

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH INTENTION TO LEAVE OF NURSES IN RAJAVITHI HOSPITAL, BANGKOK, THAILAND

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ABSTRACT:

Background: A shortage of nurses, high turnover rates and poor retention rate are the concerns for healthcare organizations in Thailand. Rates of intention to leave of nurses vary from 23.7 to 58.3%. There are no adequate solutions for this situation. Therefore, retaining nurses is an urgent issue. Job satisfaction and organizational commitment are the factors associated with the intention to leave. However, this has not been taken seriously in Rajavithi Hospital (RJH). This study aims to determine the rate of turnover intention and associated factors with intention to leave among nurses in RJH.

Materials and Methods: A cross-sectional study was conducted between April and May 2016. Nurses who had worked at RJH for at least 1 year were recruited and completed a self-administered questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of 4 parts: demographic factors, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and intention to leave. Chi-square test was used to identify the associations, and multiple logistic regression was performed to determine factors related to intention to leave.

Results: Of the 392 questionnaires distributed, 390 (99.5%) were returned. Overall, 28.2% of nurses intended to leave. Factors associated with intention to leave were work department (Adj.OR 1.93; 95% CI: 1.03-3.53), job achievement (Adj.OR 3.37; 95% CI: 1.50-7.56), job security (Adj.OR 2.71; 95% CI: 1.43-5.15), and affective commitment (Adj.OR 1.97; 95% CI: 1.03-3.77). Odd Ratio was adjusted for age, dependent, shift work, congenital disease, recognition, work promotion, policies and administration, interpersonal relations, salary and fringe benefits, personal life, quality of supervision, and internalization of values.

Conclusion: The findings support in implementing strategies to maintain nurses, and increase job satisfaction or organizational commitment for retention of nurse.

Keywords: Intention to leave; Job satisfaction; Organizational commitment; Nurse; Thailand

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INTRODUCTION

Hospital is a place that provides medical and health services. According to the Department of Medical Service in Thailand show the numbers of nurses have the highest proportion about 54.2% [1]. In order to have good medical service system, there must be sufficient human resources in every sector. Therefore, the management team needs to pay more attention on these groups of people.

Previous studies indicated that important

factors for retaining staffs with organizations the longest are job satisfaction and organizational commitment. High job satisfaction is a predictor of high job performance. On the other hand, less satisfied employee tend to decrease their productivity [2]. The development of organizational commitment among the staff play an important role in motivating them to perform effectively, encouraging them to create high quality work and being part of the organization, as well as reducing the willingness to change the job [3]. Staff who feel committed to the organization will put efforts in performing their job resulting in the overall

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effectiveness and achievement of the organization. In contrast, lack of organizational commitment and motivation may be negative effects on staff productivity, and resignation will be consequently occurred [4].

Rajavithi Hospital is a tertiary referral hospital in Bangkok, Thailand. According to a report in 2013, almost 977,811 out patients were recorded. Nearly a million visit a doctor each year. Of the 4,100 staffs in RJH, 45.12% are nurses which is about half of the total staffs of the hospital. Although this is a substantial number of nurse, it is still insufficient for patients. Based on the data of 2009-2013, the nurse's resignation tended to increase from 1.28% to 3.44% [5].

A nursing resignation affects the hospital in many aspects such as reducing in manpower, increasing workload, wasting the cost investment for recruitment, and decreasing of job performance until new replacements. Therefore, the result for the staffs resignation must be figured out [6]. Although many studies have identified that job satisfaction and organizational commitment could have an impact on the intention to leave the job. However there has been no study conducted at Rajavithi Hospital.

As such, the author is aware of the importance of nurses's retention. This study aimed to examine turnover rate and associated factors influencing intention to leave. This research is meant to be an evidence based and guideline for the administration in order to retain nurses as long as possible.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Study design

A cross-sectional study was conducted to determine factors influencing intention to leave among nurses in Rajavithi Hospital Bangkok, Thailand (RJH).

Participants

A simple random sampling was used to select nurses. A sampling frame was created from a list of all 1,850 nurses working in RJH. A consecutive number was then assigned from 1 to 1,850. Then, the first three numbers from the random number table were selected to be the part of sample and keep doing this until the completion of 392 names of the nurses. Sample size was estimated by using proportion considering 95% confidence interval (CI), 34.4% proportion of intention to leave [7], and 15% marginal error. By adding 20% nonresponse rate, the final sample size was 392.

Questionnaires were distributed to 392 nurses.

Simple language statement was informed and stated the aim of the study and volunteers to participate in a study. A total of 390 nurses completed and returned the questionnaire for analysis giving a response rate of 99.5%.

Measurement

A semi-structured self-administered questionnaire was used as the instrument to collect data. The questionnaire was developed based on the literature reviews. The experts, a nursing profession and public health professor reviewed and approved the content of the questionnaire. Pretesting was conducted with 30 nurses who are working in Queen Sirikit National Institute of Child Health.

The questionnaire consisted of four parts as follow:

Part 1: General characteristics; age, type of job, work department, marital status, education attainment, monthly income, dependent, shift work, and congenital diseases.

Part 2: Information on job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is comprised of two parts: 1) motivator factors resulting in satisfaction included job achievement (5 items), recognition (5 items), work itself (6 items), responsibility (5 items), and work promotion (4 items); 2) hygiene factors to prevent dissatisfaction consisted of policies and administration (5 items), career advancement (5 items), interpersonal relationships (8 items), salary and fringe benefits (5 items), professional status (4 items), person life (4 items), job security (5 items), work conditions (5 items), and quality of supervision (8 items).

This questionnaire was measured by five point Likert scales from strongly disagree to strongly agree. There were 74 items, which were developed from Herzberg's two factor theory [8] and previous studies [9]. The scale was reliable with Cronbach's alpha of 0.94.

Part 3: Information on organizational commitment. Job satisfaction is composed of two parts: 1) internalization of values (6 items), 2) affective commitment (7 items). This questionnaire was measured by five point Likert scales from strongly disagree to strongly agree. There were 13 items, which were developed from Allen and Meyer model [10] and previous studies [11]. The scale was reliable with Cronbach's alpha of 0.89.

Part 4: Information on intention to leave. A single question "How often do you think leaving from the job?" was used to identify nurses' intention to leave. They could answer this question on a four point answering scale with 'never', 'sometime',

Table 1 General characteristics and intention to leave of nurses (n = 390)

General characteristics	Total samples		Intention to leave		Crude OR	95% CI	p-value
	Number	%	Number	%			
Total	390	100.0	110	28.2			
Gender							0.374
Male	48	12.4	11	22.9			
Female ^(ref)	340	87.6	99	29.1	1.38	0.68-2.82	
Age (years)							<0.001
19 - 36	214	55.6	83	38.8	3.49	1.56-7.77	
37 - 51	52	30.9	19	36.5	1.05	0.43-2.57	
> 51 ^(ref)	119	13.5	8	6.7			
Mean±SD	36.02±11.62		31.42±10.52				
Min-Max	24-66		19-59				
Type of job							0.174
Permanent employee	16	4.1	4	25.0	1.00	0.31-3.22	
Government/MOPH employee	138	35.8	47	34.1	1.55	0.98-2.46	
Civil servant ^(ref)	232	60.1	58	25.0			
Work department							0.041
Out-patient department (OPD)	153	42.0	52	34.0			
In-patient department (IPD) ^(ref)	211	58.0	51	24.2	1.62	1.02-2.56	
Marital status							0.067
Single	232	60.1	72	66.7	1.32	0.83-2.13	
Divorced, widowed, separated	16	4.1	1	0.90	0.20	0.03-1.54	
Married ^(ref)	138	35.8	35	32.4			
Educational attainment							0.404
Higher than bachelor's degree	36	9.4	8	22.2	0.71	0.31-1.60	
Bachelor's degree ^(ref)	347	90.6	100	28.8			
Monthly income (Baht)							0.080
15,001- 20,000	208	54.5	68	32.7	1.77	0.99-3.15	
20,001- 30,000	36	21.2	19	52.8	1.12	0.55-2.28	
≥ 30,001 ^(ref)	93	24.3	20	21.5			
Dependent							<0.001
Yes	208	54.3	57	27.4			
No ^(ref)	175	45.7	51	29.1	0.41	0.59-1.43	
Shift work							<0.001
Yes	219	57.2	70	32.0			
No ^(ref)	164	42.8	39	23.8	0.31	0.95-2.38	
Congenital disease							<0.001
Yes	142	36.4	32	22.5			
No ^(ref)	248	63.6	78	31.5	0.46	0.39-1.02	

Table 2 Intention to leave (n=390 nurses)

Frequency of thinking on leaving from the job	Number	%
Never	62	15.9
Sometime	218	55.9
Often	77	19.7
Always	33	8.5

‘often’ or ‘always’. For nurses who answered ‘often’ and ‘always’ were classified as intention to leave.

Data analysis

Data were analyzed by using SPSS version 22.0 (licensed for Chulalongkorn University). Descriptive statistics were described as number, percentage, mean, standard deviation with minimum and

maximum. The questionnaire of opinions on job satisfaction and organizational commitment were measured by five point Likert scales. The rate of each item range from 1 to 5: strongly disagree-strongly agree response scale. Also, the response value was reversed for reversal items. The rating of each items were summed in each subdomain. The

Table 3 Job satisfaction and intention to leave of nurses (n=390)

Job satisfaction factors	Total samples		Intention to leave		Crude OR	95% CI	p-value
	Number	%	Number	%			
Total	390	100.0	110	28.2			
Motivator factors							
Job achievement							<0.001
Low	61	15.7	35	57.4	4.54	2.57-8.02	
High (ref)	328	84.3	75	22.9			
Recognition							<0.001
Low	90	23.2	40	44.4	2.66	1.62-4.36	
High (ref)	298	76.8	69	23.2			
Job characteristics							0.062
Low	274	70.8	84	30.7	1.64	0.98-2.75	
High (ref)	113	29.2	24	21.2			
Responsibility							0.490
Low	20	5.1	7	35.0	1.40	0.54-3.60	
High (ref)	370	94.9	103	27.8			
Work promotion							0.026
Low	213	54.6	70	32.9	1.68	1.07-2.64	
High (ref)	177	45.4	40	22.6			
Hygiene factors							
Policies and administration							0.006
Low	190	48.7	66	34.7	1.89	1.21-2.96	
High (ref)	200	51.3	44	22.0			
Career advancement							0.062
Low	105	26.9	37	35.2	1.58	0.98-2.56	
High (ref)	285	73.1	73	25.6			
Interpersonal relations							0.011
Low	237	60.8	78	32.9	1.86	1.15-2.98	
High (ref)	153	39.2	32	20.9			
Salary and fringe benefits							<0.001
Low	279	72.8	97	34.8	4.51	2.30-8.82	
High (ref)	104	27.2	11	10.6			
Professional status							0.063
Low	51	13.3	20	39.2	1.79	0.97-3.30	
High (ref)	332	86.7	88	26.5			
Personal life							0.021
Low	268	70.0	85	31.7	1.86	1.10-3.14	
High (ref)	115	30.0	23	20.0			
Job security							<0.001
Low	162	42.2	73	45.1	4.38	2.72-7.05	
High (ref)	222	57.8	35	15.8			
Work conditions							0.266
Low	333	86.7	97	29.1	1.50	0.74-3.03	
High (ref)	51	13.3	11	21.6			
Quality of supervision							<0.001
Low	205	53.4	74	36.1	2.41	1.51-3.85	
High (ref)	179	46.6	34	19.0			

Abbreviations: Crude OR = Crude odds ratio, 95% CI = 95 confidence interval

score of opinions in each subdomain were divided into 2 levels (high and low) by using the median as the cut off point. Chi-square test was used to identify the association between each categorical independent variable and the intention to leave. Multiple logistic regression was performed to determine the factors

influencing intended to leave. The independent variable that associated with intention to leave in bivariate tests was included in model. The variables that significant after adjusting for other variables were selected in the final stepwise model. A *p*-value of less than 0.05 was considered as statistically significant.

Table 4 Organizational commitment and intention to leave of nurses (n= 390)

Organizational commitment factors	Total		Intention to leave		Crude OR	95% CI	p-value
	Number	%	Number	%			
Total	390	100.0	110	28.2			
Internalization of values							0.012
Low	138	36.1	79	32.4	1.88	1.15-3.08	
High (ref)	244	63.9	28	20.3			
Affective commitment							<0.001
Low	141	37.1	62	44.0	3.38	2.13-5.38	
High (ref)	239	62.9	45	18.8			

Table 5 Multiple logistic regression analysis of the factors influencing the intention to leave

Factors	Adj. OR	95%CI	p-value
Work at OPD(ref: IPD)	1.93	1.03-3.53	0.033
Low job achievement (ref: high)	3.37	1.50-7.56	0.003
Low job security(ref: high)	2.71	1.43-5.15	0.002
Low affective commitment(ref: high)	1.97	1.03-3.77	0.040

Abbreviations: 95%CI = 95% confidence interval, Adj. OR = Adjusted odds ratio

Note: Predisposing variables: age, dependent, shift work, congenital disease, recognition, work promotion, policies and administration, interpersonal relations, salary and fringe benefits, personal life, quality of supervision, and internalization of values included in model were not significant after adjusting for other variables and were not selected in the final stepwise model

Ethical consideration

Ethical approval was obtained from Chulalongkorn University (no. 023.1/59), and Rajavithi Hospital (no. 215/2558). The participant's information sheets were provided and informed consent was obtained. Participation was voluntary and participants were given one week to complete the questionnaire. Data was conducted during April to May 2016.

RESULTS

General characteristics and intention to leave of nurses

The majority of nurses were female (87.6%) with the mean age 36.02 (SD = 11.62) years. Most of the participants were single, civil servant, completed bachelor degree, dependent, and monthly income ranged from 15,001 and 20,000 Baht. In addition, 58.0% of nurses had worked at in-patient department (IPD) and had shift work (Table 1).

Nurses who worked in out-patient department (OPD) tended to leave from the job. Whereas, nurses who had dependent, shift work, and congenital disease, tended to remain employed in the hospital.

Intention to leave

Overall, the rate of intention to leave among nurses in Rajavithi Hospital was 28.2%. Of these, 19.7% often thought about leaving, and 8.5% always thought about leaving (Table 2).

Job satisfaction and intention to leave of nurses

Job satisfaction classified into two parts: 1) motivator factors resulting in satisfaction, and 2) hygiene factors that prevent dissatisfaction. In terms of motivator factors, nurses with low job achievement, had low recognition, and low work promotion were more likely to intend to leave. Regarding to hygiene factors, nurses who had poor interpersonal relations, had low salary and fringe benefits, low personal life, and low job security were more likely to intend to leave. In addition, nurses who perceived themselves as working in the organization that poor policies and administration, and low quality of supervision were more likely to intend to leave (Table 3).

Organizational commitment and intention to leave of nurses

Nurses who had low internalization of values and low affective commitment were more likely to intend to leave. (Table 4).

Factors influencing the intention to leave

Age, work department, dependent, shift work, congenital disease, job achievement, recognition, work promotion, policies and administration, interpersonal relations, salary and fringe benefits, personal life, job security, and quality of supervision, internalization of values, and affective commitment were independent variables and associated with intention to leave (*p*-value less than

0.05) in bivariate tests. Using multiple logistic regression analysis, nurses who had low job achievement over 3 times were more likely to intend to leave (Adj.OR 3.37; 95% CI: 1.50-7.56). In addition, those who had low job security over 2 times were more likely to intend to leave (Adj.OR 2.71; 95% CI: 1.43-5.15). Further, nurses who worked at out-patient department (OPD), and had low affective commitment nearly 2 times were more likely to intention leave (Adj.OR 1.93; 95% CI: 1.0-3.53, 1.97; 95% CI: 1.03-3.77) (Table 5).

DISCUSSION

The current study found that 28.2% indicated the intention to leave the profession. This proportion was similar to the previous studies where 23.7% of nurses in governmental Hospitals, Bangkok Metropolitan area, 27.7% in University Hospital, Sonkhla province, and 24.1% in National Taiwan University Hospital [12-14]. This might be because those studies were carried out in the government hospital where job characteristics, salary and fringe benefits were similar. On the other hand, this proportion was almost 2.4 times lower than those in Lebanon nurses (67.5%) [15]. The difference may be due to the participants in Labanon study was practicing nurses that had young, low salary and fringe benefits. This is in agreement with the findings of previous studies conducted on nurses's intention to leave and indicated that younger nurses were more likely to leave [16, 17]. One possible explanation is advancing age tends to increase levels of commitment to the profession and organization [18]. Moreover, experienced nurses usually work in higher job position which higher salary and compensations were given [19, 20].

The present study revealed that work department was significantly associated with intention to leave. The result suggested that nurses who worked at OPD tended to have more turnover rate than those IPD nurses. The result is consistent with previous study found that work department has significantly relationship with turnover intention among nurse, and nurse who worked at OPD had the highest proportion of turnover intention [21]. This might be because OPD nurses have faced crowded patients and more stress. Several previous found that stressful condition related to leave [22].

Job satisfaction was another factor associated with intention to leave. High levels of job satisfaction led to achieve low turnover rate. According to previous studies pointed at the

relevance of job satisfaction had direct influence to organizational retention [11]. In addition, the present study found that job achievement and job security had more influenced the intention to leave. Thus, promotion in terms of training/education opportunity, increasing salary and fringe benefits, appropriate environmental condition, good relationships, and clear goals and methods of supervision will make nurses increased feelings of job security. This feeling resulting in increased work performance that will make them to success their job.

Several studies indicated that the organizational commitment was significantly associated with the intention to leave. Increasing levels of organizational commitment had reduced turnover rate [20, 23]. This current study found that organizational commitment in part of affective commitment more effected to intention to leave. Therefore, encouraging nurses to participate in all activities like their own organization is recommended.

CONCLUSION

Four factors influencing on nurses's intention to leave are work department, job achievement, job security, and affective commitment. The intention to leave is a useful indicator, which can be used to evaluate continuously at the workplace level so as to inform human resource planning in nursing retention. Thus, relevant department should mainly focus on work promotion in terms of training/education opportunity, salary and fringe benefits, work environment, interpersonal relationships, and obvious goals and methods of supervision. This study focused only on variables that are related with intention to leave. Other variables such as organizational communication and job stress are recommended for further studies.

RECOMMENDATION

1. The further studies on the factors associated with the intention to leave should be conducted in quantitative or focus group discussion to obtain the additional insights.
2. The further studies on organizational communication and job stress should be conducted.
3. The result of this research can be applied for retention strategies for nursing workforce management.

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POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

None.

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