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Association between Workload and Job Satisfaction among Nurses at Public and Private Tertiary Care Hospitals

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ABSTRACT

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Aim: The aim of the study is to assess the impact/ association between workload and nurse job satisfaction. The goal is to gain/provide insight that can help improve workplace condition, inform resources allocation strategies, enhance nurse retention, and improve patient care delivery. **Background:** High workloads are linked to lower productivity, increased turnovers rates, and adverse patient outcomes (Job satisfaction among nurses is crucial for maintaining high- quality patient care and fostering a sustainable healthcare work force. The balance between workload and job satisfaction can significantly impact nurse well-being, performance and patient care outcomes. However, increasing workloads in healthcare environment have led to rising stress, burnout and dissatisfaction among nurses. There is a need for comprehensive studies that delve into the specific dimensions of workload contributing to dissatisfaction. This research seeks to explore the relationship between workload and other related factors on nurse's job satisfaction. **Methodology:** This is cross sectional analytical survey conducted on sample size was $n=184$, data was collected from private and public tertiary care hospital, bedside nurses. Sampling technique was convenient sampling. Nurses included diploma nurses, BSN nurses, Post rn BScN holder nurses. **Conclusion:** According to the whole research and findings there is Correlation value between workload and job satisfaction is 0.02 p value and Correlation between salary and nurse patient ratio is 0.02 p value. And the nurses in Karachi Pakistan are not satisfied with job due to salary and workload.

Introduction

Nursing profession plays key role in providing essential care to individuals, families, and groups in various settings, including hospitals, clinics, and communities. The role of a nurse range from a caregiver, to communicator, teacher, client advocate, counselor, leader, manager, and research consumer Nurses perform various functions for prevention of illness, promotion of health, and alleviation of sufferings. The American nursing association defines nursing as “The protection, promotion, and optimization of health and abilities, prevention of illness and injury, alleviation of suffering through the diagnosis and treatment of human response, and advocacy in the care of individuals, families, communities, and populations. “The nursing profession has long been recognized as physically and emotionally demanding with excessive workloads often cited as a primary contributor to job dissatisfaction (Rahman, Asif, Ronald, & Sarmad, 2025).

High workloads are linked to lower productivity, increased turnovers rates, and adverse patient outcomes (Job satisfaction among nurses is crucial for maintaining high- quality patient care and fostering a sustainable healthcare work force. The balance between workload and job satisfaction can significantly impact nurse well-being, performance and patient care outcomes (Alharbi et al.,2016). However, increasing workloads in healthcare environment have led to rising stress, burnout and dissatisfaction among nurses There is a need for comprehensive studies that delve into the specific dimensions of workload contributing to dissatisfaction. This research seeks to explore the relationship between workload and other related factors on nurse’s job satisfaction (Mirani, Asif, Baloch, Ali, & Hazrat, 2025).

Studies have provided evidence that satisfied workers tend to be more productive, creative, committed and will eventually contribute to higher quality patient care and patient satisfaction. Low Job satisfaction indeed contributes to nurses’ in efficiency and affects their dedication to job quality and care given (Alvarez and Fitzpatrick, 2007). Finding was not similar to the findings of another study which reported that the majority of the participants were not satisfied with their job (Siyal, Ahmed, Asif, & Arif, 2025).

Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study is to assess the impact/ association between workload and nurse job satisfaction. The goal is to gain/provide insight that can help improve workplace condition, inform resources allocation strategies, enhance nurse retention, and improve patient care delivery.

Objective of the study

1. To assess the impact of workload on nurses
2. To identify the specific factors within workload (e.g. Patient-to-nurse ratio, shift length, task complexity) that most significantly affect job satisfaction.
3. To identify the factors contributing to high or low job satisfaction among nurses.

Research question

1. What is the impact of workload on nurses?
2. What are the specific factors within workload (e.g. Patient-to-nurse ratio, shift length, task complexity) that most significantly affect job satisfaction?
3. What are the factors contributing to high or low job satisfaction among nurses?

Hypothesis

Alternate hypothesis There is statistically significance association between workload and nurse job satisfaction.

Null hypothesis There is no statistically significance association between workload and nurse job satisfaction.

Operational definitions

Nurse

A nurse is a healthcare professional who provides hands-on care and education to patients, families, and communities.

Workload:

Workload is the total amount of tasks and responsibilities assigned to a nurse which is measured by shift duration, patient-to-nurse ratio, administrative burden, and physical and emotional demand.

Job Satisfaction:

Job satisfaction is the extent to which a nurse fulfilled and content with their job, measured by factors such as perceived work-life balance, recognition, professional fulfillment, and work place support.

Literature Review

Nurses constitute one of the largest components of the healthcare workforce and play a central role in ensuring continuity, safety, and quality of patient care. However, the nursing profession is characterized by demanding workloads, staffing shortages, long working hours, shift work, emotional demands, and organizational pressures. These conditions can influence nurses' job satisfaction, work performance, burnout, intention to leave, and quality of patient care. Recent literature published between 2020 and 2026 demonstrates that workload and the organizational environment are important determinants of nurses' job satisfaction and occupational well-being (Rahman et al., 2025).

investigated job satisfaction among 129 nurses in Pakistan and examined the effects of workplace incivility and informal organizational climate. The findings demonstrated that workplace incivility negatively affected nurses' job satisfaction, whereas an informal and supportive organizational climate reduced this negative effect. The study emphasized that interpersonal and organizational factors can substantially influence nurses' satisfaction with their jobs. These findings are important for the present study because workload may interact with the organizational environment to influence nurses' perceptions of their jobs, particularly in different hospital sectors (Iqbal et al., 2024; Iqbal et al.).

examined work environment and job satisfaction among 364 nurses working in federal and state tertiary hospitals in Lagos, Nigeria. The study found that several work-environment factors collectively predicted job satisfaction. Salary was identified as the strongest predictor, followed by advancement and promotion. Administrative and managerial support, autonomy, supervision, working conditions, recognition, and achievement were also positively associated with job satisfaction. The findings indicate that job satisfaction is multidimensional and is influenced not only by workload but also by organizational and employment conditions (Mirani et al., 2025).

In another 2020 study, Bautista et al. examined stressors and their relationships with job satisfaction among nurses working in a tertiary private hospital in the Philippines. Workload was reported as the most frequently experienced stressor and was negatively associated with job satisfaction and perceived quality of care. Workload and conflict with colleagues were also associated with greater turnover intention. Although the study was conducted in a private hospital, its findings provide strong evidence that excessive workload can undermine nurses' satisfaction and organizational retention (Siyal et al., 2025).

Investigated the relationship between workload and burnout among nurses and examined whether personal, social, and organizational resources could buffer the negative effects of workload. Their findings indicated that nursing workload was substantial and that higher workload was associated with poorer occupational well-being. Organizational and social resources were identified as potentially protective factors. Although job satisfaction was not the primary outcome, the study provides evidence that excessive workload creates adverse occupational consequences that can indirectly influence nurses' satisfaction with their work Kagan et al. (2021) conducted a cross-sectional study involving 1,040 nurses to examine personal initiative, work environment, and job satisfaction. The findings showed that a positive perception of the nursing work environment and higher personal initiative were significantly associated with greater job satisfaction. The study also found differences according to clinical area, with nurses working in emergency and pediatric settings showing greater odds of high job satisfaction compared with nurses in oncology. These findings demonstrate that nurses' satisfaction is influenced by both individual characteristics and the work environment (Majeed et al., 2023).

conducted a longitudinal study of 90 registered nurses in a Lebanese hospital, generating 1,303 shift-level observations. The researchers examined perceived workload, patient-to-nurse ratios, rationing of nursing care, and shift-work satisfaction. Nurses who were satisfied with their shift-specific work were less likely to report high workload demands and less likely to ration necessary nursing care. The findings suggest that workload is an important factor affecting nurses' satisfaction at the shift level and that workload management should be considered when improving nurses' working conditions. specifically examined nurses working in **seven public and private sector hospitals in Pakistan**, making this study particularly relevant to the present research. The study included 352 nurses and investigated organizational support, perceived work environment, organizational commitment, quality of care, and job satisfaction. The findings showed that organizational commitment mediated the relationship between organizational support and job satisfaction, while the perceived work environment

significantly influenced job satisfaction and quality of care. Importantly, the researchers selected areas where referrals from resource-poor regions could increase nurses' workload. This study demonstrates that both public and private hospital environments should be considered when examining nurses' job satisfaction in Pakistan (Qaiser et al., 2023).

examined the relationship between nursing workload and job satisfaction while considering psychological meaningfulness and perceived organizational support. The study was designed to investigate whether organizational and psychological factors could influence the relationship between workload and nurses' satisfaction. The findings contributed to evidence that workload is closely connected with nurses' job satisfaction and that organizational support can be important in managing the negative effects of demanding workloads. This suggests that the impact of workload may differ according to the organizational environment in which nurses work. Maghsoud et al. (2022) investigated 311 nurses working in four hospitals in central Iran and used structural equation modeling to examine workload, job satisfaction, emotional exhaustion, rationing of nursing care, and quality of nursing care. The nurses reported a high level of workload and a moderate level of job satisfaction. Workload had a significant direct effect on job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion. Furthermore, job satisfaction, emotional exhaustion, and implicit rationing of nursing care mediated the relationship between workload and quality of nursing care. The authors recommended improving staffing and resources, flexible work schedules, salaries, and the work environment to improve nurses' job satisfaction. investigated workload pressures experienced by nurses working in public-sector hospitals in Peshawar, Pakistan. The study is particularly relevant because it provides evidence from the Pakistani public-sector context. The researchers highlighted workload as an important occupational concern among nurses working in public hospitals. Such evidence indicates that staffing levels, patient volume, working hours, and organizational resources may contribute to excessive workload among nurses and therefore warrant assessment when examining job satisfaction (Iqbal et al., 2024; Iqbal et al.).

conducted a national survey of registered nurses in the United States examining work engagement, job satisfaction, quality of care, and intention to leave. The study used a quantitative cross-sectional design and demonstrated important relationships among nurses' work engagement and job satisfaction, quality of care, and intention to leave. The findings support the broader argument that job satisfaction is not an isolated occupational outcome but is closely connected to organizational performance, quality of care, and workforce retention (Siyal et al., 2025).

examined nurse staffing, work hours, mandatory overtime, turnover, job satisfaction, intention to leave, and burnout among nurses working in 28 acute-care hospitals in South Korea. Among 264 eligible staff nurses, nurses cared for an average of approximately 12 patients per shift, and 40% reported mandatory overtime during the previous month. Job satisfaction decreased as nurses cared for more patients and worked in units with higher turnover. The study also found that high workload was associated with burnout. These findings provide strong evidence that staffing and workload are important determinants of nurses' occupational outcomes. Lee et al. (2024) investigated the effects of workplace incivility and workload on nurses' work attitudes using data from 1,255 direct-care nurses working in 34 general hospitals in South Korea. The researchers examined job satisfaction, organizational commitment, turnover intention, workload, workplace incivility, and burnout using structural equation modeling. The findings supported the proposed stress-strain-outcome pathway, in which workplace stressors such as workload contribute to burnout and subsequently influence nurses' work attitudes, including job satisfaction. This study strengthens the evidence that workload should be assessed alongside organizational and interpersonal working conditions (Asif, Rahman, Perveiz, & Hussain, 2024). (Qaiser et al., 2023).

examined nurses' workload, patient safety, and quality of care in a tertiary-care hospital in Pakistan. The study, published in the *Pakistan Biomedical Journal*, focused specifically on the relationship between nurses' workload and patient-care outcomes. The findings add important local evidence that excessive workload is a significant concern in Pakistani hospital nursing practice. Although the study focused primarily on workload and quality of care rather than job satisfaction, it provides a relevant Pakistani context for examining whether nurses experiencing different workload levels also report different levels of job satisfaction. conducted an updated literature review of job satisfaction among hospital nurses. The review searched ten major databases and included 52 studies. The authors identified numerous factors associated with nurses' job satisfaction and grouped them into demographic characteristics, individual cognition and behaviors, organizational climate, leadership and management, psychological factors, and other work-related domains. The review concluded that working environment and management factors are particularly important and recommended further investigation of the mechanisms through which these factors influence job satisfaction. This review provides strong support for examining workload and hospital-sector characteristics as components of nurses' working environments (Asif et al., 2024). (Qaiser et al., 2023).

investigated workload and intention to leave among 373 nurses from seven hospitals in Turkey. The researchers found a strong negative effect of workload on work satisfaction ($\beta = -0.74$, $p < .001$). Workload also had a positive effect on intention to leave, while work satisfaction and organizational identification negatively influenced intention to leave. These findings provide particularly strong evidence that excessive workload is associated with lower work satisfaction and may contribute to nurses' decisions to leave their organizations (Asif et al., 2024). (Qaiser et al., 2023).

work engagement, job satisfaction, and turnover intention among nurses working in private hospitals in Pokhara, Nepal. Perceived workload was associated with work engagement, while work engagement was significantly associated with job satisfaction. The study also identified career development opportunities as an important factor associated with work engagement. These recent findings indicate that workload and organizational opportunities remain relevant determinants of nurses' occupational experiences in private-sector hospitals (Asif et al., 2024). (Qaiser et al., 2023).

Methodology

Design of study

Cross sectional analytical study design was employed.

Study setting

Public and Private tertiary hospitals were selected to collect the data.

Study population

Rn, BSN and Post Rn BScN nurses at tertiary care Public and Private hospitals in Karachi.

Sample size:

N=184 bedside nurses was calculated by open-epi software.

Sampling technique

Convenient sampling technique was employed to collect the data.

Sampling criteria

Inclusion criteria

- Nurses are working in Private tertiary hospital.
- Nurses are working in Public tertiary hospital.
- Nurses are having more than 1-year experience
- BSN nurses
- Post Rn BScN nurses.
- Nurses are present on data collection day
- Nurse are willing to participate.

Exclusion criteria

- Nurses are not present on data collection day
- Nurse are not willing to participate.

Data collection procedure

Data was collected according to convenient sampling technique; hardcopy forms were provided to the nurses after taking consent form. The data was collected after approval of supervisor and co-supervisor of course.

Data collection tool

The data was collected through an adopted tool which was already used in Pakistan research so we replicated this research in Karachi. The validity of tool is 0.75 and the reliability of tool is 0.8 in Pakistani context (Ullah et al., 2026).

Data analysis:

Normality checking

Normality of the data was checked by the Kolmogorov spirnove test

Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics was checked by SPSS AMOS-22 by applying frequency testing and descriptive testing.

Inferential statistics

Hypothesis was tested by nonparametric test Spearman rank test.

Results**Normality of the data:**

Tests of Normality							
	Type of hospital	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Physical fatigue	private hospital	.410	50	.000	.604	50	.000
	public hospital	.422	134	.000	.603	134	.000
Employment type	private hospital	.370	50	.000	.632	50	.000
	public hospital	.340	134	.000	.636	134	.000
I feel physically exhaust at end of the duty	private hospital	.526	50	.000	.344	50	.000
	public hospital	.532	134	.000	.267	134	.000
I am satisfied with my job	private hospital	.282	50	.000	.767	50	.000
	public hospital	.290	134	.000	.782	134	.000
I am satisfied with my work life balance	private hospital	.332	50	.000	.742	50	.000
	public hospital	.367	134	.000	.699	134	.000
I am satisfied with my salary	private hospital	.238	50	.000	.848	50	.000
	public hospital	.223	134	.000	.837	134	.000
I am satisfied with the available resources	private hospital	.487	50	.000	.484	50	.000
	public hospital	.498	134	.000	.454	134	.000

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table 1: According to kolmogrove spirnove test the data is not normally distributed. The data is skewed.

Descriptive statistics:

Descriptive Statistics							
	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Gender	184	1.00	1.00	2.00	1.2826	.45150	.204
Age	184	3.00	1.00	4.00	2.0435	.27313	.075
Year of experience	184	1.00	1.00	2.00	1.6957	.46139	.213

Department	184	3.00	1.00	4.00	2.0163	1.22575	1.502
Shift	184	2.00	1.00	3.00	2.1087	.79557	.633
Physical fatigue	184	4.00	1.00	5.00	1.7337	1.30980	1.716
Skipping meal	184	3.00	1.00	4.00	1.6087	.95192	.906
Support from manager in high workload	184	2.00	1.00	3.00	1.2174	.55959	.313
I feel physically exhaust at end of the duty	184	2.00	1.00	3.00	1.1141	.42209	.178
My hospital have adequate staff	184	1.00	1.00	2.00	1.5761	.49553	.246
I am able to complete my task during shift time	184	2.00	1.00	3.00	1.4674	.64361	.414
Administrative duties with interfere while patient care time	184	2.00	1.00	3.00	1.3913	.52180	.272
Type of hospital	184	1.00	1.00	2.00	1.7283	.44607	.199
Nurse patient ratio	184	2.00	1.00	3.00	2.1522	.74562	.556
Employment type	184	1.0	1.0	2.0	1.484	.5011	.251
I am satisfied with my job	184	2.00	1.00	3.00	1.7554	.65284	.426
I am satisfied with my work life balance	184	4.00	1.00	5.00	1.7717	1.09248	1.194
I am satisfied with my salary	184	4.00	1.00	5.00	2.5326	1.42154	2.021
My working environment is supportive and respectful	184	2.00	1.00	3.00	1.2663	.62704	.393
I am satisfied with the available resources	184	2.00	1.00	3.00	1.2554	.60505	.366
I feel emotionally fulfil toward my job	184	2.0	1.0	3.0	1.234	.5958	.355
I feel security of my job	184	2.00	1.00	3.00	1.4130	.71902	.517
I feel proud to be part of my health care team	184	2.00	1.00	3.00	1.2826	.69857	.488
I am able to prioritize and able to my work load effectively	184	1.00	1.00	2.00	1.4837	.50110	.251
I feel rush while perform patientcare	184	2.00	1.00	3.00	1.2283	.57457	.330
Highest qualification in nursing	184	2.00	1.00	3.00	1.4891	.65277	.426
Marital status	184	1.00	1.00	2.00	1.4022	.49167	.242

Valid N (list wise) 184

Table 2: descriptive statistics of all variables

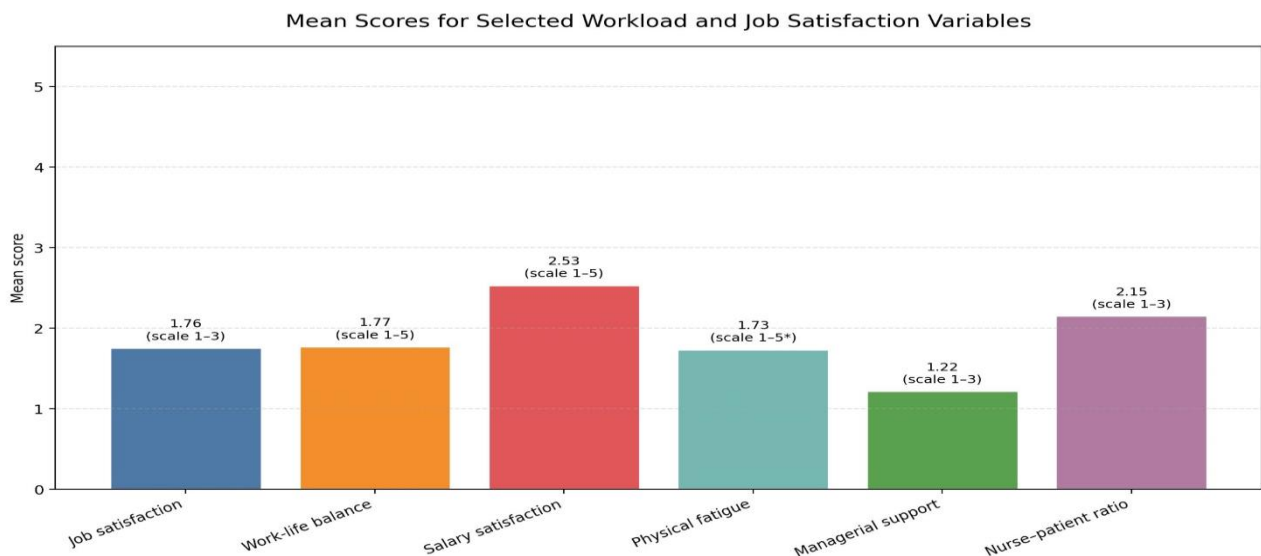
Variable Name	Mean Score	Scale Range	Status / Interpretation
Overall Job Satisfaction (I am satisfied with my job)	1.76	1.00 – 3.00	Low to Moderate. The average leans heavily toward the lower end (1 or 2), showing widespread dissatisfaction.
Work-Life Balance (I am satisfied with my work life balance)	1.77	1.00 – 5.00	Very Low. On a 5-point scale, a mean of 1.77 indicates that a massive majority of the staff feels high dissatisfaction with their balance.
Salary Satisfaction (I am satisfied with my salary)	2.53	1.00 – 5.00	Moderate / Neutral. While still low on a 5-point scale, it is the highest-rated satisfaction metric, meaning it is slightly better tolerated than work-life balance.
Emotional Fulfillment (I feel emotionally fulfilled toward my job)	1.23	1.00 – 3.00	Severely Low. An average of 1.23 implies that almost the entire sample feels emotionally unfulfilled or burnt out.

The data highlights several workplace stressors that directly correlate with these low satisfaction scores:

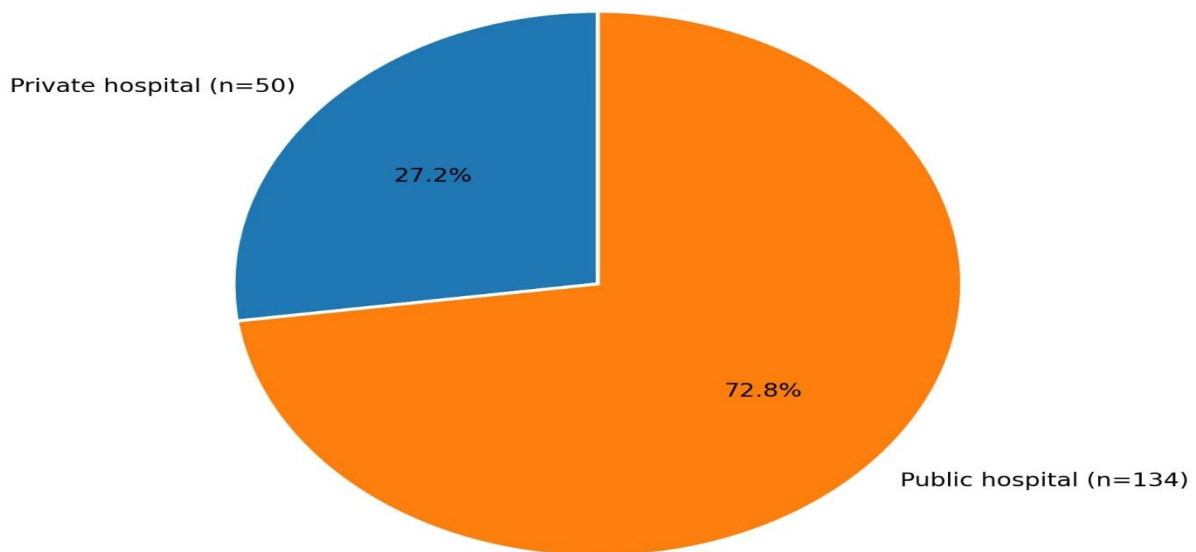
- **High Burnout:** The average score for physical fatigue is **1.73 out of 5**, and physical exhaustion at the end of a shift averages **1.11 out of 3**.
- **Staffing Shortages:** The nurse-to-patient ratio has a high mean of **2.15 out of 3**, meaning a significant portion of the staff experiences unfavorable, high-capacity patient loads.
- **Low Support:** Support from managers during high workloads is very low, averaging **1.22 out of 3**.

Inferential statistics:

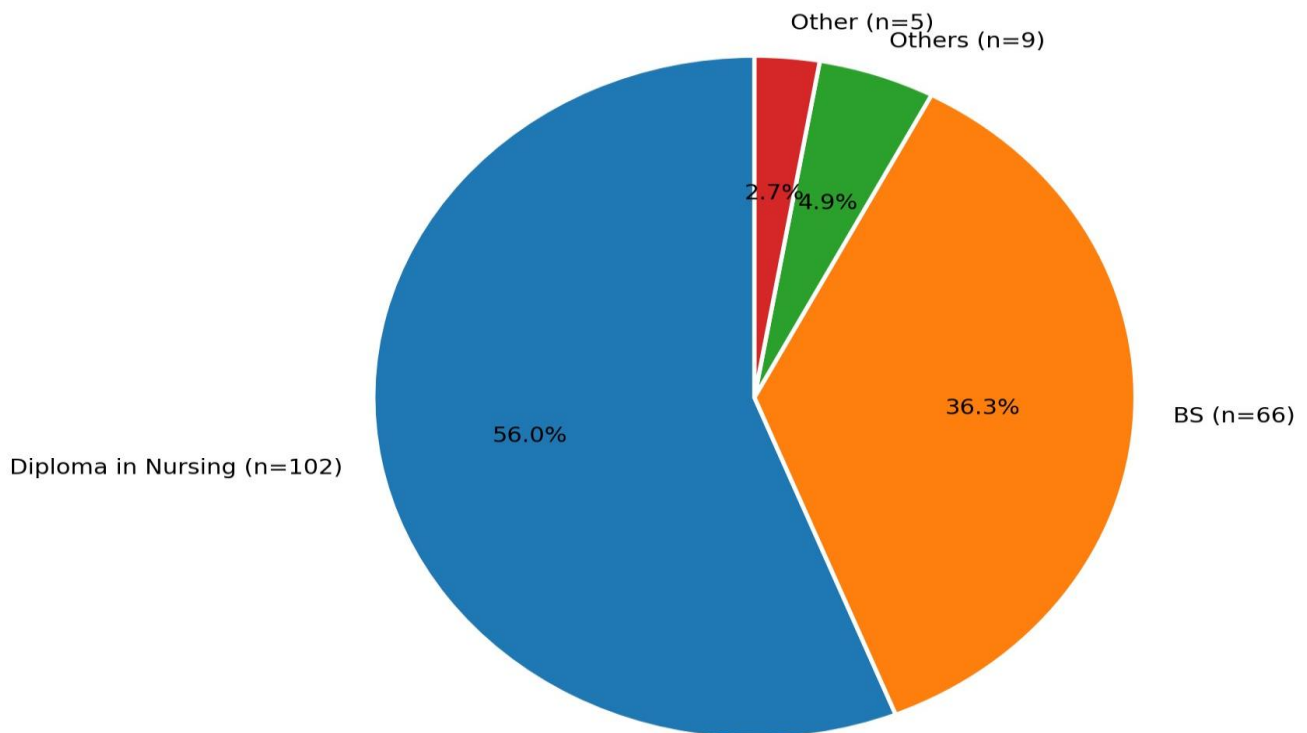
Non parametric test was spearman rank correlation was applied to calculate the inferential statistics, Correlation value between workload and job satisfaction is 0.02 p val



Distribution of Nurses by Hospital Type (N = 184)



Highest Nursing Qualification in Uploaded Dataset (N = 182)



Discussion

examined work environment and job satisfaction among 364 nurses working in federal and state tertiary hospitals in Lagos, Nigeria. The study found that several work-environment factors collectively predicted job satisfaction. Salary was identified as the strongest predictor, followed by advancement and promotion. Administrative and managerial support, autonomy, supervision, working conditions, recognition, and achievement were also positively associated with job satisfaction. The findings indicate that job satisfaction is multidimensional and is influenced not only by workload but also by organizational and employment conditions. In another 2020 study, Bautista et al. examined stressors and their relationships with job satisfaction among nurses working in a tertiary private hospital in the Philippines. Workload was reported as the most frequently

experienced stressor and was negatively associated with job satisfaction and perceived quality of care. Workload and conflict with colleagues were also associated with greater turnover intention. Although the study was conducted in a private hospital, its findings provide strong evidence that excessive workload can undermine nurses' satisfaction and organizational retention (Rahman et al., 2025).

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examined the relationship between nursing workload and job satisfaction while considering psychological meaningfulness and perceived organizational support. The study was designed to investigate whether organizational and psychological factors could influence the relationship between workload and nurses' satisfaction (**ur Rahman, Ahmed, Bibi, & Kaukab, 2024**).

The findings contributed to evidence that workload is closely connected with nurses' job satisfaction and that organizational support can be important in managing the negative effects of demanding workloads. This suggests that the impact of workload may differ according to the organizational environment in which nurses work. Maghsoud et al. (2022) investigated 311 nurses working in four hospitals in central Iran and used structural equation modeling to examine workload, job satisfaction, emotional exhaustion, rationing of nursing care, and quality of nursing care. The nurses reported a high level of workload and a moderate level of job satisfaction. Workload had a significant direct effect on job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion. Furthermore, job satisfaction, emotional exhaustion, and implicit rationing of nursing care mediated the relationship between workload and quality of nursing care. The authors recommended improving staffing and resources, flexible work schedules, salaries, and the work environment to improve nurses' job satisfaction (Mirani et al., 2025).

investigated workload pressures experienced by nurses working in public-sector hospitals in Peshawar, Pakistan. The study is particularly relevant because it provides evidence from the Pakistani public-sector context. The researchers highlighted workload as an important occupational concern among nurses working in public hospitals. Such evidence indicates that staffing levels, patient volume, working hours, and organizational resources may contribute to excessive workload among nurses and therefore warrant assessment when examining job satisfaction. Correlation value between nurse patient ratio and job satisfaction is 0.02 p value. Correlation between salary and nurse patient ratio is 0.02 p value (Siyal et al., 2025).

Conclusion

According to the whole research and findings there is Correlation value between workload and job satisfaction is 0.02 p value and Correlation between salary and nurse patient ratio is 0.02 p value although, there is no correlation between workload and the job satisfaction among nurses in Karachi Pakistan but nurses are not satisfied with job due to salary and workload.

Recommendations:

To mitigate salary dissatisfaction and improve nurse retention amidst inflation, the government must implement competitive salary increases. Furthermore, both public and private hospital administrations should actively recruit adequate personnel to address chronic staffing shortages, which serve as a primary driver of job dissatisfaction. Ultimately, healthcare stakeholders must comprehensively address broader job-related factors to foster a sustainable working environment for nursing professionals.

Acknowledgment

All references and citations have been acknowledged in this research

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