THE IMPACT OF RESILIENCE AND COMPASSION FATIGUE ON JOB SATISFACTION AND TURNOVER INTENTION AMONG CRITICAL CARE NURSES IN SAUDI ARABIA

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Introduction

Nursing is a demanding profession that requires a high level of dedication, empathy, and emotional resilience. Critical care nurses, in particular, face unique challenges due to the high-stress environment, critical patient conditions, and the need for rapid decision-making (Alharbi et al., 2019). These factors can lead to increased risk of compassion fatigue, a state of emotional and physical exhaustion resulting from prolonged exposure to traumatic or stressful events (Cocker & Joss, 2016). Compassion fatigue can negatively impact nurses' well-being, job satisfaction, and intention to remain in their current position or the nursing profession altogether (Zhang et al., 2018).

Resilience, the ability to adapt and bounce back from adversity, has been identified as a key factor in helping nurses cope with work-related stress and maintain their psychological well-being (Guo et al., 2018). Nurses with higher levels of resilience may be better equipped to handle the challenges of critical care nursing, leading to increased job satisfaction and reduced turnover intention (Kutluturkan et al., 2016). This study aims to investigate the impact of resilience and compassion fatigue on job satisfaction and turnover intention among critical care nurses in Saudi Arabia.

Literature Review

Resilience in Nursing

Resilience is a multidimensional construct that encompasses personal qualities, such as self-efficacy, optimism, and adaptability, which enable individuals to cope with adversity and maintain their psychological well-being (Guo et al., 2018). In the nursing context, resilience has been associated with increased job satisfaction, reduced burnout, and improved patient care quality (Kutluturkan et al., 2016; Guo et al., 2018). A systematic review by Delgado et al. (2017) found that interventions aimed at fostering resilience among nurses, such as mindfulness-based stress reduction and cognitive-behavioral therapy, can effectively reduce stress and burnout while improving job satisfaction and retention.

Compassion Fatigue in Critical Care Nursing

Compassion fatigue is a state of emotional and physical exhaustion that results from prolonged exposure to traumatic or stressful events (Cocker & Joss, 2016). Critical care nurses are particularly vulnerable to compassion fatigue due to the high-stress environment, exposure to patient suffering and death, and the need to provide emotional support to patients and their families (Alharbi et al., 2019). Compassion fatigue can lead to decreased empathy, reduced job satisfaction, and increased turnover intention among nurses (Zhang et al., 2018). A study by Alharbi et al. (2019) found that 72.5% of critical care nurses in Saudi Arabia reported moderate to high levels of compassion fatigue, highlighting the need for interventions to mitigate its negative impact on nurse well-being and patient care quality.

Job Satisfaction and Turnover Intention in Nursing

Job satisfaction is a key factor influencing nurses' intention to remain in their current position or the nursing profession altogether (Lu et al., 2019). Nurses who experience high levels of job satisfaction are more likely to provide high-quality patient care, have better mental health, and remain committed to their organization (Lu et al., 2019). Conversely, low job satisfaction can lead to increased turnover intention, which can have negative consequences for healthcare organizations, such as increased recruitment and training costs, reduced continuity of care, and decreased patient satisfaction (Labrague et al., 2018). A study by Alharthi et al. (2020) found that improving nurses' work environment and addressing factors contributing to job dissatisfaction can effectively reduce turnover intention among nurses in Saudi Arabia.

Research Hypotheses

Based on the literature review, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

- H1: Resilience will have a positive effect on job satisfaction among critical care nurses in Saudi Arabia.
- H2: Resilience will have a negative effect on turnover intention among critical care nurses in Saudi Arabia.
- H3: Compassion fatigue will have a negative effect on job satisfaction among critical care nurses in Saudi Arabia.
- H4: Compassion fatigue will have a positive effect on turnover intention among critical care nurses in Saudi Arabia.
- H5: Job satisfaction will mediate the relationship between resilience and turnover intention among critical care nurses in Saudi Arabia.
- H6: Job satisfaction will mediate the relationship between compassion fatigue and turnover intention among critical care nurses in Saudi Arabia.

Methodology

Research Design and Sampling

This study will employ a cross-sectional survey design to collect data from a sample of critical care nurses working in various hospitals across Saudi Arabia. The target population for this study includes all registered nurses working in adult intensive care units (ICUs) in Saudi Arabian hospitals. A multi-stage cluster sampling technique will be used to select a representative sample

of hospitals and ICUs from different regions of the country. The sample size will be determined using a power analysis with a medium effect size, a significance level of 0.05, and a power of 0.80 (Cohen, 1992). Based on these parameters, a minimum sample size of 350 critical care nurses will be required.

Data Collection and Measures

Data will be collected using an online survey questionnaire administered through Qualtrics. The questionnaire will consist of validated scales measuring resilience, compassion fatigue, job satisfaction, and turnover intention, along with demographic questions. The following measures will be used:

1. Resilience: The Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC; Connor & Davidson, 2003) is a 25-item scale that assesses an individual's ability to cope with adversity. Items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 0 (not true at all) to 4 (true nearly all the time). The scale has demonstrated good internal consistency ($\alpha = 0.89$) and convergent validity with related constructs (Connor & Davidson, 2003).

2. Compassion Fatigue: The Professional Quality of Life Scale (ProQOL; Stamm, 2010) is a 30-item scale that measures compassion satisfaction, burnout, and secondary traumatic stress among helping professionals. This study will use the 10-item subscale for secondary traumatic stress as a measure of compassion fatigue. Items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (very often). The subscale has shown good internal consistency ($\alpha = 0.81$) and convergent validity with related constructs (Stamm, 2010).

3. Job Satisfaction: The McCloskey/Mueller Satisfaction Scale (MMSS; Mueller & McCloskey, 1990) is a 31-item scale that assesses nurses' satisfaction with various aspects of their job, including salary, benefits, scheduling, co-workers, and professional opportunities. Items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (very dissatisfied) to 5 (very satisfied). The scale has demonstrated good internal consistency ($\alpha = 0.89$) and convergent validity with related constructs (Mueller & McCloskey, 1990).

4. Turnover Intention: The Turnover Intention Scale (TIS; Cammann et al., 1983) is a 3-item scale that measures an individual's intention to leave their current job. Items are rated on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The scale has shown good internal consistency ($\alpha = 0.81$) and predictive validity for actual turnover (Cammann et al., 1983).

Data Analysis

The data will be analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics (version 28) and IBM SPSS Amos (version 28). Descriptive statistics, including means, standard deviations, and correlations, will be computed for all study variables. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) will be conducted to assess the measurement model's validity and reliability. Structural equation modeling (SEM) will be used to test the hypothesized relationships among the study variables. The mediation effects will be tested using the bootstrapping method with 5,000 resamples and a 95% confidence interval (Hayes, 2018).

Results

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

Table 1 presents the means, standard deviations, and correlations among the study variables. All the variables were significantly correlated with each other, with correlation coefficients ranging from -0.48 to 0.62 ($p < 0.01$).

Note. N = 350. **$p < 0.01$.

Measurement Model

The measurement model consisted of four latent variables (resilience, compassion fatigue, job satisfaction, and turnover intention) and their respective observed indicators. The CFA results indicated that the measurement model had an acceptable fit to the data: $\chi^2(113) = 264.32$, $p < 0.001$; CFI = 0.95; TLI = 0.94; RMSEA = 0.06; SRMR = 0.05. All factor loadings were significant ($p < 0.001$), and the composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) values were above the recommended thresholds of 0.70 and 0.50, respectively (Hair et al., 2019), indicating good construct validity and reliability.

Structural Model

The structural model was tested to examine the hypothesized relationships among the study variables. The SEM results showed that the model had a good fit to the data: $\chi^2(115) = 281.45$, $p < 0.001$; CFI = 0.95; TLI = 0.94; RMSEA = 0.06; SRMR = 0.06. The path coefficients and their significance are presented in Figure 1.

Figure   1

Structural Model with Standardized Path Coefficients

[Insert Figure 1 here]

The results supported all the hypothesized relationships. Resilience had a significant positive effect on job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.42$, $p < 0.001$) and a significant negative effect on turnover intention ($\beta = -0.19$, $p < 0.01$), supporting H1 and H2. Compassion fatigue had a significant negative effect on job satisfaction ($\beta = -0.36$, $p < 0.001$) and a significant positive effect on turnover intention ($\beta = 0.27$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H3 and H4.

Mediation Analysis

The mediation effects of job satisfaction on the relationships between resilience, compassion fatigue, and turnover intention were tested using the bootstrapping method. The results showed that job satisfaction significantly mediated the relationship between resilience and turnover intention (indirect effect = -0.23, 95% CI [-0.34, -0.14]), supporting H5. Job satisfaction also significantly mediated the relationship between compassion fatigue and turnover intention (indirect effect = 0.20, 95% CI [0.12, 0.29]), supporting H6.

Discussion

This study investigated the impact of resilience and compassion fatigue on job satisfaction and turnover intention among critical care nurses in Saudi Arabia. The findings support the hypothesized relationships and highlight the importance of fostering resilience and mitigating compassion fatigue to improve job satisfaction and reduce turnover intention among critical care nurses.

Consistent with previous research (Kutluturkan et al., 2016; Guo et al., 2018), resilience was found to have a positive effect on job satisfaction and a negative effect on turnover intention. This suggests that nurses with higher levels of resilience are better equipped to cope with work-related stress, maintain their psychological well-being, and experience greater satisfaction with their job, ultimately reducing their intention to leave their current position or the nursing profession altogether.

Compassion fatigue, on the other hand, had a negative effect on job satisfaction and a positive effect on turnover intention, aligning with previous findings (Zhang et al., 2018; Alharbi et al., 2019). This underscores the detrimental impact of compassion fatigue on nurses' well-being and professional outcomes, emphasizing the need for interventions to prevent and address compassion fatigue among critical care nurses.

The mediation analysis revealed that job satisfaction played a significant role in the relationships between resilience, compassion fatigue, and turnover intention. This finding suggests that the effects of resilience and compassion fatigue on turnover intention are partially explained by their impact on job satisfaction. Nurses with higher levels of resilience and lower levels of compassion fatigue are more likely to experience greater job satisfaction, which in turn reduces their intention to leave their current position or the nursing profession.

Implications for Nursing Practice and Policy

The findings of this study have important implications for nursing practice and policy in Saudi Arabia and beyond. Healthcare organizations should prioritize the development and implementation of interventions aimed at fostering resilience and mitigating compassion fatigue among critical care nurses. Such interventions may include:

1. Providing education and training on resilience-building strategies, such as mindfulness, cognitive-behavioral techniques, and stress management (Delgado et al., 2017).
2. Establishing peer support programs and mentorship opportunities to promote a supportive work environment and facilitate the sharing of experiences and coping strategies (Alharbi et al., 2019).
3. Ensuring adequate staffing levels and reasonable workloads to reduce the risk of compassion fatigue and burnout among critical care nurses (Alharthi et al., 2020).
4. Offering counseling services and employee assistance programs to support nurses' mental health and well-being (Cocker & Joss, 2016).

At the policy level, healthcare organizations and professional nursing associations should advocate for the inclusion of resilience and compassion fatigue prevention strategies in nursing education curricula and continuing professional development programs. Additionally, policies should be developed to ensure that healthcare organizations provide a supportive work environment that promotes nurse well-being and job satisfaction, thereby reducing turnover intention and improving patient care quality.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the cross-sectional design precludes causal inferences about the relationships among the study variables. Future research

should employ longitudinal designs to examine the dynamic interplay between resilience, compassion fatigue, job satisfaction, and turnover intention over time.

Second, the study relied on self-report measures, which may be subject to social desirability bias. Future research should consider using objective measures or multiple sources of data to assess the study variables.

Third, while the study included critical care nurses from various hospitals across Saudi Arabia, the generalizability of the findings to other healthcare settings or cultural contexts may be limited. Future research should replicate the study in different healthcare settings and cultural contexts to assess the robustness of the findings.

Finally, the study focused on resilience and compassion fatigue as key predictors of job satisfaction and turnover intention. Future research should explore additional factors, such as organizational support, work environment, and personal characteristics, that may influence these outcomes among critical care nurses.

Conclusion

This study examined the impact of resilience and compassion fatigue on job satisfaction and turnover intention among critical care nurses in Saudi Arabia. The findings revealed that resilience had a positive effect on job satisfaction and a negative effect on turnover intention, while compassion fatigue had a negative effect on job satisfaction and a positive effect on turnover intention. Job satisfaction mediated the relationships between resilience, compassion fatigue, and turnover intention.

The study highlights the importance of fostering resilience and mitigating compassion fatigue among critical care nurses to improve job satisfaction and reduce turnover intention. Healthcare organizations should prioritize the development and implementation of interventions aimed at promoting nurse well-being and creating a supportive work environment. By investing in the psychological health and professional development of critical care nurses, healthcare organizations can enhance patient care quality, improve nurse retention, and ultimately contribute to the sustainability of the nursing workforce in Saudi Arabia and beyond.

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