

ORIGINAL RESEARCH

Generation-specific incentives and disincentives for nurse faculty to remain employed

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Abstract

Aims. The aims of this paper are to: (1) describe work characteristics that nurse faculty report encourage them to remain in or leave their academic positions; and (2) determine if there are generational differences in work characteristics selected.

Background. Nurse faculty play key roles in preparing new nurses and graduate nurses. However, educational institutions are challenged to maintain full employment in faculty positions.

Design. A cross-sectional, descriptive survey design was employed.

Methods. Ontario nurse faculty were asked to select, from a list, work characteristics that entice them to remain in or leave their faculty positions. Respondent data ($n = 650$) were collected using mailed surveys over four months in 2011.

Results. While preferred work characteristics differed across generations, the most frequently selected incentives enticing nurse faculty to stay were having: a supportive director/dean, reasonable workloads, supportive colleagues, adequate resources, manageable class sizes and work/life balance. The most frequently selected disincentives included: unmanageable workloads, unsupportive organizations, poor work environments, exposure to bullying, belittling and other types of incivility in the workplace and having an unsupportive director/dean.

Conclusion. This research yields new and important knowledge about work characteristics that nurse faculty report shape their decisions to remain in or leave their current employment. Certain work characteristics were rated as important among all generations. Where similarities exist, broad strategies addressing work characteristics may effectively promote nurse faculty retention. However, where generational differences exist, retention-promoting strategies should target generation-specific preferences.

Keywords: cross-sectional survey, health human resources, nurse faculty, personnel turnover, workforce generations

Why is this research needed?

- There is limited research examining generation-specific incentives and disincentives to remain employed among nurse faculty in academic settings.
- Existing evidence, generated primarily in healthcare settings, suggests that nurse incentives and disincentives to remain employed differ by generation.
- Understanding generation-specific nurse faculty incentives and disincentives to remain employed can inform the development of targeted retention-promoting strategies for each generational cohort of nurse faculty.

What are the key findings?

- Among Generation Y nurse faculty, the most frequently selected incentive enticing them to remain employed was 'opportunities for advancement', differentiating them from all other generations.
- Having a supportive director/dean, supportive colleagues and a reasonable workload were highly ranked incentives across all generations of nurse faculty.
- Workplace bullying, belittling and other types of incivility was selected across all generations of nurse faculty as a disincentive to remain employed in academic settings.

How should the findings be used to influence policy/practice/research/education?

- As similarities and differences exist across generations, broad and generation-specific strategies should be employed to promote retention among nurse faculty.
- Mentorship programmes for new nurse faculty should be implemented to foster supportive collegial relationships between new and experienced faculty.
- Strategies, such as teaching awards, should be employed to provide explicit recognition for Generation Y's successes to promote retention among this generation of nurse faculty.

Introduction

In Canada, a shortfall of 60,000 Registered Nurse full-time equivalents is predicted by 2022 (Canadian Nurses Association [CNA] 2009). Similarly, 495,500 additional nurses will be required in the USA by 2020 (U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics 2012). The global projected shortage of nurses has spurred development of strategies to meet the ongoing demand for registered nurses (Oulton 2006). Strategies such as increasing the capacity of nursing programmes to educate and prepare nurses as well as targeted retention programmes for nurses across healthcare sectors have been implemented in Canada (National Advi-

sory Council on Nurse Education & Practice 2008, CNA 2009).

Nursing education programmes in colleges and universities play a key role in preparing new nurses to promote an adequate supply of nurses in the workforce. Additionally, graduate nursing education programmes are vital to prepare advanced practice nurses and nurse faculty. However, academic institutions are often limited in their capacity to educate nurses due to faculty shortages (Canadian Association of Schools of Nursing [CASN] 2010, American Association of Colleges of Nursing [AACN] 2012). In 2012, the number of vacant Canadian full-time faculty positions was estimated to be 215 (CNA 2012). Historically, the number of nurses enrolled in doctoral programmes has been inadequate to meet projected faculty demands (CASN 2010), an issue that persists today. In a recent report, the AACN (2012) cited faculty shortages as a major barrier to increasing nursing education enrolment capacity. According to this report, approximately 75,000 qualified applicants were turned away from both baccalaureate and graduate nursing programmes in the United States in 2011 (AACN 2012). Unfortunately, qualified applicants not accepted into nursing education programmes may choose other educational programmes instead of reapplying in subsequent years (Shipman & Hooten 2008). Similarly, human resource issues also exist in countries such as Rwanda contributing towards those countries' limited ability to meet the demand for nursing services (Omoni & Smith 2012).

Challenges recruiting and retaining PhD prepared nurses in academic roles have also contributed to the shortage of nurse faculty. Turnover of nurse faculty has the potential to disrupt organizational structures and workgroup cohesion and contributes to productivity loss, increased workloads and further dissatisfaction among remaining employees (Hausknecht & Holwerda 2013). Developing an understanding of work characteristics that nurse faculty consider important in academic settings will inform the development of targeted strategies that promote nurse faculty retention.

Background

Past work in the field of organizational behaviour provides one framework to organize factors that influence faculty retention. Fredrick Herzberg's (1987) seminal 'Motivation-Hygiene Theory' proposes two groups of job characteristics that impact employee attitudes towards job satisfaction/dissatisfaction and ultimately, job retention. The first group of job characteristics, motivators, generally improves satisfaction and attitudes in the workplace; while the second group

of characteristics, hygiene factors, lead to dissatisfaction if absent (Herzberg 1987). Among nurses, satisfaction has been identified as being a mediator of job stress and turnover intent while dissatisfaction has been found to adversely affect the likelihood of staying with an organization (Armstrong-Stassen & Stassen 2013, Kuo *et al.* 2014). With the assumption that Herzberg's theory is applicable to nurse faculty, one can expect a combination of both motivators and hygiene factors to influence their job satisfaction and decisions to remain in or leave academic employment.

A review of current literature revealed five categories of factors influencing nurse faculty retention: workload, compensation, work relationships, mentorship engagement and personal health. Many of these categories can be mapped to the two groups of job characteristics identified by Herzberg (1987).

Motivating factors

Motivators are those characteristics that, if present, increase job satisfaction. However, absence of these characteristics does not theoretically lead to dissatisfaction (Herzberg 1987).

Mentoring relationships. Opportunities such as mentoring relationships have been found to positively influence nurse faculty retention. New nurse faculty mentored by more senior nurse faculty-reported improved teaching competence, higher job satisfaction and were more likely to remain employed (Baker 2010, Chung & Kowalski 2012). Additionally, nurse faculty identified the enjoyment of mentoring others, such as junior faculty and students, as a key reason to remain in academic positions (Berent & Anderko 2011). These examples of mentoring relationships reflect opportunities for personal and professional growth of both new and senior nurse faculty. This is similar to the growth motivator identified by Herzberg (1987) that was found to lead to increased job satisfaction. Nurse faculty finding enjoyment in mentorship could also be indicative of the meaningfulness of the work, an additional motivator of increased job satisfaction (Herzberg 1987).

Work relationships. Collegial support has been found to be valued by nurse faculty in academic settings (Cash *et al.* 2009, Gazza 2009). Similarly, having a supportive leader has been identified as contributing to nurse faculty job satisfaction (Garbee & Killacky 2008). These findings suggest that positive relationships with colleagues and faculty leaders may increase nurse faculty job satisfaction promoting higher nurse faculty retention. Based on this

evidence and Herzberg's (1987) definition of a motivating factor, we suggest that work relationships would be better classified as a motivator rather than a hygiene factor as categorized in Herzberg's model. As described by Grant and Parker (2009), work design research and theoretical perspectives have shown that employee experiences (e.g. intention to remain employed) are greatly influenced by availability of social support at work. Indeed, previous research supports the notion that relationships with colleagues are important to nurse job satisfaction (Ellenbecker *et al.* 2008) and nurse intent to remain employed (Ellenbecker *et al.* 2006, Tourangeau *et al.* 2014). This evidence supports our classification of work relationships as a motivating factor.

Hygiene Factors

According to Herzberg (1987), hygiene factors do not contribute to job satisfaction but rather, these factors contribute to job dissatisfaction if absent.

Workload. Foxall *et al.* (2009) surveyed current and emeritus nurse faculty and found that for faculty approaching or past retirement age, opportunities for part-time employment and decreasing workload were incentives that enticed them to continue working. Workload provisions such as flexible schedules, more vacation time, lighter teaching loads and job sharing were also found to encourage this group of nurse faculty to remain employed. Teaching responsibilities and administrative duties have been cited as resulting in increased workload among nurse faculty (Kaufman 2007a). In turn, increased workload has been identified as contributing to job dissatisfaction (Garbee & Killacky 2008). These findings about manageable workloads are congruent with Herzberg's (1987) hygiene factor, 'work conditions'. While manageable workloads may not encourage nurse faculty to become more satisfied with their workplace, unmanageable workloads will increase dissatisfaction and likely impact retention.

Compensation. Disch *et al.* (2004) reported that nurse faculty generally did not perceive their compensation to be fair. In comparison with other academic disciplines, nurse faculty earn, on average, 25% less than faculty in other departments (Kaufman 2007b). Higher salaries and improved benefit programmes have been identified as incentives for nurse faculty to remain employed (Foxall *et al.* 2009). Fair compensation (i.e. salary), a hygiene factor (Herzberg 1987), is important to consider as nurse faculty who feel insufficiently compensated for their work are likely to become dissatisfied, which may impact their retention.

Additional factors

Personal health. Perceived health status has been found to contribute to decisions to leave employment (Foxall *et al.* 2009). Adaptations to physical work requirements (e.g. work stations, clinical teaching assignments) were found to encourage nurse faculty to remain employed longer. This may be particularly important among older nurse faculty (Foxall *et al.* 2009, Williamson *et al.* 2010). While personal health status is not easily categorized as a motivating or hygiene factor, current evidence suggests that health status is important to nurse faculty retention (Foxall *et al.* 2009, Williamson *et al.* 2010).

Generational affiliation. The nurse faculty workforce consists of four generational cohorts including: the Silent Generation/Veterans (born in or before 1945), Baby Boomers (born between 1946–1964), Generation X (born between 1965–1979) and Generation Y (born 1980 onwards). While no research could be located examining generational differences among nurse faculty, research in other sectors is available. Research has identified that each generation possesses unique characteristics, values and traits that affect their expectations related to work (Duchscher & Cowin 2004, Apostolidis & Polifroni 2006). However, research findings on whether generational characteristics ultimately affect a generation's drive to work have been mixed. Earlier research found that among public sector employees, generational affiliation had no significant impact on factors affecting employees drive to work (Jurkiewicz & Brown 1998, Yang & Guy 2006). Contrary to these findings, age-related differences among knowledge workers have been found to affect employee's drive to work (Lord & Farrington 2006). In recent research with hospital nurses, it was found that while some incentives and disincentives were similar among generations, variability existed across generations (Tourangeau *et al.* 2013). Nurse faculty are knowledge workers. As such, it is reasonable to hypothesize that the relative importance of work-related incentives and disincentives for nurse faculty to remain employed will differ across generations due to generational variations in work expectations, beliefs and values.

The study

Aims

The aims of this paper are to: (1) describe work characteristics that nurse faculty report encourage them to remain in or leave their academic positions; and (2)

determine if there are generational differences in work characteristics selected.

Design

A multi-phased study was conducted to identify factors influencing nurse faculty intention to remain employed in academic settings. Phase I used focus groups with nurse faculty employed in Ontario, Canada colleges and universities to identify factors that may affect their decision to remain employed in their academic work setting (Tourangeau *et al.* 2012). Across focus groups, participants identified work characteristics that they considered to be incentives that encouraged them to remain in faculty positions and disincentives that encouraged them to consider leaving employment.

In Phase II, based on focus group findings and previous research, a survey was developed and administered to nurse faculty employed in Ontario colleges and universities. A cross-sectional, descriptive survey design was employed. The survey collected data on workplace characteristics identified by nurse faculty as influencing their decision to remain employed, and additional important concepts such as nurse faculty characteristics (Tourangeau *et al.* 2014).

Two survey items were developed based on focus group findings to explore the work characteristics that encourage nurse faculty to remain in or leave their academic positions. In each item, participants were invited to select, from a list, incentives that would encourage them to remain employed and disincentives that would contribute to their intent to leave. Respondents were invited to select all those work characteristics that applied to their situation. In this paper, descriptive findings related to the rates of selection of these incentives and disincentives are reported.

Participants

The population of nurse faculty ($N = 1329$) registered with the College of Nurses of Ontario (Canada) who agreed to be contacted for research purposes was invited to complete a survey. Eligibility criteria included; (1) was a Registered Nurse (RN), Registered Practical Nurse (RPN), or Nurse Practitioner (NP); and (2) was employed full-time, part-time or on-contract with an Ontario college or university.

Study context

Since 2005, to practice as a RN in Ontario (Canada), a baccalaureate degree in nursing from an accredited university is required (College of Nurses of Ontario 2013a).

However, college programmes also participate in the educational preparation of RNs through formal affiliations and collaborations with accredited university programmes. In such situations, the baccalaureate degree is conferred by the affiliated university. Ontario colleges are also able to offer diploma programmes for RPNs (College of Nurses of Ontario 2013b). The RPN role is similar to Licensed Practical Nurses in other jurisdictions. Nurse faculty in colleges are not required to hold undergraduate or graduate degrees if they are engaged in educating practical nursing students.

Data collection

Data were collected over a four month period in 2011. A modified Dillman approach was used to administer surveys. Potential participants received up to four mailings to maximize the response rate (Dillman *et al.* 2009). In mailings one and three, participants received an information letter, a survey and a stamped, addressed return envelope. Mailings two and four consisted of reminder cards to non-responders only.

Ethical considerations

University of Toronto research ethics board approval was obtained annually throughout the study.

Survey questions

In the two survey items outlining the list of incentives and disincentives, nurse faculty were invited to select (not rank) all those work characteristics that applied to their situation. Preceding the incentive list was the question: 'Which of the following does or would entice you to remain employed in

your current college/university?' Similarly, the disincentive list was preceded with the question: 'Which of the following make or would make you think about leaving your current college/university employment?'

Data analysis

Survey data were entered into SPSS 18.0[®] software (IBM Corp 2009) and double checked to ensure accuracy. Descriptive statistics were used to calculate sample demographic characteristics. Rates of selection of each incentive and disincentive were calculated for the entire sample and for each generational cohort. Incentives and disincentives were ranked from most frequently selected to least frequently selected. Chi-squared tests of independence were used to determine whether the proportion of respondents who selected each incentive and disincentive differed across generations.

In the survey, participants were asked to report their birth year. Generational affiliation was calculated using birth year to allocate participants to one of the four previously described generational cohorts. Eight of six hundred and fifty respondents failed to identify their year of birth (1.2% of the sample). For these eight cases, multiple imputation strategies were used to estimate birth year.

Reliability and validity of data

Content validity of the two survey items was strengthened primarily through two mechanisms: (1) extensive content analysis of Phase I focus group transcripts; and (2) pilot testing of the two survey items with five Ontario nurse faculty. As incentives and disincentives were assessed through two single-item measures, no psychometric properties can

Table 1 Sample description by generational affiliation.

	Total sample <i>n</i> = 650	Silent generation <i>n</i> = 32	Baby boomers <i>n</i> = 451	Generation X <i>n</i> = 150	Generation Y <i>n</i> = 17
Mean age in years (SD)	52.4 (9.7)	69.1 (2.4)	56.0 (5.2)	40.4 (4.1)	29.2 (1.6)
Proportion female	97.4%	100.0%	98.2%	96.0%	82.4%
Mean years experience in current position (SD)	10.4 (8.7)	16.2 (12.1)	12.0 (8.9)	5.2 (3.6)	4.0 (4.9)
Proportion employed in University	39.2%	65.6%	36.1%	44.0%	29.4%
Proportion employed in College	60.8%	34.4%	63.9%	56.0%	70.6%
Proportion full-time	64.0%	37.5%	69.6%	56.0%	35.3%
Education – highest level of educational preparation					
Practical nursing diploma (%)	1.4%	0.0%	0.7%	3.3%	5.9%
Registered Nurse diploma (%)	8.2%	6.3%	8.0%	9.3%	5.9%
Baccalaureate nursing degree (%)	18.9%	25.0%	14.4%	30.0%	29.4%
Master degree (%)	53.8%	40.6%	56.8%	48.7%	47.1%
Doctorate degree or higher (%)	17.7%	28.1%	20.2%	8.7%	11.8%

be reported. However, using the same words as focus group participants to phrase each incentive and disincentive item strengthened validity of the two survey questions.

No participants selected either all incentives or all disincentives. Furthermore, at least one incentive and at least one disincentive was selected by all respondents. This demonstrates that respondents discriminated between choices and selected those relevant to their situation. This also demonstrates that no cases should be considered to have missing data on either survey item.

Results

In total, 650 participants completed the survey (response rate = 48.9%). Study participants ranged in age from 26–76 years old, with a mean age of 52.4 years ($SD = 9.7$) and 97.4% were female. Thirty-two respondents were identified

as Silent Generation/Veterans (4.9%), 451 as Baby Boomers (69.4%), 150 as Generation X (23.1%) and 17 as Generation Y (2.6%). This breakdown closely approximates the nurse faculty population values reported by the College of Nurses of Ontario (College of Nurses of Ontario 2013c). The mean number of years in their current position was 10.4 ($SD = 8.7$), 60.8% of the sample were employed with Ontario colleges and 39.2% were employed with Ontario universities. A doctorate degree was held by 17.7% of the sample while 53.8% had completed a master's degree (see Table 1 for a description of sample demographics by generational affiliation).

Incentives

Table 2 summarizes the list of 29 incentives and their rates of selection by the total sample and by each generation.

Table 2 Incentive selection rates (%) by total sample and by generation.

	Total sample (%) <i>n</i> = 650	Silent gen (%) <i>n</i> = 32	Baby boomers (%) <i>n</i> = 451	Gen X (%) <i>n</i> = 150	Gen Y (%) <i>n</i> = 17	<i>P</i> value
Supportive director/dean	80.8	68.8	82.0	80.7	70.6	0.205 (ns)
Reasonable workload	80.2	68.8	78.9	87.3	70.6	0.031
Supportive colleagues	76.3	62.5	76.3	78.7	82.4	0.243 (ns)
Adequate resources	71.7	59.4	74.7	65.3	70.6	0.059 (ns)
Manageable class sizes	71.2	62.5	72.1	74.0	41.2	0.024
Work/life balance	70.6	46.9	69.6	78.0	76.5	0.004
Opportunity to teach	69.7	75.0	68.5	72.7	58.8	0.532 (ns)
Supportive organization	69.1	53.1	70.1	70.0	64.7	0.238 (ns)
Flexible work hours	66.0	50.0	62.5	78.7	76.5	0.001
Opportunity to work from home	64.5	50.0	63.0	71.3	70.6	0.081 (ns)
Higher salary	58.9	40.6	54.8	74.0	70.6	<0.001
Paid education leave for school or conferences	57.1	31.3	55.2	68.7	52.9	0.001
Employment benefits	53.1	50.0	52.3	55.3	58.8	0.860 (ns)
Convenience of college/university location	49.1	37.5	48.6	52.7	52.9	0.451 (ns)
Faculty mentoring/coaching opportunities	47.2	37.5	45.7	53.3	52.9	0.249 (ns)
Opportunity to conduct/be involved in research	44.9	50.0	43.7	46.0	58.8	0.570 (ns)
Opportunity for leadership roles	44.2	28.1	43.2	47.3	70.6	0.03
Opportunity for advancement	43.5	18.8	36.6	65.3	82.4	<0.001
Student mentoring/coaching opportunities	41.7	59.4	41.7	38.0	41.2	0.175 (ns)
Choice regarding employment status	41.5	46.9	38.8	47.3	52.9	0.191 (ns)
Phased in retirement plan	40.5	43.8	44.3	30.0	23.5	0.008
Personal economic status	39.2	46.9	42.6	28.7	29.4	0.014
Opportunity to have a clinical practice	32.0	18.8	29.0	44.0	29.4	0.002
Family circumstances	31.5	18.8	31.5	35.3	23.5	0.269 (ns)
Additional vacation time	28.5	12.5	26.6	36.0	41.2	0.016
Health issues	28.0	28.1	29.9	24.0	11.8	0.236 (ns)
Ties to community	25.2	18.8	25.1	26.7	29.4	0.791 (ns)
Collective agreement	21.4	15.6	22.2	22.0	5.9	0.353 (ns)
External economic conditions	12.3	21.9	13.5	6.0	17.6	0.025

P values obtained through chi-squared test of independence (*P* value <0.05 was considered statistically significant); bolded = significant. ns, non-significant.

Table 3 Disincentive selection rates (%) by total sample and by generation.

	Total sample (%) <i>n</i> = 650	Silent gen (%) <i>n</i> = 32	Baby boomers (%) <i>n</i> = 451	Gen X (%) <i>n</i> = 150	Gen Y (%) <i>n</i> = 17	<i>P</i> value
Unmanageable workload	74.8	59.4	75.6	77.3	58.8	0.072 (ns)
Unsupportive organization	70.3	68.8	70.3	72.0	58.8	0.725 (ns)
Poor work environment	68.5	56.3	69.8	68.0	58.8	0.340 (ns)
Bullying, belittling and other types of incivility in your workplace	68.2	53.1	68.7	68.7	76.5	0.266 (ns)
Unsupportive director/dean	67.7	68.8	69.4	64.0	52.9	0.355 (ns)
Inadequate leadership	57.8	53.1	61.4	50.7	35.3	0.025
Unmanageable class sizes	56.2	50.0	57.4	56.0	35.3	0.284 (ns)
Unsupportive colleagues	55.2	50.0	54.5	57.3	64.7	0.723 (ns)
Work/life imbalance	54.0	46.9	52.8	60.7	41.2	0.192 (ns)
Emotional/physical exhaustion	51.5	46.9	51.4	54.0	41.2	0.711 (ns)
Inadequate resources	50.2	50.0	50.1	50.7	47.1	0.994 (ns)
Health issues	49.2	71.9	51.2	39.3	41.2	0.004
Inadequate work group cohesion	43.5	34.4	44.8	42.0	41.2	0.668 (ns)
Family circumstances	42.6	34.4	40.6	50.0	47.1	0.162 (ns)
Opportunity outside of current college/university	42.2	18.8	40.1	53.3	41.2	0.001
Inadequate opportunity to teach	40.2	46.9	38.1	45.3	35.3	0.361 (ns)
Teaching assignments for which you are underprepared	39.7	31.3	38.1	46.0	41.2	0.271 (ns)
Inadequate salary	32.3	21.9	25.7	51.3	58.8	<0.001
Inadequate opportunity for advancement	30.0	15.6	22.6	49.3	82.4	<0.001
Inadequate continuing education/professional growth opportunities	26.8	12.5	26.2	32.7	17.6	0.079 (ns)
Inconvenient location of college/university	24.8	25.0	23.9	26.7	29.4	0.885 (ns)
Personal economic status	24.3	28.1	24.8	23.3	11.8	0.604 (ns)
Inadequate opportunity to conduct/be involved in research	23.8	12.5	22.6	28.0	41.2	0.076 (ns)
Mandatory retirement	23.4	53.1	26.2	10.7	5.9	<0.001
Inadequate paid education leave for school or conferences	21.4	9.4	20.4	26.0	29.4	0.135 (ns)
Inadequate opportunity for leadership roles	18.2	3.1	17.3	24.7	11.8	0.02
Inadequate opportunity to have a clinical practice	15.2	9.4	14.0	21.3	5.9	0.076 (ns)
Collective agreement	15.2	6.3	12.9	11.3	11.8	0.717 (ns)
External economic conditions	8.9	15.6	9.3	7.3	0.0	0.263 (ns)
Faculty mentoring/coaching responsibilities	8.3	9.4	8.0	8.7	11.8	0.940 (ns)
Phased in retirement plan	6.8	15.6	7.8	2.7	0.0	0.019
Student mentoring/coaching opportunities	3.7	0.0	4.2	3.3	0.0	0.517 (ns)

P values obtained through Chi-squared test of independence (*P* value <0.05 was considered statistically significant); bolded = significant. ns, non-significant.

Incentives listed in Table 2 are phrased exactly as they were on the survey.

Across generations, six incentives to remain employed were selected by more than 70% of the sample: having a supportive director/dean, having a reasonable workload, having supportive colleagues, having adequate resources, having manageable class sizes and being able to experience work/life balance. Selection rates of 13 incentives differed significantly across generations ($P < 0.05$). Many of the significant differences in selection rates reflected differences in expectations by the youngest generation. For example, while only 43.2% of Baby Boomers and 47.3% of Generation X respondents selected 'opportunity for leadership roles' as an incentive to remain employed, this incentive was selected by 70.6% of Generation Y respondents. A

second notable difference was found in selection rates of the incentive 'opportunities for advancement'. While only 36.6% of Baby Boomers selected 'opportunities for advancement', this incentive was selected by 82.4% of Generation Y respondents.

Disincentives

Table 3 summarizes the list of 32 disincentives and their rates of selection by the total sample and by each generation. Disincentives in Table 3 are phrased exactly as they were on the survey.

Five disincentives were selected by more than 65% of the total sample: having an unmanageable workload; having an unsupportive organization; having a poor work

environment; having an unsupportive director/dean; and experiencing bullying, belittling and other types of incivility in the workplace. Selection rates of eight disincentives differed significantly across generations. Several significant differences in selection rates reflected situational differences related to respondents' life stage. While only 39.3% of Generation X respondents and 41.2% of Generation Y respondents selected 'health issues' as a factor encouraging them to leave their faculty position, this disincentive was selected by 71.9% of Silent Generation respondents. Similarly, while 'mandatory retirement' was selected by 53.1% of Silent Generation respondents, only 26.2% of Baby Boomer respondents, 10.7% of Generation X respondents and 5.9% of Generation Y respondents selected this disincentive.

Discussion

Study findings give knowledge of incentives and disincentives in academic settings that nurse faculty reported as important when making a decision to remain in or leave their current employment. Findings show both similarities and differences across generational cohorts in work characteristics selected. These study findings reveal new information about the youngest nurse faculty generational cohort, Generation Y. This generation's responses highlight the importance of opportunities for advancement and leadership roles. As Silent Generation and Baby Boomer nurse faculty continue to retire from the workforce, leadership positions will become available. As Generation X nurse faculty value work/life balance and are less inclined to seek out leadership roles, retaining the youngest generation in the academic nurse workforce will be beneficial as they are eager to assume these roles.

Rates of selection across generations did not differ significantly for some incentives and disincentives suggesting that their importance to nurse faculty was common across the workforce. This indicates that broad retention-promoting strategies could be employed to address retention across generations of nurse faculty. For example, having a supportive director/dean and supportive colleagues were identified as important factors that, if present, would entice many nurse faculties to remain employed in their educational settings. Similarly, the absence of support from employing organizations, not having a supportive director/dean, having poor work environments and having unsupportive colleagues were identified as disincentives to remain working in academic settings. These findings reflect the importance of interpersonal relationships for nurse faculty. Previous research supports this study's findings, suggesting

that not only is a supportive work environment important but that perceived support from supervisors, colleagues and the organization also has the potential to mediate staff turnover by increasing job satisfaction and feelings of organizational commitment (Garbee & Killacky 2008, Baker 2010, Gutierrez *et al.* 2012). Mentorship programmes are one potential strategy to develop a supportive organizational environment. In mentorship programmes, experienced nurse faculty are paired with novice faculty to give socialization opportunities and career guidance and support (National League for Nursing 2006, Dunham-Taylor *et al.* 2008, Gazza 2009).

In addition, our findings suggest the need to develop supportive nurse faculty leadership. Frequently, nurse faculty leaders lack formal leadership education and training. Post-secondary educational institutions can demonstrate their support for and expectation of strong academic nurse leadership by requiring nurse faculty leaders to actively participate in formal leadership education and training.

Bullying, belittling and other types of incivility experienced by nurse faculty in the workplace was identified as an important disincentive that, if present, would encourage nurse faculty across generations to consider leaving their current employment. Negative workplace behaviours, such as horizontal violence and bullying among colleagues, have been studied and linked to higher turnover among nurses in acute care settings (Spence-Laschinger *et al.* 2009, Hogh *et al.* 2011, Wilson *et al.* 2011). As such, it is reasonable to expect that these negative behaviours will similarly affect nurse faculty. An additional source of workplace incivility for nurse faculty may result from student interactions that can escalate to situations of covert or overt incivility (Luparell 2007, DalPezzo & Jett 2010). To decrease the occurrence of workplace bullying and incivility, policies should be developed and implemented in educational settings clearly outlining what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviours related to academic work relationships. The consequences of unacceptable behaviour among faculty, staff and students should also be made explicit. As well, mentorship programmes may assist in developing a positive collegial culture (Dunham-Taylor *et al.* 2008).

Adequate access to resources (space, supplies, equipment and technology) and having opportunities to work from home are nurse faculty-reported incentives that, if present, would entice nurse faculty to remain employed in their current position. Creating faculty work environments that support faculty to work effectively on and off campus could be an effective retention-promoting strategy.

Having an unmanageable workload was the most frequently selected disincentive that, if present, would make

nurse faculty consider leaving their current position (74.8%). Academic leaders should promote work environments that have safe opportunities to discuss workload, workload fairness and workload impact. Nurse faculty take on workload from a variety of faculty roles including, but not limited to, administrative duties, clinical supervision, course preparation, teaching, advising students and research activities (Gerolamo & Roemer 2011). To address workload associated with these multiple roles, Allan and Aldebron (2008) suggest implementing innovative staffing models such as hiring non-traditional and non-nurse faculty. For example, clinical practitioners could teach clinical and foundational courses and non-nurse educators could teach required biological sciences/pharmacology, research methods and statistics courses. This would free nurse faculty from workload that others could assume.

While many incentives/disincentives were of similar importance across generations, the four generations differed significantly in selection rates for a number of these work characteristics. Below, key differences are discussed.

Silent generation

Silent Generation nurse faculty were all 66 years of age or older at the time of data collection, which may explain the high selection rate of health issues as a disincentive to remain employed. Previous research (Foxall *et al.* 2009, Williamson *et al.* 2010) supports this study's finding that for Silent Generation faculty, health issues are the most important disincentive to continuing academic work. This finding suggests that Silent Generation nurse faculty recognize that age-related health issues may make normal work routines more difficult. To retain this oldest generation of nurse faculty in academic settings, work modifications can be made to assist them to effectively fulfil their academic roles (Foxall *et al.* 2009). Remaining in the academic workforce beyond the normal age of retirement offers benefits for both the educational institution and for silent generation nurse faculty. This generation may continue to fill important academic roles in educating nurses. Additionally, continued employment is often experienced by silent generation nurse faculty as a source of security, health promotion, relationships, ego protection and fulfilment (Williamson *et al.* 2010).

Baby boomers

Baby Boomers comprise the majority of nurse faculty and represent 69% of the total study sample – confirming that, similar to other jurisdictions, the Ontario nurse faculty

workforce is ageing. In this study, Baby Boomer respondents did not consistently select reward-based incentives (i.e. higher salary, opportunity for leadership roles and opportunity for advancement) as reasons to remain employed. In fact, these reward-based incentives were selected at lower rates than the two younger generations. Therefore, study findings do not entirely support past research on generational attributes which have characterized Baby Boomers as being workaholics and as valuing job-related incentives such as titles, promotions and recognition for work (Duchscher & Cowin 2004, Apostolidis & Polifroni 2006). This may be explained by the higher average age of Baby Boomers in the current workforce as compared with previous research conducted. Rather, Baby Boomer respondents most valued having reasonable workloads and strong leadership. They were also more likely to select 'inadequate leadership' as a reason to consider leaving employment compared with other cohorts. This validates findings that report Baby Boomers value competent leaders skilled in challenging, inspiring and enabling their staff (Duchscher & Cowin 2004).

Duchscher and Cowin (2004) suggest that Baby Boomers are likely to continue working beyond the normal age of retirement. Recommendations to retain Baby Boomers in academic settings should focus on mechanisms that ensure manageable workloads and strong leadership and enable work/life balance.

Generation X

Members of Generation X have generally been characterized as independent, self-reliant individuals who are pragmatic in their attitudes towards work and as a result, may have decreased loyalty to employers (Duchscher & Cowin 2004, Howe & Strauss 2007). Generation X respondents selected the incentive 'reasonable workload' more frequently than any other generation. Similar to Gursoy *et al.*'s (2008) findings, Generation X respondents placed high importance on having flexible work hours, work/life balance and a higher salary.

Additionally, compared with other generations, Generation X respondents most frequently selected the incentive 'paid education leave for school or conferences'. This finding suggests that for this generation, possible retention-promoting strategies include providing targeted funds for professional development or teaching release for faculty interested in pursuing higher education. This is a reasonable investment as this generation will be expected and required to fill roles left by retiring Silent Generation and Baby Boomer faculty.

Generation Y

Our findings suggest that this small but growing cohort of nurse faculty have high work-related expectations. Notable were the most frequently selected incentives and disincentives related to advancement opportunities. Generation Y selected these at higher rates than any other generation. These findings support existing literature describing the overall appeal of performance-related incentives such as job advancement and promotions for Generation Y in their consideration to remain employed in academic settings (Gursoy *et al.* 2008, Wong *et al.* 2008).

Gursoy *et al.* (2008) reported that recognition motivated Generation Y in their work. However, they also felt a lack of respect from colleagues because of their youth. Strategies that provide explicit recognition for Generation Y successes may be instrumental in promoting their retention in academic settings. Additional retention-promoting strategies targeting Generation Y nurse faculty should include providing formal mentorship programmes that foster supportive relationships among Generation Y and older faculty. This generational cohort indicated that the presence of supportive colleagues was an important factor which would entice them to remain employed. Members of Generation Y have demonstrated that they can thrive in supportive social work environments that offer guidance and timely feedback provided by strong leaders (Duchscher & Cowin 2004, Howe & Strauss 2007, Gursoy *et al.* 2008, Hutchinson *et al.* 2012).

Limitations

There are several known limitations associated with this study. First, as incentives and disincentives were identified in focus groups by Ontario nurse faculty, these incentives and disincentives may not reflect nurse faculty globally. Results may only be generalizable to educational institutions with similar policies, structures and organizational settings as Ontario colleges and universities. Those evaluating the appropriateness of these recommendations should first consider whether their own nursing faculty share enough similarities with the study sample.

An additional limitation of the study is the number of Chi-squared tests needed to make comparisons across generations. Employing a large number of statistical tests increases the risk of type I error (Polit & Beck 2012).

Finally, although this was a large sample, 69% of respondents were members of the Baby Boomer generation. Small sample sizes for the oldest and youngest generational cohorts decreases the variability of responses in these

groups, increasing the chance that responses were not representative of these cohorts.

Conclusion

This research yields new knowledge about work characteristics that nurse faculty identify as shaping their decisions to remain in or leave their current academic employment. Among nurse faculty, certain incentives and disincentives were rated as equally important among all generations. Where similarities exist, broad strategies may effectively promote nurse faculty retention. For example, fostering an environment of supportive relationships among all faculty and faculty leaders could promote retention regardless of individual nurse faculty characteristics. However, this research also identified factors that were considered more important for some generations than others. Therefore, where there are generational differences, retention-promoting strategies should be targeted to specific generations based on their reported preferences.

Understanding generation-specific incentives and disincentives can inform the development of more effective and personalized strategies to modify work and workplaces to promote nurse faculty retention. A practical application of this research may be for academic leaders to conduct an environmental scan of their nurse faculty workforce to assess the breakdown of generational cohorts. Using this information, they can tailor policies and strategies to promote nurse faculty retention. For example, if a large number of faculty belong to Generation Y, faculty leaders may wish to allocate additional resources to develop teaching awards or recognition programmes as a retention-promoting strategy. In contrast, institutions seeking to retain ageing nurse faculty could employ strategies such as decreased workloads, flexible scheduling options, health promotion activities and develop age-friendly work environments (Falk 2007, Foxall *et al.* 2009, Williamson *et al.* 2010).

In previous research exploring generational diversity in other industries, it was found that certain generation-specific preferences reflected in western countries may not be reflected in other areas of the world (Yu & Miller 2005). Future research should seek to determine whether incentives and disincentives to remain employed selected among nurse faculty in Ontario, Canada hold true for nurse faculty populations in other countries and cultural contexts. Future research may inform theory and practice related to faculty retention in a global context. Finally, the findings of this study may be used to develop and test generation-specific retention-promoting strategies.

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No conflict of interest has been declared by the author(s).

Author contributions

All authors have agreed on the final version and meet at least one of the following criteria [recommended by the IC-MJE (http://www.icmje.org/ethical_1author.html)]:

- substantial contributions to conception and design, acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data;
- drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content.

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