Factors related to intention to stay in the current workplace among long-term care nurses: A nationwide survey

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ABSTRACT

Background: Keeping long-term care nurses employed is necessary to sustain the current and future demand for high-quality long-term care services. Understanding the factors relating to intention to stay among long-term care nurses is limited by the scarcity of studies in long-term care settings, lack of investigation of multiple factors, and the weakness of existing explanatory models.

Objective: To identify the factors associated with long-term care nurses’ intention to stay in their current workplace.

Design: A cross-sectional questionnaire survey.

Setting: Two hundred and fifty-seven hospitals with long-term care wards across Japan.

Participants: A total of 3128 staff nurses and 257 nurse managers from the long-term care wards of the participating hospitals.

Method: The questionnaire assessed nurses’ intention to continue working in the current workplace as well as potential related factors, including individual factors (demographic data, reason for choosing current workplace, burnout, work engagement, somatic symptom burden) and unit factors (unit size, nurse-manager-related data, patients’ medical acuity, average number of overtime hours, recreational activities, social support, perceived quality of care process, educational opportunities, feeling of loneliness, and ability to request days off). Multilevel logistic regression analysis was used to determine which variables best explained nurses’ intention to stay in their workplace.

Results: Only 40.1% of the respondents reported wanting to continue working at their current workplace. The regression analysis revealed that long-term care nurses’ intention to stay was positively associated with nurses’ age (odds ratio [95% confidence interval]: 1.02 [1.01–1.03]), work engagement (1.24 [1.14–1.35]), getting appropriate support from nurse managers (2.78 [1.60–4.82]), perceived quality of care process (1.04 [1.01–1.06]), educational opportunities (1.06 [1.0–1.13]), and various specific reasons for choosing their workplace (e.g., a good workplace atmosphere, being interested in gerontological nursing, and a high salary). By contrast, intention to stay was negatively associated with emotional exhaustion (0.93 [0.91–0.95]) and de-personalization (0.91 [0.89–0.93]). Intention to stay was associated with neither nurses’ qualifications nor patient medical acuity.

Conclusion: Reason for choosing the workplace, work engagement, getting support from the nurse manager, and perceived quality of care process are significant predictors of long-term care nurses’ intention to stay in the workplace. Promoting such nurses’ work engagement, provision of high-quality care, and access to educational opportunities might augment long-term care nurses’ intention to stay.
What is already known about the topic?

- Nurse turnover is costly and associated with negative nursing and patient outcomes.
- Voluntary nurse turnover is influenced by a myriad of inter-related individual and organizational factors, and might be moderated by the cultural and national context.
- Research on long-term care nurses’ intention to stay or leave, rather than having a comprehensive framework for the current study based on a literature review (Fig. 2). The possible factors related to nurses’ intention to stay in their current workplace were grouped into two domains: individual and unit factors.

2.2.1. Intention to stay

As an outcome variable, intention to stay was assessed by asking
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