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**Quality of Work Life AND Job Satisfaction of Nursery Workers in Related and Unrelated
Workplaces in Saudi Arabia**

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ABSTRACT

The quality of work life (QWL) and job satisfaction are critical factors in determining employee performance, well-being, and retention, especially in the field of nursery care, where the physical and emotional demands are high. This review focuses on the QWL and job satisfaction of nursery workers in Saudi Arabia, comparing those working in related (childcare and educational settings) and unrelated workplaces. By exploring the factors influencing QWL and job satisfaction, the review aims to provide insights into the challenges and rewards of nursery work in different settings within Saudi Arabia, ultimately contributing to workforce management and policy improvements.

Keywords: Quality of Work Life, Job Satisfaction of Nursery Workers, Related and Unrelated Workplaces.

Introduction

Nursery workers play a significant role in early childhood development, as they provide foundational care and education during the critical formative years of children's lives. The quality of work life (QWL) and job satisfaction among these workers have direct implications for their well-being, the quality of care provided, and their productivity. In Saudi Arabia, as the country undergoes social and economic reforms, understanding the QWL and job satisfaction of nursery workers in both related (educational and childcare institutions) and unrelated workplaces (administrative or general service roles) is crucial for policy improvement and workforce planning(1) (2).

Quality of Work Life (QWL) in Nursery Workers

Quality of Work Life (QWL) encompasses factors that impact employees' satisfaction with their work environment, such as job security, compensation, workload, work-life balance, and organizational support. In Saudi Arabia, the evolving social and economic landscape impacts these aspects differently depending on the workplace setting. Nursery workers in related fields, such as childcare centers and preschools, may experience higher QWL if they have adequate resources, supportive management, and opportunities for career growth. However, those working in unrelated workplaces may have fewer specialized resources, less support for child-related expertise, and lower engagement with their skills and passions, impacting their QWL negatively (1).

Factors Affecting QWL in Related Workplaces

Nursery workers in related workplaces often benefit from:

- **Specialized Training:** Institutions may provide ongoing training focused on child development, behavioral management, and communication, enhancing their skills and QWL (3).
- **Supportive Environment:** The presence of a supportive team and management structure helps workers feel valued and recognized for their contributions, which positively affects QWL(4).
- **Career Development:** Opportunities for advancement, such as moving to supervisory roles or specialized childcare positions, increase job satisfaction and engagement in related workplaces (5).

Challenges in Unrelated Workplaces

Nursery workers employed in unrelated workplaces may face challenges like:

- **Limited Job Relevance:** The lack of alignment between their skills and job tasks can lead to lower job satisfaction, as their expertise is underutilized(6).
- **Reduced Engagement:** Limited interaction with children and a focus on non-childcare duties can reduce their motivation and satisfaction.
- **Absence of Career Growth in Childcare:** For nursery workers in unrelated fields, limited or no career development opportunities in childcare can decrease QWL.

Job Satisfaction in Nursery Workers

Job satisfaction in nursery workers is influenced by similar factors as QWL, with additional emphasis on role fulfillment, relationships with colleagues, and personal alignment with job responsibilities.

Satisfaction in Related Workplaces

Nursery workers in related workplaces tend to report higher job satisfaction due to:

- **Direct Interaction with Children:** Working directly with children allows these workers to see the impact of their efforts, contributing to higher job satisfaction (7).
- **Professional Recognition:** In related fields, nursery workers are often recognized for their expertise and contributions to child development.
- **Aligned Job Roles:** Performing tasks directly relevant to their training and interests leads to greater job satisfaction and fulfillment (2).

Satisfaction Challenges in Unrelated Workplaces

For those in unrelated workplaces, job satisfaction may be compromised due to:

- **Mismatch of Skills and Job:** Nursery workers in administrative or general service roles may not feel fulfilled as their skills in child development are underutilized.
- **Lack of Interaction with Children:** Limited engagement with children and child-focused tasks decreases their intrinsic motivation and satisfaction with their role.
- **Reduced Professional Development:** Fewer opportunities to grow in their field of interest can lead to lower job satisfaction, as nursery workers may not see a path for career advancement.

Cultural and Policy Context in Saudi Arabia

In Saudi Arabia, the government's Vision 2030 plan has increased attention on workforce development and the professionalization of various fields, including early childhood education. Policies supporting the QWL and job satisfaction of nursery workers are crucial for sustaining a skilled and motivated workforce in the nursery sector. Recent studies indicate that providing sufficient compensation, improving workplace safety, and offering professional development can significantly enhance job satisfaction and retention among Saudi nursery workers (3).

However, there remains a gap in support for nursery workers in unrelated workplaces, as their roles are often not designed to

leverage their child development expertise, leading to decreased job satisfaction and a sense of undervaluation. Addressing these issues by creating clearer career pathways and training programs can improve job satisfaction for nursery workers in all types of workplaces.

Conclusion

The QWL and job satisfaction of nursery workers in Saudi Arabia vary significantly between related and unrelated workplaces. Nursery workers in related workplaces experience higher job satisfaction and QWL due to role alignment, professional recognition, and interaction with children. Those in unrelated workplaces face challenges due to skill mismatches and limited career growth opportunities, leading to lower job satisfaction and QWL. Policymakers and healthcare leaders in Saudi Arabia need to consider these factors to improve the work environment and satisfaction of nursery workers, ensuring a well-supported and motivated workforce in early childhood education.

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