

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

This discussion is based on the information collected from 236 professional nurses in a 500-bed private hospital in Bangkok during October to November 1999, through a self-administered questionnaire. The findings have been discussed in relation to the research hypothesis.

Hypothesis 1: Demographic characteristics such as age, marital status, education, and salary are associated with job satisfaction.

The results showed none of the demographic characteristics were found significantly related to the scores job satisfaction. Elaine et al. (1984) who also obtained similar results and concluded that this might be explained in part by the homogeneity of the study groups which could be true for this study as well because up to 99.2% were female.

Professional nurses between 26-30 age group seemed least satisfied in terms of mean job satisfaction score. Above 36 years age group seemed to be highest satisfied. This supports the Herzberg, who concluded that "people begin work typically in late or early 20 years and they appear to develop considerable degree of enthusiasm. However, the enthusiasm soon wanes giving way to steady decline in morale, which reaches its lowest depths in the late 20 years or early 30 years. Attitudes then become increasingly positive". The reason for lower satisfaction among 26-30 years age group could be due to the difference between their job needs and expectations and actual job characteristics and opportunity available in reality. These people have higher needs for personal and career development, improving the higher level of morale and motivation will certainly lead to greater productivity and patient

satisfaction. However, other age groups should be considered as their job is equally worthwhile and levels of job satisfaction were not different.

There was no statistically difference in job satisfaction between single and married even though single seemed more satisfied in terms of mean score of satisfaction. This finding supports Refissa (1997) who found that unmarried health assistant were significantly more satisfied than the married group. Stamps and Piedmonte (1986) also found significant difference in job satisfaction among married and single nursing personnel. It is a well-known fact that married have greater amount of responsibility including child cares and duty schedules, thus the apparent low level of job satisfaction is well justified. The management should fully understand their needs and must address them in an appropriate manner.

Professional nurses with higher education seemed less satisfied in terms of mean satisfaction scores. This could be true that people with higher education develop higher expectation and if they are not met, the situation eventually lead to the lower level of job satisfaction.

Professional nurses who have highest and lowest salary groups seemed to be least satisfied whereas the middle salary groups seemed more satisfied in terms of mean satisfaction scores. This contradict with Haile (1994) who found that higher income group had significantly higher level of job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 2: General work related factors such as nursing division, length of service, shift hour and distance to work are associated with job satisfaction.

None of the general work related factors were statistically significant in regards to the score of satisfaction. This study found no relationship between job satisfaction and nursing division. When look at mean satisfaction scores, thus in the intensive care unit, outpatient department, medical-surgical department, hemodialysis department, and emergency service center had lower mean scores than other units. This

could be explained commonly according to the conclusion of Hay and Oken, 1972, the large quantity of work involved in caring for critically ill person, compound by the variety, complexity, and urgency of tasks intensifies the likelihood that nurses will become exhausted and dissatisfaction with their job.

Length of service was not related to job satisfaction. This support Federick (1993) who concluded that length of stay was not significant determinant of job satisfaction. When looked at the mean scores, those over 9 years of service time had the highest level of job satisfaction. This finding partly contradicts with Deborah (1992) who found that increased service duration lead to decreased satisfaction. This contradiction may be due to the difference in cultures and values of each society in which the study was conducted.

The study found no difference between distance to work and job satisfaction. This finding contradicts with Stamps and Piedmonte (1986) who found strong positive correlation with job satisfaction. This could be due to the population homogeneity as half of nurses (50.4%) had stayed in the hospital dormitory.

Professional nurses who take only one turn of shift hour (mostly morning shift) were least satisfied. This findings supports Stamps and Piedmonte (1986) who unexpectedly found that nurses were more satisfied with evening and night shift work unlike normal duty hours. One reason for this could be that nurses working in such setting might have experienced more autonomy with less pressure work during night shift.

Hypothesis 3: Specific work related factors such as income, autonomy, task requirement, organizational policy, interaction, and professional status are associated with job satisfaction.

The stepwise multiple regression analysis showed that professional status, task requirement, organizational policy, and autonomy was related to job satisfaction. This finding supports various theories and research.

The professional status was one of four variables significantly related with job satisfaction in stepwise multiple regression analysis with $t=5.458$ and $p\text{-value} = 0.000$. It meant that increased satisfaction in professional status also lead to increased job satisfaction. The finding supports both Maslow (1954) and Herzberg (1959) who suggested that the increase of self-esteem or status of individual, which was considered as higher level of psychological needs will increase satisfaction.

In the stepwise multiple regression analysis, task requirement obtained $t=3.528$ and $p\text{-value}=0.001$. This finding support Timulty (1992) who found that task requirement received a low satisfaction score mainly due to their concern that nurses who were capable to do a good job in the time available have insufficient time with patients.

The organizational policy was one of four variables significant related with job satisfaction in stepwise multiple regression analysis with $t=2.442$ and $p\text{-value}=0.015$. This supports the findings of Falcione (1979) who concluded that one of the significant factors related to job satisfaction was policy and administration.

Most theories and research conducted have recognized autonomy as the major factor for job satisfaction. The same as this finding, the stepwise multiple regression analysis, autonomy obtained $t=2.121$ and $p\text{-value}=0.035$ which supports McClosky (1974) who concluded that lack of autonomy in the role is the major contributor to dissatisfaction among nurses. Peterson et al. (1966) concluded that significant job-facet predictors of health perception were autonomy. Timulty (1992) found that autonomy was positively related to nurses job satisfaction.

The findings from multiple regression analysis showed the relationship which was not statistically significant between income and job satisfaction with $p\text{-value}=0.37$. But there was a significant relationship between nurse age group and income with $p\text{-value}=0.007$ and a significant relationship between length of service and income with $p\text{-value}=0.028$.

The relationship was not statistically significant between interaction and job satisfaction with $p\text{-value}=0.513$. But there was a

significant relationship between marital status and interaction with p -value=0.027.

Finally, on the basis of total variables explained on job satisfaction, the factors that were significantly affecting job satisfaction of professional nurses in a 500-bed private hospital in Bangkok were mainly professional status, task requirement, organizational policy, and autonomy respectively. The professional status was the most important factor in explaining and predicting variation of job satisfaction followed by task requirement, organizational policy, and autonomy respectively. However, other variables are also equally important, therefore, they also deserve special management concern.

None of the demographic characteristics and general work related factors were found to be statistically significant in regards to the score of satisfaction. This might be because of the demographic characteristics of this study group was similar. The behavior characteristics should be considered to be one of the factors affecting job satisfaction in this study to see more significant.

In the section of the eligibility criteria, the researcher excluded the professional nurses who were not agreeing to participate and answer the questionnaire. This might be bias because this group of the subjects might be the ones who did not satisfy with their job. Anyway, it can be referred to the response rate in this study, which was 90.76%; it can be said that the results yielded from this study derived from all professional nurses in this hospital.

There were some factors beyond the analysis can reach for this study. Due to the questionnaire and the theories used in this study were developed from the European countries, in fact this study was done in Thailand. It is surely said that the Thai life style is much different from those who are in the European countries. Maslow's needs hierarchy model might not be fit for the Thai in some reasons. Due to different cultures, traditions, and economic situation; the Thai might start their basic needs from social level instead of physiological need. In Thai social, the seniority is very important in the work life. No matter what you do, the

seniority comes first. Although the juniors recognize that the senior is doing something wrong, they won't say anything. The seniors cannot be taught and told by the juniors, so in the Thai work life style the juniors are the followers. If any of the juniors tried to against this tradition, they would not be happy to work in this society. Although this event cannot be seen much in the modern business companies, which they respect the ability more than seniority; but we have to accept that the seniority has been very strong in the society of Thai nurses. So that to find the factors that affect job satisfaction of the Thai nurses, should consider about the Thai cultures and tradition. Only the factors included in this study might not be enough because the Thai life style affects job satisfaction and those specific work related factors as well.