

Job Satisfaction among Nurses Who Work in the Oncology Unit in Erbil City

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ABSTRACT

Background and Objectives: Job satisfaction refers to a person's overall assessment of their employment, whether good or bad. Oncology nursing practitioners routinely witness the suffering, misery, and death of others while working long hours in understaffed units and with a high emotional commitment. It is crucial to evaluate how happy these specialists are in their highly specialized field. This study is aimed at evaluating the job satisfaction among nurses who work in the oncology unit in Erbil City.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional Study was conducted among 31 nurses working in the oncology ward at Rizgary in the city of Erbil in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, from November 2022 to April 2023. Non-probability purposive sampling is used to collect relevant study samples. The study sample is assessed using a questionnaire consisting of two parts.

Result: According to the study, half (48.4%) of oncology nurses were dissatisfied about their pay and benefits, although the majority were just mildly unhappy. 54.8% of respondents had no unhappiness with workdays, while 32.3% expressed moderate satisfaction with work hours. The majority expressed no opinion regarding career advancement; however, there was moderate satisfaction with professional relationships (54.8%), social engagement (51.6%), and part-time jobs (41.9%). Overall, the results show that job satisfaction is moderate, with neutrality prevalent in the majority of job-related factors.

Conclusion: The study concluded that factors such as gender, age, education, and work experience can influence job satisfaction among oncology nurses. Dissatisfaction was moderate regarding salary, vacation benefits, and the benefits package.

Keywords: Job Satisfaction; Nurses; Oncology Wards; Sociodemographic Factors.

Received: 20/07/2025

Accepted: 17/09/2025

Published: 30/11/2025

INTRODUCTION

Job satisfaction is influenced by how much people like or loathe their jobs. It is also viewed as a collection of viewpoints on the job's numerous facets, such as salary, the nature of the workgroup, organizational dynamics, and working conditions. Because of this, job pleasure and dissatisfaction can both occur in a variety of workplace settings [1]. There is a correlation between enhanced patient outcomes and increased levels of work satisfaction among nurses [2]. Several factors are believed to influence the job satisfaction of nurses, such as their workload, support, occupational safety, relationships with supervisors and coworkers, and organizational structure [3]. The development of staff, the suitability of nurse staffing, the independence of nurses, their participation in policy-making, and the backing of supervisors for new ideas were significantly influenced by relationship management and the linkages between physicians and nurses, as well as dispute resolution. Consequently, these factors are closely associated with nurses' job satisfaction [4]. Nurses provide patient assessments, give treatments and prescriptions, monitor symptoms and side effects, record nursing care and interventions, educate patients and their families, and offer support. Furthermore, their collaborative contributions with other healthcare professionals and patients should not be underestimated [5]. Oncology nurses operate in a setting that entails the handling of intricate diseases with unfavorable outcomes, technological advancements, and frequent interactions with patients who are experiencing pain, suffering, and nearing the end of their lives. Based on data from previous research, these issues have played a substantial role in causing work dissatisfaction, stress, and burnout among oncology nurses [6]. Therefore, the disparity between the need for oncology nurses and the

availability of such nurses has increased the likelihood of nurses encountering unfavorable consequences, ultimately impacting the standard of treatment in a detrimental manner [7]. Concerns about nurses' job satisfaction have long existed in healthcare systems, especially in underdeveloped nations. Research from Pakistan shows that a large number of nurses are unhappy with their working conditions, particularly with regard to salary and recognition. This kind of discontent can have a detrimental effect on retention, performance, and motivation, which in turn can lower the standard of patient care. Therefore, it is crucial to comprehend the elements that affect nurses' job happiness in order to enhance workforce stability and healthcare results. [8]. This study aims to investigate the impact of organizational support, workload, salary and benefits, and compare job satisfaction levels with those working in other healthcare settings, with the ultimate goal of suggesting strategies to assess the job satisfaction among oncology nurses.

METHODS

A cross-sectional study design was conducted among nurses who are working at the Oncology Unit in Rizgary Teaching Hospital in Erbil City. The study was carried out from November 2022 to April 2023. The study sample included 31 nurses (representative sample) who are working in oncology unit at Rizgary Teaching Hospital in Erbil City, Kurdistan Region of Iraq. A non-probability, purposive sampling is used to collect the relevant study samples. All nurses in the oncology unit who are willing to participate and have at least one year of work experience were recruited in this study. A questionnaire, as a tool of data collection, was used and had two parts. Part one consists of

sociodemographic characteristics of nurses, which included age, years of experience, gender, marital status, and education level; part two consists of the items regarding job satisfaction. For assessing job satisfaction, several items had been used. The Multidimensional Job Satisfaction Scale is an in-depth tool that helps assess the distinct factors contributing to an individual's satisfaction at work. Instead of assessing job satisfaction as a single global construct, the scale recognizes a number of broader categories that influence how employees view their job. These categories usually relate to autonomy, collegial and supervisory interactions, professional stature, accountabilities at work, organizational norms and compensation, and sometimes consider external environment factors related to external colleagues or support staff. The scale employs Likert-type items to determine the importance individuals assign to various dimensions and their level of satisfaction within each dimension. [9] It is used one of the versions of the Professional Satisfaction Index, which utilized paired comparisons and attitude scales to derive adjusted component scores [10]. A validated six-factor model offered a culturally adapted model using confirmatory factor analysis. These multidimensional tools offered a fuller picture of how an employee perceives workplace satisfaction and helped researchers and administrators identify focused areas for organizational improvement and employee care and support. In the Job Satisfaction Scale, 1 coded for very dissatisfied, 2 for moderately dissatisfied, 3 for neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, 4 for moderately satisfied, and 5 for very satisfied. The data was collected through direct (face-to-face) interviews. For ethical considerations, the proposal was approved by the Scientific Committee from the Faculty of Nursing at Tishk International University to obtain formal

approval. For informal oral consent, it was taken from all participants after a detailed explanation about the purpose of the study and giving a guarantee that their personal information would be saved and secured. In addition to the above, the researchers told each participant that this is a voluntary work and that they can leave at any time even if the process is not completed. The data were analyzed by statistical software (Statistical Package for Social Science-SPSS V.26) through using descriptive statistical analysis (frequency and percentage). Within this study, "job opportunities" is a term that refers to the social and career aspects of the nursing work environment that may have some effect on job satisfaction. They include career development opportunities, participation in research, publication, working with peers, socialization, and flexible work hours. These aspects were assessed as subscales of the Multidimensional Job Satisfaction Scale, which is a measure of the extent to which certain domains such as salary, benefits, working conditions, and job opportunities are contributory to nurses' overall level of satisfaction.

RESULTS

The data represents the sociodemographic characteristics of a sample of 31 oncology nurses. The sample includes 15 females and 16 males. The majority of the sample, 67.7%, are within the age range of 30 to 39 years old. More than half of the participants were married (64.5%) and had a bachelor's degree (51.6%). In terms of work experience, the majority of participants had experience ranging from 11 to 15 years (30.0%) and 16 to 20 years (30.0%). 10.0% of respondents had 1 to 5 years of experience, whereas nearly one-quarter (23.3%) had 6 to 10 years. Only 3.3% of participants had worked for 21–25 years and 26–30 years as well. None of the

participants had a postgraduate degree, as shown in table 1.

Table1: Sociodemographic characteristics of nurses working in the Oncology Unit

Sociodemographic Characteristics		Samples (n. 31)	
		F.	(%)
Gender	Female	15	(48.5)
	Male	16	(51.5)
Age group (Year)	20-29	7	(22.6)
	30-39	21	(67.7)
	≥ 40	3	(9.7)
	Single	11	(35.5)
Marital Status	Married	20	(64.5)
Educational Level	Diploma	15	(48.4)
	Bachelor's degree	16	(51.6)
Year of Experience	1-5	3	(10)
	6-10	7	(23.3)
	11-15	9	(30.0)
	16-20	9	(30.0)
	21-25	1	(3.3)
	26-30	1	(3.3)

The findings indicate that none of the nurses were very dissatisfied or very satisfied with their salary and vacation benefits. However, a large number of nurses were

However, half of the nurses (45.2%) were neither dissatisfied nor satisfied with their benefits package. As for hours worked, none of the nurses were extremely dissatisfied, but 22.6% were moderately dissatisfied and 41.9% were neither dissatisfied nor satisfied. Meanwhile, 32.3% of the participants were moderately satisfied with their working hours, and only 3.2% were very satisfied. Overall, the results show that job satisfaction needs to be improved for nurses working in oncology wards, particularly in salary and holiday benefits, as reflected in table 2. As far as the benefits package is concerned, there were not many nurses (6.5%) who were extremely dissatisfied, but almost a quarter (25.8%) who were moderately dissatisfied. Nearly half of the nurses (48.4%) were neither dissatisfied nor satisfied with their salary and vacation benefits moderately dissatisfied with their salary (19.4%) and vacation benefits (12.9%).

Table 2: Employee Satisfaction by Work-Related Factor

	Very Dissatisfied		Moderately Dissatisfied		Nor Dissatisfied		Moderately Satisfied		Very Satisfied	
	F.	(%)	F.	(%)	F.	(%)	F.	(%)	F.	(%)
Salary	0	(0)	6	(19.4)	15	(48.4)	10	(32.3)	0	(0)
Vacation	0	(0)	4	(12.9)	15	(48.4)	12	(38.7)	0	(0)
Benefits package (insurance, retirement)	2	(6.5)	8	(25.8)	14	(45.2)	7	(22.6)	0	(0)
Hours of the work	0	(0)	7	(22.6)	13	(41.9)	10	(32.3)	1	(3.2)
Flexibility in scheduling your hours	0	(0)	6	(19.4)	21	(67.7)	4	(12.9)	0	(0)

The data represents the levels of satisfaction of nurses who work in oncology units with various aspects of their job opportunities. The data represent nurses' satisfaction with different aspects of job opportunities, including professional growth, research participation, and workplace interactions. These factors were evaluated as part of the multidimensional job satisfaction assessment to determine how such opportunities contribute to overall job satisfaction among oncology nurses. For each aspect, the percentages of nurses who reported being very dissatisfied, moderately dissatisfied, not dissatisfied, moderately satisfied, and very satisfied are presented. According to the results, the majority of nurses were not dissatisfied with their opportunities to work straight days, with 54.8% reporting no dissatisfaction, followed by moderately satisfied at 25.8%, and moderately dissatisfied at 9.7%. However, 9.7% of nurses reported being very dissatisfied with this aspect. In terms of opportunities for part-time work, 41.9% of nurses reported being moderately satisfied, while 29% were not dissatisfied and 16.1% were moderately dissatisfied. 12.9% of nurses reported being very satisfied, while none reported being very dissatisfied. Regarding social contact opportunities at work, half of nurses (51.6%) reported being moderately satisfied, followed by 29% who were not dissatisfied, and 19.4% who were very satisfied. None of the nurses reported being dissatisfied with this aspect of their job. Similarly, for social contact opportunities with colleagues after work, less than half of nurses (45.2%) were moderately satisfied, followed by 29% who were not dissatisfied and 25.8% who were very satisfied. None of the nurses reported being dissatisfied with this aspect of their job, as shown in figure 1 in a bar graph.

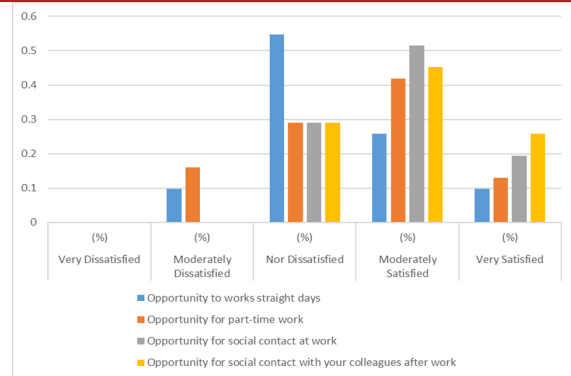


Figure 1. Different opportunities for the job

In terms of opportunities to interact professionally with other disciplines, more than half of nurses (54.8%) were moderately satisfied, followed by 19.4% who were neither dissatisfied nor satisfied, and 12.9% who were very satisfied or moderately dissatisfied. Only 4 nurses (12.9%) reported being very dissatisfied. Regarding opportunities to interact with faculty of the college of nursing, 48.4% of the nurses were neither dissatisfied nor satisfied, followed by 25.8% who were moderately dissatisfied, 22.6% who were moderately satisfied, and only 1 nurse (3.2%) who was very satisfied. No nurses reported being very dissatisfied. When it comes to opportunities to belong to department and institutional committees, less than half of nurses (41.9%) were neither dissatisfied nor satisfied, followed by 35.5% who were moderately satisfied, 19.4% who were moderately dissatisfied, and only 1 nurse (3.2%) who was very dissatisfied. In terms of opportunities for career advancement, the majority of nurses (67.7%) reported being neither dissatisfied nor satisfied, followed by 29% who were moderately satisfied, and only 1 nurse (3.2%) who was moderately dissatisfied. No nurses reported being very satisfied or very dissatisfied. Regarding opportunities to participate in nursing research, 38.7% of the nurses were moderately satisfied, followed by 29% who

were neither dissatisfied nor satisfied, 16.1% who were very dissatisfied or very satisfied, and 5 nurses (16.1%) who were moderately dissatisfied. Finally, when it comes to opportunities to write and publish, the majority of nurses (32.3%) were neither dissatisfied nor satisfied, followed by 35.5% who were moderately dissatisfied, 12.9% who were very dissatisfied, 11 nurses (35.5%) who were moderately satisfied, and only 1 nurse (3.2%) who was very satisfied, as shown in figure 1.2.

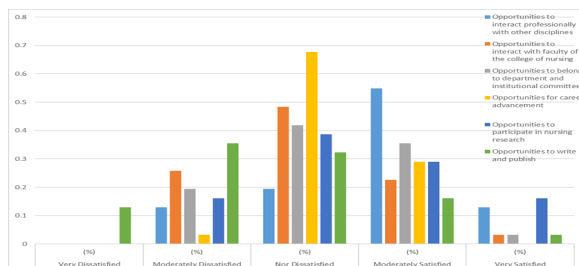


Figure 2. The different opportunities for the job

In terms of their immediate supervisors, only 3.2% of the participants reported being very dissatisfied, while 35.5% reported being moderately satisfied and 9.7% reported being very satisfied. However, a significant proportion of participants reported being moderately or very dissatisfied with their immediate supervisor (22.6% and 29%, respectively). When it comes to nursing peers, no participants reported being very dissatisfied, but 9.7% reported being moderately dissatisfied. The majority of the participants (48.4%) reported being moderately satisfied with their nursing peers, while 12.9% were very satisfied. Regarding the physicians they work with, none of the participants reported being very or moderately dissatisfied. However, a considerable proportion of participants reported being neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (38.7%). Similarly, 22.6% of the participants reported being very satisfied with the physicians they work with, as shown in figure 3.

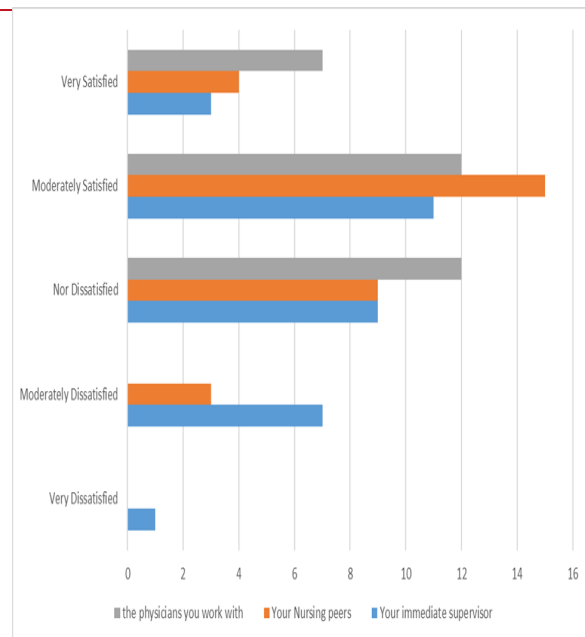


Figure 3. Satisfaction with Workplace Interpersonal Relations

In terms of weekends off per month, the majority of nurses (74.2%) reported being neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, while 6.5% were moderately dissatisfied and 19.4% were moderately satisfied. There were no nurses who reported being very dissatisfied or very satisfied. Regarding flexibility in scheduling weekends off, 38.7% of nurses were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, while 35.5% were moderately dissatisfied, 19.4% were moderately satisfied, and 6.5% were very satisfied. No nurses reported being very dissatisfied. For compensation for working weekends, 38.7% of nurses were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, 41.9% were moderately dissatisfied, 16.1% were moderately satisfied, and 3.2% were very dissatisfied. None of the nurses reported being very satisfied. Regarding maternity leave time, 38.7% of nurses were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, 32.3% were moderately satisfied, 25.8% were very dissatisfied, and 3.2% were moderately dissatisfied. No nurses reported being very satisfied. For childcare facilities, 45.2% of nurses were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, 29% were

moderately satisfied, 22.6% were moderately dissatisfied, and 3.2% were very dissatisfied. None of the nurses reported being very satisfied. Regarding the method of care delivery used in the unit, 41.9% of nurses were moderately dissatisfied, 41.9% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, 6.5% were moderately satisfied, and 6.5% were very satisfied. Only 3.2% of nurses were very dissatisfied. Regarding control over what goes on in the work setting, 51.6% of nurses were moderately satisfied, 29% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, 19.4% were moderately dissatisfied, and none of the nurses were very dissatisfied or very satisfied. For recognition of work from peers, 45.2%

of nurses were moderately satisfied, 41.9% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, 12.9% were very satisfied, and none of the nurses were very dissatisfied or moderately dissatisfied. Regarding the amount of responsibility, 61.3% of nurses were moderately satisfied, 16.1% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, 22.6% were very satisfied, and none of the nurses were very dissatisfied or moderately dissatisfied. Finally, for control over work conditions, 41.9% of nurses were moderately satisfied, 35.5% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, 22.6% were very satisfied, and none of the nurses were very dissatisfied or moderately dissatisfied, as shown in table 3.

Table 3: distribution of satisfaction among the nurses working in oncology wards

	Very Dissatisfied		Moderately Dissatisfied		Nor Dissatisfied		Moderately Satisfied		Very Satisfied	
	F.	(%)	F.	(%)	F.	(%)	F.	(%)	F.	(%)
Weekends off per month	0	(0)	2	(6.5)	23	(74.2)	6	(19.4)	0	(0)
Flexibility in scheduling your weekends off	0	(0)	11	(35.5)	12	(38.7)	6	(19.4)	2	(6.5)
compensation for working weekends	1	(3.2)	13	(41.9)	12	(38.7)	5	(16.1)	0	(0)
maternity leave time	8	(25.8)	1	(3.2)	12	(38.7)	10	(32.3)	0	(0)
Childcare facilities	1	(3.2)	7	(22.6)	14	(45.2)	9	(29)	0	(0)
the delivery of care method used on your unit (e.g. functional, team, primary)	1	(3.2)	13	(41.9)	13	(41.9)	2	(6.5)	2	(6.5)
Control over what goes on in your work setting	0	(0)	0	(0)	9	(29)	16	(51.6)	6	(19.4)
Recognition of work from peers	0	(0)	0	(0)	13	(41.9)	14	(45.2)	4	(12.9)
Your amount of responsibility	0	(0)	0	(0)	5	(16.1)	19	(61.3)	7	(22.6)
Your control over work conditions	0	(0)	0	(0)	11	(35.5)	13	(41.9)	7	(22.6)

DISCUSSION

Job satisfaction is a key component of nurses' overall well-being and is closely linked to retention, productivity, and job performance. In the case of oncology unit nurses, job satisfaction is even more important given the nature of their work and how it can be emotionally demanding. The findings of this study have important implications for nursing practice and can serve as a foundation for creating interventions to increase job satisfaction among nurses working in oncology wards. If it is understood what aspects of job satisfaction are important for this group of nurses, interventions can be tailored to improve their well-being, work performance, and general job satisfaction. Findings of this study have important implications for nursing practice and can help inform future efforts to improve the allocation of nursing resources in oncology units. Understanding job satisfaction among nurses is crucial in ensuring that patients receive appropriate care and that nurses are working in roles that suit their skills and qualifications. Sociodemographic factors, such as gender, age, marital status, and educational level, can play an important role in shaping job satisfaction among nurses working in oncology units. This is supported by [11], who found that personal and demographic characteristics influenced nurses' stress levels and job satisfaction in cancer settings. For example, variations in education level or years of experience can influence nurses' job responsibilities and tasks. Additionally, factors such as marital status and age may impact the availability of nurses to work certain shifts or take on certain responsibilities. There have been several studies that have investigated the role of sociodemographic factors in shaping job satisfaction among nurses. One piece of research conducted by [12] found that

education, age, and work experience had a strong role in determining the job satisfaction of nurses employed in Jordan. The study revealed no statistically significant correlation between sociodemographic factors, such as gender and marital status, and job satisfaction. Another study conducted by [13] investigated the influence exerted by sociodemographic factors on the job satisfaction of nurses employed in South Africa. The study established that age, education level, and work experience years were powerful predictors of job satisfaction, while variables such as gender and marriage status were insignificant predictors. Relative to these studies, the current study concluded that variables such as gender, age, marriage status, education level, and work experience were all powerful determinants of job satisfaction among oncology ward nurses. However, observe that the sample used in this study was very small, which may limit the generalizability of findings [12, 13, 14], carried out research into job satisfaction among oncology nurses in China and confirmed the same results regarding dissatisfaction with pay and benefits. Overall, 59.4% of nurses reported dissatisfaction with their salary, and 50.6% reported dissatisfaction with their benefits. In terms of job satisfaction, the research found that nurses with greater levels of education and work experience were more job-satisfied. The study indicated that heavy workloads and extended working hours negatively impact job satisfaction. Another study by [15] investigated job satisfaction among oncology nurses in Brazil and found that job satisfaction was positively correlated with the level of education, compensation, and job security. The study also found that nurses who reported greater work-related social support and autonomy reported greater job satisfaction. The study, however, found that workload, inadequate staffing, and

inadequate resources negatively affected job satisfaction. This study emphasizes the need for healthcare organizations to address areas such as compensation, benefits, workload, and resources to improve job satisfaction among nurses. If we place in comparison what we have discovered in this research as shown in Figures 1,2, and 3 with other research, e.g., the systematic reviews of [16] and [17], who identified factors influencing job satisfaction of nurses, e.g., workload, remuneration, and communication with colleagues. [18] conducted a literature review on job satisfaction among nurses and concluded that it is a complex and multifaceted concept which may be influenced by environmental, organizational, and individual factors. Drawing a comparison of research on oncology ward nurses with these other studies, there can be an identification of similarities and differences. For example, the study on nurses working in cancer wards determined that the majority of nurses were satisfied with career development opportunities, whereas the systematic reviews conducted by [16] and [17] determined that pay and opportunities for advancement were primary motivators of job satisfaction among nurses. In the same way, the study among oncology ward nurses concluded that possibilities for social interaction with others in the workplace and with coworkers outside of work were generally satisfactory, which is consistent with the study of [18] that coworker and supervisor relationships can be a major factor in job satisfaction. It is noteworthy that, among all the factors listed, no nurses reported being very satisfied. This means that there is scope to improve in all these dimensions. When it comes to weeks off a month, the majority of nurses responded neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. This could imply that they may not have a specific preference for any particular number of weekends off

a month, or else they are not concerned with how much they are getting. As far as planning weekends off for themselves, higher percentages of nurses were not satisfied at the 35.5% rate with moderate dissatisfaction. This could be read to mean that perhaps nurses do not feel that they are in charge of planning weekends off themselves. Regarding receiving pay for working weekends, a high percentage of nurses were highly or moderately dissatisfied. Nurses may feel they are not fairly compensated for the additional work assigned during weekends. Regarding the duration of maternity leave, a greater number of nurses reported being very dissatisfied, indicating that they may perceive the time off following childbirth as inadequate. Finally, regarding childcare facilities, more nurses were moderately or very dissatisfied. This may show that nurses may not feel that they have adequate childcare facilities to utilize, which may impact their work performance. Overall, this information indicates that there is some potential for improvement in many aspects of job satisfaction among nurses. Those include pay for working on weekends, maternity leave duration, and availability of childcare facilities. In Erbil city, there are two public teaching hospitals specializing in oncology: Rizgary Teaching Hospital and Nanakali Teaching Hospital. However, Nanakali Teaching Hospital did not permit us to collect data for this study, resulting in a limited sample size, as we only gathered data from all staff members working in the oncology ward at Rizgary Teaching Hospital.

CONCLUSION

The study found that oncology nurses in Rizgary Hospital experience moderate overall job satisfaction, with neutrality prevailing across most job-related factors. While nurses reported satisfaction with professional relationships, responsibility, and control over work conditions, dissatisfaction was notable regarding salary, vacation benefits, and overall benefits packages. Demographic factors such as age, gender, education, and years of experience influenced satisfaction levels. Career advancement, research participation, and academic collaboration opportunities were limited, and issues such as weekend compensation and scheduling flexibility were identified as concerns. These findings suggest that improving compensation, benefits, professional development opportunities, and supportive management practices could enhance job satisfaction, reduce turnover, and promote higher-quality care for oncology patients.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Drawing on the study's findings, the following recommendations can be made. Health care organizations, such as the Ministry of Health and relevant policymakers, should increase salaries and benefits to recruit and retain high-quality nurses. Improve working conditions: A significant proportion of nurses reported dissatisfaction with their work schedules in the study. In addition to providing flexible schedules that enable nurses to manage their personal and professional lives, healthcare facilities should seek to enhance working conditions by strategically expanding their workforce in order to reduce staffing shortages. By reducing excessive workloads, minimizing overtime, and improving overall job satisfaction, hiring more nurses can improve patient care and retain qualified personnel.

Increase career advancement: Nurses with greater education levels were found to experience higher job satisfaction levels. There should be motivation for career growth among nurses in health care organizations. Foster supportive work environments: Nurses who feel supported and valued in the work environment are more likely to have greater job satisfaction. Healthcare organizations must foster supportive work environments by providing opportunities for collaboration and teamwork, valuing and rewarding nurses for their hard work (e.g., with money, a letter of gratitude, or grant opportunities), and promoting open communication and respect for cultures.

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