

Job Satisfaction as Experienced by Generation Y Nurses: A Phenomenological Study

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Abstract

A descriptive phenomenological research design was used to explore the lived experiences of 10 Generation Y nurses in Upstate New York through analysis of narrative data from one-on-one interviews. The findings suggest if inner feelings of satisfaction are not met, nurses will look toward other opportunities to fulfill job satisfaction.

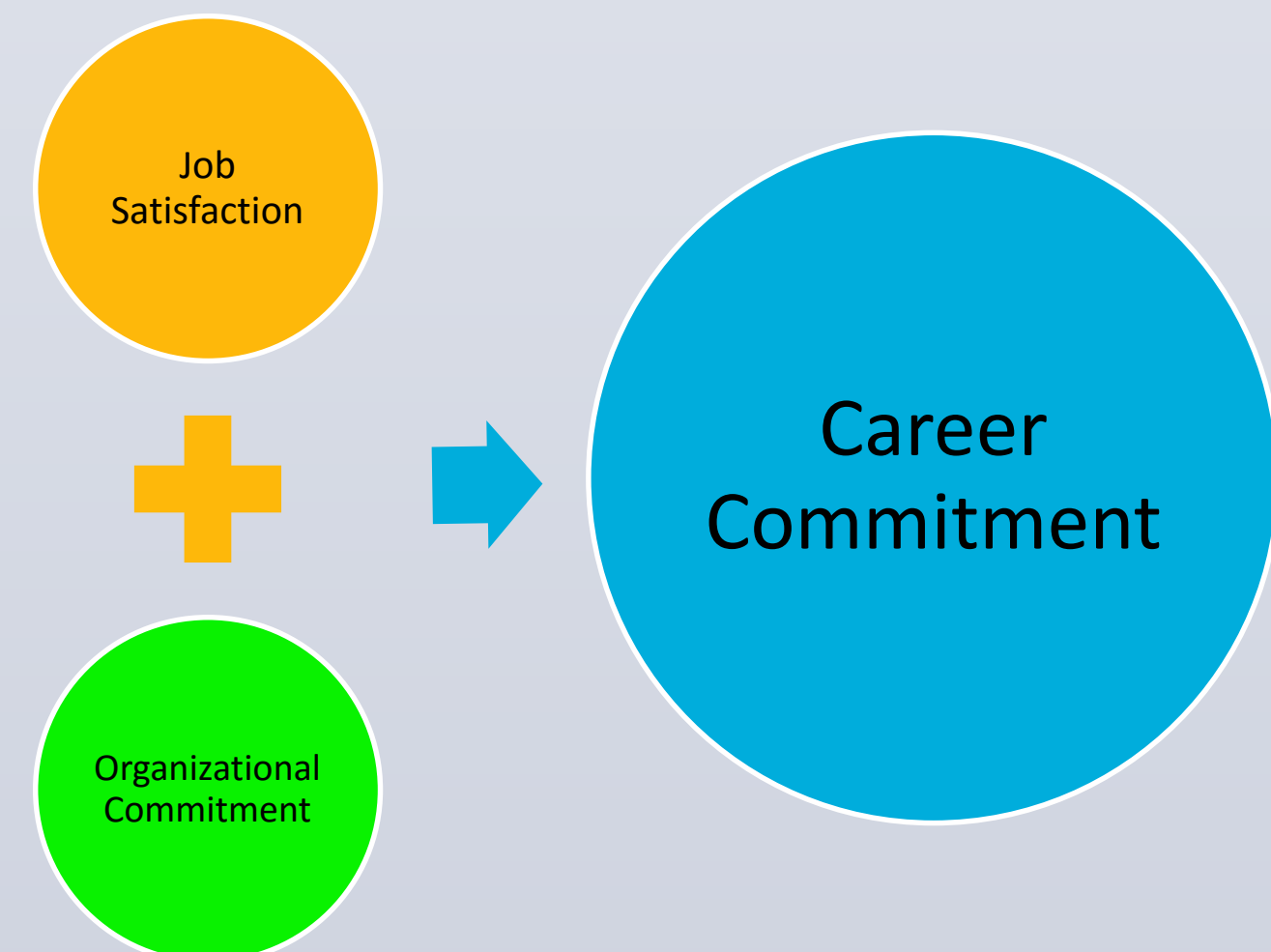
Problem

Job satisfaction has been reported to be at an all-time low, which has posed a challenge for healthcare organizations. With an increasing shortage of nurses, awareness needs to be directed toward understanding job satisfaction among Generation Y nurses. The specific problem is if nurses do not find satisfaction within their job, they may elect to leave nursing or move to another organization.

This study may bring awareness to nurse administrators and managers if they wish to retain Generation Y nurses by addressing the importance of understanding satisfiers Generation Y nurses identified.

Purpose

The purpose of the descriptive phenomenological study was to explore the lived experiences of job satisfaction among Generation Y nurses who have worked at an acute-care facility in Upstate New York for one or more years. Exploring nurses' experiences will provide nurse leaders with an in-depth understanding of Generation Y nurses' decisions to remain at their current place of employment.



Background of the Problem

The nursing shortage is at a crisis level in the United States, which is negatively affecting the quality of healthcare delivered to Americans. Research has indicated new graduate Generation Y nurses are reporting high levels of stress in their jobs and low levels of job satisfaction. This is a concern to healthcare organizations because when nurses are not satisfied in their job, they look elsewhere for other opportunities. According to current literature, Generation Y nurses are not afraid to leave their place of employment to go to another organization if they are not supported by their work environment.

- Aging workforce of nurses is a major concern
- RN shortages may surpass one million by 2020 in the United States
- 30% to 50% of newly licensed nurses will either leave or change positions within their 1st year of clinical practice
- Increase in demand for healthcare as the new healthcare reform bill will expand healthcare coverage to a predicted 32 million individuals who will enter the healthcare system



Methods

Descriptive phenomenology guided in-depth interviews to explore the lived experiences of job satisfaction among Generation Y nurses. Using purposive sampling 10 Generation Y nurses 23 to 30 years of age were recruited from an acute-care facility located in Upstate New York. The central research question that guided the study was: What is the lived experience of job satisfaction for Generation Y nurses at an acute-care facility? Herzberg's dual-factor theory of job satisfaction and motivation formed the theoretical framework for this study. Colaizzi's seven-step method was used to guide the analysis of the study to identify four main themes and six sub-themes.

Who are Generation Y Nurses

- Born between the years 1981-2000
- Just starting their careers and consist of 8% of the nursing workforce
- Most globally aware, most educated, technologically literate, and racially diverse generation in history
- Prefer text messaging rather than face-face conversations
- Parents interceded when they failed, resulting in this generation knowing mostly success
- Like to be stimulated and entertained
- Adaptable and adapt at multitasking, yet bore easily
- Do well in nursing teamwork
- Have a sense of entitlement, expect others to take care of issues for them
- Raised in a period of opulence, diversity, increased federal spending on children, interactive media, and a focus on family values
- Expect their employers to provide an extended orientation period in order to feel comfortable in their role
- Like flexible schedules to achieve a work-life balance
- Frequently job hop to accomplish their career goals

Priorities of Generation Y Workers

Gen Y was raised at the most child-centric time in our history. Showers of attention and high expectations from parents foster a great deal of self-confidence.

Gen Yers openly share their ideas as part of their team mentality and are willing to find and try new approaches to attain objectives.

Members of Generation Y have a unique familiarity with technology that vastly exceeds their predecessors. They are early adopters of new technologies.

New to the workplace, this group is perhaps the most in need of mentoring. The good news is they respond well to personal attention.

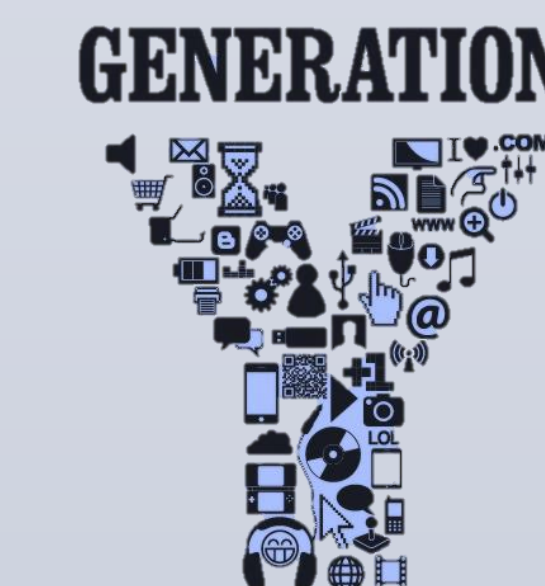
Source: ARMA International: Leveraging Generational Work Styles to Meet Business Objectives

Emerging Themes

- Theme: Experiences of Feeling Good
 - Subtheme 1: Making a difference
 - Subtheme 2: Feelings of value
 - Subtheme 3: I found my calling
- Theme: Relationships
 - Subtheme 1: Connections
 - Subtheme 2: Balancing life
 - Subtheme 3: Feeling devalued
- Theme: Job Strain
- Theme: Having Choices

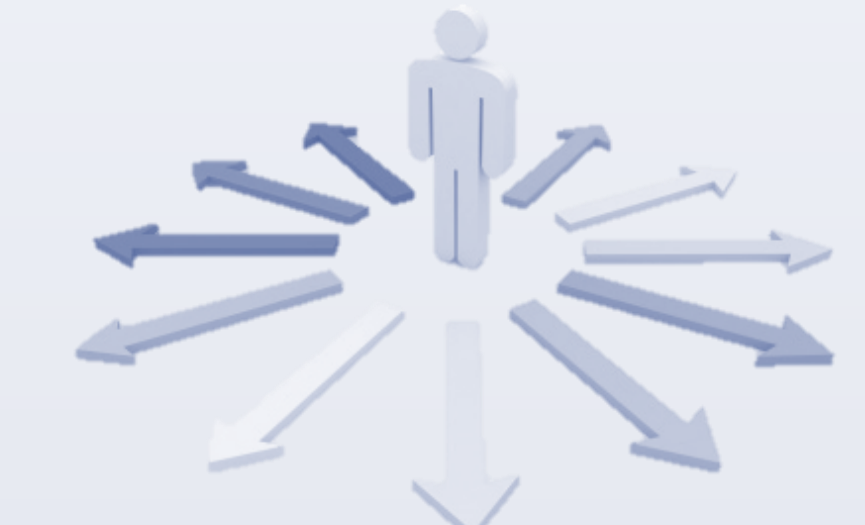
Conclusions

- Generation Y nurses want to feel valued and appreciated by others, achieve a sense of belonging
- Generation Y nurses want to make a difference in the lives of others
- Generation Y nurses want opportunities for future professional development
- Teamwork and friendships are important to this generation
- Generation Y nurses want a balance between work and home life, having a flexible schedule to accommodate personal time with their families and friends
- Generation Y nurses want a manager who is approachable, understanding, receptive, and fair
- Generation Y nurses want to feel good about the establishment they are working for
- Generation Y nurses want to be rewarded for doing a good job
- They want to choose where they work based on their personal beliefs
- If Generation Y nurses do not believe in the organization where they work, or if they do not feel supported, they will leave



Recommendations for Practice and Nurse Leaders

- Supporting Relationships and Teamwork
- Opportunities for Future Professional Development
- Provide a Balance Between Work and Home Life
- Provide an Environment Where Nurses Feel Valued
- Provide a Safe Environment



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