

NURSES' JOB SATISFACTION
AND
PARTICIPATION IN CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAMS

AN ABSTRACT OF
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The purpose of the study was to investigate whether registered nurse (RN) job satisfaction changed as a function of participation in continuing education (CE). The hypothesis was that RNs who have larger amounts of participation in CE have significantly ($p=.05$) higher total job satisfaction than RNs who have little or no participation in CE. A survey questionnaire was mailed to 120 staff RNs employed 24 hours or more in a small community hospital. The questionnaire consisted of the Staff Satisfaction Survey (Hall, Parker, and VonEndt, 1981), a demographic data sheet and an education participation sheet. The returned surveys were placed into one of three groups, based on the amount of CE participation respondents reported. The three levels of CE participation were none, small, and moderate/large amounts. A total job satisfaction score was calculated for each survey along with scores for six different job components. The six job components were task requirement, interaction, pay, autonomy, job prestige, and organizational requirement. Job satisfaction and component scores were compared by one-way randomized ANOVAs. Scheffe's post-hoc tests were done to determine which groups differed significantly. The 0.05 level of significance was used for all statistical tests. The response rate was 71.7%, with a final sample size of 78 respondents. The majority of respondents were female and in the 31 to 40 age group. Most of the respondents were graduates of diploma and associate degree nursing programs. Results indicated overall positive job satisfaction, with no statistically significant differences in job satisfaction between the three different levels of CE participation. The respondents were satisfied on all but one job component, task requirement. The findings indicated that the respondents were most satisfied with the job component, job prestige and least satisfied with task requirement. A correlation matrix indicated that the six job components were significantly intercorrelated, suggesting that the instrument may not really measure six distinct aspects of a job. In conclusion, the hypothesis was not supported by the results of this study. The implications of this study are that even though continuing education opportunities have been identified as an important job incentive and benefit in nursing, they may not significantly influence RN job satisfaction. Further research should be done to determine why RNs are dissatisfied with the job component, task requirement. The instrument needs further testing to determine if it in fact measures six different job components, the results of this study indicate that it may not.