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FACTORS AFFECTING NURSES RETENTION IN A LEBANESE MEDICAL CENTER

by
MONA KHALDOUN KAWWAS

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Approved by:

Signature

_____
_____
Dr.Myrna Abi Abdallah Doumit, Tenured Associate Professor First Reader
Rafic Hariri School of Nursing

_____
Dr.Lina Younan, Clinical Assistant professor   Second Reader
Rafic Hariri School of Nursing

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ABSTRACT
OF THE PROJECT OF

Mona Khaldoun Kawwas   for   <u>Master of Science in Nursing</u>
                                                <u>Major: Nursing Administration and Management</u>

Title: <u>Factors Affecting Nurses Retention in a Lebanese Medical Center</u>

Background: Nurses play a vital role in the world's work force of health care profession. There is a global trend of nurses migrating from developing to developed countries due to the attractive career opportunities in developed countries such as: higher earnings, better practicing and training programs, and safer working circumstances, which made it more difficult for underdeveloped countries to keep its nurses. The world health organization and the International Council of Nurses, has classified nurses' migration as a global concern. The situation in Lebanon parallels to what is happening in the world. Objectives: The purpose of this project is to uncover the factors that kept nurses working in a Lebanese medical center despite all odds. Design: A qualitative, descriptive approach was used to direct this project. Methods: Twenty registered nurses currently working at AUBMC shared their perceptions in three focus group discussions. Focus group discussions were held between October 2022 and November 2022, during the working hours at AUBMC. Results: The emerging themes were, the feeling of being respected, the power of family ties, the influence of remuneration, a clear path of career growth , the flexibility ability , the Dream place to be , the Feeling of being valued and craving a just workplace. Conclusion and Recommendations: Input from nursing staff about factors that retained them is critical in guiding assessment as part of improvement project strategy in a Lebanese hospital for nurses 'retention. By providing financial incentives and a supportive atmosphere for nurses to grow professionally, Lebanon may be able to keep its nursing staff.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION: PROBLEM DESCRIPTION AND SIGNIFICANCE

Healthcare organizations have faced a challenging issue in the last years called "Nurse retention" Halter et al. (2017). There is a global trend of nurses migrating from developing to developed countries due to the attractive career opportunities in developed countries such as: higher earnings, better practicing and training programs, and safer working circumstances, which made it more difficult for underdeveloped countries to keep its nurses (Alameddine et al., 2020).The World Health Organization and the International Council of Nurses (WHO, 2020; ICN, 2019), has classified nurses' migration as a global concern. The situation in Lebanon parallels to what is happening in the world.

Lebanese nurses are increasingly working abroad, according to the Order of Nurses in Lebanon's records (ONL, 2018). The revolution of October 2019, the continuous economic collapse that started in 2019, accompanied by extraordinary currency deterioration and a social justice revolution, in addition to the outbreak of COVID-19 and the August 4 Beirut Port explosion; led to salary reductions, hospitals downsizing, and nurses leaving the country (Doherty & Sullivan, 2020).

Across-sectional survey done on 440 emigrant Lebanese nurses conducted in Lebanon, showed that, unsatisfactory pay/ benefits and a lack of professional growth or career promotion were the main factors driving nurses to leave Lebanon (Alameddine et al., 2020).This study also showed that, Lebanese nurses who have left the country for employment abroad would return back to Lebanon if better pay, good benefits, as well as chances for career progression were offered.

Despite the massive nurse turnover and migration outside Lebanon, we noticed that some nurses remained in the country. There remains a shortage of recent studies that describes the factors influencing nurses' retention in Lebanon. Only one quantitative study conducted in 2013 was designed to understand factors significantly associated with nurses' retention in underserved areas in Lebanon (El-Jardali et al., 2013). This article showed that nurses were least satisfied with extrinsic rewards and most satisfied with relationships with coworkers (El-Jardali et al., 2013). Accordingly, there is a need to maintain and keep Lebanese nurses who are well trained, highly educated, and experienced in Lebanon. The purpose of this project is to uncover the factors that kept nurses working in a Lebanese medical center despite all odds.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Literature review

A review of literature was conducted for further understanding of the current factors influencing nurses' retention topic. The online research was obtained through American University of Beirut Sciences Library, PubMed, and Google Scholar. In order to identify the factors that influenced nurses' retention, filters were used to limit the results to English publications from 2017 to 2022.The terms used were: nurse, retention, factors, nursing, workforce and turnover.

1. *Factors Influencing Job Retention amongst Nurses*

Job retention refers to an organization's ability to retain its employees (Rana & Shakya, 2021). Healthcare organizations employ retention strategies to promote professionalism and job satisfaction, increase patient care, and increase nurses' retention (Labrague et al., 2018).A qualitative investigation led by a semi-structured interview with a purposive sample of 35 nurses working at an Egyptian university hospital showed that supportive management systems and constructive leadership continuously look for new solutions to promote staff retention (Abou Hashish & Fargally, 2017). Heidari & Seifi (2017) conducted a cross-sectional, descriptive, and quantitative study on 500 recently graduated staff nurses in Iran. This study indicated that factors to retain employees in healthcare facilities compromise social support, job satisfaction, and organizational aspects.

Several studies reported that, nurses' retention is strongly influenced by extrinsic factors like compensation and benefits, a healthy work environment, work-life balance, and magnet recognition (Mahon, 2018; Poghosyan et al., 2017; Hagan&Curtis, 2018; Alameddine et al., 2020). Moreover, the lack of reliable and practical models that take organizational, professional, and personal variables into account hinders the creation of interventions that can increase the nursing workforce's retention (Halter et al., 2017; Sasso et al., 2019; Marc et al., 2019). Such variables may include several environmental, personal, and organizational factors that influence nurses' retention at hospitals (Oss et al., 2021; Lai et al., 2018; Havens et al., 2018; Kline, 2018; Johansen et al., 2021).

a. Compensation and Rewards

Extrinsic factors like competitive pay and respectable benefits are essential to retaining workers in their current positions and have a substantial impact on job-seeking behavior. A quantitative cross-sectional study done on 47 nurses in Indonesia showed that, organizations can use a successful compensation strategy to recruit, retain, and inspire the best employees (Hidayah & Ananda, 2021).

A non-experimental cross-sectional of 857 nurses from 63 Primary Healthcare hospitals and centers located in underserved areas of Lebanon showed that implementing a compensation structure with a solid selection of incentives and allowances had a positive impact on employee retention and performance (El-Jardali et al., 2013). Similarly, a quantitative study done on nurse practitioners in Texas showed that nurses with more stable financial situations are more likely to stick with their current profession (Hagan & Curtis, 2018). Furthermore, quantitative study done on nurse practitioners practicing in 163 primary care organizations in Massachusetts demonstrated that benefits

including adequate medical treatment, housing allowances, and travel reimbursements offered by healthcare firms contribute to employee retention (Poghosyan et al., 2017).

b. <u>Work-life balance</u>

One of the recommended methods for reducing job-related stress, increasing satisfaction, and improving retention is finding a balance between work and personal life. A quantitative study done on 357 nurses working in public sector in Saudi Arabia suggested that finding a balance between work and life is one of the recommended behaviors that, when practiced, can decrease stress from work and boost retention (Aamir et al., 2016). The distribution of a person's time between jobs and familial or leisure activities are known as work-life balance (Cooper et al., 2020). A quantitative study on nurses from three public hospitals in Johannesburg assured that maintaining a healthy work-life balance is crucial and significantly influences nurse retention (Dhanpat et al., 2019). Similarly, the results of a quantitative cross-sectional study done in Portugal on 586 nurses; showed that nurses must make time for their families and personal lives in order to stay at work (Lai et al., 2018). This same study indicated that; giving workers flexibility at work strengthens their commitment to the healthcare organization (Lai et al., 2018). In Tehran, Heidari et. al, (2017); conducted a cross-sectional, descriptive, and quantitative study on 500 recently graduated staff nurses. This study showed that; 88.8% of respondents cited their residence's closeness to the institution as the best justification for staying, while 98.9% of nurses cited attentiveness to staff requests for shifts as a significant psychological element (Heidari et al., 2017). A recent qualitative study of nurses who utilized the Atlanta's Learning Center revealed that the daycare center kept them employed, and that child care services for hospitals have already improved retention

(Sausser, 2022). This study also suggested that schemes such as workplace nurseries would greatly influence nurses to join an organization and remain employed within the institution (Sausser, 2022). A comparative cross-sectional study done on 100 Australian nurses and 197 Chinese nurses revealed that increased job satisfaction, marital contentment, job engagement, and decreased intention to quit are linked to work-to-family enrichment (Zhang et al., 2021). An integrative literature review in England; results showed that workplace nurseries were a motivator for nurses to join and stay working in organizations (Chamanga et al., 2020). An empirical analysis performed at Shands Hospital at the University of Florida was summarized in an article revealing that childcare facilities provided by hospitals enhanced hiring, reduced turnover, and decreased absences of all of the healthcare providers (Langland-Orban et al., 1990).

c. <u>Magnet</u>

Hospitals that have demonstrated nursing excellence are granted magnet status (Bogaert et al., 2018). Magnet hospitals are be able to recruit and retain nurses, which leads to better patient care and satisfaction as well as lower mortality rates (Bogaert et al., 2018). A concept analysis of all studies between 2017-2022 revealed that magnet hospitals provide training programs that promote development, prosperity, and staff retention (El-khateeb et al., 2022). Training and development demonstrate to employees that the company values them, cares about their improvement, and is likely to provide them with a feeling of job security (El-hateeb et al., 2022). Continuing education and training have been associated with retention at all career levels; mentorship for experienced and novice nurses can assist them in charting their professional paths and detecting vacancies within a department or institution (Dirks, 2021). A quantitative,

descriptive, quasi-experimental done on 46 nurses in India compared the retention rate of a newly hired nurse with and without a mentor, showed that, mentoring results in greater retention, productivity, and support from the staff (Schroyer et al., 2020).

A review of the nursing residency programs in Philadelphia; revealed that; nurse's residency programs contribute to improving retention and lowering voluntary turnover by enhancing the transition and of recent graduates (Walsh, 2018). Mentoring methods include welcoming, planning for the future, imparting knowledge, assisting with transitions, offering safety, and getting prepared for leadership (Walsh, 2018). A report by Nursing Solutions Inc. (NSI, 2022) about nurses' retention and staffing stated that high-quality mentoring connections may help novice nurses stay in the profession and improve job satisfaction. According to Sherrod et al. (2020), organizations that created preceptorship and mentorship programs for fresh nursing graduates had higher satisfaction and retention rates than those who did not have such programs.

Healthcare institutions that exhibit extraordinary standards in providing nursing services, high-quality patient care, professional innovation, and positive clinical results achieve the Magnet designation (Lasater et al., 2019). The Magnet designation serves as the global benchmark for nursing practice (Lasater et al., 2019). The magnet model's first element is transformational leadership, which focuses on how leadership creates a vision (including beliefs, behaviours, and values) that supports the future of organizations (Abou Hashish & Fargally, 2017).

In a comparative cross-sectional study done on 100 Australian nurses and 197 Chinese nurses, the ability to empower personnel, value nursing excellence and mentoring skills were among the traits highly regarded in transformational leaders boosting nurses' intent to stay and improving care quality (Wang et al., 2018). The same study stated that transformational leaders increase nurse retention by encouraging and facilitating nurses' use of evidence-based practice and offering extensive support to nurses (Wang et al., 2018). Another study by El-Khatib et al. (2022) revealed that transformational leadership has demonstrated its ability to develop an environment that values autonomy, shared governance, and organizational commitment, all of which contribute to employee retention and satisfaction. A cross-sectional multisite survey set in three Australian Magnet designated facilities revealed that to support experienced

nurses and avoid staff turnover, nurse managers must cultivate transformational leadership styles (Stone et al., 2019).

d. Healthy work environment

A healthy workplace can enhance registered nurse productivity and patient outcomes. By praising workers and sharing feedback about their performance, managers can enhance the safety of their staff (Scruth et al., 2018). This approach strengthens employees' dedication to their work and the company, thereby inspiring them to stay longer (Scruth et al., 2018). Giving nurses a chance to provide feedback before taking any disciplinary measures was strongly associated with lesser intention to quit (Kagwe et al., 2019). The work environment, which includes coworkers' attitudes and access to supervision, mentoring, and training, was discovered to be a key predictor of retention for the indigenous health workforce (Lai et al., 2018). Besides the relationship between the supervisor and the employees, relationships between coworkers have been demonstrated to affect retention in addition to the supervisor-to-employee relation (Havens, 2018).

Relating, coordinating, and interacting with coworkers to complete a task, has been demonstrated to boost job satisfaction, encourage employee engagement, and influence retention (Havens et al., 2018). Shared governance, a practice that encourages shared decision-making, cooperation, and accountability through staff recognition and empowerment, is a component of a productive workplace (Oss et al., 2021).

e. Job satisfaction

The retention of nurses depends heavily on nurse job satisfaction (Kline, 2018). Nurses' job satisfaction increases when management's level of participation increases (Oss et al., 2021). Enabling bedside nurses to make decisions about acceptable nurse-patient ratios will lead to higher job satisfaction, higher retention rates, and a lessened desire to leave one's chosen profession (Johansen et al., 2021). According to Johansen et al., (2021), achieving the proper staffing ratios will reduce mistakes, boost patient satisfaction, and boost nurse retention rates. Accordingly, flexible scheduling and the acknowledgement of accomplishments facilitate the retention of health professionals and enhance their job satisfaction (Lai et al., 2018).

f. Demographic Factors

A cross-sectional study, conducted from 2010 to 2011, comprised of 3,229 registered nurses at Rio de Janeiro's 18 largest public hospitals, found that female nurses had a higher tendency than male nurses to stay in their jobs; the same study showed that the likelihood of nurses remaining in their current position increased with length of employment (de Oliveira et al., 2017). A cross-sectional study done on 9907 nurses in China by Jiang et al.; (2019);found that marital status was a significant factor influencing the retention of nurses, with married nurses more likely to remain in their existing jobs.

B. American University of Beirut Medical Center status

AUBMC has been providing patients in Lebanon and the surrounding area with the highest quality of care since 1902 (AUBMC, 2019). AUBMC is committed to improving the health of the people in Lebanon and the surrounding area via the provision of excellent and comprehensive quality care, excellence in education and training, leadership, and research. The American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), a division of the American Nurses Association, has given the American University of Beirut Medical Center (AUBMC) Magnet Recognition three times (AUBMC, 2019). As mentioned in a publication by Fadlo R. Khuri, MD, the 16th president of the American University of Beirut in Lebanon, the numerous crises that have afflicted Lebanon over the past 21 months have, caused the loss of important staff, and with the country's ongoing economic decline, there is an anticipated departure of 20% of doctors and nurses (Khuri, 2021).

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

A. Design

The design of this project is Qualitative Descriptive. The qualitative approach was selected to capture precise and in-depth insight of the nurse's individual experiences. This method provided simple and straight forward individualized description of the nurses' real causes that kept them working at this medical center. Through this design, we were able to identify the influencers of nurses' retention and how this phenomenon can be improved.

B. Inclusion criteria

Female and male nurses who are employed full-time in direct patient care, ages twenty to fifty, have more than one year of experience, and currently practicing at AUBMC hospital.

As shown in the table 1: Demographic characteristics of the nurses who participated in this project.

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of the nurses who participated in this project.

Demographic characteristics	Focus groups (1,2,3) (N=20)
Gender:	
Women	12
Men	8
Age Group:	
20y – 30y	9
30y – 40y	8
40y – 50y	3
Marital status:	
Married	11
Single	8
Engaged	1
Divorced / Widowed	-
Children:	
Have children	11
Don't have children	9
Area of living:	
next to the place of work (15-20 mins away from the work place)	12
Other	8
Current working unit:	
Medical surgical (adults)	5
Medical surgical (pediatrics)	1
Pediatric Oncology	5
Adult Oncology	1
Operating Room	1
ICU	1
CCU	3
Other	3
Education:	
BSN	14
MSN	5
PHD	1
Years of clinical work:	
(1-3) years	2
(3-5) years	3
(5-10) years	8
More than 10 years	7
Intention to stay:	
Stay	17
Leave	3

Maximum variation sampling was followed. Twenty registered nurses currently practicing at AUBMC participated in the focus group discussion. All of the participants have Bachelor degree, with some having Master's degree. The participants worked on different units at the hospital. Eleven of the twenty participants were married and had children; eight were single; and one was engaged. Seven of the twenty registered nurses worked for more than ten years; eight worked for five to ten years, and five out twenty worked from one to 5 years. Seventeen participants had the intent to stay at AUBMC and in Lebanon, while three participants had the intent to leave Lebanon.

C. Data collection

1. Procedure

At first, we sought approval and agreed on the topic with the CNO at AUBMC. The nursing project manager at AUBMC was the focal person assigned. The principal investigator of the project met with the focal person, discussed further the project, and decided on the process of recruitment. The focal person contacted the nurses and asked for volunteers who like to participate. Next, we agreed on the date, time, and place to conduct the three focus groups. The focal person sent an invitation to the focus group. Later, the focal person informed the nurses about the date and time, and formed the three focus groups. The data collection instrument used was focus group discussions.

Focus group discussions are widely employed as a qualitative strategy to comprehend social topics in depth (O.Nyumba et al., 2018). Instead of using a statistically representative sample of a larger population, the strategy seeks to collect data from a deliberately chosen group of people (O.Nyumba et al., 2018). Focus group discussions

encourage interaction and affect participant perspectives, which can produce more data than individual assessments (Scheelbeek et al., 2020). In order to choose nurses with the most information possible and make the most use of the limited resources available, the qualitative research method known as "purposeful sampling" was used (Ames et al., 2019).

All focus group discussions were held between October 2022 and November 2022, during working hours at AUBMC. The focus groups were directed by a facilitator. At the beginning of each focus group, participants were informed of the project's goals, the reason for their involvement, the potential use of the data obtained the confidentiality of their personal information. Usually participants tend to give socially pleasing answers. So, the facilitators emphasized that the nurses' opinions, ideas, experiences are extremely important and that there is no right or wrong answer. Participants were urged to speak freely about their own experiences and wishes. Each focus group discussion lasted about an hour and was conducted in a friendly environment. There were no other people in the room but the focus group's nurses, the facilitator, and the observer.

Focus group interviews continued until no additional information was added from the participants of each focus group, and data saturation was reached within each focus group. Data saturation occurs when ideas start to repeat and no new ideas emerge. Then, in between focus groups, the comparison was done to categorize the data obtained. Probing was used to get a deeper insight and elicit further information from study participants. The open-ended qualitative questions asked were: What are the reasons that kept you working in Lebanon and at AUBMC? , What is the ideal environment that you can dream of to remain at AUBMC and in Lebanon? Probing was done with each question.

In order to validate the results and strengthen their validity, the findings of the project were summarized and shared with the participants at the end of each focus group. The focus groups were conducted in English and Arabic language.

2. *Ethical considerations*

This project was considered part of a quality improvement initiative at AUBMC; therefore, we didn't seek IRB approval (Institutional Review Board). Despite the fact that we didn't seek IRB approval, we maintained the confidentiality of the data by: asking the participants to identify themselves using nicknames (pseudonym); real names had not been used. Participants were given the reassurance that they may choose not to participate in the focus group discussion at any moment and for any reason, or to leave before it was over. Moreover, softcopies of data were kept in secured files on the computer and disclosed to the authorized people. The administration and nursing services at AUBMC might be aware of the information gathered and encouraged to suggest nurse retention plans. All participants gave their consent to be audiotaped. All audiotaped material were saved on word document and put under lock.

D. Data analysis

After having the participant's approval, the discussions were digitally recorded, transcribed, translated from Arabic to English, and back translated by the principal investigator and observer. The facilitator and observer reviewed the transcripts for accuracy and saved the audiotaped interviews' transcriptions on Word documents under lock.

According to Braun and Clark (2006), data relevant to each question was examined using the thematic analysis method. Six phases constitute this method: transcription of the recorded discussion, reading it to become familiar with the data, coding of the scripts, theme identification, theme review and refinement, theme definition and naming, and lastly report generation (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

To support an inductive approach, data were analyzed and coded without using predetermined codes or categories. Each transcript was read in its entirety by the project team (Ms. Mona Kawwas and Dr.Myrna Doumit), and notes were compared, both team members were in agreement and when there was disagreement on few ideas, they went back to the text to check. The language participants used to explain the elements impacting their intention to stay in the profession was given particular consideration. Words, phrases, and paragraphs holding important ideas or concepts were given codes. Following this, themes emerged by grouping codes with related or similar meanings.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

From the perspective of the participants, the following themes comprised elements that influenced the retention of nurses in the profession and in Lebanon.

A. The feeling of being respected

The nursing staff reported that the feeling of being respected was highlighted as the main factor for the nurses to remain in this institution. Nurses reported that they felt appreciated for the work they are doing which gave them a feeling of self -respect.

Fatina 30 year old female nurse who has been working at AUBMC for more than 5 years mentioned: "*I witnessed that at AUBMC we nurses are treated differently, I saw outside of Lebanon and in Lebanon, nurses at AUBMC are treated with respect*".

Abu Jawad 30 year old male nurse who has been working at AUBMC for 5 years mentioned: *"I found respect at AUBMC in the first place, respect for the person"*.

B. The power of family ties

Family ties were important to all of the participating nurses. All participants stated that, family was the main anchor to stay in Lebanon and at AUBMC. Staying close to parents or having their children live within a family was considered very important for almost all participants.

Youssef 30 year old male nurse who has been working at AUBMC for more than 5 years, mentioned: "*I can't leave my parents, it is a must that someone stays beside them and aid them. In our culture, we value the family more than other cultures*".

Nay 30 year old female nurse who has been working at AUBMC for more than 10 years, mentioned: *"I am married and I have three small children, so I stayed here for family issues and since I am the only one that I stayed with my parents in Lebanon, all my brothers and sisters traveled, there is no one to stay with my parents other than me; also, I want my children to grow near my parents and with their cousins ; I want them to value the importance of family.*

C. The influence of remuneration

Participants talked about two kinds of remuneration that were very important in their decision in staying at AUBMC: financial and non- financial. They compared what AUBMC is offering to other hospitals within the country and even outside the country. Participants related remuneration to the entire benefit package they are receiving:

1. *Financial remuneration*

Several participants revealed that the satisfactory wage they are receiving is a major reason for their stay.

Lea 40 year old female nurse who has been working at AUBMC for more than 10 years, mentioned: *"The fresh dollars, one of the reasons that made me stay here and made me able to continue, plus the increase in dollar percentage".*

Hassan 40 year old male nurse who has been working at AUBMC for 11years, mentioned: *"The financial benefits at AUBMC are excellent, as an AUBMC's employee the salary is far way better than other hospitals."*

2. *Non-financial remuneration*

The indirect compensations that AUBMC provides influenced the stay of many participants. participants expressed contentment regarding: The health insurance plan (HIP) provided to the staff and their families, free university education at AUB, paid educational allowances for schools, and being charged with only 40% of the staff education at AUB.

Khalil 51 year old male nurse who has been working at AUBMC for 29 years, mentioned: "*The main reason behind my stay is that my son is enrolled at AUB for free now"*.

Lea 40 year old female nurse who has been working at AUBMC for more than 10 years, mentioned: "*The benefits that are available at AUBMC are not provided by other institutions, the schooling, the insurance; all of those are so important for me."*

D. A clear path of career growth

Many participants indicated that the career development at AUBMC; enhanced their retention. Several participants revealed that they gained positions or in the process of achieving positions at AUBMC.

Christine 40 year old female nurse who has been working at AUBMC for 22 years, mentioned: *"I am growing here although am still not in an administrative position as I dream, I am a clinical educator but am sure that this might give me more options"*.

Hadia 40 year old female nurse who has been working at AUBMC for 17 years, mentioned: *"This year I got an administrative position, I graduated and came directly to work at AUBMC, I knew since that time that AUBMC is the place to stay"*.

The following are the subthemes that revealed the participants dreams answers on the question of the ideal environment that they can dream of to remain at AUBMC and in Lebanon:

E. The flexibility ability

Several participants stated that being able to work with a flexible schedule is absolutely necessary to improve employee retention of nurses with family commitments or relatives that need to care for. Participants revealed that they will be able to better satisfy their various duties outside of work with more flexible work options.

Rita 32 year old female nurse who has been working at AUBMC for 3 years, mentioned*: "I wish that one day the schedule will be more flexible; so I can stay with my children after noon and on weekends to finish the school requirements"*.

Nina 50 year old female nurse who has been working at AUBMC for 29 years, mentioned: *"self-scheduling, also helps the nurses stay; I can arrange my schedule with my children, and the off days."*

F. The Dream Place to be

One of the main essentials mentioned by the respondents that would keep nurses at AUBMC was: enhanced pay. Participants were unable to really express their dreams, we felt that they were frustrated and afraid from inside, as if their dreams were hindered by their demotivation; but, when they opened up we felt that they became more engaged

Mahdi 40 years old male nurse who has been working at AUBMC for more than 10 years, mentioned: "*The hospital can give us 100% fresh $ or at least same as what they are gaining from clients*".

Natalie 22 year old male nurse who has been working at AUBMC for 1,5 years, mentioned: "*I am asking AUBMC to give us 100% fresh $ salary , I still need to continue my education and money is necessary .. Or I will be obliged to travel*".

Nina 50 year old female nurse who has been working at AUBMC for 29 years, mentioned*: "we have to get much more raise and salary, for example if AUBMC are taking 100% fresh $ why don't we get also paid 100%$? We are not getting paid for the school buses.*"

G. The Feeling of being valued

The effective recognition and appreciation of nurses was one of the major motivational requests desired by the participants.

Tarek 30 years old male nurse who has been working at AUBMC for more than 10 years, mentioned*: "I am asking for rewards, simple things, so someone can feel supported and has value, financial motivators*".

Nina 50 year old female nurse who has been working at AUBMC for 29 years, mentioned: *"If I like direct patient care, I also like them take this into consideration. And reconsider the 29 years of experience I got. Maybe I still can give direct patient care in light floor, no evening or night shifts. I am just asking for appreciation, regardless of the manager".*

H. Craving a just work-place

The participants requested equity inclusion from the hospital when reviewing files and working on promotion, in order to gain increased nurses retention.

Christine 40 year old female nurse who has been working at AUBMC for 22 years, mentioned: *"There are some people that takes certain positions due to nepotism, still I find it unfair that someone not qualified like me that gets a position that I deserve more".*

Zahraa 23 year old female nurse who has been working at AUBMC for 2 years, mentioned: *"I see people experienced knowledgeable have master's and still in their place, and others don't have potential taking positions, we see it a lot."*

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

A. Discussion

The current project sheds light on needs that are crucial for experienced nurses' to remain in the profession. Results revealed that, for the majority of respondents, their intention to remain at the hospital could not be attributed to a single factor; the reasons were complex and included individual, environmental, and external factors.

Family ties influencing nurses' retention was not included in the literature; since many Northern European, German, and Eastern European nations have weak family ties (Alesina & Giuliano, 2010). In contrast, family is of greatest importance in Arab / Middle Eastern cultures especially in Lebanon. The family is viewed as the primary source of social security for the elderly, children, and older adults (Rabo, 2020). Lebanese culture is an example; Lebanese people gives family ties a great importance and still rely greatly on an extensive network of relationships with parents, siblings, grandparents, aunts and uncles, cousins, and many more (Pier, 2015). This was clear from the responses of all of the participants in this project. Family ties directly influenced the nurses' decision to stay in Lebanon. Most participants revealed that the main reason that made them stay in Lebanon is that, they don't want to leave their parents alone, they want their children to cherish the value of family and siblings, and they are in need of the insurance plan that AUBMC provides for its employees.

On the other hand, the favorable impact of healthy work conditions, career advancement, flexible scheduling, respect, and financial incentives on nurse practice and healthcare delivery that were highlighted in this project have been examined by several scholars in great detail (Cooper et al., 2020; Havens et al., 2018; Kline, 2018; Johansen

et al., 2021; Poghosyan et al., 2017; Hagan & Curtis, 2018; Alameddine et al., 2020). The strong relationship between those factors and nurse's retention made us rethink of the current system practiced in the hospital and how can the administrators give more importance to those factors in order to retain more nurses on the long run.

The main retention strategies provided by AUBMC in an effort to retain nurses included, forty percent fresh dollar salary, insurance plan, free university tuition for children at AUB and flexible schedule. Despite the observed effort to retain nurses, participants requested enhancement in the percentage of $ salary, fair career advancement, and flexible work-schedule.

Our results remind us of Herzberg's Dual-Factor Theory, which speaks about intrinsic and extrinsic factors as motivational factors that affect job satisfaction (Herzberg et al., 1959). They address innate demands like success, acclaim, and advancement. Employee contentment and career advancement are made possible by motivational factors (Herzberg et al., 1959). Elements that are necessary in the workplace to prevent dissatisfaction but are unrelated to workplace satisfaction are known as hygiene factors (Herzberg et al., 1959). Factors related to hygiene help businesses retain their workforce Hygiene considerations include extrinsic requirements like good pay, a good grade, workplace rules, and relationships with peers. Herzberg's theory of motivation was reinforced by the project's findings, which showed that internal elements like recognition were important for job happiness while extrinsic factors like pay, benefits, and working conditions were reasons for job dissatisfaction. In line with the results of this project that highlighted the importance of career advancement and flexible scheduling; many studies concluded that the work environment, which includes coworkers' attitudes and access to supervision, mentoring, and training, was discovered to be a key predictor of retention

for the health workforce (Lai et al.,2018; Havens et al.,2018). In accordance with our findings that stressed on the significance of financial and non-financial remuneration, several studies have found that a good salary coupled with decent benefits plays a significant role in job-seeking behavior and is crucial in keeping employees happy in their existing jobs(Hagan and Curtis, 2018; Poghosyan et al.,2017) .Similar to our project findings about the importance of respect, several studies have demonstrated that respect and recognition can promote development, prosperity, and staff retention (El-khateeb et al., 2022; Dirks, 2021; Blay & Smith, 2020; Deroy & Schütze2019).

B. Conclusion

The need for hospitals to retain their nurses is crucial for their sustainability. Input from nursing staff about factors that retained them is critical in guiding assessment as part of improvement projects at AUBMC. Some factors, such as family ties, were less explored in literature than respect, payment and benefits, career growth, and flexibility, for instance. Existing researches did not place enough emphasis on the family ties factor; for further investigations and to better equip organizations with the knowledge necessary to improve their retention capability more investigation about this factor is needed. It is important to note that nursing and hospital managers must deeply examine the results of this project and earlier research in order to, in turn, implement retention strategies and healthy work conditions for nurses. If the suggestions got administrators approval, this would boost autonomy and promote transformation in the nursing sector. When working conditions improve, retention will improve, and nurses will automatically be able to focus on the most fundamental part of their job: patient care (Labrague et al., 2018).

C. Recommendations

Since the purpose of qualitative study is not to generalize but to translate findings. We recommend using the findings of this project to be able to check the cultural validity of an international tool to be used on Lebanese nurses. In addition as a short term plan we recommend the following

1- Pay 100% fresh dollars to the top 10 high performers every three months based on pre-set criteria, the criteria may include ethical standards, interpersonal and communication abilities, nursing skills, and decision-making competences.

2- Raise in the percentage of the dollar paid to all the nursing staff.

3- Focus on extrinsic motivators that make nurses feel appreciated, such as improving the scheduling, to become patient and nurse centered, not only patient centered.

4- Improve and keep track of the fair application of the career advancement policy.

By providing financial incentives and a supportive atmosphere for nurses to grow professionally, Lebanon may be able to keep its nursing staff. Further investigation on the elements influencing experienced nurses' retention may be beneficial for next nursing projects.

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