

## The Impact of Psychological Reward on Nurses' Job Satisfaction

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**Abstract:** A descriptive study examined the impact of psychological rewards on nurses' job satisfaction.; employed a quantitative cross-sectional descriptive / correlational design using a psychological reward scale and job satisfaction scale. A convenience sample of 179 registered nurses working in operating theater in tertiary government hospital in Riyadh were engaged, with 94.21% response rate. Relationships between nurses and physicians showed a significant correlation with overall psychological empowerment. The aim was attained by assessing the impact of psychological reward from head nurse on nurses' job satisfaction; assessing the impact of psychological reward from physician on nurses job satisfaction; establishing whether there is a relationship between psychological rewards and job satisfaction; and determining the relationship between demographic characteristic of nurses with psychological nurses satisfaction. The results of the study suggest that higher rewards and satisfied employees in work organizations play a major role in the promotion of employee job satisfaction. It also leads to higher productivity in organizations. From the results, the nurses' job satisfaction can be improved by reducing organizational stress and focusing on professional development. Our results illustrate that when nurses feel satisfied from psychological rewards received from the head nurse and physician, they can demonstrate more positive work performance.

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**Key words:** Nursing, Psychological Reward, Job Satisfaction

### Introduction

Good service delivery is a crucial element of the achievement of hospital goals. Given the fact that nurses are one of the largest employee groups in the health care sector, having enough skilled and motivated is critical in order to deliver effective services and improve health outcomes. However, a shortage of qualified nurses continues to raise concerns about their impact in terms of service quality and hospital budget. While improved strategies of recruiting nurses are needed, motivating and rewarding employed nurses is equally (-12-1).

In Saudi Arabia, Ministry of Health (MOH) is implementing a reform strategy to enhance patient care quality and safety. Since nursing taskforce is the largest category composing the healthcare team, they are in the target of taskforce improvements. MOH witnessed the highest increase in number of hospital and hospital beds with increased number of manpower, nurses by 37.9%. In order to maintain the number of staff, it is recommended to retain the expert employee and prevent turnover, gaining the nurses satisfaction is vital(-3-2).

For almost all organizations, employees are the vital resource and they represent an important investment, if they are satisfied and loyal to their jobs. Based on the organization's policy, management develops their bonus packages, appraisal and work

system and training programs. Basically, these are designed to gain their loyalty for the organization and which leads to highest satisfaction level to their jobs. The longer an employee works in an organization the more valuable it will be and they will be loyal and satisfied with their jobs (35 -3).

When attempting to achieve organizational effectiveness and to provide excellent patient care, hospitals need a competent work force. However, finding good nurses is difficult given the continuing worldwide nursing shortage (17 -4), (15 -5). Hospital managers invest time, effort and financial resources in rewarding their employees, as they believe that rewards can attract, motivate and retain highly qualified nurses (26 -6) (15- 5). As a result of their limited financial resources, they are often looking for non-financial reward alternatives. Different types of rewards are provided and matter to employees (4 -7), (15-5). Most studies focus on the relationship between job related stress and nurses satisfaction. A comparative study about the impact of stress on job satisfaction between Jordanian and Saudi nurses, resulted in the negative relationship between stress and job satisfaction (1 -8).

One study about the Impact of Satisfaction with Psychological Rewards and Pay on Chinese Nurses' Work Attitudes, resulted that when nurses feel satisfied with their pay and the psychological rewards

received from the head nurse they exhibit more positive work attitudes (12- 1). According to the result of a cross-sectional study of(27 -9). Effort–reward imbalance was associated with frequent short sickness absence episodes among nurses. Work efforts and rewards ought to be potentially considered when managing nurses who are frequently absent from work as these factors can be dealt with by managers. According to the result of the study of Tourangeau, 2010, higher job satisfaction was associated with lower emotional exhaustion burnout, higher global empowerment, higher organizational support, higher psychological empowerment, stronger work group cohesion and higher personal accomplishment. Higher turnover intention was associated with lower job satisfaction, higher emotional exhaustion burnout, more outside job opportunities, weaker work group cohesion, lower personal accomplishment and higher depersonalization(34 -10).

This study was conducted to determine the impact of psychological reward on nurses' job satisfaction by answering the following questions

- What is the impact of psychological reward from head nurse on nurses' job satisfaction.?
- What is the impact of psychological reward from physician on nurses' job satisfaction?
- Is there any relationship between psychological reward and job satisfaction?
- Is there any relationship between demographic characteristic of nurses and psychological nurses satisfaction?

### Material and Method

The study was carried out by the tertiary governmental hospital with JCI Accreditation in Saudi Arabia using non-probability, convenience sample of nurses who worked as registered nurse and Nursing Assistant. Sample of the study consists of 179 nurses (89.9%) female and (10.1%) male. In addition (59.8%) of total sample where in the age group (21-30). and (75.4%) of the nurses were non-Saudi, and (24.6%) were Saudi. Moreover, (92.7%) of the nurses has Bachelor of Science in nursing. With (41.9%) from the total sample had 1 – 5 years of experience and (39.7%) had 6-10 years of experience. For job title (96.1%), works as registered nurse(RN1). see table1.

In this study questionnaire was used for the purpose of data collection. Questionnaire was comprised of two section: 1); First section consisted of demographic information regarding the participants. For example age, gender,, education, etc. Second section, Satisfaction with psychological rewards from head nurse and physicians are measured using two refined subscales of the Psychological reward satisfaction Scale PReSS (15- 5). The respondent s were asked to assess how they are satisfied with

psychological reward, using a 5 –point Likert scale ranging from 'very dissatisfied'-1 to 'very satisfied'-5. Both subscales obtained a Cronbach alpha coefficient of respectively 0.91 for satisfaction with psychological rewards from the head nurse and 0.92 for satisfaction with those from physicians; 3) Job Satisfaction (Adopted from (9). The respondents will ask to score on a scale of 1 to 5, the level of agreement with the statements as it relates to working, using 1 for strongly disagree, 2 disagree, 3 neutral, 4 for agree and 5 for strongly agree. The internal consistency reliability coefficients for the scaled employed by this is 0.85 for job satisfaction.

**Table 1. Selected Demographic Characteristics of Participant**

Variables	Participants(n=179) f (%)
<b>Age</b>	
21-30	107(59.8)
31-40	56(31.3)
40 +	16(9)
<b>Gender</b>	
Male	18(10.1)
Female	161(89.9)
<b>Education</b>	
Certificate/Diploma	90(7.2)
Bachelor Degree	166(92.7)
<b>Job title</b>	
Registered nurse	172(96.1)
Nursing Assistant	7(3.9)
<b>Years of experience</b>	
1-5years	75(41.9)
6-10years	71(39.7)
11-15years	18(10.1)
16 +	15(8.4)
<b>Nationality</b>	
Saudi	44(24.6)
Non-Saudi	135(75.4)

Ethical codes of conduct were strictly adhered to at all stages of the study. During the data collection period, participants were guaranteed they would not be harmed in any way during their participation. Moreover, the participants were informed of their rights to remain anonymous, refuse to answer any particular question, and decline or leave the study at any point in time The study was submitted to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) and the Ethical Committee of the research center at Hospital, to assure the feasibility and suitability of the study and guarantee that it meets all ethical considerations. The participants who were invited to participate in the study. In this process, an information sheet explaining the introduction, purpose, process, risks, benefits,

alternative procedures, if any are disclosed, assurance of anonymity and confidentiality of the study provided to all the participants.

### Result

Table 2 showed an average mean of (3.79) level of satisfaction of psychological reward from head nurse and (3.35) the average mean level of satisfaction of psychological reward from physician.

**Table 2. Mean and Standard Deviation for the level of satisfaction of psychological reward from head nurse and from physician**

<b>Psychological reward from head nurse.</b>	<b>Means</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Level</b>
I am satisfied with: the recognition I receive from my Head nurse for doing my job	3.79	0.868	Large
I am satisfied with: the compliments from my Head nurse concerning my work	3.78	0.863	Large
I am satisfied with a word of thanks from my Head nurse	3.83	0.833	Large
I am satisfied with: the encouragements from my Head nurse while doing my job	3.77	0.840	Large
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.79</b>	<b>0.797</b>	Large
<b>Psychological reward from physician.</b>			
I am satisfied with: the recognition I receive from my physician for doing my job	<b>3.42</b>	<b>0.986</b>	High
I am satisfied with: the compliments from my physician concerning my work	<b>3.34</b>	<b>0.933</b>	Moderate
I am satisfied with a word of thanks from my physician	<b>3.36</b>	<b>0.928</b>	Moderate
I am satisfied with: the encouragements from my physician while doing my job	<b>3.29</b>	<b>0.908</b>	Moderate
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.35</b>	<b>0.873</b>	Moderate

In table 3, it has shown that the items of (how are you satisfied with your advancement opportunities) have moderate level of satisfaction. The mean for other items (3.67) showed a large satisfaction level.

**Table 3. Mean and SD for job nurses satisfaction level**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Means</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Level</b>
All in all, I am satisfied with my job	3.88	0.744	High
How satisfied are you with your opportunities for achievement?	3.69	0.926	High
How satisfied are you with your recognition opportunities?	3.70	2.350	High
How satisfied are you with your level of responsibility on your job?	3.74	0.714	High
How satisfied are you with the meaningfulness of your job?	3.66	0.787	High
How satisfied are you with your advancement opportunities?	3.35	0.876	moderate
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.67</b>	<b>0.713</b>	High

Table 4 showed that there is no statistically significant impact of psychological reward from the head nurse, on job satisfaction level for nurses at the

level less than (0.05). There is no significant statistical difference for the impact of psychological reward from physician on nurses job satisfaction below (0.05).

**Table4, Simple regression result of psychological reward from head nurse and physician on the job satisfaction**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>Beta</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Psychological reward from head nurse	0.142	29.321	0.000	9.885	0.377	0.000
Psychological reward from physician	0.138	28.238	0.000	13.434	0.371	0.000

The table 5, shows that the values of significance levels, greater than (0.05) for all demographic variables ones that means to accept the hypothesis. This result demonstrates the lack of statistical

significant differences on the psychological satisfaction and demographic variables.

There is no statistical difference on the nurses job satisfaction for the demographic variable on this level, below (0.05) as shown in Table 5.

**Table 5. Contrast Analysis**

Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Age	0.463	3	0.154	0.293	0.831
Sex	0.510	1	0.510	0.966	0.327
Education	0.680	3	0.227	0.430	0.732
Title	0.000	1	0.000	0.001	0.976
Experience	1.068	4	0.267	0.506	0.732
Shift	0.153	1	0.153	0.290	0.591
Nationality	0.018	1	0.018	0.035	0.853
Error	86.584	164	0.528		
Total	2498.810	179			

### Discussion

The aim of this study was to examine the impact of psychological rewards on nurses' job satisfaction. Further, this determined whether there is a significant difference between psychological rewards on nurses' job satisfaction and demographic characteristics. For the purpose of this study it was decided to explore specific dimensions of rewards namely: 1) psychological reward from head nurse and psychological reward from physician; and another which is 2) nurses' job satisfaction level.

There are a number of studies in the relevant literature exploring the impact of psychological rewards on nurses' job satisfaction. Yet, there is lack of systematic research of extrinsic rewards on the specific construct. This study contributes to this gap exploring the mean and standard deviations for the level of satisfaction of psychological reward from the head nurses and from the physicians, as well. In this study, indicators were measured for psychological reward from head nurse, and yielded a mean result of 3.79, indicating a large scale of reward; while from physicians, nurses got only a moderate mean scale of 3.35.

More specifically, relationships between nurses and physicians were found and they show a significant correlation with overall psychological empowerment. These results create a powerful workforce as well as support the studies that emphasize the importance of interpersonal relationships in the workplace as critical factors in the studies of (14 - 11)(18 -12)(19 -13)(25-14)(30 - 15).

The nurses in this study were moderately satisfied with their jobs revealing a high mean score of 3.67. Yet, there is no statistical significance on the impact of psychological reward from the head nurse, and on job satisfaction level. This is in contrast with other studies found in the literature. Such that, several studies point out that the areas concerning such an interaction is an important factor for job satisfaction (24- 16), (7-17). The areas that produced the highest

dissatisfaction were when they were not appreciated by the physician. This is indicated as key factors for job satisfaction (24 -16), (7 - 17). It is essential for physicians to cultivate a friendly and cooperative workplace with mutual respect and open communication like saying thanks, giving compliments and encouraging the nurses.

In this study, there was no statistical difference on the impact of psychological reward from physician on nurses' job satisfaction (Table 3) and in (table 4), it has shown values of significance levels were greater than (0.05) for all demographic variables which revealed statistically non-significant. Correlating the result of this study with Chen, et al. 2015.(12- 1), where they examined the impact of satisfaction with psychological rewards (received from the head nurse and from physicians) and with pay on Chinese nurses' work attitudes. Their cross-sectional survey were administered to 413 nurses and yielded a result of both satisfaction on pay and psychological rewards from the head nurse which significantly predicted work attitudes. On the other hand, no satisfaction with psychological rewards from physicians. (12 -1) De Gieter, 2010, examined the "two subscales and their influence on turnover intention and the turnover antecedents job satisfaction and organizational commitment (measured by validated scales) a series of hierarchical regression analyses suggested that satisfaction with psychological rewards from the head nurse has a statistically significant influence on nurses' turnover intention, job satisfaction and affective commitment, whereas pay satisfaction has not. Satisfaction with psychological rewards from the physicians only explained nurses' affective commitment. When trying to motivate nurses through rewarding them, hospital managers should not only concentrate on financial rewards, but also pay attention to psychological rewards." "Besides financial and material rewards, nurses also value psychological rewards: supportive and positively evaluated outcomes of the relationship an employee develops with the

supervisor. Satisfaction with these rewards influences employees' attitudes. Recently, the Psychological Reward Satisfaction Scale was developed to measure an employee's satisfaction with psychological rewards. However, this instrument needs refinement before it can be used with a nursing sample.”(15-5)

A main biographical variable is age that is usually examined in job satisfaction studies. In study of Baggs, et.al., 1990 and Agho, 1993, they found a relationship between age and level of satisfaction. Both the studies suggested that the younger nurses and those with less experience and were more satisfied than their older and more experienced colleagues (5-18),(2-19). But this was in contrast with other findings, which demonstrate that job satisfaction in nursing increases with age (11 - 20)(6 - 21)(13-22). As in the current study, it was noted to have no significant differences among the demographic variables. Lu,et.al. (20 - 23) explored job satisfaction among nurses as a key factor in nurse turnover. In their study, it showed that there was a “negative relationship between nurses' job satisfaction and intention to leave their current hospitals, which was mediated by age ( $P < 0.05$ )”. The organizational commitment showed the “strongest impact on job satisfaction, followed by occupational stress and role conflict”. Further, in their study, “both nurses' role perception and actual role content influenced job satisfaction as well as occupational stress, role conflict and role ambiguity ( $P < 0.05$ ); nurses' educational level was also a factor related to role perception, professional commitment and role conflict ( $P < 0.05$ ). Nurses' job satisfaction could be increased through promoting organizational and professional commitment and reducing occupational stress, role conflict and role ambiguity”.

The literature provides results that are negative with regard to education and job satisfaction. Studies show that education was inversely related to satisfaction with the job. Those with better education were less satisfied with their jobs (29 - 24)(23- 25). Some have indicated a positive relationship between the highest level of nursing qualifications and job satisfaction (28 -26)(6 - 21)(36 - 27) The results for shift works differ more. Nurses who work part-time feel more satisfaction in their job.

The results of the study suggest that higher rewards and satisfied employees in work organizations play a major role in the promotion of employee job satisfaction. It also leads to higher productivity in organizations. From the results, majority of respondents stated that job satisfaction would lead to increase in job performance.

All these conclusions demonstrate the power of employee job satisfaction in work organizations if attention is paid to the variables that trigger worker satisfaction. As Wang and Feng in 2003 claimed that

the higher the job satisfaction, the more likely workers will hold a positive attitude toward their jobs, and are more likely to be committed to the organization. Appreciation and work relations are found to have a positive and significant impact on job satisfaction. This is confirmed by the occurrence of significant association between encouragement and job satisfaction.

Some other job satisfaction studies show similar results. One main challenge will be to create a positive aspect for work and to enhance job satisfaction. Low job satisfaction, according to studies, result in turnover and leave. Rewards and schedule of work show strong associations with job satisfaction.

When the nurses are appreciated and complimented often, then there is greater job leading to greater productivity as a result of employee performance. Likewise, perceived satisfaction of nurses will impact their performance. Psychological rewards from head nurses and physicians also play an important role. Studies need to be conducted to understand the relative importance of the many identified factors relating to job satisfaction of nurses. It is argued that the absence of a strong causal model reflecting moderators is undermining the development of interventions to improve nurses' perception. Terera, 2014 explored the impact of rewards on job satisfaction and employee retention among nurses. This revealed that employee rewards lead to employee retention but however, they do not result in job satisfaction. (33 - 28). A tool is vital to further measure the job satisfaction of nurses as in the study of Tourangeau,2010, investigated and reported the psychometric properties of the McCloskey/Mueller Satisfaction Scale (MMSS) when used in 2003 to measure hospital nurse job satisfaction among nurses were used to establish. (34 -10)

### **Future Challenges**

Studies need to be conducted to understand the relative importance of the many identified factors relating to job satisfaction of nurses. It is argued that the absence of a strong causal model reflecting moderators is undermining the development of interventions to improve nurses' perception.

### **Limitations**

However, this study has some limitations. The data was collected from a specific sample (nurses) and a specific industry (health care). So these findings may not be generalizable to other employees or other industries. Another limitation is that this is a cross-sectional study of the data and therefore cannot directly assess causality. Future research should be done on all sectors and adopt a longitudinal design. Furthermore, it can include other rewards both

intrinsic and extrinsic that may influence psychological empowerment such as opportunity for training and development, recognition and skill variety. Based on this study, future studies could explore several areas of research that can make more valuable contributions to the impact of psychological rewards on nurses' job satisfaction.

### Conclusion

This study tried to examine the psychological rewards of the nurses from head nurses and physicians. Motivating nurses by rewarding them, hospital administration should not only focus on financial rewards, but need to consider also the psychological rewards. The nurses' job satisfaction can be improved by reducing organizational stress and focusing on professional development. Our results illustrate that when nurses feel satisfied from psychological rewards received from the head nurse and physician, they can demonstrate more positive work performance.

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