



CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

As can be seen, good services largely depend on basic administrative resources i.e. man, money, material and management techniques. Health management described by WHO embraces the whole process of planning, organizing, directing, controlling and coordinating resources for the development of the health status of the population based on community participation, and responsive to the needs of the people (WHO, 1977). In summary, health management is essentially a system of role, function and tasks carried out by individual at various levels of administration in order to improve health of the people.

Nowadays, the government realizes the importance of good health, as clearly defined in The National Socioeconomic Development Policy to achieve the goal of health for all by the year 2000. Having good health is defined as both physical and mental health and can be stated as a good quality of life, which depends on the efficiency of the health care system. To achieve this purpose, require qualified personnel such as doctors, nurses, dentists, pharmacies and medical technicians, etc. Nurses are among the key personnel in providing health services directly to the people. They are responsible of health promotion, disease, prevention, treatment and rehabilitation. Having sufficient nurses both in quality and quantity is important for effective health development.

In human resource management field, job satisfaction of the employee is one of the vital issues. Mondy (1990) conceived human resource management as the utilization of human resources to achieve the organizational objectives. Basically, managers get the things done through the efforts and performances of the others. The major task of the manager is to develop and to maintain an environment in which workers can be productive and contributing members of the organization.

Job structure, functions and expectation within the health care field are changing rapidly. As a result of, among other things (limited financial resources and increased service demand), the introduction of para-professionals and expanding and increasing sophisticated medical technology that demands new job procedures. New approaches to the way work is done, notably the team approach, alter job tasks, roles and relationships. These changes suggest that satisfaction with the job may also be altered (Slavitt, 1978).

Job satisfaction has become one of the relevant management issues among nurses working in the hospital. The nurses whose needs are fulfilled will give a worthwhile contribution and remain over a prolonged period in the hospital more than those nurses who have to struggle repeatedly with frustration or feel compelled to meet their job satisfaction needs in unacceptable ways. Simpson (1985) reported in his study that the indicators of job satisfaction were turnover and absenteeism and job satisfaction affects the quality of service. Absenteeism and turnover are expensive for the institution. Melbin and Taub (1966) found that the calculable cost for replacing one nurse was more than \$ 400 in 1966, today it would be considerably much more higher. Also, non-availability of replacement and learning time for new nurses to reach peak efficiency reduce effectiveness in delivering high quality of care.

Turnover from job is a major effect of dissatisfaction. Turnover have many adverse effects on nursing job as well as an organization. Turnover is result in costs of recruitment, selection and training. It may adversely affect the quality of care given to patients (Wolf, 1981). Moreover it may have a demoralizing affect both on professional nurses and the organization (Mowday, 1982). Specially, in this decade, with rapidly growing private sectors of health service, more and more importance is given on the quality of service rather than technology alone. While high turnover is affecting the quality of service in these hospitals and one of the major causes of turnover was found to be job dissatisfaction. In the United State of America, the National League for Nurses (NLN) reported in 1976 that only 69.7 percent of the nation's nurses remain in the field ten years after graduation. Some sources

reported that figures could be higher and more estimate that most professional nurses stay in the field from one and one-half to three years. Each year, in Thailand, a number of professional nurses transfer from public to private hospital and from private hospital to another job.

"Hospital" is nowadays a big business; and like any successful business, they must meet the needs of their employees (Munn, 1980). Hospital nursing staff facing with crisis and tragedy on a daily basis, are prime candidates for job satisfaction and dissatisfaction. The large quantity of work involved in caring for critically ill persons, compounded by the variety, complexity, and urgency of tasks intensifies the likelihood that nurses will become exhausted, discouraged, burn-out, and dissatisfied with their job (Hay and Oken, 1972). Thus the nature of the nurses' work makes job satisfaction extremely important; a low degree of dissatisfaction may inhibit high standards of nursing practice (Costello, 1967). There is an evidence, however, that improving job satisfaction can improve performance and the quality of care that patient receive (Weisman, 1986).

In Thailand with the advancement of health technology, more urbanized life pattern and we are facing with economic crisis, most of the private hospitals have been affected. The competition in the private health sector is increasing and they have been trying to improve their quality of service and also the quality of health care, by using new technology as soon as it becomes available (Patcharee, 1992). The hospital administrators have found some strategies to decrease hospital expenditures i.e. reduction the salary and lay off the employees. The rest of the employees in the hospital are motivated to work hard to help the organization reaching high quality of service.

The professional nurses in the private hospitals are facing an extreme overloading work. The extreme work overload situation are found to be more worse in big size units. Every year, more and more hospitals are developing on experimental primary nursing systems. This approach allows the nurses to care totally for six to seven patients every day. Nurses are now concerned with the technical, physical and emotional sides of patient care. In this new and challenging role they are more vulnerable and subject to more stress than in the past. To improve health

care, to render our society healthier should be our goal, then it is a high time to assess our present state and improve it. Improve the level of job satisfaction of professional nurses could provide effective and valuable participation in this regard.

Many studies have found that the components of job satisfaction are income, autonomy, task requirement, organization policy, interaction and professional status. However, how much the professional nurses in private hospital are satisfied with their job and what factors are influencing their job satisfaction is not exactly known. This situation has indicated that there is a greater need for information about factors affecting job satisfaction of professional nurses in the modern private hospital. It is expected that the findings from this study can facilitate the hospital management in the development and implementation of appropriate strategies and programs to fulfill professional nurses' needs and to enhance the higher level of job satisfaction, thereby increasing productivity, efficiency, quality of care and patient satisfaction at the resource constraint situation.