Reviewer's report

Title: Job satisfaction trends during nurses' early career

Version: 1 Date: 5 December 2007

Reviewer: Mary Lynn

Reviewer's report:

This manuscript addresses an area that has received little previous attention—the job satisfaction of the newly graduated nurse. Given the importance of job satisfaction this is relevant research.

Because these comments are essentially serial as the reader progresses through the manuscript they are not divided into major, minor and discretionary. Rather each comment is preceded by an M (major), N (minor) or D (discretionary).

M - However, it is not true that it has not been studied as can be noted in the following (among others):


M - Section on determinants of satisfaction given the mention of the determinants did you measure any of them? It would seem the rationale being presenting them in the background would be that you would also be focusing on them in some way.

N - 3 paragraphs before methods there are some over time studies, including the Williams et al one noted above.

Methods

M - Not clear why the full census of child and LD nurses were chosen and samples of the rest. Admittedly there will be fewer nurses in the child area but are there issues (not presented in the discussion) about sampling one group and going after all of the (or another) group? This should be addressed.

N - There is no information on how the nurses were recruited, re-contacted and retained.

M - Measure discussion is unclear when going from 34 to 20 items. What was the basis for the selection of the 20 items? The sentence that follows this (about then being applicable to 90% of
respondents) needs explanation. What did the other 10% do? How did you know that they did or did not apply?

M - Can there be a scale with 2 versions? (of course there can but this isn’t practical over time).

N - What are the reliability estimates for the scales?

D ## Any comment on a single item measure for pay?

M - What is the rational for 6, 18 and 36 months?

M - Need to justify allowing for as much as 50% missing data on a factor.

N - What are the actual findings that support combining the datasets (2nd paragraph of analysis)?

M - What is the model composed of that is alluded to in the analysis? No model has been presented.

Results

D - 1st paragraph under results ## why not include these results here?

M - Is it relevant to compare results between folks who participated at all 3 times and those that did 2 only? Relevance?

M - The relevance of Table 3 and Figure 1 is not clear since the actual analysis done that included the moderating variables is not presented.

N - There is questionable need for the detail in the paragraph that starts ##Some interesting variations in job satisfaction##

Discussion ##

M - Reflect on reality shock. Does that help explain why there might be some differences?

M - Is it true at hiring that mental health nurses are older or otherwise demographically different at hiring? If so how were these differences controlled for in the analysis?

M - Discuss statistical differences versus practical ones --- Many of the findings here are small, but significant due to the sample size. They have limited practical meaning.

General note - An issue that occurs in a few places in the report - what are the findings that support the conclusion, next step, etc.

**What next?:** Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions
Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests