

Workplace Empowerment, Burnout, and Job Satisfaction Among Nursing Faculty Members: Testing Kanter's theory

Glenn Ford D.Valdez PhD, RN,¹ Arcalyd Rose Cayaban MSC, RN,² Simy Mathews MSC, RN,³ Zakiya Ahmed Doloolat MSC, RN⁴

¹Asst.Tutor, Department of Nursing, Oman College of Health Sciences, Dhofar, Salalah City, Sultanate of Oman

²Lecturer, College of Nursing, Sultan Qaboos University, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman

³Asst.Tutor, Department of Nursing, Oman College of Health Sciences, Dhofar, Salalah City, Sultanate of Oman

⁴Specialized.Tutor, Department of Nursing, Oman College of Health Sciences Dhofar, Salalah City , Sultanate of Oman

Correspondence: Glenn Ford D.Valdez PhD, RN, Faculty, Department of Nursing, Oman College of Health Sciences, Dhofar, Salalah City, Sultanate of Oman, Email glennfordvaldez@yahoo.com

Received: March 25, 2019 | **Published:** May 08, 2019

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Abstract

Aims: Identify the level and the relationship of Nurse Faculty workplace empowerment, burnout and job satisfaction utilizing Kanter's Theory among Oman College of Health Sciences Nursing faculty members.

Methods: The study is a quantitative descriptive correlational study. The study utilized online survey tools for self-assessment and evaluation the study explored on the level of empowerment, burnout and job satisfaction among nursing faculty members. IRB-MOH/CSR/17/589 approval sought from Center for research studies & Research and Ethics Review & Approval Committee (RERAC). Nurse Educators around the sultanate the sample consisted of one hundred forty two (142) faculty member and working in Oman College of Health Sciences who met the inclusion and exclusion criteria were the target of the study.

Result: The nursing faculty members from Oman reported moderate levels of empowerment, job satisfaction and burnout in their respective branches. There was a significant correlation between structural empowerment and job satisfaction ($r=0.603$, $p<0.01$) or burnout ($r=0.718$, $p<0.01$). The computed value of r reveals a strong positive correlation. Moreover, the result also shows that there was a significant positive correlation between job satisfaction and burnout ($r=0.759$, $p<0.01$). However, since higher informal power indicates lesser stress then this reveals an inverse strong correlation between the two variables.

Conclusion: The end result provides confirmation for Kanter's organizational support theory in the Oman College of Health Science branches population. Greater levels of empowerment were concomitant with lesser levels of burnout and greater work satisfaction.

Implication for Nursing Management: Nursing education leaders are a key in aligning the support and services in colleges and nursing educational institutions in the provision of a more empowering environment and stress free workplaces.

Keywords: burnout, workplace empowerment, job satisfaction, nursing faculty, Kanter's theory, Oman College of Health Sciences.

Introduction

Oman nursing education is one of the world's most diverse education systems in terms of the number of expert expatriates and locally grown instructors in the country which caters to the educational needs and preparation of the students. It was once said that teaching is more of a calling than a vocation but in that premise, we also need to consider the amount of energy that the staff puts on his or her daily work and how his or her efforts enhances performance, satisfaction empowerment and how it is contributing to stress and eventually burn out. The role of nursing faculty in Oman Health Science Colleges is paralleled with tedious work and responsibility to ensure that quality is aimed and met at the same time. A handful of studies conducted by Laschinger and colleagues demonstrated strong association between structural empowerment and job satisfaction in nursing.^{1,2} Park et al.³ also established the influence of structural empowerment on job satisfaction in a sample of Korean nurses. Access to opportunities to

learn and grow in the job is particularly important to the nurse's job satisfaction.⁴ It is believed that access to empowerment structures is associated with the degree of formal and informal power an employee have in the organization. Formal power is anchored on work that allows flexibility, visibility and creativeness. Formal power on the other hand is also derived from jobs that are considered relevant and central to the organization. Informal power is developed from forming relationships, network with peers, subordinates, superiors within or outside the organization.⁵

Empowerment of the employees has been identified as a valuable attribute, one that is essential to the efficient and effective functioning of any given organization. Discussions has been made on the relationship of power and empowerment have their effects on opportunities for growth in the organization.^{1,5,6} Empowerment has conjointly been shown as an essential aspect of goals and outcomes in different shared governance model.⁷ Empowerment is shown by

members of the organization who are inspired and motivated are more confident in contributing as long as it is valued by the organization. According to Kanter's theory of structural power in organizations,⁵ formal and informal power, access to information, opportunity for growth support and resources can promote employee empowerment resulting in positive organizational results such as satisfaction with job and reduced employee stress and burnout.⁸⁻¹¹ Research has shown that nurses who are empowered in their jobs were more committed to work even with negative situations such as workplace behaviors and rapid staff turnover.¹² The theory of structural empowerment is a good framework to explain concepts related to negative workplace behaviors according to Kanter.⁵ According to Kanter,⁵ opportunity refers to the growth, mobility and the opportunity to enhance knowledge and skills this is followed by a second component which is the structure of power that refers to the ability to access and mobilize resources, information and support from ones position in the organization to get the job accomplished successfully. Access to resources is defined as the ability to acquire the necessary materials, supplies, money and personnel required to meet the organizational goals. Information relates to the information, technical data, and experienced required to accomplish the work. Support means the guidance and feedback received from subordinates, co-workers and middle managers to enhance effectively work and outcomes.^{5,13} It is imperative among the leaders in nursing education to invest in thrust that encourages staff empowerment and fulfillment in the work place there are previous findings that attributes decreased job satisfaction to decreased retention among faculty members in nursing.¹⁴⁻¹⁶ Retaining seasoned faculty is essential in the continuous pursuit quality in nursing education.

Aims

Oman as a hub of educational development in the GCC region has long foreseen the increased need of the country for quality education and quality graduates. This is evident in various professional fields such as nursing in particular, this makes Oman as one of the leading countries in GCC that creates the most educated professionals in the healthcare field. Majority of these graduates have now earned their post in the different sectors of the society primarily healthcare. Comparable to all the ministry in Oman the Ministry of Health under its umbrella the Directorate of General for Human Resource & Development has served as the ministry of health's educational arm that ensures that quality healthcare professionals that move up from its sought after training institutes and colleges. In 2018 the transition from health educational institute to a fully independent college was realized and enacted by Royal Decree 18/2018 as published in Oman Observer.¹⁷ To date, there are eight (8) Colleges 1 Higher Institute for Health Specialization which is dedicated to producing qualified and competent nurses in both bachelors' level and post basic specializations.

The increasing population and the austerity measures for economic resources and a shortage of nursing staff in the service side escalated the pressure of producing skilled and competent Omani nurses. The major key player that contributes in ensuring that this is met are the established nursing colleges across the sultanate that aids in the county's flourishing population as well as its healthcare needs, furthermore the recruitment of highly skilled and well-experienced faculty both locally and internationally fills the gap for such need. This research aims to discover the level and association of workplace empowerment, job satisfaction, and burnout among faculty members

of Oman College of Health Sciences- Nursing Department in the Sultanate. The proponents explored the level and correlation of empowerment and job satisfaction affect burnout level among faculty members.

Methods

The study is a quantitative descriptive correlation survey design that attempts to conclude the extent of relationship between empowerment, job satisfaction, and burnout among nursing faculty members in Oman. Descriptive research seeks to define the existing status of an identified variable. These research projects are planned to provide systematic information about an occurrence. The study utilized standard tools obtained from the main author and adapted based on the educational setting. Request form and permission is granted to utilize standard tools the following tools were utilized for the study:

- a. Conditions of work effectiveness questionnaire -I (CWEQ I)
- b. Conditions of Work Effectiveness Questionnaire-II (CWEQ-II).

A pilot study was initiated with the sample taken from the population to assess for the instrument reliability and validity using Cronbach Alpha of 0.98. IRB-MOH/CSR/17/589 approval sought from Center for research studies and Research and Ethics Review and Approval Committee (RERAC).

Scoring and Interpretation

- (1) **Opportunity:** A subscale mean score is obtained by summing and averaging the items. Score range is between 1 and 5. Higher scores denote sturdier access to opportunity
- (2) **Resources:** A subscale mean score is obtained by obtaining the sum and average the items. Score range is between 1 and 5. Higher scores represent stronger access to resources.
- (3) **Information:** A subscale mean score is obtained by summing and averaging the items. Score range is between 1 and 5. Higher scores represent stronger access to information.
- (4) **Support:** A subscale mean score is obtained by summing and averaging the items. Score range is between 1 and 5. Higher scores signify stronger access to support.
- (5) **Job Activities Scale (Formal Power):** A scale mean score is obtained by summing and averaging the items. Score range is between 1 and 5. Higher scores denote job undertakings that give higher formal or position power.
- (6) **Organization Relationships Scale (Informal Power):** A scale means score is obtained by summing and averaging the items. Score range is between 1 and 5. Higher scores signify stouter links of coalitions in the organization or higher informal power

Total Structural Empowerment:

An overall empowerment score can be calculated by summing the first four subscales or all six subscales:

Four Subscale Version: Score range is between 4 and 20. Higher scores denote stronger perceptions of working in association with empowered work setting. Scores ranging from 4 to 9 are described as low levels of empowerment, 10 to 14 as moderate levels of empowerment, and 16 to 20 as high levels of empowerment.

Six Subscale Version: Score range is between 6 and 30. Higher scores represent stronger perceptions of working in an empowered work environment. Scores ranging from 6 to 13 are described as low levels of empowerment, 14 to 22 as moderate levels of empowerment, and 23 to 30 as high levels of empowerment.

Global Empowerment

In 1995, global measure of empowerment (GE) was new to the form as a validation index. The GE score is gained by summing and averaging the 2 global empowerment items to the completion of the form. Score range is between 1 and 5. Higher scores represent stronger perceptions of working in an empowered work environment.

Items for the CWEQ-I were derived from Kanter's original ethnographic study of work empowerment and modified by Chandler¹⁸ for use in a nursing population. The CWEQ-II is a modification of the original,¹⁹ it is considerably shorter and targeted towards use in research studies, while the length and detail acquired through the original make it more valued for quality development initiatives.

Purposive sampling of the total number (249) faculty members across the Sultanate in the nine branches of the College of Health Sciences was taken. The following inclusion criteria will be set.

Inclusion criteria:

1. Served two years full time as teaching faculty in the college nursing department.
2. Full-time faculty of Nursing member at the College of Oman Health Sciences.
3. Teaches Bachelor of Science in Nursing program.

Exclusion criteria:

1. Faculty members less than 2 years and above in the Sultanate as part-time.
2. Visiting/ Temporary or on Floating Status.
3. Non-Nursing Faculty. e.g. foundation or other health disciplines.

The study utilized Purposive or Judgmental Sample. A purposive, or judgmental, the samples are selected by using supporting information from the population and the purpose of the study. The overall population of the faculty of nursing in 2018 is 249 only 180 qualified based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria. 142 faculty members participated in the study a post hoc analysis of the sample shows a confidence level at 96% with a confidence interval of 3.75.

Results

Table 1 displays that Majority of the respondents are female (69%) with the male respondent (31%). Similarly, non-Omani respondents (66.2%) outraged the number of Omani respondents (33.8%). Most of the respondents were 45-49 years old (46.5%) and the majority of them were faculty/instructor (75.4%) working for 5 – 8 years (36.6%).

As shown in Table 2, structural empowerment results shows that majority of the respondents have a moderate level of empowerment (75.4%). The result also shows that almost 25 percent of them reached a high level of empowerment (23.9%) and a few of the respondents have a low level of empowerment (0.7%). This is also supported by the mean value for the whole group revealing a value of 13.70, which

is within the range of 10-14 points described as a moderate level of empowerment. Based on the interpretation given by Laschinger and Fida,²⁰ the majority of the respondents or on average the respondents have a moderate level of access to opportunity, resources, information, and support. A worker is happy with the fundamental content of the work however one could also be dissatisfied if it doesn't allow one to grow or get into responsibilities in other areas of organization. The access to the opportunity to learn and grow is a vital component of structural empowerment.

Table 1

Demographic Profile	Categories	Frequency	Percent
Sex	Male	44	31.0
	Female	98	69.0
	Total	142	100.0
Nationality	Omani	48	33.8
	Non-Omani	94	66.2
	Total	142	100.0
Age	30<34 yrs old	18	12.7
	35<39 yrs old	19	13.4
	40<44 yrs old	15	10.6
	45<49 yrs old	66	46.5
	50 and above	24	16.9
	Total	142	100.0
Position	Faculty/Instructor	107	75.4
	Coordinator	33	23.2
	Dean	2	1.4
	Total	142	100.0
Years of Service	1<4 yrs	28	19.7
	5<8 yrs	52	36.6
	9<12 yrs	27	19.0
	13<16 yrs	17	12.0
	17<20 yrs	11	7.7
	21 yrs and above	7	4.9
	Total	142	100.0

Table 2 Frequency Count and Percent Distribution of the Faculty Level of Empowerment

Level	Frequency	Percent
Low Levels of Empowerment	1	0.7
Moderate Levels of Empowerment	107	75.4
High Levels of Empowerment	34	23.9
Total	142	100.0

Mean: 13.70 (Moderate Level) Std. Deviation (1.66)

Table 3 shows that the levels of global empowerment of the respondents were distributed from the low to high level of empowerment. The result also shows that most of them have a moderate level of empowerment (47.2%) followed by the high level of empowerment (33.1%) and few of them have a low level of empowerment (19.7%). As shown in Table 4, the respondents agreed that their present setting empowers them to achieve their work in an effective manner (2.90) and they consider their job as empowering (2.80). The result of the mean and the frequency distribution were both leading to a moderate level of empowerment (2.85). This means that the respondents have moderate

insights of working in an empowered work setting. On faculty job satisfaction. Kanter's theory also assumed that the structure of work environment is an important correlate of the employee's attitude and behaviors in the organization and similarly postulates that perceived access to power and opportunity structures are associated with the employee's behavior and attitude in the organization. It was also recommended by Kanter that people shows totally differing behaviors that are betting on a existing or non-existing structural support within the organization.

Table 3 Global Empowerment

Global Empowerment	Frequency	Percent
High Levels of Empowerment	47	33.1
Moderate Levels of Empowerment	67	47.2
Low Levels of Empowerment	28	19.7
Total	142	100.0

Table 4

Statements	Mean	Std. Deviation	Qualitative Description
Overall, my current work environment empowers me to accomplish my work in an effective manner.	2.90	1.24	Strongly Agree
Overall, I consider my workplace to be an empowering environment	2.80	1.194	Strongly Agree
Mean	2.85	1.176	Moderate Level

Table 5 displays that further than partial of the respondents were only moderately satisfied with their job (61.3%). It also shows that there were slightly satisfied (1.4%), satisfied (34.5%) and extremely satisfied (2.8%). On average, the respondents were moderately satisfied (3.28). This indicates that the respondents have moderate position power in terms of suppleness, compliance, ingenuity associated with decision making towards the purpose and goals of the organization.

Table 5 Frequency Count and Percent Distribution of the Level of Job Satisfaction

Level	Frequency	Percent
slightly satisfied	2	1.4
moderately satisfied	87	61.3
satisfied	49	34.5
extremely satisfied	4	2.8
Total	142	100.0

Mean: 3.28 (Moderately Satisfied) Standard Deviation: 0.534

Table 6 reveals the level of faculty stress/burnout. The result shows that almost half of the respondents were not stressful and almost half were also stressful. Among the stressful respondents, 40.1% were slightly stressful and 14.1 % of respondents were moderately stressful. Among the not stressful respondents, 43% were moderately stressful and 2.8 % of respondents were extremely not stressful. It can also convey in the result that most of the respondents were not stressful. However, this is not supported by the average result revealing that respondents were slightly stressful (3.38). This means that the respondents do not have very strong networks of the alliance in the organization or they do not have high informal power. This means that

they were considered slightly stressful because of not strong social connections, development of communications and information with the people around them such as their peers, sponsors, subordinates and cross-functional groups.

Table 6 Frequency Count and Percent Distribution of Faculty Stress Level

Level	Frequency	Percent
moderately stressful	20	14.1
slightly stressful	57	40.1
not stressful	61	43.0
extremely not stressful	4	2.8
Total	142	100.0

Mean: 3.38 (slightly stressful) Std. Deviation: 0.633

The outcome in Table 7 shows that there was a noteworthy correlation between structural empowerment and job satisfaction ($r=0.603$, $p<0.01$) or burnout ($r=0.718$, $p<0.01$). The computed value of r reveals a strong positive correlation. This indicates that there is a direct correlation between structural empowerment and job satisfaction. This means that the higher the structural empowerment, the more satisfied the respondent is in his/her work. Moreover, the result also shows that there was a significant positive correlation between job satisfaction and burnout ($r=0.759$, $p<0.01$). However, since higher informal power indicates lesser stress then this reveals an inverse strong correlation between the two variables. This means that the more the respondent is satisfied, the lesser the stress level

Table 7 Pearson-R Result On Relation Between Structural Empowerment, Job Satisfaction And Burnout.

		Job Satisfaction	Burnout
Structural Empowerment	Pearson Correlation	0.603**	0.718**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000
	N	142	142
Job Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	-	0.759**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
	N		142

** .Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Discussion

This study progresses the understanding of Workplace Empowerment, Burnout, and Job Satisfaction and its relationship among nursing faculty. Furthermore, the purpose of the study is to identify the level and relationship of Workplace Empowerment, Burnout, and Job Satisfaction utilizing Kanter's Theory. There is a wide array of studies on empowerment utilizing the CWEQ developed by Chandler¹⁸ mostly focusing on management, intensive care and several areas but very few and limited about nursing education according to the study of Teixeira & Figueredo.²¹ The study yielded results of the demographic profile of the respondents were female-dominated, majority of the respondents were not-Omani with the average experience of 5 to 8 years in Oman. When comparing our results from previous studies on the demographic factors it shows there's similarity with the study of Baker et al.¹⁴ that presented tenure and

rank has no significant effect on the faculty's level of empowerment, burnout and job satisfaction on the other hand according to Koh et al.²² and Thuss et al.²³ there is a determined association between gender and marital status, years of work experience which a contradiction to the results gathered in this study this is also supported by Hackman and Oldham²⁴ that says that job character can produce conditions for high level inspiration, performance and satisfaction. On the area of faculty empowerment the findings shows moderate levels of empowerment on the study conducted by Dunker²⁵ on nursing faculty empowerment she identified that access to opportunity was the most vital aspect in general empowerment and access to resources was the lowest subscale, this is different from the findings that arise from our study where challenging work garnered the highest mean (M-3.71,SD-0.351) moderate level ,while resources came lowest (M -3.29, SD0.603.) interpreted as moderate level in the same study access to resources has the lowest mean score. Nursing faculty workload includes specific teaching, research and service expectations , workload allocations and support continue to be a notable barrier to faculty satisfaction and empowerment this is highly evident in the studies of Allen,²⁶ Dattilo et al.²⁷ and Manojlovich and Laschinger.²⁸ Dunker,²⁵ on his study, visualized that informal power is perceived to have a stronger relationship and that the of overall empowerment in full time nursing faculty than formal power, these significant findings may be due to the opportunities wherein nurse educators have the need to collaborate, network and formalize relationships within and outside the reorganization.

Faculty members participate in a variety of responsibilities in their role: teaching, service, scholarship, and research. On the area of global empowerment study results yielded 47.2% of the subjects has moderate levels of empowerment followed by 33.1% high levels of empowerment and lastly 19.7% who has low levels of empowerment the results validates the overall view of empowerment among the respondents research has revealed that nurse faculty members who felt empowered in their jobs were more dedicated to the organization thereby increasing their resolved to stay in the position.¹² With the perusal of the results related to the faculty's job satisfaction the finding showed that 61.3% of the respondents a majority identify themselves as moderately satisfied with their current job. The overall mean of 3.28 with a SD of 0.534 indicates moderate satisfaction with their job as faculty of nursing. According to Disch et al.,¹⁵ there's a profound sense of significance and obligation to the discipline of nursing and faculty members contribution to the prospect of the discipline. A similar study by Brookman²⁹ shows that the job satisfaction of 358 full time BSN nursing faculties which the descriptive index showed highest means related to staff satisfaction were related to promotional opportunities and the lowest means were link to pay or salary. Evidently on this study it was identified that job flexibility yields the highest mean of 3.63, SD-0.730 and the lowest was on rewards for unusual job performance with a Mean of 2.76, SD-0.95. Overall the faculty of nursing in Oman College of Health Sciences level of Job satisfaction falls under moderately satisfied which also reveals that faculty members are not fully given formal or position power in the college. According to Chung and Kowalski's³⁰ study after multiple regressions of the demographic profile the results exhibited that having a mentor, better mental empowerment, and higher salary had affirmative substantial effects on job satisfaction; job tension and term status had significant opposite effects on job satisfaction. Half of the respondents 43% finds working in the college as not stressful and the other half 40.1% identifies with a slightly stressful environment or workplace. The overall Mean of 3.38, SD-0.633 signifies a slightly

stressful condition which is explained by not having a very strong network of alliance or high informal power. Nursing is deliberated as one of the academic disciplines with greater level of job stress due to the ranged of proficiencies required.³⁰ Nursing is a discipline whose training is quickly changing and producing knowledgeable and skilled alumni through classroom teaching is a challenge.³¹ The computed r values for structural empowerment, ($r=0.603$, $p<0.01$) job satisfaction ($r=0.718$, $p<0.01$). And burnout ($r=0.759$, $p<0.01$) indicates a strong positive correlation among the three and as inversely interpreted with job satisfaction and burnout means that the more the respondent is satisfied, the lesser the stress level this is similar to the study of Sarmiento et al.,³² wherein eighty nine fulltime nursing faculty were surveyed yielding similar results it was reported that the faculty members reported moderate levels on the three domains with empowerment determined as a strong predictor of job satisfaction. Given the result of the present study and the findings from texts, one can assume that improving the faculty member's job satisfaction can be attributed to improving their sense of empowerment and lessening burnout and stress. Several study results focus on the importance of transforming nursing educational environments, both academic and clinical, with relations to empowering mechanisms that enable nurse educators and instructors to achieve their work.^{14,33-37} In this study also it can be observed that the prevailing respondents were in majority expatriates who may be assumed as pivotal to the prevailing results given if more Omanis partook in the study. The affirmative connection between Empowerment and Job Satisfaction is obviously visible in the examined studies. Thus, a positive insight of Empowerment is a determinant of Job Satisfaction.^{11,19,38-47}

Conclusion

In conclusion we found that the levels of faculty members in terms of empowerment, job satisfaction and burnout are all in the moderate level. In this study also it's was found that the three dimensions have a direct positive correlation with Job satisfaction and burnout having an inverse direct correlation. It is assumed that the faculty members across Oman have a modest perception of empowerment, job satisfaction and a lower level of burnout or stress.

Recommendations

Our result shows differences in the result variables with regards to nationality, gender, position and length of work experience and this study did not control those factors. The use of a multi- level regression may address this issue and to enhance objectivity a direct observation can be utilized to avoid bias in self -rating the level of empowerment provided in the college. The results of the study should be taken into account by the newly transitioned Oman College of Health Sciences that clamors for a more distinct style of management focus on empowering its faculty members that would entail its longevity as a foremost institution that produces quality nurse graduates. Accordingly, the result of the study may not in overall generalize the situation in other institution due to differences in organization, structure culture, and workplace diversification.

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