ATHENA - HEALTH & RESEARCH JOURNAL

2026 • Volume 3 • Nº Suppl

Job satisfaction among nurses working in hospital emergency departments: a scoping review protocol

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ARTICLE INFO

Received 14 Sep 2026
Accepted 02 Nov 2026

Keywords:
job satisfaction
nurses
hospital emergency services
scoping review

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DOI: 10.62741/ahrj.v3iSuppl.272

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Job satisfaction among nurses is associated with professional well-being, workforce retention, quality of care, and patient safety. Hospital emergency departments are complex and unpredictable environments in which demanding working conditions may affect nurses' job satisfaction. Existing evidence is heterogeneous in its definitions, measurement instruments, and reported determinants.
Objective: To map the available evidence on job satisfaction among nurses working in hospital emergency departments, including reported levels, associated factors, measurement instruments, and knowledge gaps.
Methodology: This protocol follows Joanna Briggs Institute guidance for scoping reviews. The completed review will be reported according to PRISMA-ScR. The question is structured using the Population, Concept, and Context framework: nurses, job satisfaction, and hospital emergency departments. MEDLINE Complete, PubMed, CINAHL Complete, Scopus, Embase, APA PsycINFO and Web of Science Core Collection will be searched using controlled vocabulary and free-text terms. Primary quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods studies published in any language will be eligible. Two reviewers will independently screen records and chart data. Evidence will be summarized descriptively and through framework-informed qualitative content analysis.
Expected results: The review will describe how job satisfaction has been defined and measured, map reported levels and associated individual, professional, and organizational factors, and identify evidence gaps.
Conclusion: The review will provide a structured evidence map to guide future research and support cautious, evidence-informed consideration of working conditions in hospital emergency departments.

Contributions: Conceptualization: JJF and MTM; Data curation: JJF, MMP and ACL; Formal analysis: MTM; Funding acquisition: Not applicable; Investigation: JJF, MMP and ACL; Methodology: JJF and MTM; Project administration: JJF, MMP, MTM and ACL; Resources: JJF, MMP, MTM and ACL; Software: Not applicable; Supervision: MTM; Validation: MTM; Visualization: Not applicable; Writing – original draft: ACL, MTM and MMP; Writing – review & editing: JJF, MMP, MTM and ACL.

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Please cite this article as: Ferreira JJ, Lopes AC, Pontes MM, Moreira MT. Job satisfaction of nurses in hospital emergency services: a scoping review protocol. *Athena Health & Research Journal.* 2026;3(Suppl). doi:10.62741/ahrj.v3iSuppl.272

INFORMAÇÃO DO ARTIGO

Recebido 14 set 2026
Aceite 02 nov 2026

Palavras-chave:
satisfação profissional
enfermeiros
serviços de urgência hospitalar
revisão da literatura

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DOI: 10.62741/ahrj.v3iSuppl.272

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RESUMO

Introdução: A satisfação profissional dos enfermeiros está associada ao bem-estar, à retenção de profissionais, à qualidade dos cuidados e à segurança dos doentes. Os serviços de urgência hospitalar são contextos complexos e imprevisíveis, nos quais condições de trabalho exigentes podem afetar a satisfação profissional. A evidência existente é heterogénea quanto às definições, aos instrumentos de medida e aos determinantes estudados.
Objetivo: Mapear a evidência disponível sobre a satisfação profissional dos enfermeiros em serviços de urgência hospitalar, incluindo os níveis reportados, os fatores associados, os instrumentos de medida e as lacunas de conhecimento.
Metodologia: Este protocolo segue as orientações do *Joanna Briggs Institute* para revisões de escopo. A revisão concluída será reportada de acordo com a PRISMA-ScR. A questão está estruturada segundo a estratégia População, Conceito e Contexto: enfermeiros, satisfação profissional e serviços de urgência hospitalar. Serão pesquisadas as bases MEDLINE Complete, PubMed, CINAHL Complete, Scopus, Embase, APA PsycINFO e Web of Science Core Collection, utilizando vocabulário controlado e termos de texto livre. Serão elegíveis estudos primários quantitativos, qualitativos e de métodos mistos, publicados em qualquer idioma. Dois revisores realizarão, de forma independente, a seleção dos estudos e a extração dos dados. A evidência será sintetizada descritivamente e por meio de análise qualitativa de conteúdo orientada por um referencial teórico.
Resultados esperados: A revisão descreverá como a satisfação profissional foi definida e medida, mapeará os níveis reportados e os fatores individuais, profissionais e organizacionais associados e identificará lacunas na evidência.
Conclusão: A revisão produzirá um mapa estruturado da evidência para orientar investigação futura e apoiar uma consideração prudente e informada das condições de trabalho nos serviços de urgência hospitalar.

Introduction

Job satisfaction is a central construct in organizational psychology and healthcare management, reflecting a positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's work experiences. It is widely recognized as a key determinant of workforce stability, professional well-being, and organizational performance.[1,2] In nursing, job satisfaction is particularly important because of its association with quality of care, patient safety, and health-system sustainability.[3,4]

Globally, healthcare systems face increasing workforce shortages, high turnover, and rising demand for care. As the largest professional group in healthcare, nurses play a vital role in ensuring continuity and quality of care. Lower job satisfaction among nurses is associated with burnout, absenteeism, and intentions to leave the profession, with potential consequences for patient outcomes and organizational efficiency.[5,6]

Hospital Emergency Departments (EDs) are among the most demanding and complex healthcare environments. They are characterized by high patient acuity, unpredictable workflows, time pressure, and frequent exposure to critical and traumatic situations. These conditions contribute to occupational stress, emotional exhaustion, and psychological burden among ED nurses.[7,8] Evidence also indicates that job satisfaction and burnout are associated with emergency nurses' intention to remain in their roles.[8]

Job satisfaction in this context is influenced by a complex and multidimensional set of factors. These include individual characteristics such as age, professional experience, and coping strategies; professional factors such as workload, autonomy, and teamwork; and organizational conditions such as leadership, staffing adequacy, and the work environment. The Job Demands–Resources (JD–R) model provides a useful theoretical framework for understanding these dynamics: job demands, including workload and time pressure, and job resources, including support and autonomy, interact to influence burnout, engagement, and job satisfaction.[2,9,10]

Although a substantial body of literature addresses job satisfaction among nurses, the evidence remains conceptually and methodologically diverse. Variations in definitions, measurement instruments, and study designs limit comparability and make it difficult to identify consistent determinants, particularly in specialized settings such as EDs.[1] The inclusion of quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods evidence further reinforces the need for a broad mapping approach. The hospital-wide review by Lu et al.1 provides a broad foundation, whereas the present review will map extractable ED-specific evidence across designs and instruments. Evidence on emergency nurses' satisfaction, burnout and intention to stay[8] and on nursing work engagement10 supports considering these related constructs without treating them as interchangeable. The ED-specific map will distinguish satisfaction measures from burnout and engagement measures and examine contextual reporting on staffing, shift patterns and workload.

A scoping review is therefore appropriate. Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI) guidance indicates that scoping

reviews can map the extent, range, and nature of evidence, clarify key concepts, and identify knowledge gaps, particularly in heterogeneous or emerging fields.[11] Unlike systematic reviews designed to answer narrowly defined questions, scoping reviews provide a broader account of the available evidence and are well suited to complex, multifaceted topics such as job satisfaction among ED nurses.

Given the importance of job satisfaction for workforce retention, quality of care, and organizational outcomes, together with the specific demands of ED practice, a comprehensive synthesis is needed. Mapping the literature will clarify how job satisfaction has been conceptualized and measured and identify the factors most consistently associated with it in this context.

Therefore, this scoping review aims to answer the following research question: *What scientific evidence is available regarding job satisfaction among nurses working in hospital Emergency Departments?*

This review aims to map the available evidence on job satisfaction among nurses working in hospital EDs by describing reported levels of job satisfaction, identifying associated individual, professional, and organizational factors, summarizing the instruments used to assess the construct, and identifying gaps for future research and healthcare management.

Methodology

This scoping review protocol was developed in accordance with JBI guidance for scoping reviews.[11] The completed review will be reported following the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses Extension for Scoping Reviews (PRISMA-ScR).[12]

The review aims to address the following question: *What scientific evidence is available regarding job satisfaction among nurses working in hospital Emergency Departments?*

The question was formulated using the PCC framework (Population, Concept, Context), as recommended by JBI.

Eligibility criteria

The eligibility criteria are structured according to the Population, Concept, and Context (PCC) framework (Table 1).

Population: The review will include registered nurses and specialist nurses working in hospital EDs, regardless of age, gender, or professional experience. Studies involving mixed healthcare-professional samples will be eligible only when data relating specifically to nurses can be extracted separately.

Concept: The concept of interest is job satisfaction, understood as nurses' evaluative and affective responses to their work. Studies assessing overall job satisfaction, its dimensions, associated factors, or nurses' qualitative experiences will be included, whether they use validated instruments, other explicit measures, or qualitative methods. Studies addressing only patient satisfaction, clinical outcomes, burnout, stress, or related constructs without reporting job satisfaction will be excluded.

Context: The review will include general, adult, pediatric, and specialized hospital EDs. Studies conducted exclusively in pre-hospital emergency services, ambulance services, urgent-care centers, or other non-hospital settings will be excluded. Mixed-setting studies will be eligible only when findings for hospital EDs can be extracted separately.

Types of sources: Primary quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods studies published in peer-reviewed journals will be considered, with no date or language restrictions. Reviews, protocols without empirical results, editorials, commentaries, conference abstracts, theses, dissertations, reports, and other grey literature will be excluded. Excluding grey literature reflects the predefined scope and feasibility of the review and will be acknowledged as a potential limitation. This restriction concentrates resources on mapping empirical journal reports across languages and study designs; it may underrepresent regional, practice-based and unpublished evidence, and the resulting map will not be described as exhaustive of all evidence sources.

Table 1. PCC Framework.

PCC	Criteria
Population	Registered nurses employed in hospital Emergency Departments; mixed professional samples only when nurses' data are reported separately
Concept	Job satisfaction explicitly measured or qualitatively explored; studies reporting only burnout, stress, engagement or professional quality of life without job-satisfaction findings are excluded
Context	Hospital Emergency Departments (general, adult, paediatric or specialised); mixed settings only if hospital ED nurse findings are extractable separately. Exclusively pre-hospital services, ambulance services, urgent-care centres, intensive care units and other non-ED settings are excluded.

Search strategy

A comprehensive search strategy will be implemented using the three-step approach recommended by JBI.[11]

First, an initial limited search of PubMed and CINAHL was conducted to identify relevant articles and analyze keywords and index terms. Second, expanded controlled-vocabulary and free-text strategies will be applied in the databases listed below, with synonyms combined by OR within each PCC component and the three components combined by AND (Tables 2 and 3). Third, reference lists and forward citations of included studies will be searched using Scopus and Web of Science Core Collection. Citation searches will be dated, exported and screened using the same eligibility criteria. All database searches and citation searches will be updated before the final synthesis; database alerts will be used where available during the review period.

Table 2. Controlled vocabulary and free-text terms.

Database		P: Population	C: Concept	C: Context
MEDLINE	MeSH	Nurses; Nursing	Job Satisfaction	Emergency Service,

Database		P: Population	C: Concept	C: Context
Complete		Staff		Hospital; Emergency Nursing
	Free-text terms	nurs*; enfermeir*; enfermer*; infirmier*	Job/work/professional/occupational/career satisfaction; Portuguese, Spanish and French equivalents (full terms in Table 3).	Emergency department/room/unit/ward; accident and emergency; A&E; casualty; emergency nursing; ED nurses; multilingual equivalents (Table 3).
PubMed	MeSH	Nurses; Nursing Staff	Job Satisfaction	Emergency Service, Hospital; Emergency Nursing
	Free-text terms	nurs*; enfermeir*; enfermer*; infirmier*	Job/work/professional/occupational/career satisfaction; Portuguese, Spanish and French equivalents (full terms in Table 3).	Emergency department/room/unit/ward; accident and emergency; A&E; casualty; emergency nursing; ED nurses; multilingual equivalents (Table 3).
CINAHL Complete	CINAHL Headings	Nurses (explode)	Job Satisfaction (explode)	Emergency Service; Emergency Nursing (explode where available)
	Free-text terms	nurs*; enfermeir*; enfermer*; infirmier*	Job/work/professional/occupational/career satisfaction; Portuguese, Spanish and French equivalents (full terms in Table 3).	Emergency department/room/unit/ward; accident and emergency; A&E; casualty; emergency nursing; ED nurses; multilingual equivalents (Table 3).
Scopus	Free-text terms	nurs*; enfermeir*; enfermer*; infirmier*	Job/work/professional/occupational/career satisfaction; Portuguese, Spanish and French equivalents (full terms in Table 3).	Emergency department/room/unit/ward; accident and emergency; A&E; casualty; emergency nursing; ED nurses; multilingual equivalents (Table 3).
Embase (Embase.com)	Emtree: nurse; job satisfaction; emergency ward; emergency nursing (verify live preferred headings and explosion)	Same population free-text terms above.	Same concept synonyms and multilingual terms above; full strategy in Table 3.	Same ED variants above; full strategy in Table 3.
APA PsycINFO (EBSCOhost)	APA Thesaurus: candidate headings Nurses; Job Satisfaction; Emergency Services (verify live preferred headings)	Same population free-text terms above.	Same concept synonyms and multilingual terms above; full strategy in Table 3.	Same ED variants above; full strategy in Table 3.
Web of Science Core Collection	No controlled vocabulary; Topic fields	Same population free-text terms above.	Same concept synonyms and multilingual terms above; full strategy in Table 3.	Same ED variants above; full strategy in Table 3.

The following databases are planned: MEDLINE Complete via EBSCOhost, PubMed, CINAHL Complete via EBSCOhost, Scopus, Embase via Embase.com, APA PsycINFO via EBSCOhost, and Web of Science Core Collection. Embase will broaden biomedical and international coverage, APA PsycINFO will strengthen coverage of occupational and psychosocial constructs, and Web of Science will support multidisciplinary retrieval and forward citation searching. Overlap across databases will be managed through systematic duplicate removal. Access to the additional subscription databases will be confirmed before searching; any unavailable database, alternative access route and resulting coverage limitation will be documented as a protocol amendment.

Boolean operators, phrase searching, truncation, field codes and proximity operators will be adapted to each platform. Table 3 provides revised, staged PCC strategies to be tested and executed; controlled-vocabulary labels and explosion options will be checked against the live thesaurus of each database before final execution. No date, language, open-access or full-text filters will be applied; publication-type eligibility will be assessed during screening. Revised search dates, platform, complete executed strings and retrieval counts will be recorded.

Table 3. Database-specific search strategies.

Database	Search String
MEDLINE Complete (EBSCOhost)	S1 (Population): MH "Nurses+" OR MH "Nursing Staff+" OR TI (nurs* OR enfermeir* OR enfermer* OR infirmier*) OR AB (nurs* OR enfermeir* OR enfermer* OR infirmier*) S2 (Concept): MH "Job Satisfaction+" OR TI ("job satisfaction" OR "work satisfaction" OR "professional satisfaction" OR "occupational satisfaction" OR "career satisfaction" OR "satisfação profissional" OR "satisfacao profissional" OR "satisfação no trabalho" OR "satisfacao no trabalho" OR "satisfacción laboral" OR "satisfaccion laboral" OR "satisfacción profesional" OR "satisfaccion profesional" OR "satisfaction au travail" OR "satisfaction professionnelle" OR ((job OR work OR professional OR occupational OR career) N3 satisfaction)) OR AB ("job satisfaction" OR "work satisfaction" OR "professional satisfaction" OR "occupational satisfaction" OR "career satisfaction" OR "satisfação profissional" OR "satisfacao profissional" OR "satisfação no trabalho" OR "satisfacao no trabalho" OR "satisfacción laboral" OR "satisfaccion laboral" OR "satisfacción profesional" OR "satisfaccion profesional" OR "satisfaction au travail" OR "satisfaction professionnelle" OR ((job OR work OR professional OR occupational OR career) N3 satisfaction)) S3 (Context): MH "Emergency Service, Hospital+" OR MH "Emergency Nursing+" OR TI ("emergency department*" OR "emergency room*" OR "emergency unit*" OR "emergency ward*" OR "accident and emergency" OR "A&E" OR "casualty" OR "emergency nursing" OR "ED nurse*" OR "serviço de urgência" OR "servico de urgencia" OR "servicio de urgencias" OR "service d'urgence" OR "service des urgences") OR AB ("emergency department*" OR "emergency room*" OR "emergency unit*" OR "emergency ward*" OR "accident and emergency" OR "A&E" OR "casualty" OR "emergency nursing" OR "ED nurse*" OR "serviço de urgência" OR "servico de urgencia" OR "servicio de urgencias" OR "service d'urgence" OR "service des urgences") S4 (final): S1 AND S2 AND S3 Limits: none.
PubMed	#1 (Population): "Nurses"[Mesh] OR "Nursing Staff"[Mesh] OR nurs*[tiab] OR enfermeir*[tiab] OR enfermer*[tiab] OR infirmier*[tiab] #2 (Concept): "Job Satisfaction"[Mesh] OR "job satisfaction"[tiab] OR "work satisfaction"[tiab] OR "professional satisfaction"[tiab] OR "occupational satisfaction"[tiab] OR "career satisfaction"[tiab] OR "satisfação profissional"[tiab] OR "satisfacao profissional"[tiab] OR "satisfação no trabalho"[tiab] OR "satisfacao no trabalho"[tiab] OR "satisfacción laboral"[tiab] OR "satisfaccion laboral"[tiab] OR "satisfacción profesional"[tiab] OR "satisfaccion profesional"[tiab] OR "satisfaction au travail"[tiab] OR "satisfaction professionnelle"[tiab] OR "job satisfaction"[tiab:~3] OR "work satisfaction"[tiab:~3] OR "professional satisfaction"[tiab:~3] OR "occupational satisfaction"[tiab:~3] OR "career satisfaction"[tiab:~3] #3 (Context): "Emergency Service, Hospital"[Mesh] OR "Emergency Nursing"[Mesh] OR "emergency department*"[tiab] OR "emergency room*"[tiab] OR "emergency unit*"[tiab] OR "emer-

Database	Search String
	gency ward*"[tiab] OR "accident and emergency"[tiab] OR "A&E"[tiab] OR "casualty"[tiab] OR "emergency nursing"[tiab] OR "ED nurse*"[tiab] OR "serviço de urgência"[tiab] OR "servico de urgencia"[tiab] OR "servicio de urgencias"[tiab] OR "service d'urgence"[tiab] OR "service des urgences"[tiab] #4 (final): #1 AND #2 AND #3 Limits: none. Revised strategy not yet executed; search date and result count to be recorded after execution.
CINAHL Complete (EBSCOhost)	S1 (Population): MH "Nurses+" OR TI (nurs* OR enfermeir* OR enfermer* OR infirmier*) OR AB (nurs* OR enfermeir* OR enfermer* OR infirmier*) S2 (Concept): MH "Job Satisfaction+" OR TI ("job satisfaction" OR "work satisfaction" OR "professional satisfaction" OR "occupational satisfaction" OR "career satisfaction" OR "satisfação profissional" OR "satisfacao profissional" OR "satisfação no trabalho" OR "satisfacao no trabalho" OR "satisfacción laboral" OR "satisfaccion laboral" OR "satisfacción profesional" OR "satisfaccion profesional" OR "satisfaction au travail" OR "satisfaction professionnelle" OR ((job OR work OR professional OR occupational OR career) N3 satisfaction)) OR AB ("job satisfaction" OR "work satisfaction" OR "professional satisfaction" OR "occupational satisfaction" OR "career satisfaction" OR "satisfação profissional" OR "satisfacao profissional" OR "satisfação no trabalho" OR "satisfacao no trabalho" OR "satisfacción laboral" OR "satisfaccion laboral" OR "satisfacción profesional" OR "satisfaccion profesional" OR "satisfaction au travail" OR "satisfaction professionnelle" OR ((job OR work OR professional OR occupational OR career) N3 satisfaction)) S3 (Context): MH "Emergency Service+" OR MH "Emergency Nursing+" OR TI ("emergency department*" OR "emergency room*" OR "emergency unit*" OR "emergency ward*" OR "accident and emergency" OR "A&E" OR "casualty" OR "emergency nursing" OR "ED nurse*" OR "serviço de urgência" OR "servico de urgencia" OR "servicio de urgencias" OR "service d'urgence" OR "service des urgences") OR AB ("emergency department*" OR "emergency room*" OR "emergency unit*" OR "emergency ward*" OR "accident and emergency" OR "A&E" OR "casualty" OR "emergency nursing" OR "ED nurse*" OR "serviço de urgência" OR "servico de urgencia" OR "servicio de urgencias" OR "service d'urgence" OR "service des urgences") S4 (final): S1 AND S2 AND S3 Limits: none.
Scopus	S1 (Population): TITLE-ABS-KEY(nurs* OR enfermeir* OR enfermer* OR infirmier*) S2 (Concept): TITLE-ABS-KEY("job satisfaction" OR "work satisfaction" OR "professional satisfaction" OR "occupational satisfaction" OR "career satisfaction" OR "satisfação profissional" OR "satisfacao profissional" OR "satisfação no trabalho" OR "satisfacao no trabalho" OR "satisfacción laboral" OR "satisfaccion laboral" OR "satisfacción profesional" OR "satisfaccion profesional" OR "satisfaction au travail" OR "satisfaction professionnelle" OR ((job OR work OR professional OR occupational OR career) W/3 satisfaction)) S3 (Context): TITLE-ABS-KEY("emergency department*" OR "emergency room*" OR "emergency unit*" OR "emergency ward*" OR "accident and emergency" OR "A&E" OR "casualty" OR "emergency nursing" OR "ED nurse*" OR "serviço de urgência" OR "servico de urgencia" OR "servicio de urgencias" OR "service d'urgence" OR "service des urgences") Final: combine the three recorded searches using AND in search history. Limits: none.
Embase (Embase.com)	#1 (Population): 'nurse'/exp OR (nurs* OR enfermeir* OR enfermer* OR infirmier*):ti,ab,kw #2 (Concept): 'job satisfaction'/exp OR ("job satisfaction" OR "work satisfaction" OR "professional satisfaction" OR "occupational satisfaction" OR "career satisfaction" OR "satisfação profissional" OR "satisfacao profissional" OR "satisfação no trabalho" OR "satisfacao no trabalho" OR "satisfacción laboral" OR "satisfaccion laboral" OR "satisfacción profesional" OR "satisfaccion profesional" OR "satisfaction au travail" OR "satisfaction professionnelle" OR ((job OR work OR professional OR occupational OR career) NEAR/3 satisfaction)):ti,ab,kw #3 (Context): 'emergency ward'/exp OR 'emergency nursing'/exp OR ("emergency department*" OR "emergency room*" OR "emergency unit*" OR "emergency ward*" OR "accident and emergency" OR "A&E" OR "casualty" OR "emergency nursing" OR "ED nurse*" OR "serviço de urgência" OR "servico de urgencia" OR "servicio de urgencias" OR "service d'urgence" OR "service des urgencies"):ti,ab,kw #4 (final): #1 AND #2 AND #3 Limits: none.
APA PsycINFO (EBSCOhost)	S1 (Population): TI (nurs* OR enfermeir* OR enfermer* OR infirmier*) OR AB (nurs* OR enfermeir* OR enfermer* OR infirmier*) S2 (Concept): TI ("job satisfaction" OR "work satisfaction" OR "professional satisfaction" OR "occupational satisfaction" OR "career satisfaction" OR "satisfação profissional" OR "satisfacao profissional" OR "satisfação no trabalho" OR "satisfacao no trabalho" OR "satisfacción laboral" OR "satisfaccion laboral" OR "satisfacción profesional" OR "satisfaccion profesional" OR "satisfaction au travail" OR "satisfaction professionnelle" OR ((job OR work OR professional OR occupational OR career) N3 satisfaction)) OR AB ("job satisfaction" OR "work satisfaction" OR "professional satisfaction" OR "occupational satisfaction" OR "career satisfaction" OR "satisfação profissional" OR "satisfacao profissional" OR "satisfação no trabalho" OR "satisfacao no trabalho" OR "satisfacción laboral" OR "satisfaccion laboral" OR "satisfacción profesional" OR "satisfaccion profesional" OR "satisfaction au travail" OR "satisfaction professionnelle" OR ((job OR work OR professional OR occupational OR career) N3 satisfaction)) S3 (Context): TI ("emergency department*" OR "emergency room*" OR "emergency unit*" OR "emergency ward*" OR "accident and emergency" OR "A&E" OR "casualty" OR "emergency nursing" OR "ED nurse*" OR "serviço de urgência" OR "servico de urgencia" OR "servicio de urgencias" OR "service d'urgence" OR "service des urgences") OR AB ("emergency department*" OR "emergency room*" OR "emergency unit*" OR "emergency ward*" OR "accident and emergency" OR "A&E" OR "casualty" OR "emergency nursing" OR "ED nurse*" OR "serviço de urgência" OR "servico de urgencia" OR "servicio de urgencias" OR "service d'urgence" OR "service des urgences") S4 (final): S1 AND S2 AND S3 Free-text baseline: OR in confirmed APA Thesaurus headings for each block before execution; record the final expanded strategy. Limits: none.
Web of Science Core Collection	#1 (Population): TS=(nurs* OR enfermeir* OR enfermer* OR infirmier*) #2 (Concept): TS=("job satisfaction" OR "work satisfaction" OR "professional satisfaction" OR "occupational satisfaction" OR "career satisfaction" OR "satisfação profissional" OR "satisfacao profissional" OR "satisfação no trabalho" OR "satisfacao no trabalho" OR "satisfacción laboral" OR "satisfaccion laboral" OR "satisfacción profesional" OR "satisfaccion profesional" OR "satisfaction au travail" OR "satisfaction professionnelle" OR ((job OR work OR professional OR occupational OR career) NEAR/3 satisfaction)) #3 (Context): TS=("emergency department*" OR "emergency room*" OR "emergency unit*" OR "emergency ward*" OR "accident and emergency" OR "A&E" OR "casualty" OR "emergency nursing" OR "ED nurse*" OR "serviço de urgência" OR "servico de urgencia" OR "servicio de urgencias" OR "service d'urgence" OR "service des urgences") #4 (final): #1 AND #2 AND #3 Limits: none

Study selection process

The protocol was registered prospectively on the Open Science Framework (OSF) with DOI: 10.17605/OSF.IO/ZYGC7. Retrieved records will be exported to Rayyan for organization, duplicate detection, and screening.[13] Duplicates will be identified electronically and verified manually by the reviewers. The revised search scope and other substantive amendments will be dated and documented in the OSF record before implementation; the original registration will be retained.

Before formal screening, the reviewers will pilot the eligibility criteria on a sample of records and discuss discrepancies to improve consistency. Two reviewers will then independently screen titles and abstracts. Potentially eligible reports will undergo independent full-text assessment by the same reviewers. Reasons for full-text exclusion will be recorded. Reviewers will resolve disagreements at any stage through discussion and, when necessary, consultation with a third reviewer. Full texts will be sought through institutional subscriptions, library/interlibrary-loan services and corresponding-author contact. When necessary, one reminder will be sent after two weeks and retrieval will remain open for four weeks after the initial request. Reports still unavailable will be logged as reports not retrieved, with attempts documented, rather than excluded on the basis of access status. Any subsequent retrieval will be assessed

before finalization. For reports in languages the reviewers can assess directly, screening and charting will follow the same independent procedures. For other languages, machine translation may support initial assessment, but eligibility decisions and extracted findings will be verified by a language-proficient colleague or translator against the source text. The language, translation tool or assistance used, verification and unresolved ambiguities will be recorded. Reports awaiting adequate translation will be listed separately as awaiting classification and their potential impact discussed; language alone will not be an exclusion criterion.

The study-selection process will be documented in sufficient detail to ensure transparency and will be presented in a PRISMA-ScR flow diagram showing the numbers of records identified, deduplicated, screened, assessed for eligibility, excluded with reasons, and included in the final review.[12]

Where multiple reports relate to the same study, they will be linked and treated as a single study while retaining all relevant information.

Data extraction

Data will be charted using a standardized form developed in accordance with JBI guidance and aligned with the review question and objectives.

The following data will be extracted from each included study:

The form will capture the author, year, country, study design, sample characteristics, ED context, definition and measurement of job satisfaction, reported levels of job satisfaction, associated individual, professional, and organizational factors, and the principal findings and conclusions. Table 4 also specifies instrument versions and measurement properties, study-method markers, association estimates and ED contextual variables. Missing information will be recorded as not reported, without inferring absent characteristics or study quality.

Two reviewers will independently pilot the charting form on a small sample of included studies. The form may be refined iteratively, with changes documented. Two reviewers will then chart the data independently, and resolve discrepancies by consensus or by consulting a third reviewer. Authors may be contacted when essential information is unclear or missing.

Table 4. Data-charting Framework.

Dimension	Information to chart
Title	Job Satisfaction Among Nurses Working in Hospital Emergency Departments: A Scoping Review Protocol
Aim	To map the available evidence on job satisfaction among nurses working in hospital Emergency Departments, including reported levels, associated factors, measurement instruments, and knowledge gaps.
Research question	What scientific evidence is available regarding job satisfaction among nurses working in hospital Emergency Departments?
Inclusion/exclusion criteria	Inclusion: Primary quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods studies involving registered or specialist nurses working in hospital Emergency Departments and reporting job satisfaction, its measurement, levels, or associated factors. Mixed populations or settings will be eligible only when ED nurse data can be extracted separately. No date or language restrictions. Exclusion: Studies without extractable data for hospital ED nurses; studies not reporting job satisfaction; reviews, protocols without empirical results, editorials, commentaries, conference abstracts, and grey literature. Immediate full-text availability and open-access status will not be used as eligibility criteria. Retrieval attempts and reports not retrieved will be recorded separately, as described in Study selection process.
Population	Nurses working in hospital emergency departments.
Context	Hospital emergency departments (adult, paediatric, general, or specialised, as described in each study).
Concept	Job satisfaction.
Types of evidence	Primary quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods studies published in peer-reviewed journals.
Author	Author(s), citation and identifiers; linked reports from the same study
Year	Publication year and data-collection dates
Country	Country and geographical setting; income group if classified, with classification source/year
Aim	Study aim and research question
Population and sample size	Number of ED nurses; demographic/professional characteristics; mixed samples and extractability
Measurement instruments	Instrument name, version, language, validation status and population; number of items, domains, response options, score range/direction and cut-offs; reliability statistics and other measurement properties as reported; ad hoc measures identified separately
Dimensions of job satisfaction	Overall satisfaction and subdomains; conceptual definition; qualitative approach where applicable
Associated factors	Factor definition and measure; individual/professional/organisational level; JD–R or emergent category; modelled role; adjusted/unadjusted estimates, covariates and reference categories
Main Results	Means/medians and dispersion; counts/denominators and percentages with original thresholds; correlations, beta coefficients, odds ratios or other effect measures with confidence intervals/p values as reported; qualitative themes and supporting context
Study-method markers	Design; sampling and recruitment method; sample frame; response rate with denominator; validated/ad hoc instruments; adjustment for confounders; reported limitations. No quality score or certainty rating.
ED characteristics	General/adult/paediatric/specialised ED; hospital type; size/annual visits; crowding measures; staffing ratios and skill mix; shift duration, patterns and scheduling flexibility; record not reported where absent.
Pandemic period	Data-collection dates and authors' description of pre-, during- or post-COVID-19 context; mixed or unclear periods retained; classification basis recorded rather than inferred from publication year.
Overlapping constructs	Burnout, engagement, work environment and other constructs: separate definitions/measures, temporal ordering and model role; satisfaction retained as a distinct construct.
Translation and missing data	Original language; translation method/tool; verifier; author contact; unresolved ambiguities and not-reported fields.

Data analysis and presentation

The evidence will be analyzed using descriptive numerical summaries and qualitative content analysis. Study characteristics will first be summarized by publication year, country, design, sample, ED context, and measurement instrument. Instrument names and versions will be catalogued separately, including the McCloskey/Mueller Satisfaction Scale (MMSS), Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) and Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ), when identified. Scores will retain the original scale, direction, threshold and denominator. Reported percentages of satisfied nurses will be distinguished from mean or median scores and from qualitative accounts; incompatible thresholds or instruments will not be pooled or converted into a common prevalence estimate.

Factors associated with job satisfaction will then be organized using a framework-informed approach. The JD–R model will support interpretation of individual, professional, and organizational factors, while allowing additional categories to be developed inductively from the

included evidence. Two reviewers will pilot a codebook that records each factor, its source wording, individual/professional/organizational level, proposed JD–R category (demand, resource, personal resource or other/emergent), and the reason for assignment. Factors that do not fit will be retained in inductive categories; multiple coding will be allowed when justified. Coding disagreements will be discussed and, if unresolved, referred to a third reviewer; codebook revisions and decisions will be logged. Burnout, engagement and work environment will be charted as distinct constructs, retaining their modelled role (predictor, outcome, mediator or moderator), temporal ordering where reported, and the job-satisfaction measure used. Cross-sectional model direction will not be interpreted as evidence of causation.

Results will be presented in tables, charts, and narrative summaries aligned with the review question and objectives. Evidence gaps will be identified and described without implying causal effects where the included study designs do not support causal inference. A descriptive JD–R evidence matrix will show which factors and settings have been studied and the direction of reported relationships (positive, negative, mixed or no clear association), alongside effect estimates, confidence intervals and adjustment status where reported. Non-significance will not be treated as proof of no association. Adjusted and unadjusted results, quantitative associations and qualitative themes will remain distinguishable. Linked reports will not be counted as independent studies, and multiple estimates from a study will be displayed without inflating study counts. Direction counts will describe the evidence distribution only; they will not establish effect strength, certainty or causal consistency. Gaps will be mapped by country, ED type, study design, instrument and pandemic period, including underrepresented low- and middle-income settings and pediatric EDs.

No formal methodological quality appraisal is planned because this scoping review aims to map and characterize the available evidence rather than determine intervention effectiveness or produce certainty-of-evidence estimates.[11] This decision will be considered when interpreting the findings. To support interpretation without assigning quality scores or certainty ratings, design, sampling method, recruitment setting, response rate, instrument validation/reliability and confounder adjustment will be charted when reported.

Discussion

Job satisfaction among nurses working in hospital EDs is important because of its implications for professional well-being, workforce retention, quality of care, and patient safety.[3,4] The high clinical complexity, workload, and unpredictability of ED practice may adversely affect nurses' work experiences and retention.[7,8]

The available evidence is dispersed across different designs, definitions, and measurement instruments. A scoping review can therefore clarify how job satisfaction has been conceptualized and assessed, map its associated factors, and identify gaps requiring further investigation.[11,12]

The review is expected to provide a structured overview of the literature on job satisfaction among hospital ED nurses. The JD–R model will be used as an interpretive aid, while the synthesis will remain open to themes not represented by that framework.[9,10]

The findings may inform future research and help healthcare managers understand which modifiable working conditions have been examined in relation to job satisfaction. Because this review will map heterogeneous evidence and will not formally appraise methodological quality, it will express any implications for management or practice cautiously. Practical implications will be phrased in terms of associated factors and reported relationships. Potential organizational levers such as staffing adequacy, scheduling flexibility, leadership support, teamwork and training will be discussed only where supported by the mapped evidence, alongside design limitations and missing contextual information. Communication demands, emotional labor and cognitive load will be considered if reported, without inferring satisfaction effects from operational or technology studies that do not assess the review concept.

The review has anticipated limitations. Restricting eligible sources to peer-reviewed journal articles may omit relevant grey literature and increase the risk of publication bias. In addition, no formal critical appraisal is planned, and heterogeneity in definitions and instruments may limit direct comparison across studies. These limitations will be considered when interpreting the mapped evidence. Translation constraints, unreported ED characteristics and any inability to access additional databases may also restrict coverage or interpretation. Descriptive methodological markers will help make these limitations visible but will not substitute for formal critical appraisal.

This protocol establishes a transparent, a priori approach to identifying, selecting, charting, and synthesizing the evidence. The review will document and report any substantive amendments made during the review in the final publication.

Conclusion

This protocol describes a transparent method for mapping the evidence on job satisfaction among nurses working in hospital EDs. The review will examine how job satisfaction is defined and measured, the levels reported, and the individual, professional, and organizational factors associated with it.

By integrating descriptive mapping with a framework-informed thematic synthesis, the review will identify areas of consistency, methodological variation, and gaps in the

evidence. The findings will be interpreted in light of the designs and limitations of the included studies.

The resulting evidence map may guide future research and provide healthcare managers with a clearer account of the working conditions and professional factors that have been studied in relation to emergency nurses' job satisfaction.

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