The Impact of Low Retention of Nurses in Long Term Care Facilities: A Quantitative Study

Sherry Tankson

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Louise Underdahl

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# Chapter 1: Introduction

Low retention of Registered Nurses (RN) in Long-Term Care Facilities (LTCF) can be impactful in ways that are not beneficial for the organization (Dent, 2017). The turnover rate of these nurses is causing a higher cost that affects an organization’s ability to provide quality patient care (Barbarotta, 2015). These retention issues are demonstrating a decrease in the facilities’ ability to cover the costs to hire and retain skilled nurses that are needed to manage the unique patient-care demands for this sector of healthcare (Dent, 2017). The costs of turnover can have an immense impact on the LTCFs receding profit margin and needs to be monitored and controlled. Barbarotta (2015) suggests the average cost of turnover for a RN employed at a LTCF ranges from $37,700 to $58,400; resulting in the average facility losing $1.2M – $4.1M annually. Each percent change in RN turnover will cost or save the average LTCF an additional $123,200; if appropriate controls are implemented.

The purpose of this quantitative, correlational research study is to examine the relationships between job satisfaction, pay scale, bonus structure and nurse retention in long term care facility environments. This quantitative study will determine the factors that are related to nurses’ dissatisfaction and gain insight on nurse’s perspectives of strategic plans that the department can implement to retain nurses.

The problem that this research focuses on is that the LTCFs typically have not adopted comprehensive compensation strategies that aligns with a nurse’s interests and motivation to remain employed at the institution (Dent, 2017). This study will contribute to existing research that is typically focused on generalized retention plans for nurses; without consideration of compensation (Kim, Wehbi & Dellifraine, 2014). Moreover, job satisfaction and incentives relate to retention in such a way that compensation given by the LTCFs hold some level of importance. But the retention does not wholly depend upon the compensation but the job satisfaction. Job satisfaction may include the total compensation package instead of focusing on the reward compensation.(Terera & Ngirande, 2014) Total compensation package may include, training and development, promotions coupled with the recognition events to motivate the RNs.

## Background

Researchers in the field of Health Science Administration facilitated a study on RNs to evaluate the level of commitment the participants expressed relative to their current employer; correlated to staff age and gender. Researchers found that 80% of the study participants were female (Asegid, et al., 2014). Furthermore, the findings from this study found 58% of the study participants were under 30 years of age (Kim, et al., 2014). Approximately 28% of this age group was found to be the least likely to express commitment to their current employer (Asegid, et al., 2014). A total of 33.3% of the study participants were married with children and raised in remote areas; with 80% reporting they obtained “non-university” degrees (Kim et al., 2014).

Aforementioned background reveals that the RNs under 30 years of age are most likely to move from the LTCF. This is because when no total compensations are offered to RNs they would prefer to switch.(Sawatzky, Enns, & Legare, 2015) Under 30 years of age RNs and LPNs are more motivated and energetic and when they don’t feel satisfied with their job they move. Job satisfaction is the control factor of retention and compensations are the moderators. If young RNs don’t find what they were motivated to work for they won’t be satisfied which lead to the low retention rate and high turnover rate. In addition, the inability of the LTCFs’ management to predict the future needs of RNs and LPNs will resonate the low retention rate.

## Problem Statement

Thegeneral problem is retention of RNs within Long-Term Care Facilities has decreased an average of 43% between 1999 and 2017 (Kim et al., 2014). As a result of the high turnover rate amongst RN staff, researchers suggest the rate of patient reports of dissatisfaction is also on the rise (Asegid et al., 2014). Furthermore, low retention reduces continuity of care, increases risks of harm to resident patients, and promotes an unstable environment (Kim et al., 2014). Only 35.1% of nurses acknowledged that they were likely to remain at their current employer longer than three years. A study conducted by the 2016 National Health Care Retention and RN staffing reported that the primary motivator of RN retention is related to one’s compensation package. (NSI Nursing Solutions, 2016).

The specific problem is LTCFs typically have not adopted comprehensive compensation strategies that aligns with a nurse’s interests and motivation to remain employed at the institution (Dent, 2017). The disconnect between job satisfaction expressed by RNs; correlated to pay scale, bonus structure and retention of nurses in LTC facilities is evident in the existing literature relating to the topic of employee retention in the healthcare setting (Kim, Wehbi & Dellifraine, 2014). This study will contribute to existing research that is typically focused on generalized retention plans for nurses; without consideration of compensation (Kim, Wehbi & Dellifraine, 2014).

## Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this quantitative, correlational research study is to examine the relationships between job satisfaction, pay scale, bonus structure and nurse retention in long term care facility environments. This quantitative study will determine the factors that are related to nurses’ dissatisfaction and gain insight on nurse’s perspectives of strategic plans that the department can implement to retain nurses.

## Significance of the Study

Understanding the causes of low retention of nurses in LTC facilities will help Health Care Administrators to understand and apply recommendations to improve RN engagement strategies, thus, improving the likelihood of retention (Barbarotta, 2015). According to Asegid et al. (2014), low retention rates are typically a result of many factors, including RN perception of job satisfaction, which entails employee satisfaction with pay scale, bonus sign on, irregular schedules, and large workloads (Barbarotta, 2015).

### Scholarship

Based on the information from this study, RNs can take proactive measures to increase retention rates by implementing incentive programs. These programs will increase awareness and educate nurses on how to enhance their positions with job satisfaction. This information may also be applied towards enhancements with RNs development of new strategies with patient care. Developing career progression initiatives that may also include moving nursing graduates through graduate programs at an accelerated rate. This would allow for them to move on to higher positions with better pay as they are finishing up their continuing education without long delays and allow then to identify options beyond the lower-level roles such as faculty (Kim et al., 2014).

### Practitioner

This research study will contribute to the practitioner within healthcare by offering RNs the ability to practice a higher quality of care. Through extensive training, incentives and better pay, RNs are able to practice at a higher rate due to job satisfaction. Nursing research and practices must continue to develop evidence-based improvements to patient care, and these advancements must be tested, proven and adopted through policy changes within health care systems (Sullivan, 2005). RNs must translate new research findings to the actual practice of their everyday environments that they are working in (Sullivan, 2005). They should also incorporate education into practice and policy (Barbarotta, 2015).

### Leadership

The information that has been gathered from this study will be useful in facilitating strong leadership that will be required to enforce the vision of RN retention within LTCFs. Although the public is not used to viewing nurses as leaders, nurses should be acknowledged as leaders in the implementation and design of advocacy for better patient care and a durable healthcare system that will be needed in LTCF. Additionally, retention of nurses with allow for more leadership positions as well as leadership skills that will be needed to act as partners with physicians in order to redesign and reform within the health care systems (Kim, et al., 2014). Nursing research and practice must continue to identify and develop evidence-based improvements to care, and these improvements must be tested and adopted through policy changes across the health care system. Nursing leaders must translate new research findings to the practice environment and into nursing education and from nursing education into practice and policy (Hairr et al., 2014).

The learnings from this research would provide assistance in future researches in this subject. Moreover, quantitative researches prove to be a great help for students and professionals and this research would be an addition to the literature that is already there. It is important to note that whether it is a qualitative research or a quantitative research, the need for stats is always a must.

## Nature of the Study

This quantitative research method was employed to examine the phenomena that will measure registered nurses’ retention with job satisfaction, pay scale, and bonus structure. Quantitative methods will focus on the objective measurements and the mathematical, statistical, or numerical analysis of data that is gathered through questionnaires, surveys, or by changing existing data. In this quantitative study, validated job satisfaction surveys will be conducted among 120 RNs in 4 different long-term care facilities.  The results will be correlated with the nurse retention rate in these long-term care facilities. The purpose of the questionnaires is to evaluate the relationship between job satisfaction, pay scale, and bonus structure Sullivan (2005). Completing a quantitative study is in alignment with this research because low retention must be measured with job satisfaction, pay scale, and bonus structure (Kim, Wehbi & Dellifraine, 2014).

Qualitative research would not work well for this particular research study because qualitative is mainly exploratory research. It is used to accumulate an understanding of the main reasons, opinions, and motivations (Kim, Wehbi & Dellifraine, 2014). Whereas quantitative research is looking for a measurement of quantity (Barbarotta, 2015). Qualitative research offers insights surrounding the problem as it creates ideas and hypotheses for a possible quantitative research (Barbarotta, 2015). Qualitative Research is also used to reveal thoughts and opinions, as well as to submerge deeper into the problem itself (Kim, Wehbi & Dellifraine, 2014).

Qualitative data collecting methods may vary by using semi-structured techniques if any at all (Kim, Wehbi & Dellifraine, 2014). The sample size is typically small, and respondents are selected to fulfil a given quota. Quantitative requires a larger sample size as more samples will need to be calculated in order to come up with a true evaluation. Quantitative will determine the relationship between RN retention, job satisfaction, pay scale and bonus structure. Qualitative research will not compare these variables (Kim, Wehbi & Dellifraine, 2014).

This study will include a correlation research design because there will be comparisons between the relationships between job satisfaction, pay scale, bonus structure and RN retention (Dent, 2017). The design will begin by gathering and analyzing the quantitative data, which will include determining if there is a correlation between job satisfaction, pay scale, bonus structure and RN retention. In the quantitative phase, 30 nurses from each of four LTCFs will complete a validated job satisfaction survey and their scores will be correlated with long-term care facilities turnover data. The RN retention and job satisfaction results from the questionnaires that will be filled out by 120 nurses at long-term care facilities will gather the perspectives on job satisfaction, pay scale, and bonus structure could possibly increase nurse retention and may further explain the correlation between these variables (Kim et al., 2014).

Experimental design would not work for this study because this design is used to document and measure RNs retention and job satisfaction, pay scale, and bonus structure. Experimental designs allow the research of cause and effect because the researcher manipulates one or more of the variables (Asegid et al., 2014). Experimental design measures whether manipulation influences other variables and also allows the researcher to attempt to control outside factors that may interfere with the outcome of the experiment (Dent, 2017).

Like any other research work, this specific research project will require approval as well. The approval would be taken from Institutional Review Boards (IRB from The University of Phoenix and Memorial Hermann hospital.  The purpose of this process is to protect from harm, attain informed consent, maintain confidentiality, maintain an honest relationship with professional colleagues, and respect their right to privacy (UOPX, 2017). This particular research study will require nurse volunteers to conduct a job satisfaction survey and interview.  Nurses who decide to participate will sign a consent form that will state the intent of the study and the right to withdraw at any time.  The survey and interview process will all be kept confidential at the time of the study and names will not be affiliated with the results.  All participants and professional colleagues will be treated with respect and integrity (Asegid et al., 2014).

Understanding the causes of low retention of nurses in LTC facilities will help Health Care Administrators to understand and apply recommendations to improve RN engagement strategies, thus, improving the likelihood of retention (Barbarotta, 2015). This would not only help the LTCFs to minimize their RNs turnover rate, but also allow them to a large amount of money that they have been spending on their recruited RNs for their professional growth. It is thus an important study in order for the LTCFs to take respective measures to ensure RNs retention, and for the RNs to help them grow professionally and make them more satisfied with their workplace and work.

According to Asegid et al. (2014), low retention rates are typically a result of many factors, including RN perception of job satisfaction, which entails employee satisfaction with pay scale, bonus sign on, irregular schedules, and large workloads (Barbarotta, 2015). It is certain that job satisfaction is one of the most common reasons for the RNs to leave their jobs, however if an LTFC takes the right measure at the right time this problem could be avoided (Asegid et al., 2014). That is what the learnings from this study help the LTCFs with. By first understanding the relationship between job satisfaction, pay scale and retention, the LTCFs would be able to figure out where they are lacking and consequently, they would not have hard time deciding what steps to take to prevent the current retention problems that they are faced with. The upcoming sections of this paper would provide the significance of this study in detail.

## Research Questions, Hypothesis & Objectives

What is the relationship between job satisfaction and RN retention in LTCF?

Ho: There is no relationship between job satisfaction and RN retention.

H1: There is a relationship between job satisfaction and RN retention.

What is the relationship between pay scale and RN retention?

Ho: There is no relationship between pay scale and nurse retention in LTCF.

H1: There is a relationship between pay scale and nurse retention in LTCF.

What impact does bonus has on the retention of nurses?

Ho: Bonus structure has no impact on retention of nurses.

H1: Bonus structure has significant influence on retention of nurses in LTCF.

What is the relationship between incentives and job satisfaction?

Ho: There is no relationship between incentives and job satisfaction.

H1: There is a relationship between incentives and job satisfaction.

Answering the proposed research questions will help achieve the study purpose by revealing quantitative data that will determine if relationship exists between job satisfaction, pay scale, bonus structure and retention of nurses in LTC organizations. Study participants will consist of RNs whom are actively employed, in a full-time capacity at four long-term care facilities with a total of 120 participants within the state of Florida.

Additional criteria for this proposed study include:

* Sample Size: Four Long Term Care Facilities with a total of 120 Participants
* RN Employment Status: Full time, permanent

The research questions would strengthen the suggestions and recommendations that this study would provide for the LTCFs to take care of. Since, the research only takes into consideration the RNs employed at LTCFs that are located within the state of Florida, this research would be prove to be beneficial in future for the researchers who wish to research on RNs and LTCFs located in Florida. To be more specific, this research would enable the researchers to understand about the retention problems that LTCFs in Florida are faced with, along with that they would be able to observe the pattern and trend of the turnover of the RNs within those LTCFs. Furthermore, answering these research questions would make the causes of retention problems clear.

So far as the objectives are concerned then the objective of this particular research are as follows.

* To measure the relationship between job satisfaction, retention, pay structure and bonus structure in nurses working at skilled nurses working facility.
* To administer the quantitative surveys that measure the correlation between job satisfaction, retention, pay scale and bonus structure.
* To establish existing nurse retention rates in LCPs.
* To help the current nursing facilities to develop policies to increase retention of registered nurses RN.

## Conceptual Framework

Nurses often leave their positions as a result of job dissatisfaction, which

leads to a lower quality of patient care and a significant increase in cost for LTCF and other health care organizations (Asegid et al., 2014; Duffield et al., 2014). LTCF can benefit when job satisfaction is positive (Asegid et al., 2014). This study could potentially these facilities save money and increase job satisfaction. A conceptual framework will be used to guide this research study based on job satisfaction as well as the nurse turnover. According to Asegid et al., (2014), to obtain job satisfaction there is a need for both extrinsic and intrinsic factors.

Extrinsic segments are borrowed from the hospital’s working culture such as; working conditions, pay, benefits, and other potential resources. Intrinsic segments such as; achievement bother personal and professional along with a sense of accomplishment are imitative of employees (Asegid et al., 2014). Nurses turnover occurs as are direct product of job dissatisfaction, work environment, and management (Holtom, Mitchell, Lee, &amp; Eberly, 2008). As a working healthcare professional, it is important to identify various strategies that will help to improve overall job satisfaction and nurse turnover within LTCF. Studies have indicated that increasing nurse retention can optimize a higher quality of care for patients and reduce cost for LTCF and other healthcare entities (Hairr et al., 2014).

The following theories will be used in this conceptual model: two-factor theory of management, theory of management and range of affect theory. The two-factor theory will possibly justify motivational blueprints that management can implement to increase job satisfaction. The germinal theory of management, which is also recognized as Fayolism was made known in the 1800s by Henri Fayol (Brunsson, 2008). Fayol’s theory suggested that there were certain functions of management, the main one being “equilibrium” (Brunsson, 2008). The purpose of Edwin A. Locke’s range of affect theory is to calculate satisfaction by examining what an individual would like to have within their job, as well as what an individual already has within their job (Asegid et al., 2014). Frederick Herzberg’s two-factor theory intends to define motivation as well as satisfaction of nurse’s positions (Asegid et al., 2014). The management theory will offer a better understanding on the factors that equate management and equilibrium. Equilibrium in LTCF could help nurses feel satisfied within their positions, which can lead to a significant increase in nurse retention. Finally, the range of affect theory will conceptualize the various factors causing satisfaction and dissatisfaction with nurses. Each of these three theories will be used to conceptualize the correlation design between job satisfaction, pay rate, bonus structure and nurse turnover rates.

## Definition of Terms

Dictionary definition of Long-term care is continued care for a long period of time of elderly or sick people (“Long-term care definition and meaning | Collins English Dictionary”,2019). A long-term care facility is defined as an institute that provides such services. Throughout this paper, long-term care facility is referred to as LTCF.

Registered Nurse is defined as a person who has the qualification to work as a nurse (“Registered nurse definition and meaning | Collins English Dictionary”, 2019). Throughout the course of this paper, the term Registered Nurse is referred to as RN.

Retention of Registered Nurses is referred to as retention of RN, in this paper. It is described to be the ability of LTCF to be able to retain its Registered Nurses.

RNs turnover is another phrase used consistently in this paper. It refers to the rate at which Registered Nurses leave the workforce of LTCF and replaced by new employees ("EMPLOYEE TURNOVER | meaning in the Cambridge English Dictionary", 2019).

## Scope and Delimitations

The study focuses on the registered nurses, who hold nursing qualifications, working in LTCF based in Florida, from an urban area.

Considering that this quantitative research would consider participants from 4 LTCFs for its data collection phase, the scope of this research would be the RNs within the region where the four selected LTCF are located.

The study examines the relationships between job satisfaction, pay scale, bonus structure and nurse retention in long term care facility environments, however they are many other factors such as, individual’s personality, personal issues etc. that will not be considered while carrying out this research.

## Assumptions and Limitations

Major limitation of this quantitative research would be that RNs participating in the survey and interviews may not give out truthful responses, due to lack of attention or time. Therefore, while carrying out the research, it will be assumed that the registered nurses who take part in the survey would answer the survey questions accurately and truthfully. Also, it is assumed that the nurses would answer the interview questions according to their own beliefs and perspective. These responses would be unbiased and independent views of the participants.

It would also be assumed that the responses of 30 participants from each LTCF would represent the views of the majority of RNs.

This research is limited to 4 LTCF with 30 participants from each. The rest of the LTCF would not be considered. This is due to the constraint of time as well as accessibility. Results deduced from the quantitative research would only consider the views and responses from a limited number of LTCFs across the region. It is thereby assumed that all LTCF would have similar responses.

Responses of RNs from one LTCF in one location may vary from that of another location, therefore we have a geographical limitation. This research would only provide result that would be relevant to a single region.

The study is limited to only the registered nurses, who are qualified and have had proper nursing education.

The quantitative research method chosen for this research study is correlational design. Correlational study would only provide the relationship among factors it does not provide a conclusive result. Through this method it cannot be determined which variable influences the other. The results from this study would be assumptions unless until more research is done.

With this research project, the researcher must retain ethical approval from the

Supervisor, organization or institution. This research project will require an IRB approval from The University of Phoenix as well as approval from the long-term care facilities that are being examined.  The purpose of this process is to protect all participants from any potential harm, retain informed consent from all parties, maintain confidentiality, keep an honest relationship with peers, and to respect privacy rights of individuals (UOPX, 2017). This research study will require volunteers of nursing in the long-term care facilities to complete a job satisfaction, pay scale satisfaction, and bonus structure satisfaction survey

## Chapter Summary

Low retention of Registered Nurse’s (RN) in Long-Term Care Facilities (LTCF) can be impactful in ways that are not beneficial for the organization (Dent, 2017). The turnover rate of these nurses is causing a higher cost that affects an organization’s ability to provide quality patient care (Barbarotta, 2015).

The purpose of this quantitative, correlational research study is to examine the relationships between job satisfaction, pay scale, bonus structure and nurse retention in long term care facility environments.

Thegeneral problem is retention of RNs within Long-Term Care Facilities has decreased an average of 43% between 1999 and 2017 (Kim, et al., 2014). As a result of the high turnover rate amongst RN staff, researchers suggest the rate of patient reports of dissatisfaction is also on the rise (Asegid, et al., 2014). The specific problem is, LTCFs typically have not adopted comprehensive compensation strategies that aligns with a nurse’s interests and motivation to remain employed at the institution (Dent, 2017).

Based on the information from this study, RNs can take proactive measures to increase retention rates by implementing incentive programs. These programs will increase awareness and educate nurses on how to enhance their positions with job satisfaction. This research study will contribute to the practitioner within healthcare by offering RNs the ability to practice a higher quality of care. Through extensive training, incentives and better pay, RNs are able to practice at a higher rate due to job satisfaction. The information that has been gathered from this study will be useful in facilitating strong leadership that will be required to enforce the vision of RN retention within LTCFs. Although the public is not used to viewing nurses as leaders, nurses should be acknowledged as leaders in the implementation and design of advocacy for better patient care and a durable healthcare system that will be needed in LTCF.

This study will include a correlation research design because there will be comparisons between the relationships between job satisfaction, pay scale, bonus structure and RN retention (Dent, 2017). Validated job satisfaction surveys will be conducted among 120 RNs in 4 different LTCF.  The results will be correlated with the nurse retention rate in these LTCF. The purpose of the interviews is to get insights on their perspectives regarding the relationship between job satisfaction, pay scale, and bonus structure Sullivan (2005). Completing a quantitative study is in alignment with this research because low retention must be measured with job satisfaction, pay scale, and bonus structure (Kim, Wehbi & Dellifraine, 2014).

# Chapter 2: Literature Review

Many RNs leave their jobs at LTCF due to a lack in job satisfaction. This can lead to a decrease in the quality of care provided to the patients as well as an increase in the total costs of LTCF and other organizations (Asegid et al., 2014; Duffield et al., 2014). According to the American Organization of Nurse Executives (AONE), the recorded rate of RNs turnover in healthcare facilities was 21.3%, in 2002 (American City Business Journals, 2003).

Low retention of RNs in Long-Term Care Facilities (LTCF) can be impactful in ways that are not beneficial for the organization (Dent, 2017). The turnover rate of these nurses is causing a higher cost that affects an organization’s ability to provide quality patient care (Barbarotta, 2015). These retention issues are demonstrating a decrease in the facilities’ ability to cover the costs to hire and retain skilled nurses that are needed to manage the unique patient-care demands for this sector of healthcare (Dent, 2017). The costs of turnover can have an immense impact on the LTCFs receding profit margin and needs to be monitored and controlled. Barbarotta (2015) suggests the average cost of turnover for a RN employed at a LTCF ranges from $37,700 to $58,400; resulting in the average facility losing $1.2M – $4.1M annually. Each percent change in RN turnover will cost or save the average LTCF an additional $123,200; if appropriate controls are implemented.

Increasing the job satisfaction can prove to be very beneficial for the LTCF (Asegid et al., 2014). This study provides potential ways for these organizations to minimize costs and raise the job satisfaction of RNs. The following sections would analyze upon the existing literature in the area of this study and also, would identify how this research stands out and fills a gap in the literature.

## Historical Content

There are many research studies that have been carried out in the past to analyze the causes of turnover of RNs from LTCF. A research study in 2009, analyzed how job stress and job satisfaction play a role in RNs turnover intention (Kovner et al., 2009). The results showed that RNs who were satisfied with their jobs and were certain about their promotions were less likely to leave the job (Kovner et al.,2009). On the other hand, RNs who were uncertain about their promotions and had lesser hope of growing professionally in the current LTCF, were more likely to switch. Unfortunately, the high turnover rate at LTCFs prove that these organizations have been largely ignoring the job satisfaction levels of their employed RNs. There is a need for the LTCFs to understand how important of an issue RNs high turnover is for the organization’s reputation, performance as well as market growth.

Many studies have been conducted in the past that reflect on the factors involved in leading RNs to have job dissatisfaction. According to Hemingway and Smith (1999), as the job stress and workload increases the turnover intentions of RNs increases too. Therefore, also leading to job dissatisfaction, which in turn increases the turnover even further. If an LTCF fails to make its employed RNs satisfied due to any reason such as work environment, overload etc., RNs would inevitably want to switch their jobs. If an organization is able to identify the areas that it lacking in, with respect to its RNs retention, there are higher chances that they would take the right measures at the right time to diminish the problem.

Researchers in the field of Health Science Administration facilitated a study on RNs to evaluate the level of commitment the participants expressed relative to their current employer; correlated to staff age and gender (Asegid, et al., 2014). Researchers found that 80% of the study participants were female (Asegid, et al., 2014). Furthermore, the findings from this study found 58% of the study participants were under 30 years of age (Kim, et al., 2014). Approximately 28% of this age group was found to be the least likely to express commitment to their current employer (Asegid, et al., 2014). A total of 33.3% of the study participants were married with children and raised in remote areas; with 80% reporting they obtained “non-university” degrees (Kim et al., 2014). These stats reflect how widespread the problem of RNs retention in LTCFs as well as other healthcare centers is.

According to a research study by Kim et al., (2014), the retention of RNs within Long-Term Care Facilities has decreased an average of 43% between 1999 and 2017. As a result of the high turnover rate amongst RN staff, researchers suggest the rate of patient reports of dissatisfaction is also on the rise (Asegid et al., 2014). Furthermore, low retention reduces continuity of care, increases risks of harm to resident patients, and promotes an unstable environment (Kim et al., 2014). Only 35.1% of nurses acknowledged that they were likely to remain at their current employer longer than three years. A study conducted by the 2016 National Health Care Retention and RN staffing reported that the primary motivator of RN retention is related to one’s compensation package. (NSI Nursing Solutions, 2016).

A model developed by Gustavsson, Hallsten, and Rudman (2010) was able to identify the characteristics in the profession of nursing that leads to the turnover of RNs in LTCFs. It was found through the model that commonness of the turnover intention of the profession, bad attitude at work and low performance at work leads to an increase in the turnover rate thereby, making it difficult for LTCFs to retain its valued and trained RNs (Gustavsson et al., 2010).

An article provides strategies that health care facilities can opt for in order to tackle the challenge of RNs retention (Hirschkorn et al., 2010). After analyzing over four case studies, suggestions were made. The most important recommendation for the LTCFs was to develop a sustainable leadership to construct and maintain a culture in the organization to support and value its talented and experienced workforce of RNs (Hirschkorn et al., 2010).

We can see that several researches have so far been able to relate job satisfaction, pay scale, bonuses and RN retention (Asegid et al., 2014; Aiken et al., 2002; Al-Hussami et al., 2014; Dewanto, A., & Wardhani, V., 2018). Also, many studies make recommendations to LTCFs based on surveys and case studies to develop strategies for RN retention (Hirschkorn et al., 2010; “Understanding, preventing departures by new RNs”., 2009; Holtom, B. C. & O’Neill, B. S., 2004).

A large number of researches and studies suggest that the relationship between the working environment of RNs, job satisfaction and nursing turnover intention is definite. In organizations where RNs are given incentives to work and where they have clear opportunities ahead to grow themselves, when they are given the right to make decisions and are praised for their achievement, there is a greater chance of RNs staying back at the organization (Buchan & Calman, 2006). According to Tai, Bame, and Robinson (1998), tenure, job satisfaction and supervisor’s behavior are a few among many factors that affect the turnover intentions of RNs. As per the study by Yin and Yang (2002), stress, leadership and opportunities to grow are highly correlated to the turnover rate of RNs in an organization. In his study, Tzeng (2002) figured that lower job satisfaction level stands as the most prevalent reason for RNs to turnover.

Nurses turnover occurs as are direct product of job dissatisfaction, work environment, and management (Holtom, Mitchell, Lee, &amp; Eberly, 2008). As a working healthcare professional, it is important to identify various strategies that will help to improve overall job satisfaction and nurse turnover within LTCF. Studies have indicated that increasing nurse retention can optimize a higher quality of care for patients and reduce cost for LTCF and other healthcare entities (Hairr et al., 2014).

Apart from quantitative researches, several qualitative works such as that of Kleinman & Carol (2004) have identified the concern of RNs retention to be of utmost importance. According to Kleinman & Carol (2004), the relationship of leadership styles and RN retention has been widely studied in the past, however, there is a need to understand how to make leadership behaviors prevalent among RNs. There have been researches in the past that have been able to identify correlations but most of them have been very general in nature (Kleinman, & Carol, S., 2004). There is still a need for more specific study of the correlations in this area.

While it is understandable that the problem of RNs retention that LTCFs face today cannot be completely diminished, however with the correct strategies and techniques the LTCFs can surely make the turnover rate lower.

## Current Content

Low retention of Registered Nurses (RN) in Long-Term Care Facilities (LTCF) can be impactful in ways that are not beneficial for the organization (Dent, 2017). The turnover rate of these nurses is causing a higher cost that affects an organization’s ability to provide quality patient care (Barbarotta, 2015). These retention issues are demonstrating a decrease in the facilities’ ability to cover the costs to hire and retain skilled nurses that are needed to manage the unique patient-care demands for this sector of healthcare (Dent, 2017). The costs of turnover can have an immense impact on the LTCFs receding profit margin and needs to be monitored and controlled. Barbarotta (2015) suggests the average cost of turnover for a RN employed at a LTCF ranges from $37,700 to $58,400; resulting in the average facility losing $1.2M – $4.1M annually. Each percent change in RN turnover will cost or save the average LTCF an additional $123,200; if appropriate controls are implemented.

The purpose of this quantitative, correlational research study is to examine the relationships between job satisfaction, pay scale, bonus structure and nurse retention in long term care facility environments. This quantitative study will determine the factors that are related to nurses’ dissatisfaction and gain insight on nurse’s perspectives of strategic plans that the department can implement to retain nurses.

This research study focuses on first figuring out the relationship between job satisfaction, pay scale, bonus structure and nurse retention in long term care facility environments. Then, it will determine the factors that are related to RNs’ dissatisfaction and gain insight on nurse’s perspectives of strategic plans that the department can implement to retain nurses.

No previous work has been done based on the perceptions of RNs suggesting recommendations to LTCFs to help them make RNs’ retention possible. Also, most of the previous studies focus on hospitals and clinics, while this study brings the LTCFs under the spotlight.

The specific problem is LTCFs typically have not adopted comprehensive compensation strategies that aligns with a nurse’s interests and motivation to remain employed at the institution (Dent, 2017). The disconnect between job satisfaction expressed by RNs; correlated to pay scale, bonus structure and retention of nurses in LTC facilities is evident in the existing literature relating to the topic of employee retention in the healthcare setting (Kim, Wehbi & Dellifraine, 2014). This study will contribute to existing research that is typically focused on generalized retention plans for nurses; without consideration of compensation (Kim, Wehbi & Dellifraine, 2014).

Understanding the causes of low retention of nurses in LTC facilities will help Health Care Administrators to understand and apply recommendations to improve RN engagement strategies, thus, improving the likelihood of retention (Barbarotta, 2015). According to Asegid et al. (2014), low retention rates are typically a result of many factors, including RN perception of job satisfaction, which entails employee satisfaction with pay scale, bonus sign on, irregular schedules, and large workloads (Barbarotta, 2015).

Based on the information from this study, RNs can take proactive measures to increase retention rates by implementing incentive programs. These programs will increase awareness and educate nurses on how to enhance their positions with job satisfaction. This information may also be applied towards enhancements with RNs development of new strategies with patient care. Developing career progression initiatives that may also include moving nursing graduates through graduate programs at an accelerated rate. This would allow for them to move on to higher positions with better pay as they are finishing up their continuing education without long delays and allow then to identify options beyond the lower-level roles such as faculty (Kim et al., 2014).

This research study will contribute to the practitioner within healthcare by offering RNs the ability to practice a higher quality of care. Through extensive training, incentives and better pay, RNs are able to practice at a higher rate due to job satisfaction. Nursing research and practices must continue to develop evidence-based improvements to patient care, and these advancements must be tested, proven and adopted through policy changes within health care systems (Sullivan, 2005). RNs must translate new research findings to the actual practice of their everyday environments that they are working in (Sullivan, 2005). They should also incorporate education into practice and policy (Barbarotta, 2015).

The information that has been gathered from this study will be useful in facilitating strong leadership that will be required to enforce the vision of RN retention within LTCFs. Although the public is not used to viewing nurses as leaders, nurses should be acknowledged as leaders in the implementation and design of advocacy for better patient care and a durable healthcare system that will be needed in LTCF. Additionally, retention of nurses with allow for more leadership positions as well as leadership skills that will be needed to act as partners with physicians in order to redesign and reform within the health care systems (Kim et al., 2014). Nursing research and practice must continue to identify and develop evidence-based improvements to care, and these improvements must be tested and adopted through policy changes across the health care system. Nursing leaders must translate new research findings to the practice environment and into nursing education and from nursing education into practice and policy (Hairr et al., 2014).

The study would help understand the causes of low retention of nurses in Long-term Care Facilities and this will prove to be beneficial for the Healthcare Administrators to apply recommendations to improve the engagement strategies of registered nurses, thus, improving the likelihood of retention (Barbarotta, 2015). According to Asegid, et al. (2014), low retention rates are typically a result of many factors, including RN perception of job satisfaction, which entails employee satisfaction with pay scale, bonus sign on, irregular schedules, and large workloads (Barbarotta, 2015).

The research questions for this study are as follows:

* What is the relationship between job satisfaction and RN retention in LTCF?
* What is the relationship between pay scale and RN retention?

Answering the proposed research questions will help achieve the study purpose by revealing quantitative data that will determine if relationship exists between job satisfaction, pay scale, bonus structure and retention of nurses in LTC organizations. Study participants will consist of RNs whom are actively employed, in a full-time capacity at four long-term care facilities with a total of 120 participants within the state of Florida.

The research questions would strengthen the suggestions and recommendations that this study would provide for the LTCFs to take care of. Since, the research only takes into consideration the RNs employed at LTCFs that are located within the state of Florida, this research would be prove to be beneficial in future for the researchers who wish to research on RNs and LTCFs located in Florida. To be more specific, this research would enable the researchers to understand about the retention problems that LTCFs in Florida are faced with, along with that they would be able to observe the pattern and trend of the turnover of the RNs within those LTCFs. Furthermore, answering these research questions would make the causes of retention problems clear.

It has been observed in the previous section that most of the researches carried out in the past were quite general in nature for example, they were either not covering a particular geographic region or they considered all RNs ignoring the healthcare environment or facility that they were employed at. This research study, however, focuses entirely on the RNs who are working fulltime and are permanent (not on probation period), and are working in the LTCFs located only in the state of Florida. It is highly understandable that people belonging from one region have different problems and concerns than those belonging from a different region. Likewise, problems that LTCFs located in Florida are face with may be quite different. Therefore, this research is more specific in nature and targets the RNs retention problem faced by LTCFs located within the state of Florida.

## Conceptual Framework Literature

Nurses often leave their positions as a result of job dissatisfaction, which leads to a lower quality of patient care and a significant increase in cost for LTCF and other health care organizations (Asegid et al., 2014; Duffield et al., 2014). While, job dissatisfaction of RNs is certainly not the only cause of an increase in the turnover rate but it is for sure one of the most common and important issue that is faced by the LTCFs today. LTCF can benefit when job satisfaction is positive (Asegid et al., 2014). This study could potentially these facilities save money and increase job satisfaction. A conceptual framework will be used to guide this research study based on job satisfaction as well as the nurse turnover. According to Asegid et al., (2014), to obtain job satisfaction there is a need for both extrinsic and intrinsic factors.

Extrinsic segments are borrowed from the hospital’s working culture such as; working conditions, pay, benefits, and other potential resources. Intrinsic segments such as; achievement both personal and professional along with a sense of accomplishment are imitative of employees (Asegid et al., 2014). Nurses turnover occurs as are direct product of job dissatisfaction, work environment, and management (Holtom, Mitchell, Lee, & Eberly, 2008). As a working healthcare professional, it is important to identify various strategies that will help to improve overall job satisfaction and nurse turnover within LTCF. Studies have indicated that increasing nurse retention can optimize a higher quality of care for patients and reduce cost for LTCF and other healthcare entities, therefore, also increasing the rate at which the LTCF grows economically (Hairr et al., 2014). With a lot of options for patients today, it is important for LTCFs to maintain its reputation in the region in order to make its growth inevitable. Naturally, health is a matter that nobody compromises on and if an LTCF is not able to provide quality treatment and care to its patients, that stands as a great threat to its existence, and therefore to the RNs and other staff employed there (Holtom et al., 2008).

The following theories will be used in this conceptual model: two-factor theory of management, theory of management and range of affect theory. The two-factor theory will possibly justify motivational blueprints that management can implement to increase job satisfaction. The germinal theory of management, which is also recognized as Fayolism was made known in the 1800s by Henri Fayol (Brunsson, 2008). Fayol’s theory suggested that there were certain functions of management, the main one being “equilibrium” (Brunsson, 2008). The purpose of Edwin A. Locke’s range of affect theory is to calculate satisfaction by examining what an individual would like to have within their job, as well as what an individual already has within their job (Asegid et al., 2014). Frederick Herzberg’s two-factor theory intends to define motivation as well as satisfaction of RNs’ positions (Asegid et al., 2014). The management theory will offer a better understanding on the factors that equate management and equilibrium. Equilibrium in LTCF could help nurses feel satisfied within their positions, which can lead to a significant increase in nurse retention, since job dissatisfaction, according to majority of studies, stands as the most significant reason for RNs turnover. Finally, the range of affect theory will conceptualize the various factors causing satisfaction and dissatisfaction with nurses. Each of these three theories will be used to conceptualize the correlation design between job satisfaction, pay rate, bonus structure and nurse turnover rates.

The study focuses on the registered nurses, who hold nursing qualifications, working in LTCF based in Florida, from an urban area. Considering that this quantitative research would consider participants from 4 LTCFs for its data collection phase, the scope of this research would be the RNs within the region where the four selected LTCF are located. The study examines the relationships between job satisfaction, pay scale, bonus structure and nurse retention in long term care facility environments, however they are many other factors such as, individual’s personality, personal issues etc. that will not be considered while carrying out this research.

## Methodology and Research Design Literature

The quantitative research method would be employed to examine the phenomena that will measure RN retention with job satisfaction, pay scale, and bonus structure. Quantitative methods will focus on the objective measurements and the mathematical, statistical, or numerical analysis of data that is gathered through questionnaires, surveys, or by changing existing data. In this quantitative study, validated job satisfaction surveys will be conducted among 120 RNs in 4 different LTCF.  The results will be correlated with the nurse retention rate in these LTCF. The purpose of the interviews is to get insights on their perspectives regarding the relationship between job satisfaction, pay scale, and bonus structure Sullivan (2005). Completing a quantitative study is in alignment with this research because low retention must be measured with job satisfaction, pay scale, and bonus structure (Kim, Wehbi & Dellifraine, 2014).

Qualitative Research would not work well for this particular research study because qualitative is mainly exploratory research. It is used to accumulate an understanding of the main reasons, opinions, and motivations (Kim, Wehbi & Dellifraine, 2014). Whereas quantitative research is looking for a measurement of quantity (Barbarotta, 2015). Qualitative research offers insights surrounding the problem as it creates ideas and hypotheses for a possible quantitative research (Barbarotta, 2015). Qualitative Research is also used to reveal thoughts and opinions, as well as to submerge deeper into the problem itself (Kim, Wehbi & Dellifraine, 2014).

Qualitative data collecting methods may vary by using semi-structured techniques if any at all (Kim, Wehbi & Dellifraine, 2014). The sample size is typically small, and respondents are selected to fulfil a given quota. Quantitative requires a larger sample size as more samples will need to be calculated in order to come up with a true evaluation. Quantitative will determine the relationship between RN retention, job satisfaction, pay scale and bonus structure. Qualitative research will not compare these variables (Kim, Wehbi & Dellifraine, 2014).

This study will opt for a correlation research design mainly because there would be comparisons amongst the relationships between job satisfaction, pay scale, bonus structure and RN retention (Dent, 2017).

The design phase will begin by gathering and analyzing the quantitative data, which will include determining if there is a correlation between job satisfaction, pay scale, bonus structure and RN retention. In the quantitative phase, 30 nurses will complete a validated job satisfaction survey and their scores will be correlated with long-term care facilities turnover data. The RN retention and job satisfaction results from the informal interviews that will be conducted on 30 nurses at long-term care facilities will gather the perspectives on job satisfaction, pay scale, and bonus structure could possibly increase nurse retention and may further explain the correlation between these variables (Kim, et al., 2014).

A research by Escarze et al., (2015), used a cross-sectional correlational design to analyze the retention intentions of RNs. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between job satisfaction of RNs and their retention intentions.

Whenever relationships need to be identified researchers have been implementing correlational design in their studies (Atanes, et al., 2015; Escarze et al., 2015). It can be inferred that research studies involving examination of relationships between several factors can be done using the correlational design. Such a design enables us to figure out whether a relationship between two factors exists or not.

In this quantitative study, validated job satisfaction surveys will be conducted among 120 RNs in 4 different LTCFs.  The results will be correlated with the nurse retention rate in these LTCFs. The purpose of the survey is to get insights on their perspectives regarding the relationship between job satisfaction, pay scale, and bonus structure Sullivan (2005). Completing a quantitative study is in alignment with this research because low retention must be measured with job satisfaction, pay scale, and bonus structure in order to make sure if a relationship exists or not (Kim, Wehbi & Dellifraine, 2014). Before moving ahead and making recommendations, it is important to be sure about the existence and strength of the correlation between the chosen variable.

In the quantitative phase, 30 nurses from each LTCF will complete a validated job satisfaction survey and their scores will be correlated with LTCF turnover data. The RN retention and job satisfaction results from the informal interviews that will be conducted on 30 nurses at each LTCF will gather the perspectives on job satisfaction, pay scale, and bonus structure could possibly increase nurse retention and may further explain the correlation between these variables (Kim et al., 2014).

A study showed that most popularly chosen research method amongst the graduates is a quantitative approach, the students believed that there were more chances of getting their degrees on time if they opted for a quantitative study (Fan-Ko et al., 2018). The results of this study support the idea proposed by many other studies concluding that roughly 80% of the nursing research that has been carried out so far had used quantitative method (Lin and Lu et al., 2007; Shiau et al., 2003; Wang et al., 2014).

According to Fan-Ko et al. (2018), the postgraduate students can get hold of a lot of quantitative support via the articles and they wish to have their degree completed using the help of quantitative researchers’ supervision.

Availability of a lot of literature for quantitative studies results in influencing the students to choose their research methods. Furthermore, a study done by Hsu (2009) suggested that according to the majority of researchers, quantitative research is much easier to perform as compared to qualitative research and it takes less time to complete because of the use of statistical analysis and arithmetic methods in quantitative researches that can conveniently be performed using several easily available computer applications.

According to the study by Fan-ko et al., (2018), the perception of majority of the participants was that performing a quantitative research was convenient as it took less time to complete and the researcher has the benefit of using computer programs, so it is easier too. On the other hand, qualitative research required deep analysis and that is only possible if enough time is dedicated to it (Fan-ko et al., 2018). This research supports the results of several other researches such as study by Duh (1998), Hsu (2009) and Liao (2015), and clarifies that quantitative researches are best used when relationships need to be found and defined between different variables using the data that is available. Results from quantitative researches and studies are empirical and that can come into use by others.

In this research, quantitative approach seemed like the best option mainly because there is a need to test and analyze the relationship between job satisfaction of RNs and RNs retention. Another relationship that we are going to look deeply into is between RNs pay-scale and RNs retention. This can be done using statistical inference and of course, relevant data. That is certainly not possible using the qualitative method. According to Hsu (2009), many students opt for quantitative research because they do not know how qualitative research method is performed. However, in this case it was certain that qualitative method would not work. Also, the results of this research would help people in this field for future studies and researches.

Experimental design would not work for this study because this design is used to document and measure RNs retention and job satisfaction, pay scale, and bonus structure. Experimental designs allow the research of cause and effect because the researcher manipulates one or more of the variables (Asegid et al., 2014). Experimental design measures whether manipulation influences other variables and also allows the researcher to attempt to control outside factors that may interfere with the outcome of the experiment (Dent, 2017).

## Conclusion

This research study is quantitative in nature and would implement correlational design to examine the relationships between job satisfaction, pay scale, bonus structure and nurse retention in long term care facility environments.

Basing this research on previous literature, and building upon it, the research aims on suggesting useful recommendations to the LTCFs to retain its RNs.

Data collection phase would consist of surveys and interviews of RNs from four different LTCFs. The research is based upon the following research questions:

* What is the relationship between job satisfaction and RN retention in LTCF?
* What is the relationship between pay scale and RN retention?

Answering the proposed research questions will help achieve the study purpose by revealing quantitative data that will determine if relationship exists between job satisfaction, pay scale, bonus structure and retention of nurses in LTC organizations. This quantitative study will determine the factors that are related to nurses’ dissatisfaction and gain insight on nurse’s perspectives of strategic plans that the department can implement to retain nurses.

Low retention of Registered Nurses (RN) in Long-Term Care Facilities (LTCF) can be impactful in ways that are not beneficial for the organization (Dent, 2017). The turnover rate of these nurses is causing a higher cost that affects an organization’s ability to provide quality patient care (Barbarotta, 2015). These retention issues are demonstrating a decrease in the facilities’ ability to cover the costs to hire and retain skilled nurses that are needed to manage the unique patient-care demands for this sector of healthcare (Dent, 2017). The costs of turnover can have an immense impact on the LTCFs receding profit margin and needs to be monitored and controlled. Barbarotta (2015) suggests the average cost of turnover for a RN employed at a LTCF ranges from $37,700 to $58,400; resulting in the average facility losing $1.2M – $4.1M annually. Each percent change in RN turnover will cost or save the average LTCF an additional $123,200; if appropriate controls are implemented. One of the reasons for economical loss to the LTCFs caused due to high RNs turnover is that the hired RNs are trained during their job. More experienced and better trained the RNs would lead the LTCF to provide quality services to its patients. The cost of training the RNs goes to loss if they leave the job.

The purpose of this quantitative, correlational research study is to examine the relationships between job satisfaction, pay scale, bonus structure and nurse retention in long term care facility environments. This quantitative study will determine the factors that are related to nurses’ dissatisfaction and gain insight on nurse’s perspectives of strategic plans that the department can implement to retain nurses.

The information that would be gathered from this study will be useful in facilitating strong leadership that will be required to enforce the vision of RN retention within LTCFs. Although the public is not used to viewing nurses as leaders, nurses should be acknowledged as leaders in the implementation and design of advocacy for better patient care and a durable healthcare system that will be needed in LTCF. Moreover, this would lead the RNs to be more satisfied with their jobs and would develop in them the devotion for their work as well as the LTCF. If an LTCF is able to promise RNs a bright career with growth, it would have a positive impact on the retention of RNs and LTCF would be able to retain its trained and experienced RNs. Additionally, retention of nurses will allow for more leadership positions as well as leadership skills that will be needed to act as partners with physicians in order to redesign and reform within the health care systems (Kim et al., 2014). Nursing research and practice must continue to identify and develop evidence-based improvements to care, and these improvements must be tested and adopted through policy changes across the health care system. Nursing leaders must translate new research findings to the practice environment and into nursing education and from nursing education into practice and policy (Hairr et al., 2014).

The study would help understand the causes of low retention of nurses in Long-term Care Facilities and this will prove to be beneficial for the Healthcare Administrators to apply recommendations to improve the engagement strategies of registered nurses, thus, improving the likelihood of retention (Barbarotta, 2015). According to Asegid, et al. (2014), low retention rates are typically a result of many factors, including RN perception of job satisfaction, which entails employee satisfaction with pay scale, bonus sign on, irregular schedules, and large workloads (Barbarotta, 2015).

## Chapter Summary

There are many research studies that have been carried out in the past to analyze the causes of turnover of RNs from LTCF. A research study in 2009, analyzed how job stress and job satisfaction play a role in RNs turnover intention (Kovner et al., 2009). The results showed that RNs who were satisfied with their jobs and were certain about their promotions were less likely to leave the job (Kovner et al.,2009).

Many studies have been conducted in the past that reflect on the factors involved in leading RNs to have job dissatisfaction. According to Hemingway and Smith (1999), as the job stress and workload increases the turnover intentions of RNs increases too. Therefore, also leading to job dissatisfaction.

The following theories will be used in this conceptual model: two-factor theory of management, theory of management and range of affect theory. The two-factor theory will possibly justify motivational blueprints that management can implement to increase job satisfaction. The germinal theory of management, which is also recognized as Fayolism was made known in the 1800s by Henri Fayol (Brunsson, 2008). Fayol’s theory suggested that there were certain functions of management, the main one being “equilibrium” (Brunsson, 2008). The purpose of Edwin A. Locke’s range of affect theory is to calculate satisfaction by examining what an individual would like to have within their job, as well as what an individual already has within their job (Asegid et al., 2014). Frederick Herzberg’s two-factor theory intends to define motivation as well as satisfaction of RNs’ positions (Asegid et al., 2014). The management theory will offer a better understanding on the factors that equate management and equilibrium. Equilibrium in LTCF could help nurses feel satisfied within their positions, which can lead to a significant increase in nurse retention. Finally, the range of affect theory will conceptualize the various factors causing satisfaction and dissatisfaction with nurses. Each of these three theories will be used to conceptualize the correlation design between job satisfaction, pay rate, bonus structure and nurse turnover rates.

This research study focuses on first figuring out the relationship between job satisfaction, pay scale, bonus structure and nurse retention in long term care facility environments. Then, it will determine the factors that are related to RNs’ dissatisfaction and gain insight on nurse’s perspectives of strategic plans that the department can implement to retain nurses.

This research study is quantitative in nature and would implement correlational design to examine the relationships between job satisfaction, pay scale, bonus structure and nurse retention in long term care facility environments.

The findings of this study will be useful in facilitating strong leadership that will be required to enforce the vision of RN retention within LTCFs. Although the public is not used to viewing nurses as leaders, nurses should be acknowledged as leaders in the implementation and design of advocacy for better patient care and a durable healthcare system that will be needed in LTCF. Additionally, retention of nurses with allow for more leadership positions as well as leadership skills that will be needed to act as partners with physicians in order to redesign and reform within the health care systems (Kim et al., 2014).

# Chapter 3: Research Methodology

Research methodology is a way to solve the research problem systematically. The study of how research is done scientifically can be understood as a science. In this examination of the different steps a researcher usually takes to study his research problem with the logic behind it is done. The researcher needs to learn not only the research methods, but also the methodology.

In addition to the knowledge to develop certain indicators or tests, researchers need to understand which of these of methods or techniques are and which are not are relevant and what they mean, what are the median or standard deviation or chi-square, also how specific techniques of study are to be applied.(Yarbrough, Martin, Alfred, & McNeill, 2017) Researchers must also fully understand the assumptions behind various methods and must understand the criteria by which they can decide that certain techniques and procedures are applicable to certain problems and that others are not applicable.

All of this implies that the researcher has to develop his approach to his problem as it can differ from dilemma to dilemma. Similarly, before the decisions in research are implemented, the scientist must present the research decisions for evaluation. He must clearly and precisely indicate which decisions he or she chooses and why he or she chooses so that others can assess them. We can say from the above that research methodology has many dimensions and research methods are part of research methodology.

Research methodologies have a broader scope than research methods. So when talking about research methodology, we don't just speak of the research methods, but consider the logic behind the methods used in our research study, and why we use a particular method or technique, and why we don't use other methods so that the findings are evaluated either by the researcher or by others.

What is the reason for the research study, how the research problem has been identified, how and why the hypothesis was formulated, what data was collected was and what specific method was adopted, why particular data analysis techniques were used and why numerous other similar issues are normally addressed when we speak of the research methodology for a research study or problem. The following sections will best reflect the resarch methodlogy for this particular research study.

## Research Design

In this particular research, quantitative research method has been used to carry out research in the form of correlative and cross-sectional research design. The reason why the research spins around quantitative methods is that it appears more appropriate while explring the ifluence of retention coupled with incentives (Bonus structure + Pay scale) on job satisfaction of the nurses working in LTCF. The research design would evaluate the relationship between the variable which are not controlled and without any intervention. The research would provide a predictive model for LTCF to look into the flaws and correct them.

The quantitaive design does not look for cause and effect and this attribute would make this particular reserach more observational in terms of data collection. Quantitative research approach is used because the results of this research will prove or disprove hypothesis. Statistical analysis would provide a comprehensive result which can be discussed legitimately. This reserach design would filter external factors, if any, and the final results will be real and unbiased.

## Sample and Population

In this quantitative study, the sample size has been determined using the Cochran’s sample size formula. A validated job satisfaction surveys will be conducted among 120 RNs in 4 different LTCFs. There is no gender specification i.e. the population for this particular research consists of both male and female RNs. The results will be correlated with the nurse retention rate in these LTCFs. The purpose of the interviews is to evaluate the relationship between job satisfaction, pay scale, and bonus structure Sullivan (2005). Completing a quantitative study is in alignment with this research because low retention must be measured with job satisfaction, pay scale, and bonus structure (Kim, Wehbi & Dellifraine, 2014).

In the quantitative phase, 30 nurses from each LTCF will complete a validated job satisfaction survey and their scores will be correlated with LTCF turnover data. The RN retention and job satisfaction results from the informal interviews that will be conducted on 30 nurses at each LTCF will gather the perspectives on job satisfaction, pay scale, and bonus structure could possibly increase nurse retention and may further explain the correlation between these variables (Kim et al., 2014).

The research model to correlate between job satisfaction, retention and incentives (Bonus structure + Pay scale) is as follows.

Y= a+b1X1 + b2X2

The parameters used are following.

Y= Incentives (Bonus structure + Pay scale)

a= intercept

X1= Retention variable

X2= Job Satisfaction

b1= Slope of X1

b2= Slope of X2

### Population inclusion criteria

Population inclusion criteria will depend on the following.

* Only the nurses will be included who have had experience of more than 1 year.
* Nurses with experience only in LTCF will be included.
* No age restriction on the recruitment of the nurses.
* The nurses who carry out administrative work as well will be included.
* Nurses from both of the sexes will be included.
* Nurses who are proficient in speaking English will be included in the study.

### Population exclusion criteria

* No graduate nurse will be included
* Nurses who are serving their probation periods will be excluded.
* Nurses, who are under training will be excluded from the study.
* Nurse, who have not had 1 year of experience in LTCF will be excluded.

## Procedures

Procedures to carry out research are the most critical steps in any research. So far as this particular study is concerned, it procedures delinestes the following.

### Selection of LTCF

The initial step to be taken is the selection of LTCFs from where the populaton will be recruited. The most important thing to start with for sample collection is the identification of LTCFs which are facing issues in the nurses retentation rate and bearing higher cost due to the turnover rate of these nurses.

This step will be followed by the criteria and procedure set by respective LTCF for the recruitment of RNs. Their criteria for offering job to nurses coupled with thier rules and regulations and the incentives they offer to their RNs would help in sampling of the poulation for this particular research.

After identificaton of LTCFs their respective head will contcted and briefed about the research and it purposes. The most effective way to present them with research proposal and ask them to go through it. Following their comprehension regarding the research propoal an oficial letter would be requested to seek their permission for the recruitment of population from their organization.

### Identification of Nurses for Research

Following the selection of the LTCF, and permission from their respective heads, their HR departments will be contacted and briefed about the research and its importance. HR departments of the respectve LTCFs will be requested to share the details of the RNs working there and following the details population will be marked according to inclusion and exclusion criteria.

If, in case following the details no participant satisfy the inclusion criteria, then respective LTCF will be excluded from the research.

Following the marking of participants according to the inclusion and exclusion criteria a form will be provided to HR department. The form is actually termed as inform consent form. Informed consent form is actually the document that must be duly signed by the participants prior to their participation in the survey.(Chu, Wodchis, & McGilton, 2014) The information which must be delineated by the informed consent form is following.

* Name and purpose of research
* Statement aroun which the whole of research revolves.
* Time period of the research.
* What proceures will be adopted by the researcher while carrying out the resarch.
* What benefeits, if any, this research offers to the participants or others.
* There will be no breach of information of the participants taking part in the research.
* No offensive information will be required while carrying out the research.
* An undertaking statement which must narrate that the participation voluntary and following the participation candidate would be bound to provide all the information deemed necessary for the research.
* Contact information for answering the queriesof the participants regarding the research.

The HR will be requested to send E-mail to all the RNs qualifying the incluion criteria with the informed consent form attached. The duly signed form by the nurses will be collected by the HR department of the respective LTCF and then will be received by us. This step would benefit in two ways, firstly; it would identify the RNs for the research, and secodly; it would recruit the nurses for research. For only those nurses will be provided with questionare who will sign the form and all other nurses will be excluded. No matter if they are satisfying inclusion criteria. Consent of nurses is deemed inevitable for the research which will be received the forms duly signed by them.

The most important thing for above procedural steps is the timeline. A timeline will be set for all the above process i.e the distribution of forms, their signing by the participants interested to beconepart of the research and collection of forms, all will be done in a specific time domain. HR will be responsible to communicate the timeline for above process while E-mailing the informed consent forms and general information concerning research to the candidates.

In case if the consent given by the candidates is not complying with the required number of nurses i.e. less than thirty candidates showed their interest to be a part of the research then HR will be contacted again to have a follow from the candidates.

## Measurements

Following the recruitment of the participants of the research meaurements will be taken to further the research process. For the measurements, a standard quetionare will be used for taking measurements. A questionare will contain questions to seek appropriate information for data analysis. The study will by computed by four variables and the four variables will include the following.

* Biographical questionare: This questionare will fetch the information about the background, interests and plans of the participant.
* Compensation and reward questioare: This questionare will tend to collect information regarding the incentives (Bonus structure + Pay scale) being offered by the LTCF to RNs, and what is their opinion regarding the incentives (Bonus structure + Pay scale).
* Minnesota satisfaction questionare: Short form of Minnesota satisfaction questionare will be used in order to measure the satisfaction of nurses with their job.
* Intention to leave questionare: This questionare will focus on the retention of the employ i.e. how long he/she would work in the respective LTCF and what factors would motivate them to leave that LTCF.

Compensation and reward practices will be measured using a 6-items meausre and response to each measure will be related using a 5-point Likert scale with anchors labelled: 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= neither agree nor disagree, 4= agree, 5= strongly agree.

The questionare will beself administered,following the permission from HR head of the respective LTCF to hand over the questionnaires.(Terera & Ngirande, 2014) The questionnaires will be distributed by the HR officials. In order to facilitate a good response rate a timeline will be set for the collection of the questionnaires. Confidentiality of the information will be stressed to the HR department of the respective LTCF.

## Data Analysis

Following the measurement of the data taken, analysis of the taken will be carried out. Descriptive statistics will be used to carry describe the data in summary form. As mentioned above, the research is designed to draw correlation between the job satisfaction, retention and incentives (Bonus structure + Pay scale). Following such a design and measurements, data would be correlated to deduce result. The results born by the data analysis woul reveal whether the variables are related to eachother or not. Using the Questionnaires correlation between each variable under consideration would be calculated.

The formula used to draw the relation between two variables will be *Pearson’s Correlation Coefficient i.e.*

Where,

N = number of pair or scores

∑XY = sum of products of paired scores

∑X= sum of Xscores

∑Y = sum of Y scores

∑X2 = sum of squared X scores

∑Y2 = sum of squared Y scores

Following the input of the values, *Pearson’s Correlation Coefficient* will calculate the value of , which is correlation coefficient that would range from -1 to +1. If the value is near to -1, it would reveal that the relation between Y and X is weak and if the value Pearson’s Correlation Coefficient is inclined towards +1 then relationship between Y and X is strong.

The Pearson’s Correlation Coeficient would be used twice i.e. to find out strength of relationship between independent variable Y (Incentive- Bonus structure + Pay scale) and dependent vairables ( Retention) and ( Job satisfaction) which are X1 and X2  respectively.(Terera & Ngirande, 2014)

Prior using *Pearson’s Correlation Coefficient* , Questionnaires reeived from the participants would be organized. Summing up the data collected would help to get values of the variables which further can be used in the *Pearson’s Correlation Coefficient formula.* Results obtained following the application of *Pearson’s Correlation Coefficient formula* would exemplify the relationship between job satisfaction, retention, incentives (Bonus structure + Pay scale).

Another method could also be used in the data analysis of the reserach and that is the evaluation of independence of the variables. Chi-square test exhibits the null hypothesis that there is no relationship between the variables in the population. The calculation of the Chi-square is as follows.

X2= ∑[ ( fo­ – fe )2/ fe ]

Where,

fo = frequency observed

fe = frequency expected, if there is no relationship between the variables.

The formula of the Chi-square test concludes that this test hinges upon the difference between observred relation data and expected outcome if the variable exhibit no relationship between eachother. Chi-square test will be performed by cross-tabulation of the variables.(Terera & Ngirande, 2014) The cross tabulation of data will exhibit the association between the variable i.e. job satisfaction and incentives, retention and incentives and job satisfaction and retention.

## Ethical Issues

Ethical Issues are bone of contention while carrying out research in social sciences. So far as this particular research is concerned, then yes! Ethical issues are invlolved and addressing those ethical issues the research delineates the following steps.

* Ethical approval must be sought prior to the research through informed consent form.
* Confidentiality of the participats involved in the research must be retained.
* Questionnaires must not be disclosed to anyone but the researcher.
* Answers of the Questionnaires of the participants must not be disclosed to anyone, not even the HR of the respective LTCF.
* No two participants must be allowed to consult while filling their Questionnaires.
* Data of all the participants must be kept safe in a computer hard-drive with a folder lock with password.
* Only researcher will have the access to the data of all participants.
* Data must be deleted following the set timeline for which the data had to be stored. A time of line of 3 years will be set for data storage.
* A backup must be created if,in case the data from the primary file gets deleted. Backup file too, must be secured with password protection and accessible by the researcher only.
* There must not be exploitation of participant’s data by anyone especially research.
* Help of legal advisor must be sought in case of any breach in participant’s data by anyone.
* Participant’s must be allowed to come up with their reservations concerning their personal data, and reservations must be addressed follwing any reservation.
* Only the data which does not raise any offence against the participants could be shared or disclosed. That too, following the proper the investigation i.e. why and how data will be used.

## Conclusion and Reccomendations

The research will focus on the retention of RNs in LTCFs and the level of their job satisfaction. Both of the above two parameters will be seperately be influenced by the incentives (Bonus structure + Pay scale). Following the results it can be deduced that retention of the RNs in LTCFs is very much dependent upon the incentives (Bonus strucure + Pay scale) and job satisfaction.(Han, Trinkoff, & Gurses, 2015) This signifies the importance of compensation given by the LTCFs to RNs for deciding their future with LTCF. Biographical Questionnaire will signify that RNs would consider their happiness while making the decesion concerning their future with LTCFs.

Following the results of the research would the management of LTCFs to work on a retain strategy. The retain strategy developed by the management following the results of the research has to focus on the job satisfactiono of the RNs coupled with the incentives given to them. The reseach would help the management of LTCFs to come up with incentive structure which is lucrative enough to retain the RNs in the LTCFs. In case any RN resigns, exit interviews must be conducted, this exit strategy would help orgaization to shape effective retetion strategy.(Barry, 2005)

Job satisfaction is the key factor for retention of RNs. Its not incentives which ensure job satisfaction completely but some other factors as well. The study would help organization to identify and incorporate those factors in the retention strategy.(Lartey, Cummings, & Profetto‐McGrath, 2014) At last the future research on the subject matter must aim to study the effect of other factors on the retention of RNs of LTCFs. The othe factors could be, prmotion of RNs, development opportunities provided by LTCFs to RNs etc.

## Chapter Summary

The purpose of this quantitative, correlational research study is to examine the relationships between job satisfaction, pay scale, bonus structure and nurse retention in long term care facility environments. This quantitative study will determine the factors that are related to nurses’ dissatisfaction and gain insight on nurse’s perspectives of strategic plans that the department can implement to retain nurses.

Research questions for this quantitative study are:

1. What is the relationship between job satisfaction and RN retention in LTCF?
2. What is the relationship between pay scale and RN retention?

This research project will require an IRB approval from The University of Phoenix as well as approval from the long-term care facilities that are being examined.  The purpose of this process is to protect all participants from any potential harm, retain informed consent from all parties, maintain confidentiality, keep an honest relationship with peers, and to respect privacy rights of individuals (UOPX, 2017).

This quantitative research method has been employed to examine the phenomena that will measure registered nurses’ retention with job satisfaction, pay scale, and bonus structure. In this quantitative study, validated job satisfaction surveys will be conducted among 120 RNs in 4 different long-term care facilities.  The results will be correlated with the nurse retention rate in these long-term care facilities with the help of questionnaires. A questionnaire consists of a number of questions printed or typed in a definite order on a form or set of forms. The questionnaires aim to gain insight into their views on the relationship between work satisfaction, payroll scale and bonus structure (Sullivan, 2005). Before it could be used, the questionnaire would be scrutinized by experts who would give their critical opinion of it. Any technical defects in the questionnaire would also be highlighted. Pilot test will be conducted as it helps to identify and resolve any issues that may cause problem such as length of questions, the phrases and words used in the questions, their sequence and if the questionnaire takes too long to complete.

To find out the correlation between two variables, *Pearson’s Correlation Coefficient* would be used. The Pearson’s Coffecient Formula gives you a value *r* (correlation coefficient) that ranges from -1 to +1. Before the Pearson’s Coefficient Formula could be used the scores obtained from the questionnaires would be organized and summed up in a way that we get values for each of the variable in the equation. These values for r for each relationship would then be used to discuss the existence or deexistence of relationship between variables.

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