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Navigating Nursing: A Literature Review of Understanding and Addressing Challenges in the Nursing Profession

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Navigating Nursing: A Literature Review of Understanding and Addressing Challenges in the

Nursing Profession

Honors Thesis

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By

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Navigating Nursing: A Literature Review of Understanding and Addressing Challenges in the

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Abstract

The purpose of this project is to conduct a comprehensive literature review from a global nursing perspective, examining the challenges faced by nurses and potential strategies to address them. Specifically, this study investigates the concept of resilience in nurses to inform future interventions aimed at building and maintaining a strong nursing workforce. The study analyzed 34 scholarly articles from various databases to identify the challenges and factors affecting nurse retention and to explore effective strategies for reducing nurse turnover. The results suggest that burnout, compassion fatigue, moral distress, incivility in the workplace, workload, and job stress are the key reasons for nurse turnover. Manager support, self-care strategies, nurse unions, supervisor support, and professional development are identified as effective strategies for enhancing nurse retention. This study provides significant implications for policymakers, healthcare administrators, and nurse leaders to develop targeted interventions aimed at improving the well-being and job satisfaction of nurses, ultimately enhancing the quality of care provided to patients. By investing in the resilience of nurses, this study seeks to make a positive impact on the nursing workforce and promote the future of healthcare.

Keywords: Nurses, Career Choice, Stress, Burnout, Job Satisfaction, Self-Care, Resilience, Retention, Self-Actualization, Interventions, United States

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Nursing Profession

Hanna McQueary

Dr. Melanie Adams-Johnson, D NP, RN School of Nursing

Introduction

Background

The nursing profession has long been recognized as one that involves high levels of stress and burnout, leading to negative consequences such as drug abuse, self-harm, and even suicide among nurses (Shanafelt et al., 2016). In recent years, there has been increasing awareness of the need to address the challenges faced by nurses to improve the quality of life for nurses and promote investment in the future of healthcare. This review of related literature aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the existing research related to the challenges faced by nurses in the profession.

One of the key challenges faced by nurses is the high workload and demanding nature of the job. This can lead to stress, burnout, and a decreased quality of care for patients (Salyer et al., 2019). Many studies have focused on the impact of the workload of nurses, with research suggesting that increased staffing levels and the implementation of support programs can lead to improved job satisfaction and retention rates (Kane et al., 2017).

Another challenge faced by nurses is the emotional toll of the job. Caring for patients who are critically ill or dying can take a significant emotional toll on nurses, leading to compassion fatigue and emotional exhaustion (Figley, 2013). Research has highlighted the need for emotional support programs and counseling services to help nurses cope with the emotional demands of the job (Roney et al., 2018).

The physical demands of the job are also a significant challenge for nurses. Many nurses work long hours and are required to lift heavy patients, leading to physical strain and injury (Okoye & Nnodim, 2016). Studies have highlighted the need for improved ergonomic practices and equipment, as well as the implementation of exercise programs to promote physical fitness and reduce the risk of injury (Crawford et al., 2018).

Other challenges faced by nurses include workplace violence and bullying, limited career advancement opportunities, and inadequate compensation (Duffield et al., 2014; El-Masri et al., 2018; Kim et al., 2019). Addressing these challenges will require a multifaceted approach that includes improved staffing levels, support programs, and policy changes related to workplace safety and compensation.

Overall, the literature highlights the need to address the challenges faced by nurses to improve their quality of life and promote investment in the future of healthcare. The implementation of support programs, improved staffing levels, and policy changes related to workplace safety and compensation are all potential strategies for addressing these challenges. By investing in the resilience of nurses and understanding the factors that lead to job satisfaction and retention, it is possible to improve the nursing workforce and ultimately, the quality of patient care.

Significance

The nursing profession is a critical component of the healthcare industry. The challenges faced by nurses have significant implications for patient care and the overall functioning of the healthcare system. As a result of the crucial role that nurses play, research has shown that the nursing profession is associated with high levels of stress, burnout, and turnover. These factors are leading to shortages of experienced nurses in many areas. This project is important because it aims to address the challenges faced by nurses and explore potential strategies for addressing them. By examining the existing literature on nursing challenges from a global perspective, this project hopes to fill the gap in knowledge and find ways to improve the lives of nurses.

The potential impact of this project is significant as it can inform interventions aimed at building and maintaining a strong nursing workforce. Understanding the concepts that support resilience in nurses is crucial to informing future interventions aimed at promoting nurses' well-being and retaining experienced nurses in the healthcare workforce. By investing in the resilience of nurses, it is possible to improve the future of healthcare and better understand why nurses leave the profession.

This project's significance is highlighted by the limitations in previous research, which has mostly focused on individual-level interventions such as stress management and self-care techniques. Addressing the challenges in the nursing profession requires a broader perspective that includes systemic interventions and structural changes. This project hopes to contribute to the field by examining potential strategies for addressing the challenges faced by nurses including policy changes, workplace interventions, and support systems for nurses.

Overall, this project seeks to make a positive impact on the nursing profession and contribute to the development of effective interventions that promote nurse well-being and improve healthcare outcomes.

The nursing profession is one that is associated with high levels of stress and burnout, leading to many nurses leaving the field, or experiencing negative consequences such as drug abuse, self-harm, and even suicide. Despite these challenges, many individuals still aspire to become nurses, and many continue to endure the demanding conditions of the profession.

Problem Statement

The research problem is to understand the challenges that nurses face and explore potential strategies for addressing them to improve the quality of life for nurses. Ultimately, the goal is to improve the retention rate of experienced nurses in the healthcare workforce.

Research Question

What are the challenges faced by nurses in the profession, and what strategies can be implemented to address them?

Thesis Statement

The objectives of this project are to conduct a comprehensive literature review on the challenges faced by nurses in the profession as well as potential strategies for addressing them. The review will identify common themes and patterns across the literature and analyze data collected from the literature review to develop recommendations for addressing the challenges faced by nurses.

Statement of Purpose

This project examines current evidence in published literature in an effort to propose strategies that promote resilience and retention in the nursing workforce. The resultant findings and recommendations will be published for nursing organizations and policymakers with the goal of aiding future interventions aimed at building and maintaining a strong nursing workforce.

Methodology

The methodology of this project is a literature review that will examine existing literature from both a national and global nursing perspective. The significance of this research lies in the potential to improve the quality of life for nurses and promote investment in the future of healthcare by addressing the challenges faced by nurses in the profession. By investing in the resilience of nurses and understanding the factors that lead to job satisfaction and retention, this research aims to contribute to the improvement of the nursing workforce and, ultimately, the quality of patient care.

Terminology

Understanding resiliency and interventions to improve retention in nursing requires the understanding of factors that contribute to nurses' ability to cope with and overcome challenges, as well as the ability to identify strategies to support their continued engagement in the nursing profession.

Resiliency refers to an individual's ability to adapt to stress and adversity in order to maintain a sense of well-being in the face of challenges. In nursing, resiliency is important because nurses are often faced with high levels of stress and emotional strain as they care for patients in complex and unpredictable situations. Understanding resiliency involves recognizing

the personal and environmental factors that contribute to nurses' ability to cope with stress, such

as social support, self-care practices, and workplace culture.

Interventions to improve retention in nursing involve implementing strategies to support

nurses' engagement and commitment to the profession. This may include initiatives to address

workplace culture and support, such as improving work-life balance, providing opportunities for

professional development and advancement, and creating a supportive work environment that

values and recognizes nurses' contributions. It may also involve providing resources and support

for nurses' mental and emotional health, such as access to counseling services, mindfulness and

stress reduction programs, and peer support networks.

Finally, burnout in the nursing field is a state of emotional, physical, and mental

exhaustion that occurs as a result of prolonged stress and overwork. Nurses who experience

burnout may feel overwhelmed, emotionally drained, and detached from their work, patients, and

colleagues. They may also experience a sense of depersonalization or a lack of empathy and

connection with others. Burnout is a common experience among nurses and can have serious

consequences for both nurses and patients. There are several signs and symptoms of burnout in

nursing that should be recognized. Emotional exhaustion is a key symptom, as nurses may feel

drained and struggle to find joy or satisfaction in their work. They may also experience feelings

of irritability, frustration, or cynicism. Burnout can also manifest in physical symptoms such as

headaches, fatigue, and insomnia.

Additionally, nurses experiencing burnout may feel less engaged and committed to their

work, leading to decreased job satisfaction. This may further lead to increased errors and

mistakes, which can have serious consequences for patient care. Finally, burnout can cause

nurses to withdraw from their colleagues and patients, leading to a sense of isolation and

disconnection from the workplace. It is crucial for nurses and healthcare organizations to

recognize these symptoms of burnout and take appropriate steps to address them. Overall,

burnout in the nursing field can have serious consequences for both nurses and patients. It is

important for nurses and healthcare organizations to recognize the signs of burnout and take

steps to address it, such as by providing support and resources for self-care, improving work-life

balance, and addressing workplace culture and practices that may contribute to burnout.

Literature Review

International Studies

Ulupinar and Aydogan (2021) investigated the factors influencing the satisfaction and intentions of new graduate nurses (NGNs) in their first year of work. Their study involved 428 NGNs from four hospitals in Turkey, and they found that nearly half of the participants experienced difficulties adapting to the nursing profession, and more than two-fifths had considered leaving the profession. The authors recommend improving the professional skills of NGNs through well-structured orientation programs that contribute to the development of their knowledge and skills, to increase job satisfaction and as a result, reduce the intention of NGSs leaving their jobs.

The cross-sectional study by Gong et al. (2022) suggests that there is a connection between the professional quality of life, burnout, nursing practice environment, and turnover intention among newly graduated Chinese nurses. The study highlights the importance of addressing these factors to improve nurse retention. It sheds light on the interrelationships among factors that impact turnover intention among newly graduated nurses in China. Through the analysis of data from 315 participants, the researchers employed multiple regression analysis and structural equation modeling to explore the mediating effect of professional quality of life on the relationship between predictors and turnover intention. The findings indicated that nursing practice environment, social support, and empathy indirectly affected turnover intention via burnout and compassion satisfaction, while no significant mediating effect of secondary traumatic stress was identified. The study's insights underscore the importance of addressing the professional quality of life of nurses in China to prevent turnover and promote retention in the workforce.

Hognestad Haaland, Olsen, & Mikkelsen (2021) found that supervisor support and ethical dilemmas are associated with nurses' intention to leave, and the meaning of work mediates this relationship. Improving supervisor support and addressing ethical dilemmas can, therefore, play an important role in retaining nurses.

Kerzman et al. (2020) conducted a case-control study with 100 resigning nurses and 200 matched remaining nurses to identify the factors that differentiate hospital nurses who leave from those who stay. Resigning nurses had higher education, less seniority, and fewer managerial positions than remaining nurses, and cited reasons such as distance from home, working conditions, and the desire for professional advancement for leaving. The study highlights the importance of addressing the factors that can influence work attitudes and professional characteristics to retain highly qualified nurses, including developing career advancement tracks and promoting professional autonomy.

Li et al. (2020) investigated the factors influencing the intention of newly graduated Chinese nurses to leave their jobs. This quantitative study explored the association of intention to leave with nurse characteristics, person-environment fit, and social support. The study was conducted as a cross-sectional descriptive study, and data was collected through an online questionnaire from 1,313 newly graduated nurses at 18 hospitals in six provinces in China during 2018. The study found that among newly graduated Chinese nurses, intention to leave is significant and is influenced by work area, level of education, negative workplace/life events, and person-organization fit.

Wang et al. explored the relationship between staff nurses' emotional intelligence, transformational leadership, and nurses' intent to stay in Shanghai hospitals. This quantitative study aimed to investigate the mediating effect of emotional intelligence on the relationship

between transformational leadership and nurse intent to stay. The study utilized a self-report questionnaire to collect data from 535 full-time registered nurses in four general hospitals in Shanghai, China. The study found that emotional intelligence partially mediated the relationship between transformational leadership and nurse intent to stay. The results showed that a nurse manager's transformational leadership was positively associated with the nurse's intent to stay, and this relationship was mediated by the nurse's emotional intelligence. The findings suggest that developing training programs for nurse managers' transformational leadership and nurse emotional intelligence could be an effective strategy to improve nurse retention in China.

Ngabonzima et al. (2020) examined the relationship between managerial leadership styles and job satisfaction, intention to stay, and service provision of nurses and midwives in Rwanda. The study involved 162 full-time nurses and midwives practicing in five selected hospitals. The Path-Goal Leadership questionnaire was used to collect data on leadership styles, while other questionnaires with high validity and reliability were used to collect data on job satisfaction, intention to stay, and service provision. The study found that managerial leadership styles play a substantial role in improving the aforementioned factors. The study concludes that there is a need to develop a "comprehensive formal professional continuous development course" on leadership styles to prepare future leaders early in their careers and enhance effective leadership at all levels in order to improve the job satisfaction of nurses and midwives, address the issue of retention in their respective health facilities, and strengthen service provision.

A study in Germany explored the reasons why state-qualified nurses consider leaving or staying in the nursing profession (Roth et al., 20). The study found that push factors, such as limited career prospects and workplace pressures, and pull factors, such as professional pride and improved remuneration, influence the decision to leave or stay. The authors suggest that nurse

managers should address pull factors, including professional development opportunities and a

supportive work environment, to tackle nursing shortages.

Walker et al. aimed to identify the main reasons for nurses leaving the profession before

retirement age and the factors that could enable them to remain in nursing. The study's sample

consisted of 459 nurses aged 55-65 who had left nursing before the official retirement age in

New Zealand. Data was collected through an online survey using the Survey Monkey (Pro)

platform. The study found that workload, stress, and a lack of support were the main reasons for

nurses leaving the profession, with many also reporting feeling undervalued and disrespected in

their workplace. The study highlights the need for nursing management to address these issues

and implement initiatives to support and retain older nurses in the workforce. The study provides

valuable insights into the factors contributing to the attrition of older nurses in New Zealand,

which can inform the development of retention strategies for this demographic.

Another global study conducted in Venezuela investigated the relationship between the

level of quality of professional life and the characteristics of burnout syndrome among the

nursing staff in the intensive care unit (Quijada-Martínez et al., 2017). The study used both

quantitative and qualitative methods to measure the level of quality of professional life and

burnout syndrome of nursing staff. The results revealed insights into the current state of

professional quality of life and burnout syndrome experienced by nurses in the ICU setting in

Venezuela.

The literature review encompasses studies that investigate factors influencing the

retention of nurses in their profession, particularly newly graduated nurses. The studies reveal

several factors associated with nurse retention, including the nursing practice environment, social

support, empathy, burnout, compassion satisfaction, supervisor support, ethical dilemmas,

distance from home, working conditions, professional advancement, person-environment fit, negative workplace/life events, emotional intelligence, and transformational leadership. The studies suggest that interventions such as structured orientation programs, developing career advancement tracks, promoting professional autonomy, comprehensive formal professional continuous development courses, and implementing initiatives to address workload, stress, lack of support, and limited career prospects could help in retaining nurses in their profession. The studies highlight the need for nursing management to address these factors to promote nurse retention and reduce turnover intention among nurses.

United States Studies

Researchers in the United States (US) discovered the rate of burnout among nurses and explored the factors associated with leaving (or considering leaving) the field in 2018. According to Shah et al.'s (2021) report on the National Sample Survey of Registered Nurses in the US, a significant proportion of nurses (31.5%) who quit their job in 2017 cited burnout as the reason. The study also found regional differences, with lower rates of burnout reported among nurses in the West (16.6%) and higher rates in the Southeast (30.0%). The researchers elaborated that nurses working 40 hours per week have a higher burnout rate and are more likely to leave their jobs in nursing compared to those working less than 20 hours per week (Shah et al., 2021). The study confirms that nurses leave or consider leaving because of the stressful work environment and inadequate staffing. The data is multifaceted and contains both national and state-level distributions. The researchers in question would like to address the need for intervention and offer countermeasures for burnout in nursing through both legislation and system-level initiatives.

Al Zamel, Lim Abdullah, Chan, & Piaw (2020) suggest that factors such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, social support, and work-life balance are all important in influencing nurses' decisions to stay or leave their job. Similarly, Ayanwale (2019) found that strategies such as mentorship, effective communication, and recognition are used by nurse managers to reduce the voluntary turnover of new registered nurses. Bonamer & Aquino-Russell (2019) suggest that self-care strategies such as transcendental meditation can reduce compassion fatigue and improve resilience for nurses. This can be an important factor in retaining nurses who may be at risk of burnout or compassion fatigue.

Bong (2019) argues that understanding moral distress can help decrease the turnover rates of new graduate pediatric nurses. By identifying the sources of moral distress and providing support to address these issues, healthcare organizations can support their nurses and as a result, reduce turnover rates.

Chipps et al. (2022) reflect on the experience of nurse managers across the United States during the COVID-19 pandemic and found that the pandemic has led to increased workloads and stress for nurses, which can negatively impact retention. Harris (2019) argues that the challenges of nursing faculty retention can be addressed by improving organizational culture as well as by providing opportunities for professional development.

Lane and Kohlenberg (2021) conducted a qualitative study in the US on the current state of graduate nursing programs in the United States related to the nursing education shortage. The study aimed to identify key areas for the future development of graduate programs in nursing education. Lane and Kohlenberg used a nationwide review that assessed the status of graduate nursing education programs in the United States. The resultant data was analyzed to identify trends and patterns in the current state of graduate nursing education programs. This analysis

found that 90% of programs were able to enroll all qualified nursing education applicants in their programs, but those that turned away qualified applicants turned away 1-20 students. Over half (27) of the programs that responded to the survey were delivered online, and 81% of the respondents reported a nurse educator shortage.

Poghosyan et al. (2022) aimed to explore the relationship between nurse practitioner work environment and nurse practitioner outcomes (job satisfaction and intent to leave) in six states in the United States: Arizona, New Jersey, Washington, Pennsylvania, California, and Texas. The study used a cross-sectional design, and data was collected from 575 nurse practitioners. The study found that nurse practitioner work environments were significantly associated with both job satisfaction and intent to leave. The study suggests that improving nurse practitioner work environments could be an effective strategy for retaining nurse practitioners in their jobs and enhancing their job satisfaction.

Researchers Rothacker-Peyton, Wilson-Anderson, and Mayer conducted a cross-sectional study at a private nursing school in the Pacific Northwest to assess the professional quality of life of full-time nursing faculty prior to COVID-19. The study collected data from full-time nursing faculty, including mid-level nurse leaders, using four validated tools. Results showed moderate levels of burnout, low levels of resilience, moderate levels of compassion satisfaction, and high levels of secondary traumatic stress. The study emphasizes the need for a supportive work environment to address the nursing faculty shortage. The survey was conducted online via Qualtrics® in early 2020.

The qualitative study conducted by Wei et al. aimed to identify strategies that nurse leaders can use to foster nurse resilience in a tertiary hospital in the United States. A purposive sampling method was used to recruit 20 nurse leaders, and they were interviewed to identify

strategies to promote resilience in nurses. The study identified seven strategies, including promoting positivity, nurturing nurses' growth, and fostering mindfulness practice, which can be easily implemented in any healthcare setting. The study highlights the importance of nurse leaders in building a resilient nursing workforce and improving patient outcomes, and the need for ongoing efforts to promote nurses' resilience. Nurse leaders are encouraged to model and enable evidence-based strategies to promote resilience in their teams.

Another study conducted in the United States investigated the connections between health promotion behaviors, burnout, compassion fatigue, and compassion satisfaction in nurses working in a community medical center (Rigdon & Winters, 2022). The study found that there is a lack of literature exploring the interrelationships between these variables and health promotion behaviors. The results of the study indicated that nurses who engage in health-promoting behaviors are less likely to experience burnout and compassion fatigue, and more likely to experience compassion satisfaction. These findings suggest that implementing programs to promote wellness and enhance compassion satisfaction can mitigate the negative effects of stressors such as burnout and compassion fatigue in nursing professionals.

Urso et al. conducted a study at The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center to evaluate the effects of a mindfulness-based intervention called LOTUS on burnout, stress, anxiety, and depression among ICU nurses and patient care technicians. The LOTUS program consisted of eight 1-hour classes over 8 weeks, and the study had a total of 67-day shift ICU nurses and patient care technicians as participants. The study population had low baseline scores of burnout, stress, anxiety, and depression compared to other ICU nursing populations. The implementation of the LOTUS program was found to be not feasible, and it did not have a statistically significant effect on the already low scores of depression, stress, anxiety, and overall

burnout. However, professional efficacy was found to have improved significantly. The LOTUS

program was supported by nursing leadership, physicians, research assistants, and the yoga

therapist.

This quantitative study by Zhang et al. examines the projected shortage of registered

nurses (RNs) in the United States from 2015 to 2030. Using existing data sources, the study

breaks down the RN shortage into three levels: national, regional, and state. The study provides a

detailed analysis of the expected RN shortages in each of the four regions of the United States

and projects the RN shortage ratios per 100,000 people in each region. The study concludes that

the RN shortages will continue to grow across the country during the analyzed period, with the

South and West regions experiencing the largest shortages. California, Florida, and Texas are

expected to face the largest RN shortages, while South Dakota is the only state projected to

receive an A grade in 2030 due to successful long-term efforts to expand its RN supply. This

study provides valuable information for healthcare policymakers and administrators to address

the projected RN shortages.

Finally, a study in the United States explored the effects of mindfulness training on stress,

anxiety, depression symptoms, well-being, and academic performance among college students

(Biegel et al., 2009). While not specifically focused on nursing professionals, the findings

suggest that mindfulness training can be a valuable intervention for promoting mental health and

academic success among individuals experiencing high amounts of stress.

The articles reviewed explore the factors associated with nurses leaving or considering

leaving their profession, including burnout, moral distress, and compassion fatigue. Strategies

such as job satisfaction, work-life balance, mentorship, effective communication, recognition,

and self-care are identified as important in retaining nurses. The COVID-19 pandemic has also

impacted nurse retention rates. The studies emphasize the need for intervention and countermeasures to address burnout in nursing through legislation and system-level initiatives. The research also explores the current state of graduate nursing education programs and the nurse educator shortage. Nurse practitioner work environments are significantly associated with both job satisfaction and intent to leave. Strategies to promote nurse resilience, including promoting positivity, nurturing nurses' growth, and fostering mindfulness practice, are also identified. Finally, a lack of literature is noted on the interrelationships between health promotion behaviors, burnout, compassion fatigue, and compassion satisfaction, and the potential for implementing programs to promote wellness and enhance compassion satisfaction to mitigate the negative effects of stressors on nurses.

Other Sources

Khan et al. (2019) suggests that factors such as job satisfaction, work-life balance, and social support can influence nurses' intentions to leave adult critical care settings. These factors need to be addressed to improve nurse retention in these settings.

Tsolakidis et al. (2022) conducted a systematic review to investigate the factors that contribute to burnout in nursing staff. The study aimed to improve policy makers' understanding of the elements that predispose nurses to burnout. The study highlights challenging working conditions and the demanding nature of patient care as the primary risk factors for burnout among nurses. The authors selected relevant articles on PubMed using specific keywords, then analyzed, synthesized, and presented the data in the review's findings. The study found that heavy workloads, poor relationships with doctors and supervisors, and lack of support from colleagues increase the risk of burnout, whereas a supportive environment by superiors or colleagues reduces the risk. The study emphasizes the importance of interpersonal relationships

between healthcare workers in creating a peaceful and productive work environment and reducing the risk of burnout among nurses.

Stephen L. Wagner offers a comprehensive overview of the healthcare system in the United States. The publication provides an analysis of the historical development of the system, the driving forces that have shaped it, and the challenges that it currently faces. The book offers insights into potential future developments and reforms, examining the roles of organizations and providers, financing mechanisms, quality and safety improvement, the impact of technology, and ongoing reform efforts. It is a secondary source that synthesizes and analyzes existing data, research, and literature on the US healthcare system. The publication is valuable for a literature review as it provides a thorough understanding of the complex and evolving US healthcare system.

The three sources share a common theme of identifying factors that affect nursing staff in critical care settings. Khan et al. (2019) examined the factors that impact nurses' intentions to leave adult critical care settings, highlighting the importance of job satisfaction, work-life balance, and social support in retaining nurses. Tsolakidis et al. (2022) investigate the factors that contribute to burnout in nursing staff, identifying challenging working conditions, heavy workloads, and lack of support from colleagues and superiors as primary risk factors. Both studies emphasize the role of interpersonal relationships between healthcare workers in creating a supportive and peaceful work environment.

Wagner's publication offers a comprehensive overview of the healthcare system in the United States, providing insights into potential future developments and reforms. Although not directly related to nursing staff in critical care settings, it is still relevant to the literature review as it contextualizes the healthcare system in which nursing staff operates. The publication

provides an analysis of the historical development of the system, the driving forces that have shaped it, and the challenges it faces, including financing mechanisms, quality and safety improvement, and ongoing reform efforts. It is useful in understanding the broader healthcare system within which the factors identified by Khan et al. and Tsolakidis et al. operate.

Overall, the sources suggest that factors such as job satisfaction, work-life balance, social support, challenging working conditions, heavy workloads, and supportive interpersonal relationships are crucial in retaining nursing staff in critical care settings and reducing the risk of burnout. They also highlight the importance of understanding the broader healthcare system in which these factors operate. In addition, the studies emphasize the importance of addressing factors that contribute to the wellbeing of nursing professionals, such as health-promoting behaviors, supportive work environments, and mindfulness training. Addressing these factors can not only benefit individual nurses but also improve patient outcomes and retention rates within the nursing profession.

Assumptions

Throughout this literature review, the researcher made several assumptions based on their background as a nursing student and their understanding of burnout, and the need for interventions to improve retention in the nursing profession. It is believed that understanding the concepts that support resilience in nurses is crucial to informing future interventions aimed at promoting nurses' well-being and retaining experienced nurses in the healthcare workforce.

Additionally, the researcher assumes that the nursing profession is associated with high levels of stress, burnout, and negative consequences. Despite these challenges, many individuals still aspire to become nurses, and many continue to endure the demanding conditions of the profession.

Through the research conducted, the student gathered that increased staffing levels and the implementation of support programs can lead to improved job satisfaction and retention rates. Emotional support programs and counseling services can also help nurses cope with the emotional demands of the job. Thus, the researcher infers that addressing the challenges faced by nurses will require a multifaceted approach that includes improved staffing levels, support programs, and policy changes related to workplace safety and compensation.

By investing in the resilience of nurses and understanding the factors that lead to job satisfaction and retention, it is possible to improve the nursing workforce and ultimately, the quality of patient care. This can be achieved by taking a broader perspective that includes systemic interventions and structural changes.

Methods

To conduct a comprehensive literature review on the national nursing perspective and a general understanding of resiliency and burnout in the nursing profession, relevant databases such as CINAHL Ultimate, MEDLINE, Nursing & Allied Health Premium, Academic Search Ultimate, PubMed, and the Cochrane Database of systematic reviews, journals, and other sources were utilized. The search was conducted using key terms such as Nursing, Resiliency, Retention, Stress, Burnout, Job Satisfaction, and Self-Care, and articles were screened based on predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria. This process was guided by identifying the research questions: "Why do nurses pursue nursing?", "Why are nurses staying in the profession?", and "Why are nurses leaving the profession?". Data from the selected articles was extracted, analyzed, and the findings were synthesized to provide a comprehensive and unbiased summary of the current state of knowledge on the topic. The literature review was concluded by writing a report or manuscript that summarized the findings and their implications. The aim of the review was to provide

insights into resiliency and burnout in nursing in order to inform strategies and interventions aimed at improving nurses' well-being and job satisfaction.

Inclusion Criteria

Several inclusion criteria were established in this project to ensure the use of relevant and up-to-date information. The consideration was limited to full-text research articles published in English, and only those that were published no earlier than 2018, to ensure the data is current and within the last 5 years. Additionally, only peer-reviewed articles were used, and the search was limited to academic journals within the nursing subset, with the aim of ensuring the validity and reliability of the information gathered. These inclusion criteria were applied to ensure that the research conducted is significant, relevant, and informative.

Results

Literature Search and Selection

The author conducted a comprehensive search of the literature using an electronic search strategy that included the Eastern Kentucky University Nursing guide and various databases (see Table 3.). The search yielded 34 relevant sources from both global and national perspectives. Additionally, eight databases provided more than one valuable source to the review (see Table 4).

Characteristics of Selected Sources

Of the 34 sources analyzed, 20 were United States (US) based journals, 11 were international journals, and three had no specified location (see Table 1.). Twenty-three of the

sources provided a sample size and response rate, while 11 did not. Among the 23 sources with sample size and response rate information, 17 had a sample size less than 1000, while 6 had a sample size greater than 1000 (see Figure 1). Furthermore, twenty of the sources were quantitative, nine were qualitative, and five were mixed methods (see Table 2).

Overall, the selected sources represent a diverse range of perspectives and methodologies. The majority of sources were from US-based journals with a sample size of less than 1000. While the number of sources with sample size and response rate information was limited, the results can still provide valuable insights into the research question. The selected sources also provide a range of quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods studies that offer a comprehensive understanding of the topic.

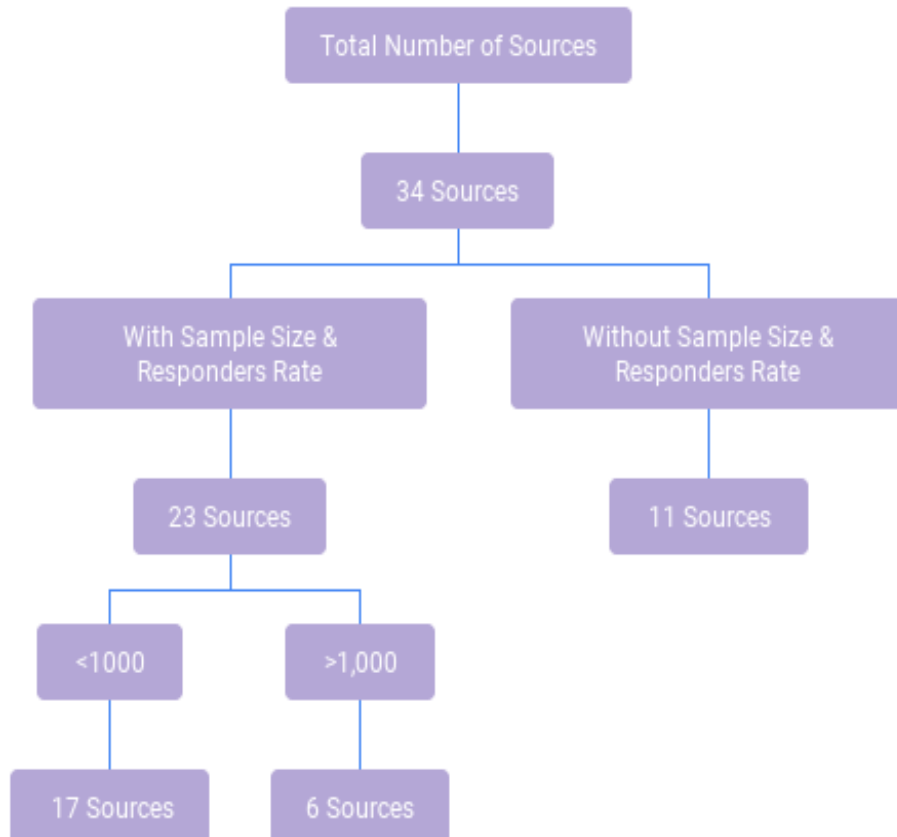**Figure 1.**

Responders Rate and Sample Size

Table 1.

Location of Sources

US	20
Global	11
No Location	3

Table 2.

Method of Studies

Quantitative	20
Qualitative	9
Mixed	5

Table 3.

Distribution of Literature Sources in Nursing Databases

International Journals	United States Journals
Sage Journals (UK)	Nursing & Allied Health Premium
Scopus (Netherlands)	Midwest Quarterly
ResearchGate (Germany)	CINAHL Ultimate
CORE (UK)	BMC Nursing
RCN (UK)	Journal of Nursing
Europe PMC (Europe)	Journal of Nursing Education
BioMed (UK)	PubMed
SciELO (Scientific Electronic Library Online) (Brazil)	Ovid
DOAJ (Directory of Open Access Journals) (Sweden)	Walters Kluwer Health
ScienceGate (Germany)	Wiley
Nursing Open (UK)	Google Scholar
Education Source (Australia)	GovExtra
International Journal of Caring Sciences (Greece)	OAIster
Redalyc (Red de Revistas Científicas de América Latina y el Caribe, España y Portugal) (Mexico)	American Psychology Association (psycnet)
	Supplemental Index
	EdSource
	ProQuest
	UNCHealthcare

Table 4.

Frequency of Literature Sources in Nursing Databases

Source	Number of Repeats
PubMed	3
CINAHL Ultimate	3
Wiley	3
ResearchGate	3
Midwest Quarterly	2
BMC Nursing	2
Nursing & Allied Health Premium	2
Journal of Nursing Education	2

Illustration 1.

Geographic Depiction of Source Locations

Literature Review Themes and Strategies

This literature review from a global perspective covers various factors influencing the satisfaction and intention of new graduate nurses (NGNs) in their first year of work, with a focus on nurse retention. The studies analyzed data from China, Turkey, Rwanda, and Germany. The main themes that emerged were the importance of addressing professional quality of life, burnout, nursing practice environment, ethical dilemmas, person-environment fit, social support, emotional intelligence, transformational leadership, managerial leadership styles, job satisfaction, and service provision to improve nurse retention. The authors suggest developing well-structured orientation programs, promoting professional skills, providing career advancement tracks, and improving workplace support to retain highly qualified nurses. Additionally, the study highlights the need for nursing management to address workload, stress, and a lack of support in the workplace.

This literature review from a US perspective focuses on various factors affecting the burnout rate and retention of nurses. The review covers multiple studies that explore different strategies and interventions that can be used to reduce burnout and enhance retention rates. The studies discuss the impact of various factors such as job satisfaction, work-life balance, organizational commitment, social support, and effective communication on nurses' retention. Additionally, the review highlights the importance of addressing burnout through legislation, system-level initiatives, and self-care strategies like meditation. The COVID-19 pandemic has also had a significant impact on the workload and stress levels of nurses, which can negatively affect their retention rates. Finally, the review emphasizes the importance of improving nurse practitioner work environments and implementing programs to promote wellness and enhance compassion satisfaction as potential strategies to mitigate burnout and increase retention.

As for the other sources with no specified location, the author found that three of the sources related to nursing staff in critical care settings. Khan et al. (2019) identified factors such as job satisfaction, work-life balance, and social support as important for retaining nurses. Tsolakidis et al. (2022) highlight challenging working conditions, heavy workloads, and lack of support as primary risk factors for burnout among nurses. Both studies emphasize the importance of supportive interpersonal relationships between healthcare workers in creating a peaceful work environment. Wagner's publication provides a comprehensive overview of the healthcare system in the United States, contextualizing the factors identified by Khan et al. and Tsolakidis et al. Overall, the sources suggest that addressing factors that contribute to the wellbeing of nursing professionals is crucial for improving retention rates and patient outcomes.

In conclusion, this literature review provides valuable insights into the various factors that influence nurse retention and burnout rates from both a global and US perspective. The study identified common themes such as job satisfaction, work-life balance, organizational commitment, social support, and effective communication as crucial factors in retaining nurses. The review emphasizes the need for nursing management to address workload, stress, and a lack of support in the workplace. Additionally, the study highlights the importance of promoting professional skills, providing career advancement tracks, and improving workplace support to retain highly qualified nurses. The COVID-19 pandemic has also significantly impacted nurse workload and stress levels, making it crucial to implement programs to promote wellness and enhance compassion satisfaction as potential strategies to mitigate burnout and increase retention. Overall, addressing the factors that contribute to the wellbeing of nursing professionals is crucial for improving retention rates and patient outcomes.

Barriers

During the process of conducting a comprehensive literature review on the challenges faced by nurses and potential strategies to address them from a global nursing perspective, several challenges were encountered that posed potential barriers to the reliability and validity of the study. The following barriers were identified:

Firstly, difficulties were faced in identifying sources that met the search and inclusion criteria. Despite using various search strategies and databases, it was challenging to find sources that specifically addressed the concept of resilience in nurses from a global perspective. Additionally, most of the studies that examined effective strategies for reducing nurse turnover were focused on specific countries or regions. To overcome this barrier, the search was expanded to include international databases, and subject matter experts were consulted.

Secondly, the lack of consistency in the quantitative findings across studies posed a challenge. Some studies used different measures or methods for assessing similar constructs, which made it difficult to synthesize the results and draw meaningful conclusions. Additionally, some studies had small sample sizes or lacked statistical power, limiting their generalizability and robustness. To address these challenges, a thorough review of the literature was conducted, and the quality and validity of the included studies were critically evaluated. A narrative synthesis approach was also used to analyze and interpret the results.

Thirdly, the reliability and validity of some of the sources were a concern. Some studies lacked transparency in their methods or did not provide adequate information about their sampling or data collection procedures. Additionally, some studies were based on self-reported data, which may have introduced biases or inaccuracies. To address these concerns, the quality

and credibility of the included studies were carefully evaluated, and studies with rigorous methods and transparent reporting were prioritized.

Fourthly, the alignment of international studies to the global nursing perspective posed a challenge. Cultural and contextual differences in healthcare systems, policies, or social norms between countries made it difficult to apply some of the findings from international studies to the global nursing workforce. To address this, a thorough review of the literature was conducted, and the relevance and transferability of the findings were critically evaluated.

Finally, challenges were faced in narrowing the search and excluding sources that did not meet the inclusion criteria. This was particularly challenging given the breadth of the literature and the need to balance the scope of the review with its depth and rigor. To address these challenges, multiple rounds of screening were conducted, and strict inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied based on relevance, quality, and study design. However, some relevant studies may have been missed or excluded due to these challenges.

Overall, these barriers highlight the importance of transparency and rigor in conducting a literature review and the need for careful consideration of the strengths and limitations of the available evidence. They also emphasize the need for future research to address the gaps in the literature and to develop targeted interventions aimed at building and maintaining a resilient nursing workforce.

Discussion

New and experienced nurses alike experience the effects of stressful workplace conditions. Although many have individually analyzed the causes of burnout, and the nurses' urge to leave the field, far fewer have studied why nurses pursue the profession and the possible solutions to retain healthy, motivated, and fulfilled nurses. This research offers insight into the

realities of the field as well as positive countermeasures. This work fills the gap between the

need for nurses and the goal of having loyal nurses that are devoted to their work. Understanding

the array of reasons why nurses are leaving the profession will enable those invested in

healthcare to make efforts to adapt the system and either inspire new and old nurses to persevere

despite the challenges or to relieve them of some of their work-related stress.

Motivations for Entering the Nursing Profession

Nursing is a highly rewarding career that provides individuals with the opportunity to

make a positive impact on the lives of others. There are many reasons why nursing is a fulfilling

profession. These include the ability to make a difference in patient's lives, the variety of career

paths available within nursing, the potential for personal and professional growth, and the job

security and competitive compensation that nursing provides (Wakefield et al., 2021).

Many individuals enter the nursing field because they have a desire to help people and

improve their health outcomes. The American Nurses Association (ANA) has also identified

these motivations, outlining the many rewarding aspects of a nursing career. These include the

opportunity to provide compassionate care, work in a dynamic and constantly evolving field, and

make a positive impact on public health. Additionally, nursing offers personal fulfillment both

from helping others, and the sense of community that nurses often experience with their

colleagues. The chance to work in a variety of healthcare settings and specialties is also a draw

for many nurses.

The advantages of a nursing career are further highlighted online in "The Benefits of

Being a Nurse" by Nurse.org. These advantages include the potential for job stability and

growth, flexible work schedules, competitive compensation and benefits, and opportunities for

personal and professional development. The article also emphasizes the emotional rewards of

nursing, including the ability to form meaningful connections with patients and their families as well as the satisfaction of making a positive impact on others' lives.

Overall, there are various reasons why individuals choose to enter the nursing profession. Nursing is a rewarding career that allows individuals to make a significant difference in the lives of others. The potential for job stability and growth, personal and professional development, and the opportunity to make meaningful connections with others are all factors that make nursing an attractive career choice. Additionally, personal experiences with healthcare or witnessing the impact of a nurse's care on a loved one may also inspire individuals to pursue a career in nursing. Finally, the chance to continuously learn and develop new skills and knowledge often keeps nurses engaged and fulfilled in their work.

Understanding the Reasons Why Nurses Leave the Profession

The retention of nurses in healthcare organizations is critical for maintaining quality patient care and achieving positive patient outcomes. Even still, nurse turnover remains a significant challenge for healthcare organizations as it can result in increased costs, decreased productivity, and reduced quality of care. The reasons for nurse turnover are complex and multifaceted, and they can have individual, organizational, and environmental origins. This section explores the common themes and factors that contribute to nurse turnover based on a review of relevant literature. Understanding these factors can help healthcare organizations develop effective strategies to address nurse turnover and retain competent and satisfied nursing staff.

Several common themes and factors that may contribute to nurse turnover have emerged within the reviewed studies. Burnout, stress, and low job satisfaction are consistently highlighted as key factors in several sources, including Bonamer & Aquino-Russell (2019), Gong et al.

(2022), and Esposito et al. (2021). In addition, the intention to leave is identified as a specific focus in some studies, such as Al Zamel et al. (2020), Ayanwale (2019), and Khan et al. (2019).

  More specifically, the Esposito et al. (2021) study mentioned explored the work environment and sources of stress among registered nurses in seven unionized acute care hospitals in New York State prior to the implementation of contractually mandated nurse-to-patient ratios. The aim of the study was to determine the top three stressors nurses face on a daily basis on the job and to broadly evaluate trends among workload, stress, and health as they relate to burnout, depression, and compassion fatigue. The results of the study found that inadequate staffing, lack of adequate supplies and/or equipment, and pressure to carry out duties outside of the scope of practice were the three most significant sources of stress for the majority of nurses. Institutional practices such as lapses in upholding agreed-upon staffing grids or ratios, delays in filling vacancies, and floating practices contribute to work stress for nurses. This study serves as a baseline for future evaluation of whether contractually mandated nurse-to-patient ratios reduce stress, burnout, compassion fatigue, and depression of the working nurse, and to determine if they increase the work satisfaction of the working nurse.

  Another important factor is support and management, which is highlighted in Chipps et al. (2022), Hognestad Haaland et al. (2021), and Kerzman et al. (2020). These sources suggest that supervisors and management play a crucial role in reducing nurse turnover rates by providing adequate support and addressing any issues that may lead to dissatisfaction or burnout. Professional development is another factor that is examined by Frisbee et al. (2019), who explored the impact of incivility on nurse educators' job satisfaction and intention to leave, and Dyrbye et al. (2020), who examined career choice regret among American nurses. These sources

suggest that providing opportunities for professional development and growth may be important factors in retaining nurses.

Interventions to Improve Retention and Reduce Nurse Turnover

In the healthcare industry, the issue of nurse turnover is a significant concern for nurse managers and organizations. The loss of experienced nurses can negatively impact patient care and increase costs for healthcare facilities. Therefore, it is essential to identify interventions that can improve retention and reduce nurse turnover rates. In order to approach this, it is important to understand the factors that influence nurses' intentions to stay or leave their jobs.

The study conducted by Al Zamel, L. G., Lim Abdullah, K., Chan, C. M., & Piaw, C. Y. aimed to critically review and synthesize relevant studies on the determinants of nurses' intention to stay or leave their organizations. This quantitative study was conducted in the United States, using the Mixed Method Appraisal Tool (MMAT) version 2018 to assess the methodological quality of the studies included in the review. The review identified several factors that affect a nurse's intention to stay or leave, including job satisfaction, work-life quality, organizational commitment, work environment, leadership style, bullying, professional and family reasons, and security. The study highlights the importance of considering these factors when developing interventions to reduce nurse turnover rates and improve retention in healthcare organizations.

Another article by Bonamer and Aquino-Russell (2019) evaluated the impact of Transcendental Meditation (TM) on nurses' compassion fatigue and resilience. The study found that nurses who practiced TM experienced a significant reduction in compassion fatigue and an increase in resilience compared to the control group who did not practice TM. These findings suggest that TM could be a promising intervention for improving nurse well-being and reducing

burnout. Improving nurse well-being and reducing burnout is a critical component in retaining nurses and reducing nurse turnover.

As mentioned before, the Esposito et al. (2021) study analyzed stressors and workload trends among registered nurses in New York State prior to implementing nurse-to-patient ratios. Results showed that inadequate staffing, lack of supplies and/or equipment, and pressure to perform duties outside of the scope of practice were the top stressors. Addressing these imbalances by implementing contractually mandated nurse-to-patient ratios could alleviate stress, reduce burnout, and improve job satisfaction, potentially leading to better retention of nurses.

Impacts of COVID-19

Ball et al. conducted a quantitative analysis of free text responses from a cross-sectional survey of the UK nursing and midwifery workforce during the COVID-19 pandemic. Out of the 3299 nurses and midwives who responded to the online survey, 2205 (67%) answered a specific question on the top three actions that their employer or government could take to enhance their working lives. The study found that personal protective equipment/staff safety, support to the workforce, and better communication were the most common themes cited by respondents. Using content and thematic analysis, as well as multiple response analysis, the study analyzed the frequency of various themes and variations by the employer.

Chipps et al. explored the experiences of US nurse managers (NMs) during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study involved thirty-nine NMs from five health systems across the US, who participated in focus groups. Using a constant comparative method, the data was analyzed to identify the challenges, ethical dilemmas, and negative emotions faced by NMs during the pandemic. The study found that NMs were experiencing considerable professional and personal

repercussions due to their significant responsibilities. Some NMs indicated that they were exploring other career options as their typical coping techniques proved ineffective. The study provides insight for senior leaders on how to develop approaches to mitigate managerial stress during difficult times which could potentially help retain nurses in the workforce.

Overall, these studies highlight the urgent need for better support, communication, and safety measures for nurses and midwives during and after the COVID-19 pandemic to help retain the workforce. The pandemic has underscored the importance of ensuring the physical and mental well-being of nurses, providing them with appropriate resources and support, and acknowledging their efforts and contributions.

Limitations

Limitations refer to the shortcomings or weaknesses of the reviewed literature, such as a small sample size, a lack of diversity in the participants, or a narrow scope of the study. For this project, it is crucial to acknowledge and discuss these limitations to provide a balanced and accurate evaluation of the literature. By doing so, unwarranted generalizations and conclusions can be avoided, and opportunities for future research can be explored.

The first limitation of this project is the relatively small sample size. The majority of the studies analyzed have small sample sizes. Of the 34 studies reviewed, 17 have less than 1000 respondents. This can limit the generalizability of the findings in comparison to a larger population of nurses.

The second limitation of this project is the bias. There is bias both in the form of how the researchers selected their participants and how the participants responded to the researchers' investigations. More specifically, there is recall bias, especially in the qualitative studies. Recall bias happens when a participant is asked a question and cannot remember or accurately recall

past events or experiences. Another form of bias is social desirability bias. This type of bias

occurs when participants respond in a way that they perceive to be socially desirable or

acceptable, rather than providing an honest or accurate response. This can happen when

participants feel pressure to present themselves in a positive light or when they are concerned

about being judged by others. These biases can affect the validity and reliability of the results as

nurses may not always accurately recall or report their motivation for staying or leaving the

nursing profession.

      The third limitation is contextual limitations. The studies reviewed come from a variety

of geographic locations, however, the majority come from hospital-based settings in the United

States. The lack of diversity in healthcare settings and geographic locations hinders the scope

and representation of nurses across the globe. More specifically, there are monumental

differences between nursing care in rural and urban environments, as well as between first and

third-world countries.

      The fourth limiting factor is the relevance of the studies. Furthermore, some studies are

retrospective or cross-sectional in nature, limiting the accuracy of the information. When

capturing data, it is important to consider when the data is being captured and how relevant it is

for the present time because the data may not capture the changes in reasons for staying/leaving

the nursing profession.

      The fifth limiting factor is the lack of qualitative data. Most studies may rely solely on

quantitative data, such as surveys or questionnaires, and cannot capture the rich, nuanced

perspectives of nurses regarding their motivations or reasons for staying or leaving the nursing

profession.

Last but not least, the nursing profession and healthcare field are constantly evolving, and studies conducted in the past may not fully reflect the current state of the nursing workforce or the reasons why nurses stay or leave the profession.

In conclusion, while the reviewed literature provides valuable insights into the reasons why nurses stay or leave the nursing profession, it is important to acknowledge and discuss the limitations of the studies. These limitations, including small sample sizes, bias, contextual limitations, lack of relevance, lack of qualitative data, and the constantly evolving nature of the nursing profession and healthcare field, can hinder the generalizability, validity, and reliability of the findings. However, by acknowledging and discussing these limitations, opportunities for future research can be explored and unwarranted generalizations and conclusions can be avoided. Ultimately, a more balanced and accurate evaluation of the literature can lead to a better understanding of the motivations and reasons behind nurses' decisions to stay or leave the profession.

Conclusion

The nursing workforce plays a vital role in providing optimal healthcare and is critical to the well-being of society. However, the nursing shortage and high rates of burnout and stress among nurses pose significant challenges that must be addressed to maintain the quality of healthcare and improve patient outcomes.

Understanding factors such as nurse satisfaction, adaptation, intention to leave, and burnout is essential in improving nurse retention rates. The consequences of a nursing shortage can be detrimental to both patients and the healthcare system, and it is time for society to show compassion and fight for the well-being of nurses. This proactive approach to the nursing profession begins with understanding the complex factors that impact nurse retention.

Investing in the well-being and satisfaction of nurses is not only a moral obligation but also makes economic sense. Nurse retention reduces costs associated with recruitment and training of new nurses and improves patient satisfaction. Nurses are often the unsung heroes in healthcare, and their contributions must be acknowledged and appreciated.

Effective and sustainable strategies can be implemented by healthcare facilities to promote better patient outcomes, meet the needs of nurses, and improve the overall healthcare system. However, further research is needed to explore the complex factors that impact nurse retention, including working conditions, job satisfaction, and leadership support.

In conclusion, the nursing workforce is essential to society, and the well-being of nurses must be a top priority. It is time for society to show compassion to nurses and fight for their well-being, which can lead to positive change in their daily lives. By implementing effective and sustainable strategies, healthcare facilities can promote better patient outcomes and meet the needs of nurses, ultimately improving the overall healthcare system.

Implications for Practice

Nurse retention rates can be improved through various legislative and system-level initiatives such as contractually agreed-upon staffing. However, implementing such strategies may result in clinical implications like bed shortages and unsustainable cost shifts for temporary staff fillers. Healthcare employers can prioritize nurse well-being by establishing staffing guidelines to overcome these challenges and ultimately lead to better patient outcomes. It is crucial to recognize the value of nurses in the healthcare system to provide optimal care.

To promote job satisfaction and work-life balance for nurses, nurse managers, and leaders must prioritize nurse well-being and create a supportive work environment. Hospitals and healthcare organizations should implement adequate nurse-patient ratios and staffing guidelines

to prevent burnout and improve patient outcomes. Education and training programs can emphasize self-care and stress management strategies for nurses to reduce burnout and promote well-being. Nurses can advocate for themselves and their patients by participating in professional organizations that advocate for nursing issues and voicing their concerns.

To address the nursing shortage and support the well-being of nurses, governments must invest in nursing education and training programs and implement policies that support the nursing workforce. By implementing these strategies, healthcare organizations and governments can improve nurse retention rates, reduce costs associated with recruitment and training, and improve the overall quality of healthcare. It is time to recognize the worth of nurses in the healthcare system and prioritize their well-being to provide optimal care to patients.

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