arabia, the United States (1 study, specifically Pennsylvania), Malaysia, and Pakistan (see Figure 2). These countries represent both high-income and middle-income settings, offering a broad perspective on the factors influencing job satisfaction among nurses. Most of the included studies employed a cross-sectional design, commonly using survey-based methods to assess variables related to job satisfaction

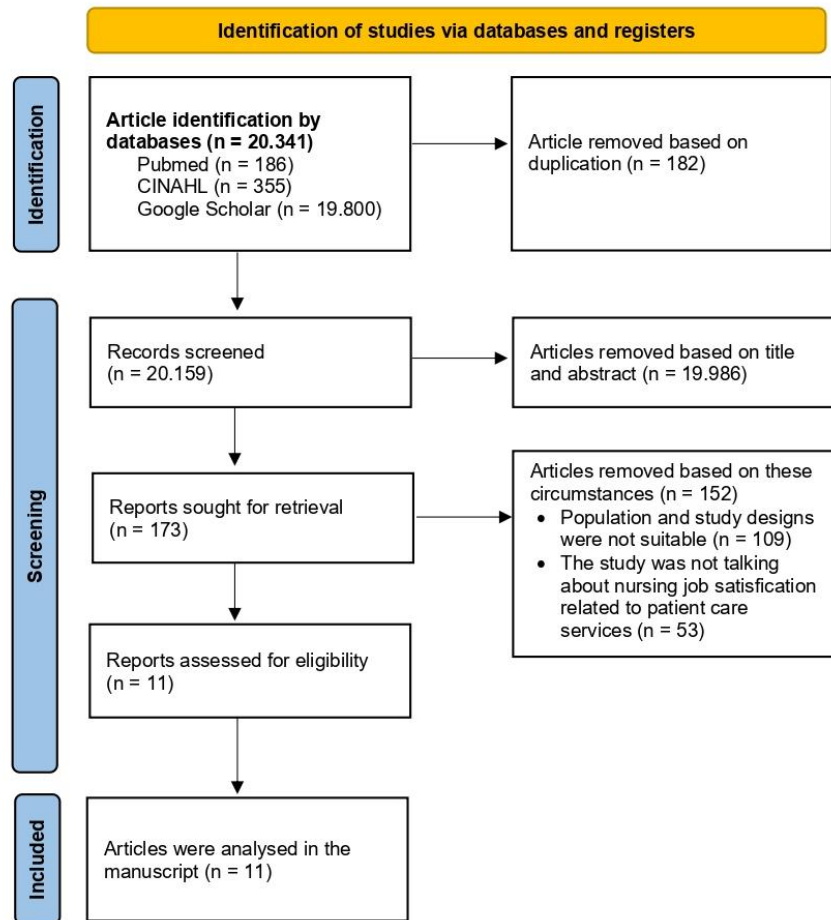


Figure 1. PRISMA Flow Chart Diagram

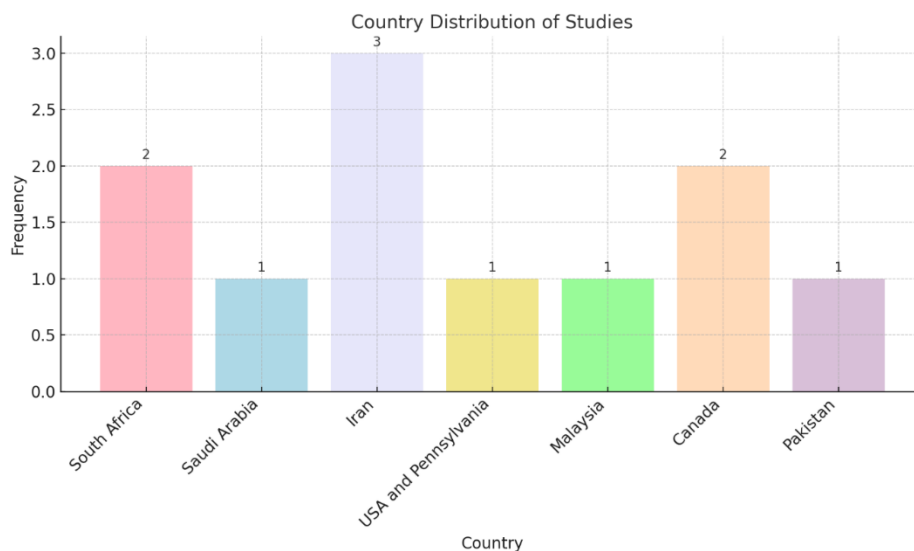


Figure 2. Country Distribution of Included Studies

Table 1 showed that the study populations primarily consisted of registered nurses working in various settings such as acute care hospitals, primary health clinics, and tertiary institutions. Sample sizes varied considerably, ranging from 49 to 756 participants, indicating both small-scale and large-scale investigations.

It is important to note that the studies included in this review used diverse methodological designs, which were reflected in the way their findings were reported. Some studies presented statistical correlations and significance values (e.g., r-values, p-values) to highlight associations between variables, while others provided narrative or thematic descriptions based on qualitative analysis. This heterogeneity in reporting is consistent with the scope of the review, which included both quantitative and qualitative evidence.

Table 1. Characteristics of Included Studies

Authors and Year	Design	Country	Sample	Main Findings
Sojane et al., 2016 (10)	Cross-sectional survey	South Africa	204 registered nurses (medical-surgical units)	• Leadership was significantly associated with job satisfaction ($r = 0.47$, $p = 0.00$). • Dissatisfaction was reported regarding salary, recognition, and opportunities for promotion.
Abella, 2022 (11)	Quantitative with correlational study	Saudi Arabia	49 nurses (staff and head nurses)	• Job satisfaction differed significantly based on nationality, monthly income, and education level. • High workload and lack of vacation days reduced satisfaction.
Rahnavard et al., 2018 (12)	Cross-sectional	Iran	371 registered nurses	Environmental factors such as shift type (fixed vs rotating), job status (staff vs supervisor), number of shifts per week, and hospital type were significantly associated with job satisfaction. Fixed shift and supervisor roles had higher satisfaction.
Havens et al., 2018 (13)	Multisite survey	USA and Pennsylvania	382 Direct care RNs in 5 acute care hospitals	Relational coordination was positively associated with increased job satisfaction, higher work engagement, and reduced burnout.
Munyewende et al., 2014 (14)	Cross-sectional	South Africa	108 PHC nursing managers	• Job satisfaction was negatively impacted by being tired at work, exposure to verbal abuse, and not working in a preferred clinic. • Working in a clinic of choice increased satisfaction.
Aisyahton Suhaimi et al., 2023 (15)	Cross-sectional	Malaysia	403 nurses in tertiary hospitals	• Significant differences in job satisfaction levels concerning age, marital status, year of work experience, and income levels ($p < 0.05$). • Work experience significantly predicted job satisfaction ($p < 0.05$).
Aloisio et al., 2019 (16)	Cross-sectional	Canada	756 nurses	Job satisfaction was positively associated with empowerment, work engagement (vigor and dedication), organizational culture, space adequacy, and sufficient orientation training.
Ahmad et al., 2021 (17)	Cross-sectional	Pakistan	352 nurses	• Organizational commitment mediated the relationship between organizational support and job satisfaction. • The perceived environment also had a direct effect on job satisfaction.

Authors and Year	Design	Country	Sample	Main Findings
Rahnavard et al. 2018(12)	Cross-sectional	Iran	371 nurses	- There is no relationship between demographic variables and job satisfaction. - However, a significant association was observed between environmental aspects such as work rotation (fixed versus rotating), nurse's status (staff vs. supervisors), type of hospitals (governmental vs. private) and work (p<0.01), promotion (p<0.02) and pay (p<0.01).
Déry et al., 2017(18)	Correlational cross-sectional	Canada	301 nurses	The Enacted Scope of Nursing Practice (ESOP) had a direct positive effect on job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.118$; $p = .006$).
Gadirzadeh et al. 2017(19)	Correlational cross-sectional	Iran	260 nurses	- Job stress and job satisfaction scores ($r = 0.30$, $P < 0.001$). - Married and unmarried nurses were not significantly different in job satisfaction or job stress scores. - The mean job stress score was significantly higher in female nurses than in males ($P = 0.042$). - The mean job satisfaction scores and the mean job stress scores were significantly different in nurses with various degrees ($P < 0.001$ and $P = 0.002$).

Factors Associated with Job Satisfaction among Nurses

Job satisfaction among nurses is influenced by a combination of organizational, individual, environmental, and professional development factors (see Table 2). Organizational and leadership-related elements such as effective leadership, organizational culture, support, and commitment were consistently reported to have a positive impact on nurse satisfaction. These findings emphasize the importance of strong, supportive management and healthy workplace relationships in enhancing motivation and reducing dissatisfaction. Moreover, the relational dynamics within teams, such as relational coordination, were found to significantly correlate with increased job satisfaction and reduced burnout.

In addition to organizational factors, nurses' characteristics such as age, marital status, education level, nationality, and gender were also associated with varying levels of satisfaction. Environmental aspects, including work schedules, shift type, job roles, and working conditions such as workload, exposure to abuse, and the ability to choose one's work setting, further influenced satisfaction. Lastly, opportunities for professional growth and empowerment, such as promotion, recognition, training, and broader scopes of practice, were identified as critical contributors to job satisfaction.

Table 2. Categories of Factors

Category	Sub-Categories (Main Factors)	Author and Year
Organizational and Leadership Factors	- Leadership - Relational coordination - Organizational support - Organizational commitment - Organizational culture	(10,13,16,17)
Nurses Characteristics	- Age - Marital status - Educational level - Nationality - Gender	(11,15,19)
Work Environment	Shift type (fixed vs rotating)	(11,12,14)

Category	Sub-Categories (Main Factors)	Author and Year
Professional Development and Nursing Practice	• Job position (staff vs supervisor)	(11,14,17,18)
	• Number of shifts	
	• Type of hospital	
	• Preferred workplace	
	• High workload	
	• Limited vacation	
	• Verbal abuse	
	• Empowerment	
	• Work experience	
	• Promotion opportunities	
	• Recognition	
	• Orientation training	
	• Enacted Scope of Nursing Practice (ESOP)	

DISCUSSION

This review aimed to identify factors that influence nurses' job satisfaction, which affects on quality of patient care. 25 factors can affect the level of job satisfaction in nurses. Based on the synthesis of the 11 included studies, this review provides concrete evidence of the relationship between nurses' job satisfaction and the quality of patient care. Several studies explicitly reported that higher levels of job satisfaction among nurses are associated with improved clinical outcomes, greater adherence to protocols, enhanced communication, and increased patient safety. For example, Sojane et al. (2016) and Ahmad et al. (2022) found that leadership support and organizational commitment directly influenced both nurse satisfaction and patient service quality (10,17). Similarly, Aloisio et al. (2019) highlighted that empowered work environments improved satisfaction and care delivery (16). In contrast, studies such as those by Abella (2022) and Munyewende et al. (2014) showed that high workloads, lack of recognition, or unsafe work conditions led to lower satisfaction and compromised care quality (11,14). Then, these factors are classified into four categories, namely organizational and leadership factors, nurses' characteristics, work environment, and professional development and nursing practice, as shown in Table 2. Several factors categorized in organizational and leadership factors in the form of leadership, relational coordination, organizational support, organizational commitment, and organizational culture can affect nurse job satisfaction (10,13,16,17).

The Role of Organizational and Leadership Factors

Previous studies reported that a leadership style that provides full support is proven to increase nurses' job satisfaction, through reducing emotional exhaustion and increasing positive perceptions of the work environment (20–22). Relational coordination contributes to nurses' desire to remain in the same institution, where job satisfaction is the link between relational coordination and the desire to work in the same place (23–25). Organizational support provided to nurses in the form of attention to welfare and recognition of contributions made has been shown to increase nurse job satisfaction and improve service quality (26–30). Organizational cultures that provide full support and are oriented towards innovation, relationships, and learning can increase job satisfaction, while overly hierarchical cultures are less likely to increase nurses' job satisfaction (31–33).

The Influence of Nurse Characteristics

Factors included in the nurses characteristics category include age, marital status, educational level, nationality, and gender (11,15,19). Older nurses tend to be more satisfied with their work schedules and relationships with coworkers, while nurses with younger more often experience dissatisfaction related to career development opportunities and workload (34,35). Married nurses have lower levels of job satisfaction than single ones (36). However, in contrast to the results of research showing that nurses who have good marital quality tend to be more satisfied in their work because they can spend more time with their spouse and family (37). This is supported by a meta-analysis, which reveals that nurses with unmarried status tend to have higher levels of burnout compared to nurses with married status (38).

Nurses with higher education, such as bachelor's or master's degrees, tend to have higher levels of job satisfaction because there are opportunities for autonomy, self-development, and job security compared to diploma graduates (39,40).

Work Environment and Its Impact on Satisfaction

The Work Environment category includes factors such as Shift type (fixed vs rotating), Job position (staff vs supervisor), Number of shifts, Type of hospital, Preferred workplace, High workload, Limited vacation, and Verbal abuse. Nurses who work and are oriented to rotating shifts, especially night shifts, are more often associated with job stress, fatigue, and sleep disturbances, which can reduce job satisfaction in nurses (41,42). Positions or positions in work positions such as staff nurses, room heads, or managers, affect the level of job satisfaction, because there are differences in responsibilities, promotion opportunities, and recognition received (43,44). Nurses with higher positions, despite having greater responsibilities, often have different job satisfaction compared to nurses who are just starting their careers (43,45).

Nurses who work longer shifts, especially 12 hours or more, tend to experience lower levels of job satisfaction and experience fatigue, burnout, and have a desire to leave work compared to working shorter shifts, such as 8 hours (46–48). Nurses working in private hospitals tend to have higher levels of satisfaction at work, compared to nurses working in government hospitals, who face greater work pressure, as well as lower policy understanding (45,49). Nurses are more likely to choose workplaces that offer opportunities for growth, financial rewards, and good exposure (50,51). Job satisfaction increases when nurses feel they are fairly rewarded for their contributions (52). Research shows that excessive workload is negatively correlated with job satisfaction, leading to stress, burnout, and decreased motivation, which ultimately impacts the quality of care and mental health of nurses (53–55). Furthermore, lack of adequate vacation or leave time can exacerbate workload and decrease nurses' job satisfaction (56). The occurrence of verbal abuse is associated with decreased job satisfaction and tends to experience higher psychological stress, especially in young, newly employed nurses (57,58).

Professional Development and Scope of Practice

Factors that include Empowerment, Work experience, Promotion opportunities, Recognition, Orientation training, and Enacted Scope of Nursing Practice (ESOP) are included in the Professional Development and Nursing Practice category (11,14,17,18). Structural empowerment, such as access to information, resources, support, and career opportunities, has a strong positive relationship with nurses' job satisfaction and plays an important role in increasing satisfaction with the services provided to patients (59–61). Psychological empowerment, which includes a sense of autonomy and competence, is associated with job satisfaction in nurses (62,63). Research shows that structural empowerment at the organizational level can increase individual psychological empowerment, thereby increasing job satisfaction in nurses (64). Nurses with longer work experience tend to have different perspectives on job satisfaction, compared to newer nurses, especially regarding the need for work environment support, autonomy, and professional development (65). In addition, longer work experience is often associated with higher levels of satisfaction, although workload and lack of rewards may lower these levels (66,67).

Implications and Limitations

The implementation of a career ladder system has been shown to increase job satisfaction by providing clear development paths and rewards (68). Therefore, a lack of promotion opportunities or an unfair promotion system can reduce job satisfaction in nurses (69,70). The results of a meta-analysis study show that recognition is one of the factors that have a relationship with nurses' job satisfaction (71). Recognition has an impact on job satisfaction, as recognition can increase intrinsic motivation and make nurses feel more satisfied in carrying out their duties (72–74). New nurses adapting to a new healthcare system need structured orientation programs and organizational support that can increase job satisfaction (75,76). Orientation training plays an important role in helping nurses adapt to the work environment, reducing confusion in the initial phase of assignment, and strengthening their motivation and professional

identity (76,77). Nurses' job satisfaction tends to increase when they have the opportunity to optimally apply their skills and knowledge, by their qualifications and educational background (18,78). Conversely, limited scope of practice, excessive workload, and role ambiguity can reduce nurses' job satisfaction, which then negatively impacts organizational performance and the quality of care provided to patients (65,79).

Research shows a positive correlation between nurse job satisfaction and quality of patient care (80). Nurses who have high levels of job satisfaction tend to provide more optimal care by demonstrating better adherence to clinical protocols, communicating more effectively, and contributing to increased safety, well-being, and satisfaction with the care received by patients (80–82). However, if low job satisfaction and burnout occur in nurses, it can increase the risk of medical errors, reduce caring behavior, and harm the quality of services provided (83). Job satisfaction of nurses can act as a protective factor against intention to resign, if not managed properly, it can disrupt continuity and reduce the quality of nursing services (82,84). Efforts to increase job satisfaction, including improving work environment conditions and strengthening adequate organizational support, as well as strengthening interpersonal relationships in the workplace, are important strategies in creating optimal health care system improvements (85). Therefore, paying attention to the various factors that affect nurses' job satisfaction is one of the efforts to improve the overall quality of health services.

This review has a number of limitations that need to be considered; there is a lack of longitudinal studies and intervention-based research, which is a limitation in developing the effectiveness of organizational strategies in improving nurses' performance satisfaction. The geographical and socio-cultural backgrounds of the reviewed studies are diverse, and there are different health care systems, making it challenging to generalize the results to specific local contexts. Thus, further exploration with a longitudinal approach is needed so that the dynamics of nurses' job satisfaction can be monitored, including changes that occur due to organizational policies or shifts in the work environment. Intervention-based studies that assess the effectiveness of organizational programs are needed to provide an empirical basis for formulating managerial policies that support nurses' well-being. The application of local context should be considered in depth in the future, considering the characteristics of the national health system to produce more relevant findings.

CONCLUSION

The results of this scoping review indicate that nurses' job satisfaction is influenced by various factors, including organizational aspects, individual characteristics, work environment, and professional development opportunities. These factors contribute directly and indirectly to the quality of patient care. The findings confirm the importance of organizational strategies that focus on improving nurses' well-being to support the quality of health services. Further longitudinal and intervention-based research is needed to strengthen empirical evidence on the effectiveness of policies to improve job satisfaction in the context of nursing practice.

FUNDING

This research received no external funding.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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