

Job security as perceived by staff nurses and its Relation to their work alienation

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Abstract

Background: Recently, along with changes in the labor market, work alienation and job security have gained considerable attention from both academics and practitioners. **Aim:** This study aimed to examine Job security as perceived by staff nurses and its relation to their work alienation. **Design:** A descriptive, correlational design was used to conduct this study. **Setting:** This study was conducted at a pediatric University Hospital, which affiliated to Ain shams university hospitals. **Subjects:** 137 staff nurses were included in the study. **Tools of data collection:** Two tools were used namely Job security scale; and work alienation Scale. **Results:** more than half of staff nurses had moderate perception level regarding job security. Less than half of staff nurses had moderate level of work alienation,. **Conclusion:** There was a statistically significance negative correlation between total staff nurses perception regarding job security and total work alienation . **Recommendations:** Reinforcing the relationship between nurse managers and staff to ensure healthy work environment /climate. Supervisors developing and implementing strategies that support job security. Hospital have to enhance their sensors to management strategies which maintain job security.

Keywords: Job security, Staff Nurses and Work alienation.

Introduction

Human resource management plays the most vital role in managing the employees in any organization (*Tulsi & Ji, 2020*). Humans are a complex element in an organization as they pose a risk to organizational survival or failure (*Valikhani & Zamani, 2019*).

Additionally, the great majority of societies suffered from an unemployment problem. This is due to many reasons including the spread of technology, demographic changes. Therefore, organizations adopt several procedures to reduce their workforce and remain competitive such as restructuring, organizational, mergers and acquisitions. Ultimately, all these changes and practices enhanced the worker's feeling of job insecurity (*Komendat & Didona, 2016*).

Also today, many people suffer from feeling unreal. They have lost their connection with themselves and they do not have a sense of self-consciousness. They are powerless and unconscious and act under the influence of any forces which motivate them, and they are affected by work alienation (*Conway et al., 2018*).

Job security is ensuring that a person retains a job without the risk of becoming unemployed. In the absence of job security, employees are at great risk of losing their jobs.

Job security is a concept that refers to the real or perceived probability that an individual will keep his or her job. It has been defined and presented in many different ways by researchers and practitioners. The term is understood as the state of knowing that one's job is secure and that he is not likely to be fired or made redundant. Also, the employee's assertion or confidence that he or she will keep their current job. Moreover, the assurance is that the employee has about the continuity of profitable work for his working life (*Sanyal et al 2018*).

Relatively several factors such as employment contract, collective bargaining agreement, labor legislation, and personal factors such as education, work experience, job functional area, work industry, work location, play an important role in determining the need for an individual's services and impacts their job security (*Sanyal et al.,2018*).

Alienation from the workplace is common among people in our society today. (*Dust et al,*

2018). Additionally, the literature on work alienation has foregrounded the context and working conditions that create a sense of work alienation among employees and its negative influences on several employees' work-related attitudes, behaviors, and performance outcomes, such as employees' motivation, commitment to the organization, job satisfaction, well-being, work effort, and job performance (Khan et al, 2019).

Alienation refers to the estrangement that occurs when the worker relates to the work of hands as an object that is alien and even hostile to him or herself (Harley, 2017) Also, Work alienation is defined as "the reflection of individual's feelings created by disappointment experienced due to employment conditions at the workplace. Moreover, work alienation defined as the result of an organization's "inability to provide environments such as autonomy, responsibility, social interaction, and self-realization that value individuals as human beings. (Çetinkanat & Kösterelioglu, 2016).

Alienation is described as a feeling of powerlessness, meaninglessness, and estrangement as a result of being unable to find fulfillment in one's work. In other words, it represents the degree to which employees felt alienated from their work (Awang, 2017).

The employees suffering from work alienation feel stranger in their organization. (Khdour, Durrah, & Harris, 2015). Moreover, may feel powerless, isolated and normless, and experience their work as meaningless. So, mechanisms to promote dis alienation, like developing a shared purpose in improving patient care, trusting leaders, receiving a fair income, and seeing a sustainable future could be used (Fedi, et al., 2016).

There are five signs of alienation: helplessness (i.e. lack of control), meaninglessness (i.e. the inability to understand the relationship between one's contributions to a greater purpose), lack of standards, alienation (i.e. when rules or norms of behavior do not effectively direct behavior toward personal goals), and alienation about the self (i.e. when work becomes a pathway to satisfying external needs only and not a means of expressing one's potentials (Sarros et al, 2017).

Many factors have been identified as causes of work alienation, bureaucratic control, use of technology in many jobs, organizational justice, and quality of social relations with employees and other managers at work (Zaki, & Al-Romeedy, 2018). Additionally, various consequences of alienation including work dissatisfaction, influence on job performance, organizational loyalty, commitment, increase turnover intention, job dissatisfaction (Fedi et al. 2016U nguren et al., 2016).

Significance of the study:

Human resources are the backbone of any organization. The organization must effectively manage its employees, and ensure that their attitudes and behaviors are supporting the delivery of high-quality service. Once employees feel job insecure, they become frustrated, stressed and ambiguous, which in turn may affect their job performance (Gümüş , 2015), and consequently, alienation (Hosseinzadeh et al., 2014 and Taamneh et al., 2014).

Aim of the study

This study aimed to investigate the relationship between job security and work alienation among staff nurses.

Research hypothesis

There is a relationship between job security as perceived by staff nurses and their work alienation.

Subjects and Methods

Research design

A descriptive - Correlational design was used in this study.

Setting

This study was conducted at pediatric University Hospital which is affiliated to Ain Shams University Hospitals. It provides care for pediatric patients in different medical and surgical specialties. Its total capacity is 618 beds. It consists of the following department: The first floor include dialysis unit and oncology ICU. Second floor include cardiac cath lab unit . Third floor include neonate ICU, and medical ICU. Fourth floor include hematology unit, and diabetes unit . Fifth floor include immunity unit

and neuro unit. Finally, sixth floor include GIT unit and chest unit.

Subjects:

The study sample used included (137) staff nurses out of 210 staff nurses. The sample size was calculated using Open Epi, version 3, the open source calculator considering that the sample size was calculated with a standard error of 5% at a 95% confidence level and a power of 80%. A simple random sample was used.

Sample size $n = [DEFF*N p(1-p)] / [(d2/Z21-\alpha/2*(N-1)+p*(1-p)]$

(Light et al, 2018)

Tools of data collection

Two tools were used for data collection namely Job security scale; work alienation Scale

1. Job security scale: This scale was used to measure job security as perceived by staff nurses. It was developed by *Taamneh & Gharaibeh, (2015)*, and modified by the researchers. It consisted of two parts:

Part 1: designed to gather personal data including age, gender, nursing qualification, experience years, and marital status.

Part 2: it consists of 20 items such as the organization material and moral possibilities available, and the supervisor treats me kindly and respectably.

Scoring system:

Responses were measured on a five-point Likert ranging from (1) Strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree. The score of the items is summed up and the total scores divided by the number of items, giving an average score for the part. These degrees have been converted into a percent score. Then the job security perception considered low if the percent score was less than 60%, moderate from 60% - <75% and high if 75% or more.

2. Work alienation Scale: It developed by *Mottaz (1981)*. This scale aimed to assess work alienation as perceived by staff nurses. It consists of 21 item divided into three dimension as follow: powerlessness; (7 items), meaninglessness; (7 items), and self-estrangement; (7 items).

Scoring system:

Responses were measured on a five-point likert scale ranged from (1- 5). The (1) on the scale indicated "strongly disagree", and (5) "strongly agree". The items were summed up and the total divided by the number of items, giving the average score for the part. These degrees have been converted into a percent score. the perception of staff nurses regarding work alienation is considered low if the percentage score is less than 60%, medium from 60% - <75%, and high if it is 75% or more

Tools validity:

Study tools were validated by jury group consists of seven experts from nursing administration. Jury group reviewed the tools to judge its clarity, comprehensiveness and accuracy. Minimal Modifications were done according to the expert opinions

Tools reliability:

Internal consistency was done by Cornbach Alpha was (0.88) for job security and (0.48) for work alienation.

Pilot study:

Prior for field work, a pilot study was conducted on 14 staff nurses. They represent 10% of study subjects to examine the feasibility, practicability and clarity of the language. It also used to estimate time needed to fill the sheets which ranged between 25-35 minutes. Staff nurses who participate in the pilot study were excluded from the main study sample.

Fieldwork

The field work for this study extended through four months. It is started at the beginning of July 2021, and was completed by the end of September 2021. The researchers introducing themselves to staff nurses and simply explained the purpose of the study to who agree to participate in the study. The researchers collected the data in two days per week in different shifts. Through meeting staff nurses either individually or in groups at their work units after explaining the aim of the study. Approval of hospital director was taken first also suitable time for data collection was determined with each staff nurse of the participated units.

Procedures:

Official permission was obtained to perform the study after reviewing ethical aspects of the study by faculty ethics committee. Approval of hospital director was taken first also suitable time for data collection was determined with each head nurse of the participated units. Data were collected all days of the week except Fridays starting from 9.30 am to 2 pm. Informed oral consent was obtained from each participant after explaining the purpose of the study, and informing them about the right to refuse or withdraw from the study at any time. Confidentiality of the data was ascertained.

Ethical Considerations:

Official permission to conduct the study was secured. The researchers clarified to staff nurses that participation was voluntary and anonymity was assured. Approval of hospital director was taken first also suitable time for data collection was determined with each head nurse of the participated units and oral approval was taken from each participant. The participants were informed their right to withdraw from the study at any time and notified that data were collected only for the purpose of scientific research.

Statistical Analysis:

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20 used to analyze data in this study.

Data were presented using descriptive statistics in the form of frequencies and percentages for qualitative variables, and means and standard deviations for quantitative variables. Pearson's correlation was used to assess the interrelationship between quantitative variables, to assess the relationship between job security and work alienation among staff nurses.

P-value: Level of significance: $P < 0.05$: Significant (S) - $P < 0.01$: Highly significant (HS).

Results

Table (1) : shows that less than half of the study participants were less than 30 years, the majority of them (87.59) were married, less than three quarter (72.99) of them had Diploma of technical institute in nursing, less than two thirds (64.96) of them had experience ranged from 15-20 years with mean

14.64±7.65. More than one quarter of staff nurses working at neonate ICU.

Figure (1): presented that 80.8% majority of nurses were female and 19.2% of them were male.

Figure (2): presented that majority 87.70% of staff nurses attended training courses and a few of them did not attend training courses.

Table (2): reveals that the highest value of job security as perceived by staff nurses for item (Boss treats me kindly). While, the lowest was item (I have security and stability)

Figure (3): revealed that more than half (53.8%) of staff nurses had a moderate perception level of job security. Meanwhile slightly more than one quarter (29.3%) of them had a low perception level of job security

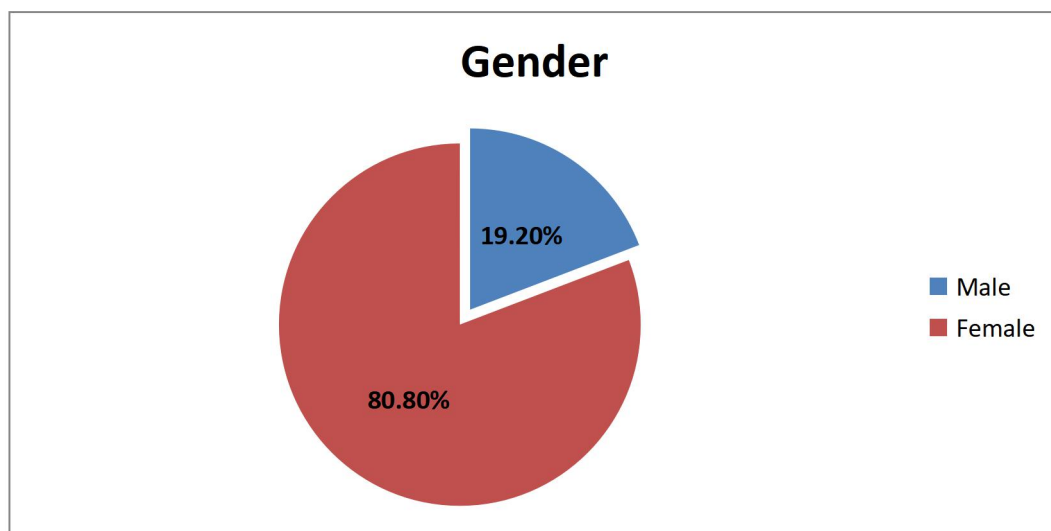
Table (3): showed that Powerlessness dimension had the highest mean 2.85±1.43, followed by meaninglessness with mean 2.40±1.28 and Self-estrangement with mean 2.32±1.26.

Figure (4): revealed that less than half (45.8%) of staff nurses had a moderate perception level work alienation, slightly more than one third (34.3%) of them had a low perception level of work alienation.

Table (4) demonstrated that there was a negative and significant relationship between job security and work alienation dimensions as follows; powerlessness (-0.754**), then meaninglessness (-0.691**), and self-estrangement (-0.667**). There was a negative and significant relationship between total job security and total work alienation as perceived by staff nurses.

Table (1): Distribution of staff nurses according to their personal characteristics (n=137)

Personal characteristics	No.	%
Age		
< 30	66	48.18
30-40	44	32.11
>40	27	19.70
Mean ± SD	34.98±6.72	
Range	24-55	
Marital status		
Married	120	87.59
Single	17	12.41
Educational qualification		
Diploma of technical institute	100	72.99
Bachelor degree in nursing	37	27.01
Experience		
< 15years	28	20.44
15- 20 years	89	64.96
> 20years	20	14.60
Mean ± SD	14.64±7.65	
Range	3-31	
Units		
GIT unit	11	8.8
Dialysis unit	20	14,5
Hematology unit	10	7.2
Oncology ICU	20	14.5
Neonates ICU	28	20.4
Immunity unit	24	17.5
Cardiac cath lab unit	24	17,5

**Figure (1):** Percentage distribution of staff nurses related gender (n=137)

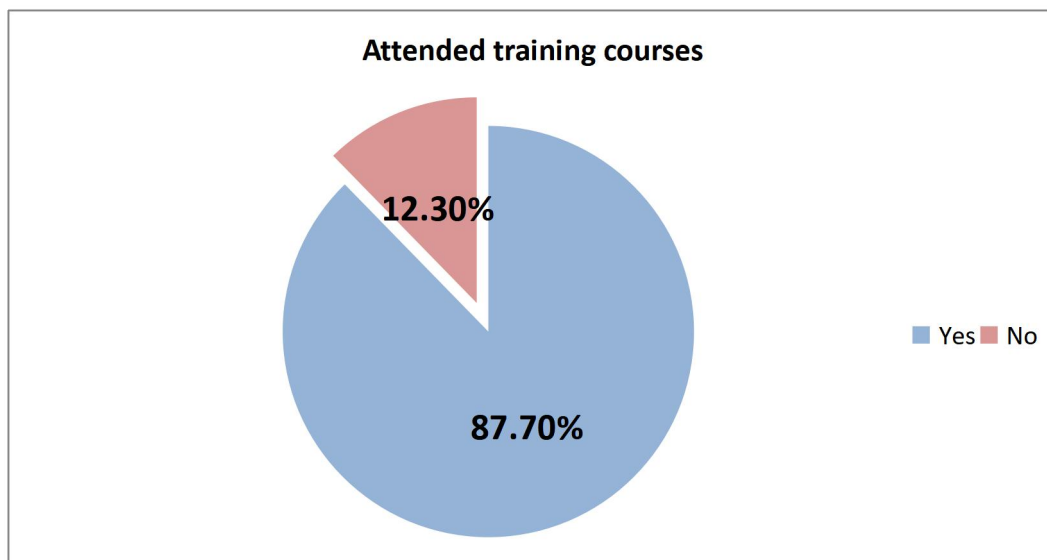


Figure (2): Percentage distribution of staff nurses attended training courses (n=137).

Table 2: Mean score of job security as perceived by staff nurses

Job security	Mean±SD
1-When I might be terminated, I don't feel worried about my job	1.91 ±1.20
2- I have a reasonable and stable income	1.92 ±1.29
3- My job provides me with all required benefits	1.66 ±1.12
4- My job at the firm gives me a decent social Status	1.85±1.19
5- My job at firm gives me material and moral incentives	2.81 ±1.32
6- I have a good relationship with my boss in my job	2.64 ±1.68
7- Working at the organization gives me an opportunity for more training and learning	2.07± 1.35
8-Work conditions at my organization are convenient	1.96 ±1.37
9- I feel quite confident in doing my job	2.63 ±1.67
10- I have a chance to participate in designing work Objectives	1.96 ±1.37
11- I have a chance to participate in designing work Methods	1.47 ±.88
12- I have security and stability at my work	2.92 ±1.64
13- I have sufficient information about my job	2.93± 1.64
14- the supervisor understands the problems at work and my personal	2.22± 1.35
15-The organization makes material and moral possibilities available	2.83 ±1.65
16- the supervisor treats me kindly and respectably	3.72± 1.40
17- I have a clear vision of what I'm supposed to do in my job	3.61 ±1.42
18- There is fair play in organization. Good deeds are rewarded and bad ones are penalized	2.49± 1.47
19- Salaries and yearly allowances are controlled by a fair and just interior system	2.50 ±1.43
20- The organization interior system of promotion is fair enough	2.21 ± 1.34

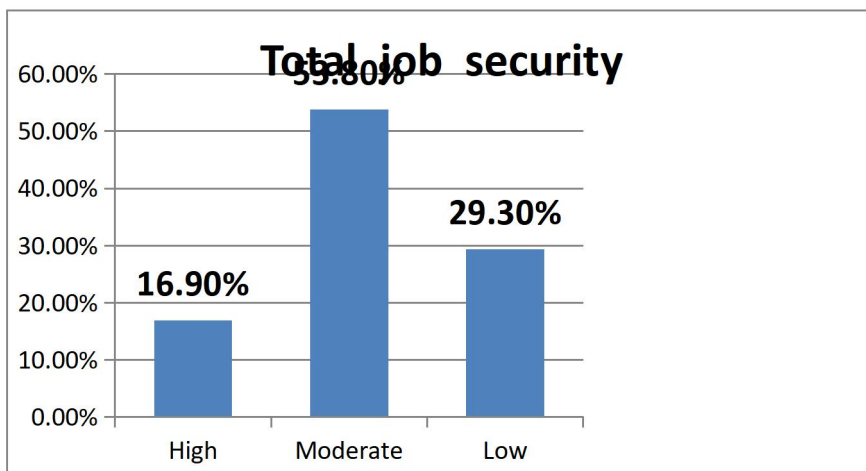


Figure (3): Percentage distribution of staff nurses according to their total perception level of job security (n=137)

Table (3): Mean score of work alienation dimensions as perceived by staff nurses

Dimensions of alienation	Mean	SD
Powerlessness	2.85 ±	1.43
Meaninglessness	2.40 ±	1.28
Self-estrangement	2.32 ±	1.26

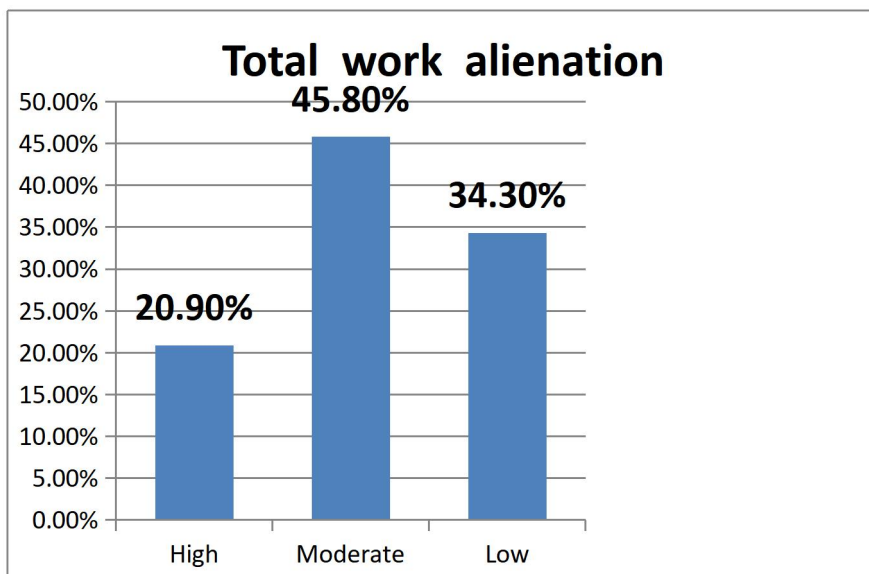


Figure (4): Percentage distribution of the studied nurses related total work alienation level (n= 137).

Table (4): Correlation Matrix between job security and work alienation dimensions

Dimensions of work alienation	Self-Estrangement		Meaninglessness		Powerlessness		Total	
	r	p-value	r	p-value	r	p-value	r	p-value
Job Security	-0.754	0.000**	-0.691	0.000**	-0.667	0.000**	0.835	0.000**

(**) high statistically significant at $p < 0.001$.

Discussion

Job security is essential and crucial in order to retain employees in an organization and allow them to work productively and comfortable. The situation of job security is now at the peak level in the workforce and has a great effect on work alienation (*Michelle & Helen, 2016*).

The results of the present study concluded that the highest value of job security as perceived by staff nurses was the item (Supervisor treats me kindly). While, the lowest was item (I have security and stability at my work). On the contrary, the result reported by *Taamneh & Gharaibeh (2015)* were found that the highest factors of job security was (There is fair play at university and good deeds are rewarded and bad ones are penalized) and the lowest was (Supervisor understands the problems at work and my personal ones as well).

The results of the present study finally revealed that more than half of staff nurses had a moderate perception level of job security, slightly more than one quarter of them had a low perception level of job security and minority of them had high job security.

Also, The result of *Zaki & Al- Romeedy, (2018)* were consistent with the current study who exploring the influence of job security on employees' feeling work alienation in the Egyptian travel agencies and who found that the level of job security among Egyptian travel agencies/ employees were moderate. Meanwhile, the present study on contrary with the result reported by *Bt Daud, (2017)* and *Giunchi & Emaneul, (2016)* were examine the relationship between job security and well-being of workers and who showed that

employees have a high level of job security even the country is in a desperate state.

The present study finding showed that powerlessness dimension had the highest mean score, followed by meaninglessness and self-estrangement. on the contrary the result reported by *Taamneh & -Gharaibeh, (2015)* who found that, the pessimism dimension had the highest mean followed by powerlessness. Similarly, the result reported by *Çetinkanat & Kösterelioglu, (2016)* who found that the mean of teacher perceptions related to work alienation was perceived with the highest level, followed by powerlessness, meaninglessness and isolation.

The results of the present study revealed that less than half of staff nurses had moderate perception level of work alienation, slightly more than one quarter of them had low perception level of work alienation. The result of *Taamneh & -Gharaibeh, (2015)* were congruent with the current study who investigate the impact of job security elements on the work alienation at private universities in Jordan and found that, the participants had a moderate level of the feeling of work alienation reflecting the sample members viewpoints.

Correspondingly, the same result of *Zaki & Al- Romeedy, (2018)* were consistent with the current study finding who found that the level of feeling work alienation were moderate.

Regarding correlation among job security and work alienation dimensions, the present study demonstrated that there was a negative and significant relationship between job security and work alienation dimensions. The result of *Zaki & Al- Romeedy, (2018)* were congruent with the current study who exploring the influence of job security on employees' feeling work alienation who found that the job

security correlated negatively with work alienation dimensions.

On the contradictory of the result were reported by *Taamneh & -Gharaibeh, (2015)* who investigate the impact of job security elements on the work alienation at private universities in Jordan and who showed that, there is a statistically significant effect for the job security elements on the feeling of work alienation among the staff. The greater impact of job security on self-estrangement and the lowest is on isolation.

As regards, the correlation coefficient between job security and work alienation, the present study showed that there was a negative and significant relationship between total job security and total work alienation as perceived by staff nurses. This result indicates that as the job security increases, the feeling of work alienation decreases. The result were consistent with *Zaki & Al- Romeedy, (2018)* who concluded that job security explain 61.6% of the variation in the feeling of work alienation among employees. Furthermore, these findings came to agree with the studies of *Hosseinzadeh et al. (2015)* which showed that, job security is important predictor of work alienation feeling.

Conclusion

The result revealed that more than half of staff nurses had a moderate perception level of job security. Less than half of staff nurses had a moderate perception level of work alienation. There was a negative and significant relationship between total job security and total work alienation as perceived by staff nurses. This confirmed a research hypothesis which was there is a relationship between job security as perceived by staff nurses and their work alienation.

Recommendations

1. Nurse managers have to identify the reasons of work alienation among staff.
2. Encouraging staff nurses to participate in decision making.
3. Applying organizational justice for improving work relations between management and employees
4. Management have to take needs and expectations of employees into consideration

5. Further researches are suggested :
 - a. Assess factors affecting job security.
 - b. Relationship between job security and loyalty among staff nurses.
 - c. Relationship between work alienation and organizational performance.

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