

proposal

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Using ²Frederick Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory to Increase Nursing Staff Retention

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2 Using Frederick Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory to Increase Nursing Staff Retention

Nurses play a vital role in healthcare delivery, and their job satisfaction is essential to ensuring the quality and safety of patient care (Berridge et al., 2020). However, the ongoing global workforce challenges and other industry-specific factors affect nurses. One primary outcome of these challenges is the high nursing staff turnover rate, a major leadership/management/practice (LMP) challenge. Nurse turnover may be influenced by long work hours, burnout, low wages and benefits, and career stagnation, among others. According to Chang and Cho (2023), the retention rate for nurses in their first job is nearly 92.7% in year 1, 77.8% in year 2, and 68.6% in year 3. Nurses who expressed turnover intention and male nurses are likelier to resign from their first job.

In addition to being a primary indicator of unfavorable human resource practices in hospitals, high nursing staff turnover predicts poor service delivery (Berridge et al., 2020). Health facilities with high chances of nurses leaving their jobs are less likely to deliver quality patient care and treatment services (Chang & Cho, 2023). On this note, there is a persistent need to enhance nursing staff retention through evidence-based practices. The purpose of this proposal is to examine how the application of Frederick Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, or Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory, can facilitate increasing nursing staff retention. The proposal will be submitted to the Chief Nursing Officer to approve the implementation across the entire department and realize all the benefits to relevant stakeholders.

Theory Description

Frederick Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Motivation, also known as the Motivator-Hygiene Theory, argues that two sets of factors influence employee retention: hygiene and

motivator factors (Herzberg, 1974). Herzberg's primary assumption was that lack of "satisfaction" is "no satisfaction" and lack of "dissatisfaction" is "no dissatisfaction." Motivators cause satisfaction or no satisfaction, while hygiene factors cause dissatisfaction or no dissatisfaction (Alrawahi et al., 2020). The motivator factors are intrinsic, focusing on the staff's job appreciation and accomplishment reward, which encourages their dedication (Herzberg, 1974). The hygiene factors are extrinsic, such as the work conditions, the relationship among staff, salary, and administration guidance that can reduce staff dissatisfaction within the work environment (Herzberg, 1974). Both factors are associated with staff performance toward job satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Relieving the stressors can improve the staff's work needs and retention.

The primary rationale for selecting Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Motivation is that it is a well-established theory of motivation that can be utilized in various employment settings, including healthcare (Alrawahi et al., 2020). It offers essential components to the staff encouragement with motivation to increase staff retention. Additionally, it is a simple theory to understand and provides practical guidance for nursing staff managers on improving employee job satisfaction and motivation (Alrawahi et al., 2020). Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory can be used to identify and address the factors that contribute to nurse dissatisfaction and turnover. Moreover, Herzberg's theory offers a comprehensive view of motivation by distinguishing between satisfiers (motivators) and dissatisfiers (hygiene factors) (Herzberg, 1974). This clear distinction enables staff managers to pinpoint the specific elements that lead to job satisfaction or dissatisfaction in nursing staff. The theory is also comprehensive enough as it considers all the possible satisfiers and dissatisfiers in a work environment.

Literature Review

Literature Search Process

The search process included searching the UC Libraries, Elsevier ScienceDirect, and Google Scholar databases. The search terms included nursing staff retention, nurse turnover, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Motivation, and Motivator-Hygiene Theory for nursing staff retention. The search was also limited to peer-reviewed journal articles published within the last five years. All qualified sources were level 1 evidence, including experimental studies and randomized controlled trials (RCT). Sources with meta-analysis, systematic, or integrative reviews were rejected. A review of the best three pieces of literature is provided below.

Literature Review: Part I

Different credible studies have explored the LMP challenge of nursing staff retention, turnover, and related issues. One recent study by Henshall et al. (2023) investigated the engagement with, acceptability of, and impact on resilience and psychological well-being of a newly developed web-based resilience enhancement training for nurses (REsOluTioN). The study was justified by the problem of low job satisfaction, high turnover, and retention challenges among nurses and the resulting implications on patient care outcomes. The study sample included 93 participants who completed the study. Their mean age was 44 years; 88.8% were females, 88.8% were whites, and 85.0% worked in community settings. In this pilot randomized controlled trial design study, Henshall et al. (2023) used random sampling to assign the participants into two groups - a waitlist group or a REsOluTioN group. An informed consent form and local research ethics approvals were considered ethical considerations.

Henshall et al. (2023) found that the REsOluTioN program improved participants' self-confidence, quality of service, resilience, communication, and relationships. While no statistically significant differences were observed between the waitlist and REsOluTioN groups, there were positive trends toward improvement in well-being and resilience. The REsOluTioN group found the program effective and acceptable. Moreover, the study ensured reliability and validity using measures adapted from the Brief Resilience Scale and the Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale. The study addressed rigor by using a randomized controlled trial design, which is a standard for research to establish causality. Henshall et al. (2023) also achieved rigor by using validated measures to assess the resilience and psychological well-being of nurses.

Another study by Watts et al. (2022) explored the factors influencing retention among non-supervisory Public Health Nurses (PHNs) in North Carolina (NC). They used a descriptive cross-sectional online survey design with a sample size of 672 non-supervisory PHNs employed in NC local health departments (LHDs). The study assessed various aspects, including perceptions of the working environment, stress levels, intent to stay, and job satisfaction. Similarly, the study used convenience sampling, and participants were ensured anonymity and confidentiality through informed consent as part of ethical consideration. The findings revealed a retention problem within LHDs, as indicated by 53% of respondents acknowledging this issue. 35.32% expressed intentions or considerations of leaving their positions within the next three years, unrelated to retirement. Those contemplating departure reported lower scores in perceived working environment and job satisfaction, coupled with higher negative stress levels. While the study demonstrated high overall job satisfaction (79.76%), the number of PHNs planning to leave was alarming, considering the current shortage of PHNs in NC.

The study ensured reliability and validity using measures ¹ adapted from the revised Casey-Fink Registered Nurse Retention Survey (2009), a peer-reviewed and validated instrument. Despite the study's valuable findings, Watts et al. (2022) highlighted limitations in using convenience sampling as it restricted the generalizability of the findings. Nonetheless, the study recommended the need for healthcare employers to improve the working environment and PHNs' compensation and mitigate stressors. Addressing these factors is essential to retaining the current ¹ PHN workforce and ensuring the stability and effectiveness of public health services in North Carolina. Watts et al. (2022) addressed rigor using a convenience sample, acknowledged its limitations, and discussed its implications. They also used a well-established and validated instrument to measure the dependent variables.

² Testing Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

A qualitative study by Alrawahi et al. (2020) proposed investigating ³ the motivational elements associated with job satisfaction among medical laboratory professionals (MLPs) in Oman using Herzberg's two-factor theory of motivation. The study used a sample size of 101 MLPs selected through a formal stratified sampling process. Alrawahi et al. (2020) used a qualitative approach where focus group discussions were the method for collecting qualitative data, views, and opinions from participants. Moreover, the study upheld ethical considerations by ensuring anonymity and confidentiality. ¹ Informed consent was also obtained from all participants. Similarly, the study complied with both Omani and Swedish legislations regarding ⁵ research ethics and personal data. Approval for the study was obtained from the Research and Ethical Review and Approval Committee of MOH in Oman.

¹ Data were analyzed by directed content analysis and frequencies of statements related to factors highlighted in the Herzberg theory. ³ The findings revealed that job satisfaction factors

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(motivators) were relationships with co-workers, leaders, and professional development.

Conversely, the job dissatisfaction factors (hygiene) were heavy workload, occupational health and safety, wages, career growth, recognition, and company policies. They used focus group discussions to collect qualitative data and the triangulation method to achieve reliability and validity. Also, the FGDs were conducted in the main hospitals in Oman to ascertain the validity and generalizability. Alrawahi et al. (2020) also addressed rigor by using focus group discussions, a well-established qualitative research method, and a triangulation approach to data analysis to ensure accuracy and reliability.

Based on the Johns Hopkins framework, the study by Henshall et al. (2023) is level 1 evidence since it was a pilot randomized controlled trial design study. Secondly, Watts et al. (2022) is level 3 evidence since it was a descriptive cross-sectional online survey. The study by Alrawahi et al. (2020) is also level 3 evidence since it is a qualitative study.

Part II: Evidence Summary

The literature reviewed in this proposal is high-quality evidence that ranks in levels 1 and 3 of the Johns Hopkins Nursing Evidence-Based Practice Model. Henshall et al. (2023) article was an RCT, while Watts et al. (2022) and Alrawahi et al. (2020) articles were non-experimental and qualitative studies. All these studies are of high quality and qualified for this proposal since they are relevant to the LMP challenge and have clear and generalizable findings for nursing staff retention strategies. For instance, Henshall et al. (2023) tested a REsOluTioN program on 93 participants who were all nurses of different ages, races, and genders. Watts et al. (2022) also sampled 672 non-supervisory PHNs employed in NC local health departments (LHDs). Alrawahi et al. (2020) also tested the Herzberg theory on 101 medical laboratory professionals. These studies qualify for using diverse sample sizes, compliance with all relevant ethical

considerations, and accurate data analysis. They also employed different tactics to ensure validity, reliability, and rigor. Therefore, these articles qualify for this proposal.

Practice Intervention

The proposed practice intervention is a Nurse Motivation Program that addresses both ¹hygiene and motivator factors as outlined in Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory. The program will be implemented continuously through approaches that maximize the use of hygiene factors like salary, working conditions, staffing levels, workload, and interpersonal relationships. This program will also maximize ²the motivator factors such as professional development, recognition, autonomy, appreciation, and control over their work.

The information from the reviewed literature justifies the practice intervention. ²Alrawahi et al. (2020) and Watts et al. (2022) have demonstrated the applicability ²of Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory in improving employee job satisfaction and motivation within healthcare settings. These studies indicate that nurses who derive satisfaction from their jobs are likelier to remain in their positions. Furthermore, high nurse turnover rates correlate with adverse patient care outcomes (Watts et al., 2022), underscoring the need for interventions to enhance nurse retention, job satisfaction, and motivation. Nurses satisfied with their jobs have low turnover rates (Henshall et al., 2023).

Therefore, the specific intervention is a continuous Nurse Motivation Program, a face-to-face intervention designed to improve nurse job satisfaction and motivation. The program can be provided by the human resource manager, Chief Nursing Officer, or an APRN certified in Adult/Gero Nursing. Moreover, the program can be implemented for all nursing staff in any hospital, owing to the generalizability of findings. Since the program is based on ¹Herzberg's

Two-Factor Theory, it entails identifying hygiene and motivator factors in the nursing workplace (Alrawahi et al., 2020). It also contains strategies for enhancing hygiene factors to mitigate dissatisfaction and create opportunities to experience motivator factors (Alrawahi et al., 2020). Similarly, it sets personalized goals and a clear plan for professional development and networking among the nursing staff.

Regarding the mode of delivery, the Nurse Motivation Program can be delivered face-to-face, online, or through actions such as promotions, rewards, awards, and other ways of motivation. As mentioned above, the program can be delivered continuously throughout the day, week, year, or perpetual, as needed by the healthcare facility. The qualified settings for this program include any healthcare environment with nurses, such as a hospital, clinic, or home care facility. However, the program is only tailored to nurses in hospitals, in leadership roles, or specific clinical specialties. In case the program is delivered to a population other than nurses, modifications may be made to the list of motivator and hygiene factors; these are always relative to the facility and are not generalizable to all organizations and employees.

The measurable outcomes of this Nurse Motivation Program are aligned with Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory and the LMP challenge of nurse turnover (Herzberg, 1974). Specifically, the outcomes of nurse job satisfaction can be measured using a validated tool, such as the Work Satisfaction Index. The outcome of nurse intent to stay can be measured using a validated tool, such as the Intention to Stay Questionnaire. Similarly, the outcome of the nurse turnover rate can be measured using the number of nurses who leave the hospital each year (Alrawahi et al., 2020; Henshall et al., 2023). On this note, the Nurse Motivation Program will be evaluated using a pre-test/post-test design. All participants can be subjected to complete the Work Satisfaction Index and the Intention to Stay Questionnaire at the beginning and end of the program. The nurse

turnover rates will be tracked for one month, a year, or a selected period after launch. Based on the research evidence, it is expected that the Nurse Motivation Program will improve nurse job satisfaction and motivation and subsequently increase nursing staff retention.

Conclusion

Nursing staff retention is a critical LMP challenge facing healthcare organizations today as it affects patient care outcomes and costs. Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Motivation identifies and addresses motivator and hygiene factors. Different pieces of literature have explored the challenge of nursing turnover and the use of Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory. Based on the literature and the theory, a Nurse Motivation Program can improve nurse job satisfaction and motivation. The program uses Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory to identify hygiene and motivator factors in the workplace and strategies for improving both. The program is tailored to all nurses in the hospital and can be delivered by various healthcare professionals. The proposed intervention can improve nursing staff retention by promoting nurse job satisfaction and motivation; this can lead to better patient care outcomes and lower costs for healthcare.

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