

DOI: 10.15225/PNN.2019.8.4.3

## Selected Aspects of Life Satisfaction Assessment Among Neurological Nurses

### Wybrane aspekty oceny satysfakcji z życia pielęgniarek oddziałów neurologicznych

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#### Abstract

**Introduction.** Satisfaction is a positive feeling, perceived subjectively. Assessment of life satisfaction is undertaken by comparing your own situation with the standards you set, your goals, objectives. Therefore, the measurement of satisfaction is based on individual criteria specific to each person.

**Aim.** The study aims to determine satisfaction with life among nurses working in neurological wards.

**Material and Methods.** The study was conducted in a group of 130 nurses working in neurological wards of hospitals in the Lublin Province. The vast majority of the study group constituted women (93.80%). Most respondents were aged between 36–50 years old (43.08%). The research used a standardized research tool: The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS).

**Results.** The examined group of neurological nurses assessed their satisfaction with life at an average level ( $20.66 \pm 5.72$  points). After converting points into sten values, the average was  $5.56 \pm 2.03$  sten. Significant statistical differences in the assessment of life satisfaction were found in the material situation. The higher assessment was provided by nurses who were satisfied with their financial situation (21.70 points).

**Conclusions.** The assessment of satisfaction with life among neurological nurses was at an average level. Self-assessment of the financial situation significantly differentiated the assessment of life satisfaction in the group of surveyed nurses. (JNPN 2019;8(4):157–161)

**Key Words:** satisfaction with life, nurses, neurological wards

#### Streszczenie

**Wstęp.** Satysfakcja jest odczuciem pozytywnym, postrzeganym w sposób subiektywny. Oceny satysfakcji z życia można dokonać poprzez porównanie własnej sytuacji z ustalonymi przez siebie standardami, wytyczonymi celami. Dlatego też dokonuje się jej na podstawie indywidualnych kryteriów charakterystycznych dla każdego człowieka.

**Cel.** Celem badań było określenie satysfakcji z życia pielęgniarek pracujących w oddziałach neurologicznych.

**Materiał i metody.** Badania przeprowadzono w grupie 130 pielęgniarek, pracujących w oddziałach neurologicznych szpitali województwa lubelskiego. Zdecydowaną większość badanej grupy stanowiły kobiety (93,80%). Najwięcej badanych miała od 36–50 lat (43,08%). W badaniach zastosowano wystandaryzowane narzędzie badawcze: The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS).

**Wyniki.** Badana grupa pielęgniarek oddziałów neurologicznych oceniła swoją satysfakcję z życia na poziomie średniej  $20,66 \pm 5,72$  pkt. W punktach przeliczonych na wartości stenowe średnia wynosiła  $5,56 \pm 2,03$  stena. Istotne statystyczne różnice w ocenie satysfakcji z życia stwierdzono w zakresie sytuacji materialnej. Oceny na wyższym poziomie dokonały pielęgniarki, które były zadowolone ze swojej sytuacji materialnej (21,70 pkt.).

**Wnioski.** Ocena satysfakcji z życia pielęgniarek oddziałów neurologicznych kształtowała się na przeciętnym poziomie. Samoocena sytuacji materialnej istotnie różnicowała ocenę satysfakcji z życia badanych pielęgniarek. (PNN 2019;8(4):157–161)

**Słowa kluczowe:** satysfakcja z życia, pielęgniarki, oddziały neurologiczne

## Introduction

Satisfaction is a positive feeling, perceived subjectively. The authors researching the issue of satisfaction define it as a sense of contentment concerning their own achievements and living conditions. That assessment is, in the authors' opinion, the result of comparing their own situation with the criteria they set [1–4].

Assessment of life satisfaction is implemented by comparing your situation with the standards you set, your goals. Therefore, the measurement of satisfaction is based on individual criteria specific to each person. The tools used to examine the quality of life do not comprehensively reflect the content of elements specific to each individual that make up life satisfaction. Therefore specific tools have been created to study this issue, i.e., the Life Satisfaction Scale [5].

According to cited researchers, there is a relationship between life satisfaction and the level of job satisfaction in a nursing environment [6–8].

The study aims to determine satisfaction with life among nurses working in neurological wards.

## Material and Methods

The study was conducted among 130 nurses working in neurological wards of hospitals located in the Lublin Province. The research was conducted following ethical standards. The respondents expressed an informed and voluntary consent to participate in the study.

The vast majority of the study group constituted women (93.80%). Most respondents were between 36–50 years old (43.08%). A detailed sociodemographic analysis of the respondents is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Characteristics of the study group

Variable	%
1	2
Gender	
Woman	93.80
Man	6.20
Age	
Up to 35 years	29.23
36–50 years	43.08
50 years and more	27.69
Marital status	
Single	35.38
In a relationship	64.62

Table 1. Continued

	1	2
Education		
College		28.46
Bachelor of nursing		37.69
Masters of nursing		33.85
Place of residence		
City		63.08
Village		36.92
Work experience in the profession		
Up to 5 years		23.85
6–20 years		30.00
21 years and more		46.15
Financial status		
Unsatisfactory		37.69
Satisfactory		62.31

The research used a standardized research tool: The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS). The scale consists of five statements. Subject refers to each of them in the range 1 (Strongly disagree) — 7 (Strongly agree). The range of results is in the range of 5–35, the better the score, the better the satisfaction with life. The result of the assessment can also be presented in the form of stens: 1–4 sten (low level); 5–6 sten (average level) and 7–10 sten (high result) When interpreting the result, authors implemented the sten scale, where the results within 1–4 (raw score 5–17 points) sten mean low values, 5–6 (raw result 18–23 points) — average, while 7–10 (raw result 24–35 points) — high values [9,10].

The collected material was analyzed statistically. The level of significance  $p < 0.05$  indicated the existence of statistically significant differences or correlations.

## Results

The examined group of nurses from neurological wards assessed their life satisfaction at an average level of  $20.66 \pm 5.72$  points. After converting points into sten values, the average was  $5.56 \pm 2.03$  sten. Table 2 presents the assessment of satisfaction with life of the studied group depending on the analyzed sociodemographic variables. It shows that women were characterized by slightly higher values concerning satisfaction with life (average 20.70 points) compared to men (average 20.22 points). Respondents' satisfaction with lives decreased with age. Nurses from the youngest age rated their satisfaction with life the highest (average 21.63 points). However, the difference between the groups was not statistically significant. When analyzing life satisfaction

depending on marital status, it was found that nurses in the relationship rated this issue slightly higher compared to single respondents (20.91 points vs. 20.22 points). Also, in this respect, there was no statistically significant difference. Neither education did statistically significantly differentiate the assessment of satisfaction with life among respondents. Nurses with a bachelor's degree were the most satisfied with their life (21.30 points), and the least satisfied those who graduated from nursing college (19.56 points). People from the rural environment rated their life slightly better (21.44 points) compared to the respondents from the urban areas (20.22 points). However, this difference was not statistically significant. The study found that people characterized by the shortest professional experience were the most satisfied ones with their lives (22.32 points). The level of satisfaction with life decreased with age, and it was at the lowest level for nurses working above 21 years (20.41 points). Significant statistical differences in the assessment of satisfaction with life were found in the

financial situation. Higher assessments were provided by nurses who were satisfied with their financial situation (21.70 points).

## Discussion

In the case of professionally active nurses, satisfaction with life is associated with job satisfaction. The level of job satisfaction can be affected by factors related to the work environment and individual characteristics of nurses. Factors related to the working environment include, among others: work organization, relationships in the therapeutic team, relations with the patient and his family, the scope of entrusted tasks, organizational culture, incentive system, a system of in-house and off-site training, prestige and autonomy of the profession, remuneration, workplace equipment. The individual characteristics of nurses related to the sense of life and professional satisfaction are primarily: age, marital status, religion, adopted personality patterns, self-esteem, and the presence of burnout syndrome associated with emotional exhaustion, personal achievements, and depersonalization [11,12].

In the authors' research, it was found that satisfaction with life in the group of nurses was at an average level (average 20.66). Similar results were found in studies conducted in a group of nurses in various environments. Retired nurses obtained a similar level (average 21.1 points) in the research by Pietraszek et al. [13]. A slightly lower result (average 19.6 points) was obtained in national surveys concerning the assessment of satisfaction with the life of nurses [14]. On the other hand, nurses working in one of Lublin's clinical hospitals were characterized by higher life satisfaction (average of 23.17 points). At the same time, in this study, a group of nurses from neurological wards determined their satisfaction with life at an average level of 22.50 points according to the SWLS scale [15].

Investigated researchers indicate that variables such as demographics, personality, or close relationships with people in correlation with random events are factors that significantly affect the level of satisfaction with life [16].

The results of studies by other authors indicate that satisfaction with life fluctuates depending on age. However, it is not dependent on gender, although some

Table 2. Sociodemographic variables and the assessment of satisfaction with life

Variable	M	Me	SD	Statistical analysis
<b>Gender</b>				
Woman	20.70	21.00	5.86	U=513.500 p=0.780
Man	20.22	22.00	3.70	
<b>Age</b>				
Up to 35 years	21.63	21.00	4.91	F=0.766 p=0.467
36–50 years	20.33	20.00	6.26	
50 years and more	20.17	21.50	5.67	
<b>Marital status</b>				
Single	20.22	21.00	5.43	Z=-0.899 p=0.368
In a relationship	20.91	22.00	5.90	
<b>Education</b>				
College	19.56	19.00	5.85	F=1.020 p=0.364
Bachelor of nursing	21.30	22.00	6.08	
Masters of nursing	20.88	21.50	5.18	
<b>Place of residence</b>				
City	20.22	21.00	5.56	Z=1.049 p=0.294
Village	21.44	22.00	5.93	
<b>Work experience in the profession</b>				
Up to 5 years	22.32	22.00	4.84	F=1.886 p=0.156
6–20 years	19.74	19.00	6.60	
21 years and more	20.41	22.00	5.44	
<b>Financial status</b>				
Unsatisfactory	18.98	19.00	5.45	Z=-2.611 p=0.009
Satisfactory	21.70	22.00	5.67	

M — mean, Me — median, SD — standard deviation, Z(U) — Mann-Whitney U test, F — analysis of variance

researchers emphasize that women gain higher values [11] and other studies point to men, especially after 60 years of age [17]. Nurses also showed a slightly better quality of life in studies conducted in Iran [18]. Elderly respondents with more significant life experience are able to analyze and prioritize their achievements experience as a higher satisfaction with life [11,19,20]. In our research, similarly to Korean nurses [11], age did not affect the assessment of satisfaction with life.

Western European authors present interesting conclusions. They demonstrate that the level of satisfaction with life is related to the level of education or marital status, in the case of which the highest satisfaction values are observed for married respondents [5,11,17,21]. Additionally, Kupcewicz et al. show a significant relationship between life satisfaction and the education of nurses. With the increase in vocational education, life satisfaction increases [22]. In our research, these variables did not significantly differentiate the assessment of satisfaction with life; nonetheless, also married people were characterized by higher assessment here. However, the assessment of satisfaction with life was slightly different depending on education. Nurses with bachelor's degree provided the highest assessment, and master's degree holders gave slightly lower values. The results of our research showed that rural nurses were more satisfied with their lives than those from urban areas. Similar results were obtained by Jakubowska et al. [15] and Kupcewicz et al. [22].

In research, nurses with the least seniority (up to 5 years experience) the best satisfaction with life. Also, in the studies of Kupcewicz et al. [22]. The research showed that respondents with the shortest experience (under 10 years) assessed the issue the highest. Even more, the relationship between satisfaction with life and seniority has been demonstrated by Dziąbek et al. [23]. The authors discovered a negative correlation between the examined features; the satisfaction with life decreases as the seniority increases. Different results were obtained by Wysokiński et al. [14], where the lowest values of life satisfaction were obtained in the group of nurses with the shortest seniority (under 5 years). These studies also found that as the seniority increased, the satisfaction with life of the surveyed nurses increased.

Own research found that the assessment of the financial situation significantly differentiated the degree of satisfaction with life. The better the material status, the better the self-assessment of satisfaction with life was. These results are consistent with those obtained by researchers from Olsztyn, where the wealth of the respondents was significant in assessing their level of satisfaction with life. Nurses who had a very good or good financial status represented a statistically significantly higher level of satisfaction with life than nurses whose financial situation was bad or very bad [22].

## Conclusions

The assessment of satisfaction with life of nurses in neurological departments was at an average level. Self-assessment of the material status significantly differentiated the assessment of satisfaction with life among the surveyed nurses.

## Implications for Nursing Practice

Activities should be undertaken to optimize the work of nurses, increasing their comfort by reducing the burden concerning the number of patients under their care. The improvement of working conditions can contribute to increased satisfaction with life, and thus the quality of nursing care.

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**Conflict of Interest:** None

**Funding:** None

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(A — Concept and design of research, B — Collection and/or compilation of data, C — Analysis and interpretation of data, D — Statistical analysis, E — Writing an article, F — Search of the literature, G — Critical article analysis, H — Approval of the final version of the article)

**Received:** 25.09.2019

**Accepted:** 30.11.2019