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## Effect of Job Satisfaction on Turnover among Nursing Employees at National Referral Hospitals in Kenya

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### **Abstract**

*The general objective of the study was to establish the effect of job satisfaction on turnover among nursing employees at national referral hospitals in Kenya. The study specifically sought to establish the effect of professional job autonomy, work-life balance, participation in work decision-making process, compensation and work recognition on turnover among nursing employees at national referral hospitals in Kenya. The study adopted mixed methods research design and used simple random sampling to select a sample of 315 respondents from the 1779 registered nurses working at the 12 national referral hospitals in Kenya. The unit of analysis was national referral hospitals in Kenya while the unit of observation was registered nurse managers or their equivalent. The analyzed data was presented using frequency tables, charts and graphs. The study generated both qualitative and quantitative data which was collected using Likert scales and was later analyzed descriptively using measures of central tendency and inferentially using correlation tests and multiple regression models. The study found out that there is an inverse relationship between job satisfaction and nursing employees' turnover and that participation in work decision-making process and compensation contribute positively but significantly to nursing employees' turnover at these hospitals. The study therefore concluded that it is imperative for the employer of the nursing employees at these hospitals to put in place job satisfaction strategy and specifically put more emphasis on participation in work decision-making process and compensation in order to help curtail and/or manage the turnover of the nursing employees at these hospitals more effectively. This will lead to their retention for longer at these hospitals and hence help improve on the quality of services the nursing employees at these hospitals provide to customers.*

**Keywords:** Professional job autonomy, work-life balance, participation in work decision-making process, compensation, work recognition and employee turnover

### **1. Introduction**

Nursing employees' turnover is a major challenge for healthcare services and it is also a key factor that interacts with and affects nursing shortages (Dawwas & Zahare, 2014). Retention of qualified nurses is therefore vital if healthcare organizations are to survive (Drake, 2012). However, the ongoing nursing turnover especially that of high performers is a major management problem and a challenge to healthcare industry (Mohammed, 2012). This is because it is very costly to the organizations concerned and it also interrupts organizational planning and results in poor service delivery (Mahmoud, Muhammad, Ali & Ferial, 2013). Recent studies indicate that nursing shortages and turnover are major challenges for healthcare organizations globally and are expected to continue and intensify in the future (Mohammad, 2012), unless urgent intervention measures are put in place. According to scholars, employee turnover is the action of employees leaving an organization for another or leaving the profession altogether to engage in other different activities (Dawwas & Zahare, 2014). Mbah and Ikemefuna (2012), posit that employee turnover is the entire process of filling a vacancy each time there occurs one. Meanwhile other scholars such as Kanwar, Singh and Kodwani (2012), posit that employee turnover is the rate at which an employer gains and losses employees. According to Joarder, Sharif and Ahmmed (2011), it refers to the rotation of employees around the market, between firms, jobs and occupations and between states of employment and unemployment. Still other scholars assert that employee turnover is the individual's movement across the membership boundary of an organization (Rothmann, Diedericks & Swart, 2013).

### 1.1. Statement of the Problem

The ultimate goal of Kenya's health policy is to provide quality healthcare to the Kenyan people (Kenya Health Policy, 2012-2030), therefore, hospitals in the country should aim at achieving this goal (Akacho, 2014). The hospitals must therefore work towards achieving adequate and stable nursing employees since nursing is central to quality healthcare delivery (WHO, 2006). On its part, the government of Kenya has invested heavily in the public health sector (Strategy for Community Health, 2014-2019) and more especially at national referral hospitals, in order to improve quality of essential healthcare (KSHRS, 2014-2018). However, despite heavy government investment in national referral hospitals in Kenya, these hospitals are plagued by a myriad of challenges that include low job satisfaction of nurses, high nursing employees' voluntary turnover, lack of adequate nurses in key areas and poor quality patient care (David, 2012; KHWR, 2015; Kinyili, 2015; KHSSP, 2013-2017; KSHRS, 2014-2018; Strategy for Community Health, 2014-2019; Akacho, 2014; The Nation media, March, 2018; The Standard, March, 2018). Voluntary turnover of nurses continues unabated (nurse resignations, 10%, nurse transfers, 6 % and nurse out-migrations, 8%) (KNWR, 2012; Kimutai, 2013; KNWR, 2015; KNUN, 2019; Kenya Health Policy 2014-2030), and this has made national referral hospitals provide poor quality healthcare products and services to customers. Therefore, to retain the best nursing employees at national referral hospitals in Kenya, and hence improve on the quality of healthcare services and products provided to clients, urgent attention must be directed at their job satisfaction since job satisfaction is very important in the lives of nursing employees (Dhurup et al. 2014) and lack of it contributes to voluntary turnovers (Drake, 2014). Furthermore, voluntary turnover of nursing employees is a problem that cannot be ignored or put aside since it is not only very costly, but it also leads to decreasing staff shortages and hence has an adverse impact on quality of services and products provided to clients (Kinyili, 2016). Therefore, to reduce turnover rate among nurses is one of the most effective ways of decreasing staff shortages and improving quality of services and products that nurses provide to clients (Aron, 2015).

However, if the current nursing employees' voluntary turnover trend at national referral hospitals in Kenya continues, given the critical role these hospitals play in Kenya's healthcare sector, then chances of the country achieving quality healthcare for all would remain bleak. Moreover, although related studies have been carried out by previous scholars such as Drake (2014) and Aron (2015) among others, most of the studies have been carried out in developed countries such as USA, Canada, UK and Australia. The studies carried out in developed countries may therefore not adequately address the effect of job satisfaction on nursing employees' voluntary turnover in developing countries and more especially in Kenya, due to economic and social-cultural differences. Furthermore, related studies carried out in developing countries by scholars such as Mbah and Ikemefuna (2012) and Olusegun (2013), among others, have also not adequately addressed the issue of nursing employees' voluntary turnover. With respect to Kenya, none of the previous studies have examined the effect of job satisfaction on turnover among nursing employees at national referral hospitals in Kenya. It is against this background that this study aimed at filling this gap in existing literature.

### 1.2. Research Objective

The purpose of the study was to establish the effect of job satisfaction on turnover among nursing employees at national referral hospitals in Kenya.

### 1.3. Research Hypothesis

- H<sub>01</sub>: Professional job autonomy has a positive significant effect on turnover among nursing employees at national referral hospitals in Kenya.
- H<sub>02</sub>: Work-life balance has a positive significant effect on turnover among nursing employees at national referral hospitals in Kenya.
- H<sub>03</sub>: Participation in work decision- making process has a positive significant effect on turnover among nursing employees at national referral hospitals in Kenya.
- H<sub>04</sub>: Compensation has a positive significant effect on turnover among nursing employees at national referral hospitals in Kenya.
- H<sub>05</sub>: Work recognition has a positive significant effect on turnover among nursing employees at national referral hospitals in Kenya.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Theoretical Review

#### 2.1.1. Stacey Adam's Equity Theory

Equity theory developed by Stacey Adams (1963) is based on the premise that people want to be treated fairly at the place of work. The theory states that employees weigh what they put into a job (input) against what they get from it (outcome) and then compare this ratio with the input – outcome ratio of other workers. If they find this ratio is equal to that of the relevant others, a state of equity is said to exist (Gupta, 2011). If an employee thinks that there is inequity between himself/herself and another employee, he/she is likely to be dissatisfied because the input and output are not equal. Inputs refer to the quality and quantity of the nursing employee's contributions to his or her work, while outputs refer to the positive or negative consequences that an individual perceives as a consequence of his relationship with or others (Berry, 2010). The major concern of equity theory is about payment made to employees by their employers. Payment is a cause of concern of equity and inequity in most organizations. This theory is relevant to the study because it

explains the issues of compensation in an organization in that the nursing employees have to perceive that the compensation given to them is fair. If nursing employees feel that the compensation awarded to them is not fair in comparison to efforts and time, they put into the job and in comparison, with others, then it can cause dissatisfaction and hence make the nursing employees quit.

#### 2.1.2. Hackman Oldham's Job Characteristics Theory

This theory by Hackman and Oldham (1975) posit that there are a number of core job characteristics that impact job outcomes and these include job autonomy. Job characteristics are aspects of the individual employee's job and tasks that shape how the individual perceives his/ her role in the organization. Hackman argued that the outcomes are of job redesign. These are influenced by several moderators which include differences to which various employees desire personal or psychological progress (Saif, et, al, 2012). The clarity of tasks leads to job satisfaction because greater clarity creates such a workforce which is more satisfied with and involved in work. According to Saif et al. 2012), there are five core job characteristics (skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback). These characteristics impact three critical psychological states which are experienced meaningfulness, experienced responsibility for outcomes of the work and knowledge of actual results of the work activities. The theory implies that if a job is high on satisfaction through job autonomy, the likelihood of negative outcomes such as turnover will be reduced. The theory helps in the understanding that if there is greater clarity in regard to professional job autonomy, then the nursing employee will create a positive perception about the organization and be satisfied with the job. In the absence of professional job autonomy, the nursing employee is likely to have a negative perception about the job which will lead to job dissatisfaction hence leading to turnover.

#### 2.1.3. Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

This theory by Herzberg, Mausner and Snyderman (1959), in the motivation to work, argues that employees are motivated by internal values than external values at work. The theory states that there are job satisfiers (motivators) related to the job contents and job dissatisfiers (hygiene factors) related to the job contents. One of the motivators is work recognition. From the theory we learn that hygiene factors do not satisfy but they prevent dissatisfaction. Hygiene factors include supervision and administration among others. The theory therefore helps in the understanding that work recognition is important in the work place as it makes an employee to be satisfied with his or her job. An employee that is satisfied with his/her job will not think of ever leaving that job. Further empirical studies have also been conducted which have concluded that due to hygiene factors the field will always be plagued by high turnover. This high turnover can only be reduced by deliberate measures to create defined career paths and feasible promotional opportunities for an organization's officers (Sattar, Nawaz & Khan. 2012). This theory is relevant for this study because according to this study, if there is no work recognition in an organization, the nursing employees will feel that they are not appreciated or even valued. The situation would leave them dissatisfied with the job currently held and hence make them quit. Therefore, work recognition leads to job satisfaction and hence employee retention at the workplace.

#### 2.1.4. Aldous 'Spillover Theory

This theory by Aldous 1969 is used to explain the relationship between work and personal life. The theory states that what happens at work spills over and affects personal life and vice versa. Spillover theory is concerned with correspondence between what occurs at work and outside work which can have an impact on the family life and vice versa. The spillover can come in the form of mood, value or skill. For instance, failure to fulfill a family role may make an employee have a foul mood which if carried over to the work place, it is considered a mood spillover (Miles, 2013). This theory by Follet (1868-1933) and Mayo (1880-1949), fronted the idea of involving individuals and groups in decision-making process. This involvement is possible when there is co-operation at the workplace. So, the theory is out to explain importance of co-operation in the workplace. It implies that co-operation of workers is desirable for the attainment of the objectives of a firm. Worker participation in decision-making process is any arrangement that is designed to involve low cadre employees in the important decision-making process within the work place (Mohd, Mohamad & Kawsar, 2011). Scholars posit that worker participation consists of the creation of opportunity under suitable conditions for people to influence decisions which affect them and it serves to create a sense of peaceful coexistence among the workers as well as creating a conducive environment for work (Hassan, Wright & Park, 2015). The human relations theory comes from the understanding that co-operation of workers is desirable for the attainment of objectives of high productivity.

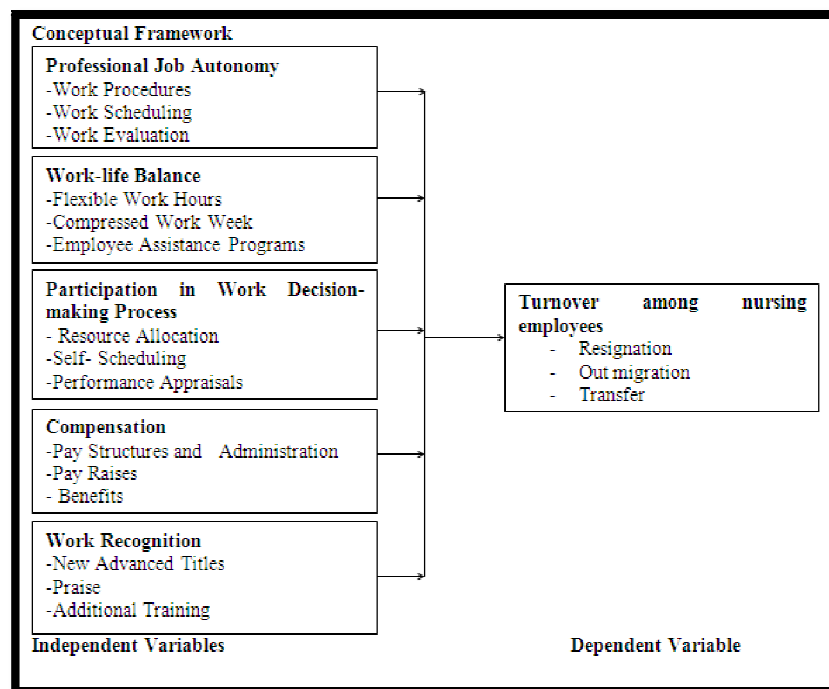


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

## 2.2. Research Methodology

The study adopted a mixed methods research design using both quantitative and qualitative approaches the study further adopted a positivism philosophy where scientific processes were followed in hypothesizing fundamental laws then deducing the observations so as to determine the truth or falsify the said hypotheses. The target population of this study was 1779 registered nursing employees working at national referral hospitals in Kenya. The study adopted a probabilistic sampling approach in developing a sample of 315 respondents. The study adopted questionnaires to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. Qualitative data were analysed using content analysis while quantitative data was analysed with the help of SPSS window to generate descriptive statistics and inferential such as percentages, frequency tables, means, and standard deviations. The study was guided by the following regression model:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \beta_5 X_5 + \varepsilon$$

Where: Y is Turnover,  $\beta_0$  is the constant,  $\beta_1$  to  $\beta_5$  are the model's coefficients,  $X_1$  is Professional job autonomy,  $X_2$  is Work-life balance,  $X_3$  is Participation in work decision-making process,  $X_4$  is Compensation,  $X_5$  is Work recognition and  $\varepsilon$  is Error term – margin of error

## 3. Results

In this study, the researcher administered a total of 261 questionnaires. A total of 189 questionnaires were filled and returned. This represented a response rate of 83%. This response rate was considered appropriate in this study since according to Kothari (2006), any response rate which is above 70% is considered good for analysis.

### 3.1. Descriptive Results

#### 3.1.1. Professional Job Autonomy

The responses provided by the nurses in charge of wards or units at national referral hospitals in Kenya on the effect of job autonomy on turnover are summarized in Table 1. Slightly more than half (54.2%) of the respondents were negative by strongly disagreeing and disagreeing to the statement that they were able to choose the way to go about their job. On the other hand, slightly more than a third (35.8%) strongly agreed and agreed to the statement. This statement had a mean of 2.64 and a standard deviation of 1.42. Whereas 30.5% of the respondents strongly disagreed to the statement that they were free to choose the methods they used in carrying out their work, slightly less than a quarter (22.9%) agreed with the statement. The remaining 28.2% and 13.7% disagreed and strongly agreed with the statement respectively. This statement had a mean of 2.44 and standard deviation of 1.32. With regard to control over the sequencing of work, 24% and 25.2% of the respondents strongly disagreed and disagreed that they had some control over the sequencing of their work activities respectively. Slightly less than a quarter (22.9%) of them was positive to the statement by agreeing. The mean for the statement was 2.67 whereas the standard deviation was 1.30. Majority (66.8%) strongly disagreed and disagreed with the statement that they had control over when and how long they did their job i.e. scheduling of work. A few nurses (16.8%) remained neutral on the statement while the remaining 16.4% were positive with the statement by strongly agreeing and agreeing respectively. Based on the mean and standard deviations ( $M=2.22$ ,  $\alpha=1.19$ ), it can be concluded that the respondents do not have control over the scheduling of their work at the national referral hospitals in Kenya. Slightly less than two thirds (61.5%) of the respondents reported strongly disagreeing and others disagreeing with the statement that they were able to decide when to do particular work activities at their job.

Furthermore, slightly less than a quarter (21.0%) of the responses was neutral on the statement whereas 17.6% were positive by strongly agreeing and others agreeing. The statement had a mean of 2.39 and standard deviation of 1.14. When asked to indicate whether the job allowed them to modify the normal way in which they were evaluated so that they could emphasize some aspects of their job and down play others, an equal distribution of responses was obtained between those who strongly disagreed and those who disagreed. Whereas 34.4% strongly disagreed with the statement, 34.4% generally disagreed with the statement.

On the other hand, a few (18.7%) of the respondents were in agreement with the statement. Furthermore, 33.6% and 26.0% of the respondents were in disagreement when asked whether they were able to modify what their job objectives were (what they were supposed to accomplish). Slightly less than a quarter (23.7%) agreed whereas 6.5% strongly agreed. With less professional job autonomy in modifying nurses' job objectives, what their job objectives are (what they are supposed to accomplish), nursing employees may not be satisfied with the results that they get from the job and this may in the end affect their turnover. Regarding the response to the statement on whether the nursing employees had control over what the supervisor saw as their job objectives, slightly less than a third (30.5%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that they had control over what they were supposed to accomplish. 25.2% of the respondents were in disagreement with the statement. A few respondents (11.8%) however, remained neutral. The remaining 26.3% and 6.1% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed respectively with the statement that nurses had control over what their job supervisors saw as their job objectives. This statement had a mean of 2.52 and a standard deviation of 1.33. The findings in this section are proof that the nurses at national referral hospitals in Kenya don't exercise full professional job autonomy and this is an issue that affects their turnover. This finding is corroborated by Iliopoulou and While (2010), and Scherb et al. (2011), who explain that professional job autonomy is important in the workplace and more especially in the healthcare industry.

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	$\mu$	$\alpha$
	%	%	%	%	%		
I am able to choose the way to go about my job (The procedures to utilize).	26.0	28.2	9.9	22.1	13.7	2.69	1.42
I am free to choose the methods to use in carrying out my work.	30.5	31.3	8.4	22.9	6.9	2.44	1.32
I have some control over the sequencing of my work activities.	24.0	25.2	19.1	22.9	8.8	2.67	1.30
I have control over when and how long I will do my job (Scheduling of my work).	33.6	33.2	16.8	10.7	5.7	2.22	1.19
My job is in such a way that I can decide when to do particular work activities.	23.7	37.8	21.0	11.5	6.1	2.39	1.14
My job allows me to modify the normal way we are evaluated so that I can emphasize some aspects of my job and play down others.	34.4	34.4	9.5	18.7	3.1	2.22	1.19
I am able to modify what my job objectives are (what I am supposed to accomplish).	26.0	33.6	10.3	23.7	6.5	2.51	1.28
I have some control over what I am supposed to accomplish (what my supervisor sees as my job objectives)	30.5	25.2	11.8	26.3	6.1	2.52	1.33

Table 1: Effect of Professional Job Autonomy on Turnover among Nursing Employees at National Referral Hospitals in Kenya

### 3.1.2. Work-life Balance

In this study, the respondents were asked to indicate the effect that work-life balance had on their turnover. To do this, they were given a number of statements and asked to indicate the extent of their agreement or disagreement. The responses are as summarized in Table 2. In terms of personal life, 33.2% of the respondents disagreed that personal life has suffered due to their job. This was supported by 15% of nursing employees that strongly disagreed. A few (15.3%) remained neutral whereas the remaining 35.9% were positive, by strongly agreeing and agreeing respectively that their personal life was affected by their job. This statement had a mean of 2.84 and a standard deviation of 1.29. Scholars such as Yamahata (2015), reported that having difficulties in managing work-life balance or having work-family conflicts is one of the major stressors in the work place which also affects employees' job satisfaction and turnover. Therefore, there is need for employees to have work-life balance. As shown by the table below, slightly more than half (54.5%) of the respondents strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively that the organization they worked for offered flexible working hours. Slightly less than a quarter (23.3%) of them however agreed to the statement. The statement was summarized with a mean of 2.47 and a standard deviation of 1.18. This implies that majority of the nurses considered the working hours to be rigid and not flexible and this actually affects their work-life balance. Slightly more than half (54.6%) were negative that the amount of time their job took made it difficult to fulfill family obligations. On the other hand, 30.2% of the respondents were positive to the statement by strongly agreeing and agreeing respectively. Only a few (15.3%) remained neutral on the matter. The mean and standard deviation of the statement were 2.61 and 1.33 respectively. This implies that the amount of time taken by the job does not really affect the family lives of all the nurses but it affects the personal lives of

only a few nurses. In terms of time for personal activities, 21.4% strongly disagreed and 24.8% disagreed that they missed out on important personal activities due to their jobs. A few (17.9%) were undecided. The remaining 35.9% were positive that they missed out on important personal activities due to nature of their jobs. This statement had a mean of 2.81 and standard deviation of 1.35. Furthermore, 51.9% of the respondents were negative that it was possible for them to perform their job well and yet be able to perform home-related duties adequately. Slightly less than a quarter (23.3%) agreed with the statement whereas 18.7% remained neutral.

The statement had a mean of 2.61 and standard deviation of 1.23. Majority (70.3%) of the respondents were negative to the statement that the organization they worked for offered compressed work weeks (working for fewer days per week but more hours per day). The remaining 11.1% were positive, by strongly agreeing and agreeing to the statement. The mean and standard deviation were 2.11 and 1.04 respectively. This means that employees do not have compressed work week facility (working for fewer days per week but more hours per day) at the national referral hospitals in Kenya. Recent studies have posited that compressed work week is a policy that allows an employee to arrange his/her working schedule in a way that he/she would have longer working hours in a day so as to have five days or shorter work week Yamahata (2015). Scholars therefore posit that flexi time is important in the workplace in order to improve on work-life balance of employees. Regarding employee assistance programs, a majority of the nursing employees (71.0%), strongly disagreed and disagreed with the statement that the organization they worked for offered employee assistance programs for instance confidential professional counseling in case of job stress, long illness, balancing work and family finance among others. A few remained neutral whereas the remaining 18.7% were positive on the matter. The statement had a mean of 2.11 and a standard deviation of 1.21. This implies that most of the employees at these hospitals do not receive any employee assistance programs such as confidential professional counseling in case of job stress, long illness, balancing work and family, finance etc. In regard to the statement on whether their nursing job gives them energy to pursue activities outside of work that are important to them, majority (64.5%) of the respondents were negative. The remaining 17.2% were neutral whereas 16% were positive by agreeing with the statement. The statement had a mean of 2.23 and standard deviation of 1.14. The findings of this section indicate that nursing employees at national referral hospitals in Kenya do not have clear work-life balance programs, and this is affecting their turnover. This finding is corroborated by Dude (2012), who explains that employees that report high levels of both work-to-life and life-to-work conflicts usually have lower levels of job satisfaction and hence increased turnover.

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	$\mu$	$\alpha$
	%	%	%	%	%		
My personal life suffers because of my job.	15.6	33.2	15.3	23.7	12.2	2.84	1.29
The organization I work for offers flexible working hours.	26.3	28.2	19.8	23.3	2.3	2.47	1.18
The amount of time my job takes up make it difficult to fulfill family duties.	25.2	29.4	15.3	19.5	10.7	2.61	1.33
I miss out on important personal activities because of my job.	21.4	24.8	17.9	23.3	12.6	2.81	1.35
It is possible for me to perform my job well and yet be able to perform home-related duties adequately.	22.1	29.8	18.7	23.3	6.1	2.61	1.23
The organization I work for offers compressed work weeks (working for fewer days per week but more hours per day).	32.1	38.2	18.7	8.4	2.7	2.11	1.04
The organization I work for offers employee assistance programs for instance confidential professional counseling in case of job stress, long illness, balancing work and family, finance etc.	40.5	30.5	10.3	14.5	4.2	2.11	1.21
My job gives me energy to pursue activities outside of work that are important to me.	33.6	30.9	17.2	16.0	2.3	2.23	1.14

Table 2: Effect of Work-Life Balance on Turnover among Nursing Employees at National Referral Hospitals in Kenya  
Key: SA-Strongly Agree, A-Agree, N-Neutral, D-Disagree, SD- Strongly Disagree M- Mean, A-Standard Deviation

### 3.2. Participation in Work Decision-Making Process

Respondents were asked to indicate the extent of their agreement or disagreement on various statements and their responses are summarized in Table 3. In this study the views of the respondents regarding their participation in working decision making process were analyzed and slightly less than a third (33.6%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that their supervisors asked for their opinions and thoughts when making work decisions. Slightly more than a quarter (26%) disagreed with the statement whereas 27.1% were of a different opinion by agreeing to the statement. A mean of 2.89 and a standard deviation of 1.25 were obtained for the statement. This clearly shows that supervisors at national referral hospitals don't ask for opinions of nurses during the process of making work decisions. Majority of respondents (61.1%) were negative that they usually participated in making important decisions in their work units. A few respondents (24.8%) however remained positive by agreeing with the statement. A mean of 2.42 and standard deviation of 1.22 was obtained. This implies that most of the nurses do not participate in making important work decisions in their places of work. Regarding nursing employees' participation in resource allocation, slightly less than two thirds

(67.2%) of the respondents were negative by strongly disagreeing and disagreeing with the statement that the national referral hospitals they worked for offered them a chance to participate in resource allocation regarding their job. A few (18.7%) were in agreement with the statement whereas 13.7% remained neutral. The mean obtained from this statement was 2.14 with a standard deviation of 1.12. This is an indication that most of the nurses are not provided with an opportunity to participate in allocation of resources that they require for their job at the national referral hospitals in Kenya. In regard to whether the respondents are participating in self-scheduling, while 38.5% of the respondents strongly disagreed, 35.1% disagreed that in the hospital where they worked, they were usually allowed to participate in self-scheduling, that is, allowed to participate in deciding the hours they are at work and the hours they are off. A few (15.3%) however remained neutral in regard to the statement. A mean of 2.01 and standard deviation of 1.06 was obtained for this statement. This implies that nursing employees at national referral hospitals are not allowed to participate in self-scheduling regarding the hours they are work and when they are off work. In respect to whether the respondents are allowed to participate in performance appraisals for nurse managers, in their work units, slightly more than half (58.8%) were negative that in the organization where they work, they are always allowed to participate in performance appraisal of nurse managers in their respective work unit. Slightly less than a quarter (22.1%) of the respondents, was however in agreement whereas 13% remained neutral on the matter. A mean of 2.41 and standard deviation of 1.31 was obtained for the statement. This implies that the input of the nursing employees is not sought when appraising the performance of the nurse managers in their individual work units. In regard to whether the respondents' are allowed to participate in various work decision-making processes regarding their job in their work units, while 27.1% and 32.1% were negative to the statement that nurses are usually allowed to participate in various work decision-making processes regarding their job in their respective work units, 21.4% agreed with the statement. A few (16.8%) however remained neutral. The statement had a mean of 2.34 and 1.20. This implies that nurses are not allowed to participate in various work decision-making process in their work unit at national referral hospitals in Kenya. Furthermore, in regard to whether respondents are free to suggest positive changes regarding their job, slightly more than half (55.3%) were negative that they are free to suggest positive changes regarding their job. A few (17.6%) were neutral. Slightly less than a quarter (21.8%) was positive by agreeing with the statement. A mean of 2.45 and standard deviation of 1.27 was obtained. This is an indication that nurses are not free to suggest positive changes regarding their job at the national referral hospitals in Kenya. The findings of this section also reveal that the nurses at national referral hospitals are not being provided with opportunities to participate in the work decision-making process. This in turn may be affecting their control over the activities they undertake at the national referral hospitals thus resulting in their low job satisfaction and consequently their voluntary turnover. Not being provided with opportunities to be involved in work decision-making process is an issue that previous studies have looked at. This finding is corroborated by Petkovska et al. (2014), who explain that organizations that foster employee participation in work decision-making process have increased levels of job satisfaction and lower turnover rates.

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SD		
	%	%	%	%	%	$\mu$	$\alpha$
My supervisor asks for my opinions and thoughts when making work decisions.	33.6	26.0	11.5	27.1	1.9	2.38	1.25
I usually participate in making important decisions in my work unit.	27.5	33.6	10.7	24.8	3.1	2.42	1.22
The organization I work for offers me a chance to participate in resource allocation (staffing, equipment etc.) in regard to my job.	37.0	30.2	13.7	18.7	.4	2.14	1.12
In the hospital where I work, I am usually allowed to participate in self-scheduling, that is, I am allowed to participate in deciding the hours I am at work and the hours I am off work.	38.5	35.1	15.3	7.6	3.1	2.01	1.06
In the organization where I work, I am always allowed to participate in performance appraisals of nurse managers in my work unit.	33.2	25.6	13.0	22.1	5.7	2.41	1.31
I am usually allowed to participate in various work decision-making processes regarding my job in my work unit.	32.1	27.1	16.8	21.4	2.3	2.34	1.20
In the organization where I work, I am free to suggest positive changes regarding my job.	30.9	24.4	17.6	21.8	5.0	2.45	1.27

Table 3: Effect of Participation in Work Decision- Making Process on Turnover of Nursing Employees at National Referral Hospitals in Kenya

Key: SA-Strongly Agree, A-Agree, N-Neutral, D-Disagree, SD- Strongly Disagree, M- Mean, A-Standard Deviation

### 3.3. Compensation

In response to the statement on whether they are okay with the pay structure and administration in their organizations (national referral hospitals), an overwhelming majority (83.6%) of the respondents were negative to the statement that they are okay with the pay structure and administration used in their organizations. Only a few (9.5%)

were positive to the statement. A mean of 1.76 and standard deviation of 0.99 was obtained for the statement. This is an indication that the nurses strongly do not like the pay structure and administration used in their organizations (NRH). An overwhelming majority (84%) were negative that the pay raises they get from their employer are often and reasonable. A few (8.8%) were positive with the statement whereas the remaining 7.3% were neutral. The statement had a mean of 1.79 and standard deviation of 0.94. Also, majority of the nurses (75.2%) strongly disagreed and disagreed that the fringe benefits provided were competitive. A few (11.1%) were however positive with the statement. A mean of 1.92 and standard deviation of 1.03 was obtained for the statement meaning that majority of the nurses do not consider the fringe benefits provided to them as being competitive enough. Responding to the statement on whether they felt fairly compensated for the work they were performing at the national referral hospitals, 79% of the respondents strongly disagreed and disagreed with the statement. A few (11.5%) however, remained positive to the statement whereas 9.5% of the remaining respondents were neutral. The statement had a mean of 1.83 and a standard deviation of 1.09. This implies that the nurses at the national referral hospitals in Kenya felt that they were not being compensated fairly for the work they perform at the national referral hospitals in Kenya. Regarding the statement on work rewards, majority (71.3%) of the respondents were positive to the statement that their work rewards were not sufficient for the amount of work experience that they have. A few (11.8%) strongly disagreed with the statement whereas the rest (9.2%) remained neutral on this matter. A mean of 3.87 and standard deviation of 1.39 was obtained for the statement. This shows that the work rewards provided for the nursing work at the national referral hospitals in Kenya are not commensurate with the work experiences of the nurses at these national referral hospitals (NRH) in Kenya. Respondents were further asked to rate the compensation that was being offered to them by their organizations (national referral hospitals) in Kenya. Variables included were pay structure and administration, pay raises and pay benefits. The responses provided by the nurses in regard to this statement, are as summarized in Table 4.

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	$\mu$	$\alpha$
	%	%	%	%	%		
I am okay with the pay structure and administration used in my organization.	51.5	32.1	6.9	8.0	1.5	1.76	0.99
The pay raises I get are often and reasonable.	45.8	38.2	7.3	8.0	.8	1.79	0.94
Fringe benefits provided are competitive.	44.3	30.9	13.7	10.3	.8	1.92	1.03
I am compensated fairly for the work that I perform.	52.3	26.7	9.5	8.4	3.1	1.83	1.09
My work rewards are not sufficient for the amount of experience that I have.	11.8	7.6	9.2	24.4	46.9	3.87	1.39

Table 4: Effect of Compensation on Turnover of Nursing Employees at National Referral Hospitals in Kenya  
Key: SA-Strongly Agree, A-Agree, N-Neutral, D-Disagree, M- Mean, A-Standard Deviation

Findings shown by Table 5 below indicate that the average mean of the respondents is 1.81 and average standard deviation is 0.99. This shows that majority of the respondents are negative in regard to the pay structure and administration, pay raises and pay benefits that are in place at their places of work, which are the national referral hospital in Kenya. The findings of this study therefore prove that nursing employees at national referral hospitals in Kenya are not getting from their employer compensation that is satisfactory to them. Scholars postulate that compensation is one of the facets / dimensions of job satisfaction (Motshegwa, 2011; A'yuninnisa & Saptoto, 2012), and that retention of employees in organizations can be achieved through giving compensation to employees that they perceive as good. The findings of this study are consistent with those of other scholars who explain that employees that are satisfied with their compensation can be devoted to their organization and hence will not have thoughts of leaving the organization (Dawwas and Zahare, 2014). This study's finding therefore indicates that national referral hospitals in Kenya need to put in place a compensation policy that will enable the nursing employees get fair and competitive compensation in order for them to be satisfied with their job. This will help reduce voluntary turnover of the nursing employees from these hospitals.

IStatement	VU	U	N	F	VF	$\mu$	$\alpha$
	%	%	%	%	%		
Pay structure and administration.	48.1	32.8	10.3	8.8	-	1.79	0.95
Pay raises.	46.9	34.7	9.5	8.0	.8	1.81	0.96
Pay benefits.	50.8	27.5	9.9	11.1	.8	1.84	1.05

Table 5: Nurses' Rating of the Compensation That Is Offered to Them at the National Referral Hospitals in Kenya  
Work Recognition

Key: VU- Very Unfair, U- Unfair, N-Neutral, F-Fair, VF-Very Fair M- Mean, A-Standard Deviation

The respondents gave their responses regarding the effect that work recognition had on turnover as shown in Table 6. In response to the statement on whether their employer invests in their continuing additional training which ensures their professional development in recognition of their exemplary performance, majority of the respondents (67.9%) were negative that the employer invests in their continuing additional training which ensures their professional development in recognition of their exemplary performance. A few (14.1%) were however neutral on the matter whereas 18% were positive by strongly agreeing and agreeing with the statement. The statement had a mean 2.11 and standard



deviation of 1.13. This implies that the nursing employers at the national referral hospitals do not invest in continuing additional training of their nursing employees in recognition of their exemplary performance to ensure their professional development. Furthermore, while 36.6% and 32.4% of the respondents strongly disagreed and disagreed, 13.7% and 3.1% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed that they received verbal or written praise and / or thanks from their employer to celebrate their efforts and accomplishments. This statement had a mean of 2.14 and standard deviation of 1.15 implying that there is limited verbal or written praise and/ or thanks given to the nurses by their employers at national referral hospitals as way of celebrating their efforts and accomplishments. Regarding the statement that whenever the nursing employees at national referral hospitals excelled in job performance in any specific area, the employer gives them a more advanced job title and description, majority of the respondents (78.7%) strongly disagreed and disagreed. Few respondents (8.1%) were positive to the statement by strongly agreeing and agreeing. A mean of 1.90 and standard deviation of 1.01 was obtained. This implies that the percentage of nurses at the national referral hospitals in Kenya that are given more advanced job titles and descriptions in work recognition whenever they excel in job performance is negligible. In regard to the statement about special public recognition whenever a nursing employee excels in any particular work area at the national referral hospitals, 42.4% and 33.2% of the respondents strongly disagreed and disagreed with the statement. A few (11.2%) of the respondents however were positive to the statement. The statement had a mean of 1.96 and standard deviation of 1.06. This means that special public work recognition is hardly provided to the nurses at national referral hospitals in Kenya whenever they excel in any particular work areas.

In response to the statement on whether their organizations (national referral hospitals) have well developed programs that support employee recognition, 38.9% and 38.2% of the respondents strongly disagreed and disagreed that there was a well-developed program in their organizations that supported employee recognition. This statement had a mean of 1.92 and standard deviation of 0.94. Responding to the statement on whether the employer recognizes the nursing employee in any way when the employee excels in work performance, slightly more than half (57.6%) of the respondents were positive that nursing employees that excel in any specific work performance are not recognized in anyway by the employer. Slightly more than a quarter (29.4%) of the respondents was negative to the statement whereas the remaining 13% were neutral. A mean of 3.49 and a standard deviation of 1.42 were obtained for the statement. This shows that employees that excel in job performance at national referral hospitals in Kenya are rarely recognized by the employers. Moreover, majority of the respondents (69.5%) were negative to the statement that the employer gives them an opportunity to be involved in activities that promote their professional development whenever they excelled in their work performance at the national referral hospitals in Kenya. A few (16.4%) were neutral on the statement whereas the remaining 14.1% were positive by strongly agreeing and agreeing with the statement. The statement had a mean of 2.04 and standard deviation of 1.17. This means the employer of the nurses at the national referral hospitals in Kenya hardly give those that excel in work performance, opportunities to be involved in activities that promote their professional development. This implies that there are no well-developed programs put in place at the national referral hospitals in Kenya that support nursing employees' work recognition. This affects the nursing employees' voluntary turnover. The finding is corroborated by Henryhand (2010), who explains that lack of employee recognition in an organization is a significant predictor of turnover.

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	$\mu$	$\alpha$
	%	%	%	%	%		
My employer invests in my continuing additional training which ensures my professional development in recognition of my exemplary performance (for example through conferences, training seminars etc.).	39.3	28.6	14.1	17.2	.8	2.11	1.13
I receive verbal or written praise and/ or thanks from my employer to celebrate my efforts and accomplishments.	36.6	32.4	14.1	13.7	3.1	2.14	1.15
Whenever I have excelled in job performance in any specific area, my employer gives me a more advanced job title and description.	42.4	36.3	13.4	5.0	3.1	1.90	1.01
In my organization, there is special public work recognition whenever an employee excels in any particular work area.	42.4	33.2	12.2	10.7	1.5	1.96	1.06
My organization has well developed programs that support employee recognition.	38.9	38.2	16.4	5.0	1.5	1.92	0.94
In my organization even if an employee excels in work performance the employer does not recognize the employee in any way.	12.2	17.2	13.0	24.0	33.6	3.49	1.42
Whenever I excel in performance, the employer gives me an opportunity to be involved in activities that promote my professional development.	44.7	24.8	16.4	10.3	3.8	2.04	1.17

Table 6: Effect of Work Recognition on Turnover of Nursing Employees at National Referral Hospitals

Key: SA-Strongly Agree, A-Agree, N-Neutral, D-Disagree, SD- Strongly Disagree  $\mu$ - Mean,  $\alpha$ -Standard Deviation

### 3.4. Inferential Analysis

To assess the strength of the relationship independent and dependent variable, the study used correlation coefficient (r) which tests the degree to which changes to the value of one variable predict changes to the value of another. A correlation coefficient of +1 indicates perfect positive correlation while a correlation coefficient of -1 indicates perfect negative correlation.

### 3.5. Correlation between Professional Job Autonomy and Turnover among Nursing Employees at National Referral Hospitals in Kenya

Professional Job Autonomy and Turnover among Nursing Employees at National Referral Hospitals in Kenya had a negative and moderate relationship -.039. The p value was 0.534 which is > the critical value of 0.05 and so not significant. The results are depicted in table 7.

	Turnover among Nursing Employees	Professional Job Autonomy
Pearson Correlation	1	-.039
Sig. (2-tailed)		.534
N	261	261
Pearson Correlation	-.039	1
Sig. (2-tailed)	.534	
N	261	261

Table 7: Correlation Analysis between Professional Job Autonomy and Turnover Among Nursing Employees at National Referral Hospitals in Kenya

### 3.6. Correlation between Work- Life Balance and Turnover among Nursing Employees at National Referral Hospitals in Kenya

Work-life balance and Turnover among Nursing Employees at National Referral Hospitals in Kenya had a negative and moderate relationship of -.072. The p value was 0.248 which is > the critical value of 0.05 and so not significant. The results are depicted in table 8.

	Turnover among Nursing Employees	Work life balances
Pearson Correlation	1	-.072
Sig. (2-tailed)		.248
N	261	261
Pearson Correlation	-.072	1
Sig. (2-tailed)	.248	
N	261	261

Table 8: Correlation Analysis between Work Life Balances and Turnover among Nursing Employees at National Referral Hospitals in Kenya

### 3.7. Correlation between Work Decision-Making Process and Turnover among Nursing Employees at National Referral Hospitals in Kenya

Work Decision-Making Process and Turnover among Nursing Employees at National Referral Hospitals in Kenya had a negative and moderate relationship of -.138. The p value was 0.026 which is < the critical value of 0.05 and so significant. The results are depicted in table 9.

	Turnover among Nursing Employees	Work Decision-Making Process
Pearson Correlation	1	-.138*
Sig. (2-tailed)		.026
N	262	259
Pearson Correlation	-.138*	1
Sig. (2-tailed)	.026	
N	259	259

Table 9: Correlation Analysis between Work Decision-Making Process and Turnover among Nursing Employees at National Referral Hospitals in Kenya

\*. Correlation Is Significant at the 0.05 Level (2-Tailed)

### 3.8. Correlation between Compensation and Turnover among Nursing Employees at National Referral Hospitals in Kenya

Compensation and Turnover among Nursing Employees at National Referral Hospitals in Kenya had a negative and moderate relationship of -.051. The p values were 0.409 which is > the critical value of 0.05 and therefore not significant. The results are depicted in table 10.

	Turnover among Nursing Employees	Compensation
Pearson Correlation	1	.051
Sig. (2-tailed)		.409
N	261	261
Pearson Correlation	.051	1
Sig. (2-tailed)	.409	
N	261	261

Table 10: Correlation analysis between Compensation and Turnover among Nursing Employees at National Referral Hospitals in Kenya

### 39. Correlation between Work Recognition and Turnover among Nursing Employees at National Referral Hospitals in Kenya

Work Recognition and Turnover among Nursing Employees at National Referral Hospitals in Kenya had a negative and moderate relationship of -.058. The p values were 0.354 which is > the critical value of 0.05 and so not significant. The results are depicted in table 11.

	Turnover among Nursing Employees	Work Recognition
Pearson Correlation	1	-.058
Sig. (2-tailed)		.354
N	261	261
Pearson Correlation	-.058	1
Sig. (2-tailed)	.354	
N	261	261

Table 11: Correlation Analysis between Work Recognition and Turnover among Nursing Employees at National Referral Hospitals in Kenya

The model in table 12 before moderation shows R value was 0.315 indicating that there is a positive relationship between turnover of nursing employees at the national referral hospitals in Kenya and professional job autonomy, work-life balance, participation in work decision-making process, compensation and work recognition. The R squared ( $R^2$ ) had a value of .053 showing that 5.3 % of dimensions of job satisfaction (professional job autonomy, work-life balance, participation in work decision-making process, compensation and work recognition) are explained by the model. The remaining 94.7 % is explained by other factors not put into consideration in this study.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.315 <sup>a</sup>	.053	.034	6.73096

Table 12: Regression Model Summary

The results presented in Table 13 on the ANOVA for the overall model, indicate that the model was statistically significant in explaining the effect of the independent variables which are professional job autonomy, work life balance, participation in work decision-making process, compensation and work recognition on turnover of nursing employees at national referral hospitals in Kenya since the p - value is .017<sup>a</sup> which is < 0.05 at 5% level of significance.

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
1	Regression	638.903	5	127.781	2.820	.017 <sup>a</sup>
	Residual	11462.379	253	45.306		
	Total	12101.282	258			

Table 13: ANOVA

a. Predictors: (Constant), v5, v4, v2, v3, v1

b. Dependent Variable: dv

Table 14 results on the beta coefficients show that participation in work decision-making process had -.280 which was negative but significant, while compensation had .275 which was both positive and significant with p values < 0.05. The professional job autonomy variable had a positive but insignificant effect while work-life balance and work recognition also had negative and insignificant effect with p values > 0.05.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		t	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	28.026	1.674	16.745	.000
	v1	.115	.084	1.376	.170
	v2	-.101	.089	-1.135	.258
	v3	-.280	.095	-2.941	.004
	v4	.275	.105	2.627	.009
	v5	-.024	.106	-.231	.817

Table 14: Coefficients

The optimal regression model therefore becomes:

Employee Turnover = 28.026+ .275(Compensation) -.280(Participation in work decision-making process)

#### 4. Conclusions

On the basis of the findings of the study, it can be concluded that job satisfaction greatly influences employee turnover since the independent variables in the study had a significant positive relationship with job satisfaction and job satisfaction had inverse relationship with turnover of nursing employees at national referral hospitals in Kenya. This study has also clearly shown that the two combined independent variables (participation in work decision-making process and compensation) in this study together play a significant role in explaining the dependent variable (turnover among nursing employees). The findings also established that the effect of professional job autonomy, on turnover among nursing employees at national referral hospitals in Kenya was positive and insignificant. The effect of work-life balance, on turnover among nursing employees at national referral hospitals in Kenya was negative and insignificant while the effect of work recognition on turnover among nursing employees at national referral hospitals in Kenya was negative and insignificant. Furthermore, among the independent variables in the study, participation in work decision-making process and compensation contributed negatively but significantly to turnover of nursing employees at national referral hospitals in Kenya. The study concluded that on the basis of the findings, it is imperative that the employer of the nursing employees at national referral hospitals in Kenya, put in place urgently job satisfaction strategy and specifically put more emphasis on participation in work decision-making process and compensation in order to help curtail and/or manage the turnover of the nursing employees more effectively. This will lead to retention for longer of the nursing employees at these hospitals which will help improve on the quality of services the hospitals provide to customers and hence help satisfy them. By so doing, these hospitals will help the ministry of health in the country achieve its healthcare goal which is the provision of quality healthcare for all. This study has contributed to existing empirical literature by contributing to the understanding of the effect of job satisfaction on turnover among nursing employees at national referral hospitals in Kenya and especially in regard to job satisfaction facets (participation in work decision-making process and compensation) and how they help in creating satisfied employees. The study has therefore played a substantial role in offering solutions to this serious human resource problem that is currently affecting provision of quality services in organizations especially national referral hospitals in Kenya.

#### 5. Recommendations for Practice and Policy

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the researcher recommends that human resource managers/ employers at these hospitals need to foster nursing employees' job satisfaction by putting in place a job satisfaction strategy in order to curtail voluntary turnover and /or be able to manage the turnover process more effectively. This will help keep the nursing employees at the hospitals for longer and hence help improve on the quality of products or services these hospitals provide to customers thus satisfying them. It is therefore urgent and critical that these national referral hospitals invest in job satisfaction of their nursing employees by ensuring that they formulate and implement a nursing employees' job satisfaction strategy urgently. Formulation and implementation of a job satisfaction strategy will help these hospitals curtail voluntary turnovers of nursing employees and / or manage the turnover process more effectively. This will go a long way in helping these hospitals to have enough, skilled and stable nursing employees that will help these hospitals deliver quality healthcare. Provision of quality healthcare will contribute to the success of the health sector in the country as these hospitals are at the apex of the public health sector and are hence crucial in helping the country achieve its goal in healthcare which is provision of quality healthcare for all. Furthermore, in the process of fostering and improving job satisfaction at these hospitals, there is need to embrace the job satisfaction facets that this study has found that contribute negatively but significantly to nursing employees' turnover at these hospitals and these are participation in work decision-making process and compensation. Nursing employees should be involved in work decision-making process to make them feel part of the process thus facilitating implementation. There should also be compensation fairness to prevent voluntary turnover of nursing employees.

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