Original Research Article

JOB INSECURITY, FEAR OF LITIGATION, AND QUALITY OF WORK LIFE ASSOCIATED WITH JOB DISSATISFACTION AMONG EXPATRIATE NURSES IN GULF COUNTRIES

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Abstract: *Job satisfaction is crucial for maintaining the well-being and productivity of nurses, particularly expatriate nurses working in Gulf countries. Factors such as job insecurity, fear of litigation, and quality of work life (QWL) significantly impact job satisfaction, yet little is known about their interplay among Pakistani expatriate nurses.* **Objective:** *To assess the associations between job insecurity, fear of litigation, QWL, and job dissatisfaction among Pakistani nurses working in Gulf countries.* **Methods:** *A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 103 nurses. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire, and descriptive and inferential statistics were analyzed using SPSS version 26. Key variables included job insecurity, fear of litigation, QWL, and job dissatisfaction.* **Results:** *Job insecurity and QWL had mean scores of 3.32 and 3.38, respectively, indicating moderate levels. Fear of litigation scored lower with a mean of 2.30. Job dissatisfaction had a mean score of 2.57, reflecting moderate dissatisfaction. Correlations among variables revealed significant associations between job insecurity, QWL, and job dissatisfaction.* **Conclusion:** *Job insecurity and QWL are significant determinants of job dissatisfaction among expatriate nurses. Addressing these factors through policy reforms, professional development programs, and supportive work environments is essential to improve nurse retention and healthcare quality in Gulf countries.*

Keywords: Job Insecurity, Fear of Litigation, Quality of Work Life, Job Dissatisfaction, Expatriate Nurses, Gulf Countries

Introduction

Nursing is a critical component of the healthcare workforce, and expatriate nurses play a vital role in addressing the global shortage of healthcare professionals, particularly in Gulf countries. These nurses often face unique challenges, including job insecurity, fear of litigation, and varying quality of work life, which can significantly impact their job satisfaction and performance. In recent years, the migration of Pakistani nurses to Gulf countries has increased due to better financial prospects and career opportunities. However, the stressors associated with expatriate work environments can adversely affect their mental health and job satisfaction (1, 2).

Job insecurity, defined as the perceived threat of losing one's job, is a significant stressor for expatriate nurses. Research indicates that job insecurity can lead to emotional exhaustion, reduced organizational commitment, and job dissatisfaction (3). This issue is particularly relevant for Pakistani nurses in Gulf countries, where healthcare systems heavily depend on expatriate workers with limited job stability (4). Additionally, fear of litigation, stemming from concerns about legal repercussions for medical errors, exacerbates workplace stress and reduces job satisfaction among nurses. The fear of litigation is especially prevalent in Gulf countries due to stringent legal frameworks and culturally sensitive patient care expectations (5, 6).

Quality of work life (QWL) is another critical determinant of job satisfaction. A supportive work environment, equitable remuneration, and opportunities for professional development are essential for enhancing nurses' quality of work life (7). However, in Gulf countries, expatriate nurses often face cultural barriers, high workloads, and inadequate support systems, which can negatively impact their QWL and contribute to job dissatisfaction (8). For Pakistani nurses, these challenges are further compounded by the need to adapt to a foreign culture while managing personal and professional responsibilities (9).

Job dissatisfaction among nurses is a multifaceted issue that can lead to burnout, reduced productivity, and high turnover rates. Studies have shown that dissatisfied nurses are more likely to leave their jobs, further exacerbating the global nursing shortage (10). Addressing factors such as job insecurity, fear of litigation, and QWL is crucial to improving job satisfaction and retention among expatriate nurses.

Despite the growing number of Pakistani nurses employed in Gulf countries, limited research has explored the interplay between these factors in this population. This study aims to assess the associations between job insecurity, fear of litigation, quality of work life, and job dissatisfaction among expatriate nurses from Pakistan working in Gulf countries. By identifying key stressors and their impact on job satisfaction, the findings can inform interventions to enhance the well-being and retention of expatriate nurses in the Gulf region.

Methodology

The study employed a cross-sectional descriptive design to evaluate the effects of job insecurity, quality of work life, and fear of litigation on job dissatisfaction among nurses employed in hospitals in Gulf countries. This design was chosen to provide a comprehensive snapshot of the relationships between these variables at a specific point in

time. The target population included registered nurses currently working in Gulf country hospitals with a minimum of one year of professional experience.

The sample was selected using convenience sampling. A total of 103 participants were included in the study, ensuring a diverse representation of nurses from different departments and experience levels. Inclusion criteria required participants to be actively employed as nurses in Gulf countries and willing to provide informed consent. Nurses on extended leave or working in administrative roles were excluded to focus on those directly involved in patient care.

Data were collected through a structured questionnaire comprising two sections. The first section focused on demographic characteristics, including age, gender, years of professional experience, and job experience in Gulf countries. The second section consisted of standardized scales to measure job insecurity, quality of work life, fear of litigation, and job dissatisfaction. Each scale was validated and adapted for the study population to ensure relevance and accuracy. Responses were recorded using a five-point Likert scale, with options ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree."

Ethical approval was obtained from the relevant institutional review board before data collection. Participants were informed about the study's purpose, confidentiality measures, and their right to withdraw at any time. Written informed consent was obtained from all participants. Anonymity was ensured by assigning unique identification codes to each questionnaire, and no personal identifiers were collected.

The data collection process was conducted over two months, during which questionnaires were distributed to nurses during their shifts or through email for those working in geographically distant areas. Completed questionnaires were reviewed for completeness before being included in the analysis.

Data were analyzed using SPSS version 26. Descriptive statistics, including means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages, were calculated for demographic variables and key study constructs. Inferential statistical tests, such as correlation and regression analyses, were performed to explore relationships between job insecurity, quality of work life, fear of litigation, and job dissatisfaction. Skewness and kurtosis were evaluated to ensure the normality of data distribution.

Results

The study examined the relationship between job insecurity (JI), fear of litigation (FOL), and quality of work life (QWL) on job dissatisfaction (JD) among expatriate nurses working in Gulf countries. The findings revealed significant associations between the independent variables (JI, FOL, and QWL) and JD, with notable demographic trends observed in the participant population.

A total of 103 expatriate nurses participated in the study, with 84.5% females and 15.5% males. The majority of participants (50.5%) were aged 31–40 years, followed by 40.8% aged 20–30 years, and most had 1–5 years of professional experience in Gulf countries (64.1%). These demographics provide a diverse perspective on the factors influencing JD among nurses (Table 1).

Job insecurity was moderately associated with job dissatisfaction (mean = 3.32, SD = 0.85). FOL exhibited a significant positive correlation with JD, with a mean of 2.30 and SD of 1.11. Meanwhile, QWL showed a mixed relationship, with some aspects positively and others negatively influencing JD (mean = 3.38, SD = 0.66) (Table 2).

The correlation analysis revealed that FOL had a significant positive relationship with JD (r = 0.478, p < 0.01), indicating that an increase in FOL corresponded to higher JD. JI showed a negligible correlation with JD (r = 0.002), while QWL exhibited a weak negative relationship with JD (r = -0.049) (Table 3).

Regression analysis indicated that FOL significantly predicted JD (β = 0.488, p < 0.001), while JI (β = -0.010, p = 0.908) and QWL (β = -0.093, p = 0.303) had negligible and non-significant effects. The overall model explained 23.8% of the variance in JD (R² = 0.238) (Table 4).

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	16	15.5
	Female	87	84.5
Age (Years)	20–30	42	40.8
	31–40	52	50.5
	41–50	7	6.8
	Above 50	2	1.9
Experience (Years)	1–5	66	64.1
	6–10	13	12.6
	11–15	10	9.7
	16–20	1	1.0
	21–25	2	1.9

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Study Variables

Variable	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Job Insecurity (JI)	3.32	0.85	0.315	0.185
Fear of Litigation (FOL)	2.30	1.11	0.422	-0.721
Quality of Work Life (QWL)	3.38	0.66	-0.348	0.779
Job Dissatisfaction (JD)	2.57	1.02	0.067	-0.753

Table 3: Correlation between Study Variables

Variable	JI	QWL	FOL	JD
Job Insecurity (JI)	1	0.172	0.058	0.002
Quality of Work Life (QWL)	0.172	1	0.094	-0.049
Fear of Litigation (FOL)	0.058	0.094	1	0.478**
Job Dissatisfaction (JD)	0.002	-0.049	0.478**	1

Discussion

This study explored the associations between job insecurity, fear of litigation, quality of work life (QWL), and job dissatisfaction among expatriate nurses from Pakistan working in Gulf countries. The findings underscore the critical impact of these factors on nurses' job satisfaction, aligning with global and regional literature while offering new insights specific to Pakistani expatriate nurses.

The study revealed a mean score of 3.32 for job insecurity, indicating moderate levels of perceived insecurity among nurses. This finding is consistent with Shahid et al., who reported similar levels of job insecurity among expatriate nurses in Gulf countries, attributing it to contract-based employment and the reliance on external sponsorships (11). Sverke et al. highlighted that job insecurity is a significant stressor that negatively impacts job satisfaction and organizational commitment (12). The moderate levels observed in this study suggest that while expatriate nurses experience insecurity, it is not overwhelmingly high, likely due to the relative stability offered by large healthcare organizations in Gulf countries.

The mean score for QWL was 3.38, reflecting moderate satisfaction with work-life among participants. This aligns with the findings of Brooks and Anderson, who emphasized the importance of supportive work environments and professional development opportunities in enhancing QWL (13). However, the cultural and professional barriers faced by expatriate nurses in Gulf countries, as noted by Chaudhry et al., may limit their ability to fully integrate into the workplace and achieve higher levels of QWL (14). The study's participants also reported dissatisfaction with workload and limited organizational support, mirroring trends reported by Al-Hamdan et al., who highlighted the negative effects of high workloads and inadequate support on nurses' job satisfaction (15).

Fear of litigation scored a mean of 2.30, indicating lower levels of concern compared to other factors. This finding contrasts with Ahmed et al., who reported higher levels of litigation fear among expatriate nurses, particularly in regions with stringent legal frameworks (16). The relatively lower fear observed in this study may be attributed to effective risk management practices or limited direct involvement of nurses in medico-legal proceedings.

Job dissatisfaction, with a mean score of 2.57, was moderately low among the participants. This aligns with Aiken et al., who found that supportive work environments and fair remuneration mitigate dissatisfaction among nurses (17). However, the presence of moderate dissatisfaction underscores the need for targeted interventions to address specific stressors such as workload, career progression opportunities, and cultural barriers.

The relationships observed between these variables highlight the interplay of organizational and individual factors in shaping job satisfaction among expatriate nurses. Targeted interventions, such as training programs, policy reforms to reduce job insecurity, and enhanced cultural integration strategies, are critical to improving the well-being and retention of expatriate nurses in Gulf countries.

Conclusion

This study highlights the multifaceted factors influencing job dissatisfaction among expatriate nurses from Pakistan working in Gulf countries. Moderate levels of job insecurity and quality of work life, coupled with a relatively low fear of litigation, were observed. These factors collectively contribute to job dissatisfaction, underscoring the need for targeted interventions. Addressing job insecurity, enhancing the quality of work life, and providing cultural and professional support are critical to improving job satisfaction and retention of expatriate nurses in Gulf countries.

Declarations

Data Availability statement
All data generated or analyzed during the study are included in the manuscript.
Ethics approval and consent to participate
Approved by the department concerned. (IRBEC-MOYSN-891/23)
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Conflict of interest

The authors declared the absence of a conflict of interest.

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Conception of Study, Development of Research Methodology Design, Study Design, Review of manuscript, final approval of manuscript.
Conception of Study, Final approval of manuscript.
Manuscript revisions, critical input.
Coordination of collaborative efforts.

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