

## Level of Job Satisfaction among Sulu Nurses

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### Abstract

The research aimed to determine the Sulu nurses' profile and job satisfaction level. The study aimed to investigate the correlation between the profile of Sulu nurses and their level of job satisfaction. A quantitative descriptive research design was used. A self-devised Likert Scale questionnaire was used to gather the data, and Proportionate Stratified sampling was used in selecting the respondents. Descriptive statistics were utilized to ascertain the profile of nurses from Sulu, while multiple regression was employed to investigate the interrelationships among the variables. The results showed that the average age of nurses in Sulu was 27, female holding a non-permanent status with an average length of service of 5.50 years and a mean compensation of 17,500 per month, and working in more than 100-bed capacities in public and non-military hospitals. The majority of Sulu nurses had a high level of job satisfaction. The study showed a significant positive relationship between job satisfaction and employment status, salary, and hospital type (non-military and military). A salary increase accompanied a high satisfaction rating of nurses in Sulu. Nurses working in military hospitals were more satisfied than those in non-military hospitals. In addition, nurses with permanent tenure were more satisfied than non-permanent nurses.

**Keywords:** Job satisfaction, Nurses, Hospital, Nurses' profile

### 1. Introduction

According to the World Health Organization's report in 2011, nursing personnel constitute the most extensive cohort of professionals in the global healthcare system, with a cumulative count of 19.3 million. They perform crucial functions within medical facilities, including hospitals, clinics, and private practices. However, research indicates that many employees experience job-related stress and desire to resign or have already resigned from their positions. For example, Aiken et al. (2011) found that 41.5% of nurses surveyed are dissatisfied with their jobs. Moreover, one of the five nurse respondents intends to leave his or her job. Conversely, a study conducted in the United States revealed that the turnover rate among newly graduated nurses is approximately 30% during their initial year of practice and can escalate to as much as 57% during their second year (Twibell et al., 2012).

The Philippines' most prominent group of direct healthcare providers is nurses. The Philippines boasts 490 nursing colleges, contributing to an annual production of approximately 100,000 nurses (Lorenzo et al., 2007). Lorenzo et al. (2007) stated, "The Philippines has a net surplus of registered nurses. However, the country loses its trained and skilled nursing workforce much faster than it can replace them, thereby jeopardizing the integrity and quality of Philippine health services". The Philippine General Hospital and the National University Hospital are tangible illustrations of the interrelationship between the earlier factors and

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job satisfaction and retention. The nurse-to-patient ratio currently stands at 1:15, considerably higher than the optimal ratio. According to Lorenzo et al. (2007), nurses depart from their profession not primarily due to compassion fatigue but instead to pursue more favourable employment prospects overseas, indicating job contentment. Furthermore, according to Lorenzo et al.'s (2007) findings, inadequate working conditions frequently prompt nurses with permanent positions in the healthcare industry to pursue job opportunities abroad.

Research has demonstrated that contented employees are likely to exhibit enhanced productivity, creativity, and commitment, ultimately leading to improved quality of patient care and patient satisfaction (Kaldenberg & Regrut, 1999 as cited by Bhatnagar & Srivastava, 2012). Nonetheless, there are instances when nurses encounter circumstances that result in reduced levels of job satisfaction, as evidenced by diminished motivation, disengagement, and a lack of zeal towards their work and objectives. Nurses' lack of job satisfaction has been found to harm their efficiency and dedication to providing quality care (Maslach & Leiter, 2016).

As observed in Sulu, for example, more nurses are leaving the hospitals and opting to go abroad or enter other jobs like Non-Uniform Personnel (NUP), Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) and even the Philippine National Police (PNP). All hospitals in Sulu are affected by this situation. As such, the provision of nursing care and improvement of the health status of the people is at stake. Hence, the demand for nurses increases.

Although there is evidence of a fast turnover rate in the hospital, the level of job satisfaction among Sulu nurses has never been assessed, and this is the reason that motivates the researcher to conduct a study along that line. She is also interested in finding predictors to gauge those nurses' job satisfaction levels.

## **2. Materials and Methods**

### **2.1 Design**

The quantitative descriptive-survey method of Research was used in this study to gather needed data on the level of job satisfaction of Sulu nurses and to answer the research questions. *Descriptive Research* is defined as one that determines the cause of something and describes the behaviour of something (Brains, 2010), and this pertains to depicting information and attributes about a given populace. Valdez (2007) posits that the objective is to obtain precise, reliable, and methodical information that can be utilized in computations such as means, frequencies, and comparable analyses. This method suited the present study since it investigated the present conditions in the research setting. The researcher believed that descriptive-survey design was the most appropriate method to determine the profile and the level of job satisfaction among Sulu nurses.

### **2.2 Sample and Setting**

The data of the study were gathered from primary sources. The respondents were 156 nurses employed in the five hospitals, namely Integrated Provincial Hospital Office-Sulu Provincial Hospital (IPHO-SPH), Sulu Sanitarium, Sulu Medical Specialist Hospital (SMHS), Camp Teodulfo Bautista Station Hospital, and Siasi District Hospital.

### **2.3 Variable**

The study sought to find out the Sulu nurses' profile in terms of age, gender, employment status, length of service, salary, hospital size and hospital type, and the level of job satisfaction. It also sought to explore significant relationship between profile and level of job satisfaction among Sulu nurses.

### **2.4 Instruments**

A self-devised questionnaire was used in this study to gather data wherein respondents were asked to give a response based on a Likert Scale. The questionnaire was composed of two parts. The first part looked into the

profile of Sulu nurses, and the second was a list of statements to determine the level of job satisfaction among Sulu nurses. The constructed questionnaire was based on the literature presented in the study. It underwent validity and reliability testing before administering it to the study participants.

The internal reliability result based on Cronbach's alpha was the following statistical data: Cronbach's alpha of part 1 was .787 with 31 items of the questionnaire. In comparison, part 2 had a value of .976 with 31 items of the questionnaire, indicating a Cronbach alpha of 0.7 level of significance, which indicated that the self-devised questionnaire was reliable. The correlational value between forms was .557, indicating a positive correlation between forms of items. Cronbach's Alpha and correlation values confirmed that the questionnaire items were highly positively correlated.

## **2.5 Data Collection**

After the questionnaire was found to be valid and reliable, the researcher wrote a letter seeking permission from the five directors and nursing department heads of the five hospitals in Sulu to conduct the study. The questionnaire was attached to the letter. Upon approval of the medical director, the researcher then went to the chief nurse or hospital administrator to seek permission for data gathering. The questionnaire was administered on October 12, 2016, at Sulu Medical Specialist Hospital and Sulu Sanitarium. On October 13, 2016, the researcher administered it at Sulu Provincial Hospital; on October 18, 2016, at Camp Teodulfo Bautista Station Hospital; and on October 20, 2016, at Siasi District Hospital.

The researcher personally distributed the questionnaires to the respondents. The researcher explained the manner of answering the survey questionnaire to the respondents. The Nurse-participants were given the survey questionnaire and requested to complete it immediately. During the questionnaire administration, the researcher was around to answer the respondents' queries and collected them herself. Heartfelt gratitude was conveyed to the respondents for participating in the survey.

After retrieval of the questionnaire, statistical treatment was done to tabulate and process the data using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16 to arrive at scientific analysis and interpretation of results. The response to the questions in the research instrument was coded in numeric language and encoded into the computer software after the data gathering procedure. After statistical treatment of the data, interpretation was made.

## **2.6 Data Analysis**

The data obtained from the participants was analysed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences version 16 (SPSS).

The data pertaining to the profile and level of job satisfaction among Sulu nurses was subjected to analysis using descriptive statistics. The study employed multiple regression analysis to establish the correlation between the profile and level of job satisfaction of nurses from Sulu.

## **2.7 Ethical Consideration**

The researchers established study objectives that comprised three primary components: a. Providing the respondents with a thorough comprehension of the study's purpose and significance; b. Ensuring the questionnaire was clearly explained to the respondents to facilitate accurate data collection; c. They were receptive to any inquiries raised by the respondents after they consented to participate in the study.

This study ensured the safety and confidentiality of participant information. The Respondent's background was kept confidential. Respondents were assured of strict confidentiality regarding their identities or names.

## **3. Results**

As shown in Table 1, the mean age of Sulu nurses was 27, the length of service was 5.50 years, and the mean salary was 17.50. The result indicates that most Sulu nurses were 27 years old, rendered 5.5 years of service, and received a compensation of P17,500.

Based on Joint Commission Resources (2005) findings, a significant proportion of nurses employed in hospital settings were below 30. The study indicates that hospitals possess a comparatively younger nursing workforce. According to Lorenzo et al. (2007), migration significantly affected the nursing profession in the Philippines. The authors specifically observed that the departure of skilled and experienced healthcare workers has the potential to diminish the existing reservoir of such professionals, thereby jeopardizing the standard of care delivered within the healthcare system. Based on the research conducted by Tan (2015), it has been observed that the healthcare system in the Philippines faces a potential threat, and this arises from the hospitals' inadequate capacity to adequately replace their senior nursing personnel in a manner that aligns with the rate of attrition.

Lorenzo (2013) asserts that most nurses in the Philippines typically provide their services for a duration ranging from 1 to 10 years before opting to relocate to a different location.

**Table 1** Mean age, length of service, and salary of Sulu Nurses

Profile	M	SD
Age	27.48	7.65
Length of service	5.50	5.7
Salary	17.50	9.75

As shown in Table 2, 134 or 85.9% of the Sulu nurses were female, and 22 or 14.1% were male. The table indicates that although nursing had attracted men, it remained strongly female-dominated. The table shows that 114, or 73.1%, of Sulu nurses, were non-permanent, while 42, or 26.9%, had permanent employment status. Most Sulu nurses, 135 or 86.5%, worked in hospitals with a bed capacity of more than 100, while 21 or 13.5% were in less than 100-bed capacities. The findings suggest that most Sulu nurses worked in a hospital with more than 100-bed capacities. As can be gleaned in Table 2, most Sulu nurses, with a frequency of 148 or 94.9%, were working in public hospitals, and 8 or 5.1% were in private hospitals. Table 2 also shows the distribution of Sulu nurses when grouped according to hospital type (non-military and military). Most Sulu nurses, 149 (95.5%), were from the non-military hospital, while only 7 (4.5%) belonged to a military hospital. According to Pastor (2015), there was a notable rise in the percentage of male registered nurses, from 2.7% in 1970 to 9.6% in 2011. The research indicates that a prominent characteristic of the healthcare sector was its significant occupational segregation.

According to the assertion by Senator Guingona III in 2016, it was noted that the number of nurses in the Philippines who were engaged in contractual employment surpassed those who occupied permanent positions within hospitals. The unfilled plantilla positions in public hospitals have resulted in nurses being vulnerable to labor practices that are exploitative and inequitable. In recent times, nurses have been increasingly obligated to operate within the framework of job orders or contractual agreements.

Based on a study published by Swain (2016), nurses preferred hospital employment boasting a bed capacity exceeding 100. This inclination stemmed from the opportunity to interact with a substantial patient population, which facilitated the acquisition of valuable experience and the development of nursing capabilities and skills.

The study exclusively involved the Sulu Medical Specialist Hospital, a single private healthcare facility. Basu (2011) states that public hospitals exhibited greater prominence than private hospitals, employing a limited number of nurses.

Lake (2010) reported a disparity in the number of registered nurses employed in military hospitals compared to civilian hospitals. This discrepancy can be attributed to the fact that civilian nurses in the Army were not required to hold a bachelor's degree in nursing. However, a significant number did possess associate degrees. Nevertheless, the individuals in question had more excellent expertise than their counterparts in the Army. Typically, civilian nurses who joined the Army included at least one year of nursing experience before deployment in the hospital setting.

**Table 2** Distribution of Sulu Nurses according to gender, employment status, hospital size, hospital type

Profile	Freq	%
<i>Gender</i>		
Female	134	85.9
Male	22	14.1
<i>Employment status</i>		
Permanent	114	73.1
Nonpermanent	42	26.9
<i>Hospital size</i>		
More than 100	135	86.5
Less than 100	21	13.5
<i>Hospital type</i>		
Public	148	94.9
Private	8	5.1
<i>Hospital</i>		
Military	149	95.5
Nonmilitary	7	4.5

Table 3 shows that the mean job satisfaction score among Sulu nurses was 3.60. The findings suggest that the Sulu nurses had high job satisfaction. Table 3 also indicated that the mean scores for the nature of work, pay, supervisor-subordinate relationship, promotional opportunities, co-worker relations, and working conditions were 3.92, 3.61, 3.18, 4.21, and 3.39, respectively. Sulu nurses were delighted with the nature of the work they performed in their supervisor-subordinate relationship and with their co-worker relations. However, the respondents were moderately satisfied with pay, promotional opportunities, and working conditions.

The outcome was comparable to the 2013 Survey of Registered Nurses carried out by Healthcare Industry Research. A comprehensive total of 101,431 surveys were diligently completed, yielding noteworthy findings that indicate a considerable degree of job satisfaction among nurses. Furthermore, it is worth noting that this high satisfaction level persisted throughout 2013. Around 90% of nurses reported being content with their occupation.

According to the data in Table 3, the participants expressed a moderate degree of contentment with their remuneration, as indicated by a mean score of 3.29. The study's findings suggest that nurses from the Sulu region expressed moderate satisfaction with their compensation. According to the survey conducted by Willem et al. (2005), it has been observed that the pay dimension, which is independent of the organizational structure, serves as a constraint for hospitals in their efforts to enhance nurses' job satisfaction. Multiple studies have indicated that nurses are moderately satisfied with their compensation (Bjork et al., 2007; Curtis, 2007; Simpson, 2008; Sveinsdottir, 2006).

According to the data presented in Table 3, it is evident that the participants expressed a greater degree of contentment with the relationship between supervisors and subordinates, as evidenced by the mean score of 3.61. The research findings indicate a positive and reciprocal relationship between Sulu nurses and their superiors within the work environment, which significantly contributes to overall job satisfaction.

The findings align with Chan's (2001) investigation into nurses' job satisfaction, which revealed that nurses expressed high satisfaction levels with their supervisor-subordinate relationships. The researcher discovered that reduced pressure exerted by supervisors is associated with increased morale and job satisfaction among nurses.

According to the data in Table 3, the promotional opportunities for nurses from Sulu yielded a mean score of 3.18. The findings indicate a moderate level of satisfaction among individuals regarding their career advancement and training. According to Sajuyigbe et al. (2013), individuals experience a feeling of satisfaction when they hold the belief that their prospects are positive. This perception can contribute to their professional growth and advancement within their organization and enhance their chances of finding new employment opportunities. Based on their claim, when individuals perceive limited career advancement opportunities, their job satisfaction level may decrease.

As indicated in Table 3, the Sulu nurses exhibited high satisfaction with their coworker relationships, with a mean score of 4.21. Consequently, the presence of amiable and encouraging coworkers among Sulu nurses is positively associated with their heightened levels of job contentment.

The results align with Ting's (1997 as cited by Singh & Slack, 2016) study, which emphasizes the significant impact of interactions with colleagues on the job satisfaction of federal government employees in the United States. Viswesvaran et al. (1998) conducted a study that further supports the existing body of evidence indicating that positive relationships with colleagues benefit job satisfaction.

Based on the data presented in Table 11, it can be observed that the Sulu nurses displayed a moderate level of satisfaction with their working conditions, as indicated by a mean score of 3.39. Based on the available data, the participants exhibited moderate satisfaction regarding various aspects of their working conditions, including safety measures, ventilation, lighting, workspace, job location, and other relevant factors. The results align with the study conducted by Lambrou et al. (2011), which suggests that nurses demonstrate a moderate level of satisfaction with their working conditions and that the quality of working conditions significantly influences nurses' overall job satisfaction. According to Hinno (2009), there has been a growing global focus on the professional environment of nurses. This attention stems from the consensus that identifying ways to improve hospital working conditions is essential for maintaining nurses' job satisfaction.

**Table 3** Level of job satisfaction of Sulu Nurses

Dimensions	M	Textual equivalent	Interpretation
Nature of work score	3.92	Agree	High
Pay score	3.29	Neutral	Moderate
Supervisor-subordinate relationship score	3.61	Agree	High
Promotional opportunities score	3.18	Neutral	Moderate
Co-worker relations score	4.21	Agree	High
Working condition score	3.39	Neutral	Moderate
Level of job satisfaction score	3.60	Agree	High

The correlation between the profile and job satisfaction level of Sulu nurses is illustrated in Table 4. The findings indicate a significant association between one's employment status and the degree of contentment with their job ( $b = .405$ ,  $p = .004$ ). The findings of the study revealed a significant correlation between remuneration and the degree of job contentment ( $b = .022$ ,  $p = .000$ ), as well as a significant association between the category of healthcare facility (civilian and military) and the level of job satisfaction ( $b = .608$ ,  $p = .003$ ). The findings are analogous to Luddy's (2005) investigation on workers' contentment in a public healthcare organization in the Western Cape region. The researcher discovered a meaningful correlation between employment status and job satisfaction ( $r = 0.54$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), as well as between salary and job satisfaction ( $r = 0.4324$ ,  $p = 0.0104$ ).

Table 4 demonstrates that there was no statistically significant association between age and the degree of job satisfaction, gender and the degree of job satisfaction, length of service and the degree of job satisfaction, hospital size and the degree of job satisfaction, as well as hospital type (public and private) and the degree of job satisfaction. All of the results indicated a p-value exceeding the 0.05 threshold. The findings align with Andrews' (1990) study, which indicated a lack of correlation between age and job satisfaction among Extension agricultural agents. In contrast, Oshagbemi's (2000) study did not yield evidence of a significant association between gender and job satisfaction. In a study conducted among young American and British employees, Donohue and Heywood (2004) could not establish a definitive correlation between gender and job satisfaction. In a study titled "The Relationship between Demographics and Job Satisfaction of Research Assistants," Eren (1999) discovered no statistically significant correlation between tenure and job satisfaction.

It can be concluded that while employment status, salary, and hospital type (non-military and military) are significant predictors of the level of job satisfaction among Sulu nurses, age, gender, length of service, hospital size, and hospital type (public and private) do not predict the level of job satisfaction among Sulu nurses.

The model can take the form of an equation. In the equation, there are several unknown quantities (the b-values). The first part of Table 4 gives an estimate for b-values, and these values indicate the individual contributions of each predictor to the model. By replacing b-values in the equation, the model can be defined as follows:

$$\text{Level of job satisfaction} = 4.57 - 0.07 \times \text{Age} + 0.090 \times \text{Gender} + 0.015 \times \text{Length of service} + .405 \times \text{Employment status} + .022 \times \text{Salary} + .291 \times \text{Hospital size} + .144 \times \text{Hospital type (public \& private)} + .608 \times \text{Hospital type (non-military \& military)} .$$

The coefficient b establishes the association between the degree of job satisfaction and individual predictors. Field (2009) states that a positive value indicates a positive association between the predictor and the outcome, while a negative coefficient signifies a negative association. The study's results demonstrate a statistically significant and positive association between job satisfaction and various factors, including employment status, salary, and hospital classification (military and non-military). There is a positive correlation between salary increases and job satisfaction among nurses in the province of Sulu. The levels of job satisfaction among nurses working in military hospitals are higher than their counterparts in non-military healthcare facilities. According to empirical research, evidence suggests that nurses who have achieved permanent tenure demonstrate elevated levels of job satisfaction compared to their counterparts who have not obtained such job security.

**Table 4** Coefficient of profile and level of job satisfaction of Sulu Nurses

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1 (Constant)	4.570	.828		5.516	.000
Age	-.007	.014	-.089	-.532	.596
Gender	.090	.129	.051	.695	.488
Length of service	.015	.017	.139	.882	.379
Employment status	.405	.140	.291	2.895	.004
Salary	.022	.005	.344	4.305	.000
Hospital size	.291	.233	.161	1.250	.213
Hospital type (public & private)	.144	.298	.069	.483	.629
Hospital type (non-military & military)	.608	.283	.204	2.150	.033

a. Dependent variable: ljbscore

#### **4. Discussion**

Research has shown that contented employees exhibit more significant levels of productivity, creativity, and commitment, ultimately leading to improved quality of patient care and heightened patient satisfaction. Nurse dissatisfaction can result in adverse outcomes such as decreased energy levels, increased absenteeism, diminished organizational loyalty, and suboptimal patient care. This research aimed to determine the Sulu nurses' profile and job satisfaction level. The study aimed to investigate the correlation between the profile of Sulu nurses and their level of job satisfaction. Most nurses working in the Sulu hospitals were under 30, with 5.5 years in the service. The Sulu hospitals have a younger nursing workforce. They are losing their senior nurses faster than they could replace them, which can be linked to migration to another place or working abroad for better opportunities. Although nursing had attracted men, it remained strongly female dominated in Sulu hospitals. Sulu had more nurses on a contractual basis than in permanent jobs. Nurses preferred working in hospitals with more than 100-bed capacities due to the large number of patients because they could acquire better experience and enhance their nursing capabilities and skills. Most public hospitals were more prominent than private hospitals, and the latter hired few nurses, and fewer registered nurses were working in military hospitals than in civilian hospitals. A salary increase accompanied a high satisfaction rating of nurses in Sulu. Moreover, nurses working in military hospitals were more satisfied than those in non-military hospitals. In addition, nurses with permanent tenure were more satisfied than non-permanent nurses.

#### **5. Conclusion**

A significant proportion of nurses in Sulu exhibit a considerable degree of job satisfaction. Regarding job satisfaction, nurses in Sulu exhibit high satisfaction with their work, their relationship with their supervisors, and their interactions with colleagues. The study reveals that the participants exhibit a moderate level of contentment concerning their remuneration, prospects for advancement, and the work environment they are currently situated. There exists a significant correlation between the profile of Sulu nurses and their level of job satisfaction. The job satisfaction levels of Sulu nurses can be predicted by their employment status, salary, and the type of hospital they work in (military or non-military). A statistically significant correlation exists between job satisfaction levels and various factors, including employment status (permanent versus non-permanent), salary, and hospital type (military versus non-military).

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The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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