

Anticipated Employment: A Comparison of RN Cohorts

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Field: Social Research, Planning And Practice (Srpp)

Subject: SRPP43 Work and Retirement

Key Words: retention, nurse, cohort comparison

Retention of older nurses is essential in light of growing shortages, and identification of retention predictors is a necessary first step. Other research has identified specific job design characteristics and areas of job satisfaction as determinants of RN intentions to leave (McIntosh, Rambur, Palumbo & Mongeon, 2003). In an effort to understand these responses in a more holistic context, however, this paper models the importance of both personal (self-rated health, satisfaction with finances, caregiver status) and job related variables (hours of work, work goal attainment) as predictors of continuing RN employment.

Data are drawn from the 2003 Job Analysis and Retention Study, a mail survey sent to a sample of 3000 from a list of all registered nurses in the state of Vermont in 2002 (n=7028). The response rate was 56.7% with 1,574 out of the 2,778 surveys returned. Standardized OLS regression results show that the job related variables are the strongest significant predictors, work goal attainment (.21) and work hours (.19), for nurses 55+. Satisfaction with finances (-.17) was the only significant personal variable. For the cohort aged 40 to 54, the most important predictor was caregiver status (.21) followed by work goal attainment (.18) and then satisfaction with finances (-.13). Interestingly, satisfaction with finances and caregiver status were irrelevant for nurses under 40 years of age. The most important predictors for this age cohort were work goal attainment (.19) hours of work (.18), and health (.18). These results are discussed in terms of life-course and role theory.