



Job Satisfaction, Career Advancement, And Economic Opportunities as Determinants of Respiratory Therapists' Migration

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ABSTRACT

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Migration of healthcare professionals has become an increasing concern in many countries, particularly in the Philippines where skilled healthcare workers often seek employment abroad. Among these professionals, respiratory therapists play a vital role in delivering specialized respiratory care, especially in critical care settings. However, the factors influencing their intention to migrate remain an important area of investigation. This study examined the relationship between job satisfaction, career advancement opportunities, and economic opportunities as determinants of migration intention among Filipino respiratory therapists.

The study employed a quantitative descriptive-correlational research design and utilized an online survey questionnaire distributed to PRC-licensed Filipino respiratory therapists. The instrument underwent expert validation and reliability testing to ensure accuracy and consistency. Statistical tools such as weighted mean and Pearson product-moment correlation were used to analyze the data.

Findings revealed that job satisfaction (WM = 2.62) was interpreted as satisfied, career advancement opportunities (WM = 2.56) were available, and economic opportunities (WM = 2.16) were slightly experienced. Meanwhile, migration intention (WM = 3.08) was interpreted as high, indicating a strong inclination among respondents to consider working abroad. The results further showed that economic opportunities had the strongest association with migration intention, while job satisfaction and career advancement demonstrated comparatively lower associations.

It was concluded that economic factors, along with limited career growth and moderate job satisfaction, significantly influence the migration intention of Filipino respiratory therapists. The findings suggest that improving compensation, strengthening career development pathways, and enhancing workplace conditions are essential in addressing workforce migration. This study serves as a valuable reference for healthcare administrators and policymakers in developing strategies to retain respiratory therapists in the local healthcare system.

KEYWORDS:

Respiratory therapists, migration intention, job satisfaction, career advancement, economic opportunities

I. INTRODUCTION

Migration of healthcare workers has remained a persistent global phenomenon that continues to reshape health systems across both developed and developing countries. International mobility among health professionals has intensified due to disparities in compensation, working

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conditions, professional development opportunities, and institutional capacity (Alibudbud, 2022; Eaton et al., 2023). High-income countries have increasingly depended on internationally trained healthcare personnel to address domestic workforce shortages, thereby reinforcing transnational labor flows (Eaton et al., 2023). In the Philippine context, outward migration has remained deeply embedded in the national health workforce structure, with economic disparities, chronic understaffing, and limited professional growth opportunities continuing to drive mobility among healthcare professionals (Alibudbud, 2022; Bretana, 2023; Caino, 2024).

Julipie S.M.et al, Job Satisfaction, Career Advancement, And Economic Opportunities as Determinants of Respiratory Therapists' Migration

Job satisfaction, career advancement, and economic opportunities have consistently emerged as central determinants of healthcare workforce retention and mobility. Dissatisfaction related to workload, institutional support, and recognition has been shown to significantly influence turnover and migration considerations (Ali & Bangcola, 2022; Chung & Rahman, 2023). Similarly, structured professional development systems and clear specialization pathways have been associated with stronger employee commitment and reduced migration intention (Sufyani et al., 2024). Economic disparities between domestic and international labor markets have likewise remained a powerful motivator among Filipino healthcare workers seeking financial stability and improved living conditions (Antonio, 2025).

Within respiratory care practice globally, respiratory therapists have assumed advanced and specialized roles in critical care, emergency response, and pulmonary diagnostics. In many high-income countries, they function as autonomous clinicians integral to mechanical ventilation management and interdisciplinary care (Varekojis, 2022; Zaccagnini, 2025). Despite this global recognition, migration research has continued to focus predominantly on physicians and nurses, leaving allied health professionals, including respiratory therapists, underrepresented in empirical studies (Sax dos Santos Gomes et al., 2024).

In the Philippine healthcare context, respiratory therapists face structural and professional limitations such as restricted scope of practice, limited recognition, and constrained career pathways. These conditions may contribute to dissatisfaction and influence migration decisions, particularly in a post-pandemic environment where respiratory expertise has become increasingly critical (Chung & Rahman, 2023). Moreover, while job satisfaction, career advancement, and economic opportunities have been independently studied, there is limited research examining their combined influence on migration intention among Filipino respiratory therapists.

Migration intention is widely recognized as a strong predictor of actual migration behavior. It reflects an individual's conscious plan or willingness to work abroad based on perceived opportunities and constraints (Hajian et al., 2020). Understanding the determinants of migration intention is essential for developing effective retention strategies and strengthening healthcare workforce sustainability.

Objective of the Study

The overall objective of this study was to determine the level of job satisfaction, career advancement, and economic opportunities, as well as the level of migration intention among Filipino respiratory therapists. Specifically, the study aimed to determine the level of job satisfaction in terms of departmental support, workload manageability, recognition

and appreciation, leadership communication and support, and work-related emotional exhaustion; determine the level of career advancement opportunities in terms of career growth opportunities, promotion clarity, training and development support, supervisory guidance, and long-term career outlook; determine the level of economic opportunities in terms of salary equity, statutory benefits, institutional incentives, compensation transparency, and financial growth prospects; determine the level of migration intention in terms of intention to work abroad, career opportunities abroad, compensation abroad, work environment abroad, and long-term career alignment abroad; determine the significant relationship between job satisfaction, career advancement, and economic opportunities and migration intention; and propose an action plan to enhance job satisfaction, career advancement, and economic opportunities in order to reduce the migration of Filipino respiratory therapists.

II. METHODS

Research Design

The study employed a quantitative descriptive-correlational research design to examine the relationships among job satisfaction, career advancement, economic opportunities, and migration intention among Filipino respiratory therapists. This design was appropriate as it allowed the collection and statistical analysis of numerical data to determine the degree and direction of relationships among variables without manipulating real-life conditions.

The descriptive component was used to determine the levels of the identified variables, while the correlational component examined whether significant relationships exist among them. This approach is suitable for studies involving human behavior and workplace experiences where variables cannot be ethically manipulated.

Overall, the design provided a systematic and objective method for analyzing how workplace and career-related factors are associated with the migration intention of respiratory therapists, generating evidence useful for workforce planning and policy development.

Sources of Data

The study utilized primary data collected from PRC-licensed respiratory therapists employed in selected government and private hospitals in the Philippines. Data were gathered using a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher to measure job satisfaction, career advancement, economic opportunities, and migration intention.

Population of the Study

The population of the study consisted of 160 Professional Regulation Commission (PRC)-licensed respiratory therapists employed in selected government and private hospitals in the Philippines with operational

Julipie S.M.et al, Job Satisfaction, Career Advancement, And Economic Opportunities as Determinants of Respiratory Therapists' Migration

respiratory therapy departments. These practitioners were selected as the target population because they possess the necessary clinical experience and professional exposure to provide informed insights into job satisfaction, career advancement, economic opportunities, and migration intention.

The respondents were drawn from fifteen hospitals where respiratory therapy services are actively provided. To ensure institutional confidentiality, the participating hospitals were assigned coded identifiers rather than their actual names. This approach allowed the researcher to protect the identity of the institutions while still capturing data across multiple healthcare settings.

To determine the required sample size, the Raosoft Sample Size Calculator was used with a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error, resulting in a minimum sample size of 114 respondents. A stratified sampling technique with proportional allocation was initially employed as a guide in identifying the number of respondents from each hospital. However, the final number of participants depended on voluntary participation.

A total of 114 respiratory therapists completed the survey and were included in the study. Participation was voluntary and anonymous, and no personal or institutional identifiers were collected. This ensured the confidentiality of respondents and encouraged honest and unbiased responses while adhering to ethical research standards.

Instrumentation and Validation

A structured, researcher-developed survey questionnaire was used as the primary instrument for data collection. The instrument was designed to measure the four core variables of the study: job satisfaction, career advancement, economic opportunities, and migration intention, along with selected demographic characteristics of the respondents.

The questionnaire consisted of multiple sections. The first section gathered demographic information, while the succeeding sections measured job satisfaction, career advancement, and economic opportunities using Likert-scale items developed based on relevant literature and theoretical foundations. A separate section assessed migration intention, including respondents' willingness and plans to seek employment abroad.

To ensure validity, the instrument underwent face and content validation by a panel of experts, including a respiratory therapy academic, an experienced respiratory therapist with international exposure, and a statistician. Their recommendations were incorporated to improve clarity, relevance, and alignment with the study variables.

The questionnaire was pilot tested among a group of respiratory therapists not included in the final sample to

assess clarity and usability. Reliability testing using Cronbach's alpha demonstrated acceptable to excellent internal consistency across variables: job satisfaction ($\alpha = 0.62$), career advancement ($\alpha = 0.888$), economic opportunities ($\alpha = 0.865$), and migration intention ($\alpha = 0.934$).

Following validation and reliability testing, the finalized questionnaire was administered to the target respondents.

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Evaluation and Scoring

To determine the level of job satisfaction, career advancement opportunities, economic opportunities, and migration intention among the respondents, a 4-point scale will be used as follows:

Julipie S.M.et al, Job Satisfaction, Career Advancement, And Economic Opportunities as Determinants of Respiratory Therapists' Migration

Assigned Points	Numerical Range	Categorical Response	Verbal Response
4	3.25 - 4.00	Always	Fully Satisfied
3	2.50 - 3.24	Often	Satisfied
2	1.75 - 2.49	Sometimes	Partially Satisfied
1	1.00 - 1.74	Never	Not Satisfied

Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher followed a systematic procedure in collecting the data using a self-structured questionnaire designed to measure demographic profile, job satisfaction, career advancement, economic opportunities, and migration intention. Prior to data collection, the instrument underwent face and content validation by a panel of experts, and necessary revisions were incorporated to improve clarity and relevance.

The finalized questionnaire was distributed directly to PRC-licensed respiratory therapists in selected government and private hospitals. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were provided with an informed consent statement explaining the purpose of the study, confidentiality of responses, and their right to withdraw at any time.

To ensure anonymity, no personally identifiable information was collected. After data collection, the completed questionnaires were retrieved, encoded, and organized for statistical analysis. The data were then

analyzed using appropriate statistical tools to determine the levels of the variables and examine their relationships.

Statistical Treatment Data

The following statistical tools were used to analyze the gathered data:

1. **Weighted Mean** – used to determine the level of job satisfaction, career advancement, economic opportunities, and migration intention among Filipino respiratory therapists.
2. **Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r)** – used to determine the significant relationship among job satisfaction, career advancement, economic opportunities, and migration intention. The strength of the relationships was interpreted based on established guidelines, and all analyses were conducted at a 0.05 level of significance.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. The level of job satisfaction among Filipino Respiratory Therapists as measured by departmental support, workload manageability, recognition and appreciation of contributions, leadership communication and support, and work-related emotional exhaustion.

Table 1. The Level of Job Satisfaction among Filipino Respiratory Therapists

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. Department support	2.55	Satisfied	3.5
2. Workload manageability	2.73	Satisfied	1
3. Recognition and appreciation of contributions	2.47	Partially Satisfied	5
4. Leadership communication and support	2.55	Satisfied	3.5
5. Work-related emotional exhaustion	2.69	Satisfied	2
Average	2.60	Satisfied	
Weighted Mean Range		Verbal Interpretation	
3.25 - 4.00		Fully Satisfied	
2.50 - 3.24		Satisfied	
1.75 - 2.49		Partially Satisfied	
1.00 - 1.74		Not Satisfied	

Table 1 presented the level of job satisfaction among Filipino respiratory therapists, with an overall weighted mean of 2.60, interpreted as Satisfied. This indicated that respondents generally experienced favorable working conditions, supported by adequate organizational systems, leadership, and manageable job demands.

Among the indicators, workload manageability (2.73), leadership communication and support (2.55), and departmental support (2.55) were all interpreted as Satisfied, suggesting that respondents perceived their work environment as structured and supportive. These findings implied that effective communication, coordination, and workload distribution contributed positively to employee

Julipie S.M.et al, Job Satisfaction, Career Advancement, And Economic Opportunities as Determinants of Respiratory Therapists' Migration

morale and professional engagement. In contrast, recognition and appreciation of contributions (2.47) was interpreted as Partially Satisfied, indicating that respondents perceived limited acknowledgment of their professional efforts.

Overall, the findings suggested that while Filipino respiratory therapists were generally satisfied with their jobs, there remained a need to strengthen recognition and appreciation practices. Enhancing this aspect may further improve motivation, organizational commitment, and workforce retention.

2. The level of career advancement opportunities available to Filipino respiratory therapists in the Philippines is assessed in terms of career growth opportunities, promotion clarity, training and development support, supervisory guidance, and long-term career outlook.

Table 2. The Level of Career Advancement Opportunities available to Filipino Respiratory Therapists in the Philippines

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. Career growth opportunities	2.49	Limited	3
2. Promotion clarity	2.41	Limited	4
3. Training and development support	2.70	Available	2
4. Supervisory guidance	2.89	Available	1
5. Long-term career outlook	2.29	Limited	5
Average	2.56	Available	
Weighted Mean Range		Verbal Interpretation	
3.25 - 4.00		Highly Available	
2.50 - 3.24		Available	
1.75 - 2.49		Limited	
1.00 - 1.74		Very Limited	

Table 2 presented the level of career advancement opportunities available to Filipino respiratory therapists, with an overall weighted mean of 2.56, interpreted as *Available*. This indicated that career advancement opportunities were generally present among respondents, particularly in terms of supervisory guidance (2.89) and training and development support (2.70), which obtained the highest mean scores. These findings suggested that mentorship and professional development initiatives were accessible within the workplace.

However, career growth opportunities (2.49), promotion clarity (2.41), and long-term career outlook (2.29) were interpreted as *Limited*, indicating constraints in structured advancement pathways and long-term career progression. This implied that while certain opportunities

existed, they were not sufficiently comprehensive or clearly defined to support sustained professional growth.

Overall, the findings suggested that although career advancement opportunities were generally available, there remained a need to improve promotion transparency, strengthen structured career pathways, and enhance long-term career sustainability to support workforce retention.

3. The level of economic opportunities experienced by Filipino respiratory therapists is evaluated in terms of salary equity, statutory benefits, institutional incentives, compensation transparency, and financial growth prospects.

Table 3. The Level of Economic Opportunities experienced by Filipino Respiratory Therapists

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. Salary equity	1.74	Not experienced	5
2. Statutory benefits	2.75	Experienced	1
3. Institutional incentives	2.41	Slightly Experienced	2
4. Compensation transparency	2.11	Slightly Experienced	3

Julipie S.M.et al, Job Satisfaction, Career Advancement, And Economic Opportunities as Determinants of Respiratory Therapists' Migration

5. Financial growth prospects	1.78	Slightly Experienced	4
Average	2.16	Slightly Experienced	
Weighted Mean Range		Verbal Interpretation	
3.25 - 4.00		Highly Experienced	
2.50 - 3.24		Experienced	
1.75 - 2.49		Slightly Experienced	
1.00 - 1.74		Not experienced	

Table 3 presented the level of economic opportunities experienced by Filipino respiratory therapists, with an overall weighted mean of 2.16, interpreted as Slightly Experienced. This indicated that respondents only slightly experienced economic opportunities in their current employment, suggesting that financial and compensation-related aspects were present but limited in adequacy.

Among the indicators, statutory benefits (2.75) were interpreted as Experienced, indicating that mandated benefits were generally accessible. However, institutional incentives (2.41), compensation transparency (2.11), and financial growth prospects (1.78) were interpreted as Slightly Experienced, reflecting limitations in additional

financial rewards, clarity of compensation structures, and long-term economic advancement. Notably, salary equity (1.74) was interpreted as Not Experienced, indicating that respondents perceived their compensation as insufficient relative to their workload and responsibilities.

Overall, the findings suggested that economic opportunities were the weakest dimension among the variables, highlighting the need to improve compensation, enhance financial incentives, and strengthen long-term economic growth prospects to support workforce retention.

4. The level of migration intention among Filipino respiratory therapists is assessed in terms of their intention to work abroad, perceived career opportunities abroad, expected compensation abroad, anticipated work environment abroad, and long-term career alignment abroad.

Table 4. The Level of Migration Intention among Filipino Respiratory Therapists

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. Intention to work abroad	3.11	High	3
2. Career opportunities abroad	3.18	High	1
3. Compensation abroad	2.89	High	5
4. Work environment abroad	2.96	High	4
5. Long-term career alignment abroad	3.16	High	2
Average	3.06	High	
Weighted Mean Range		Verbal Response	
3.25 - 4.00		Very high	
2.50 - 3.24		High	
1.75 - 2.49		Low	
1.00 - 1.74		Very Low	

Table 4 presented the level of migration intention among Filipino respiratory therapists, with an overall weighted mean of 3.06, interpreted as High. This indicated that respondents had a strong inclination toward overseas employment.

Among the indicators, career opportunities abroad (3.18) and long-term career alignment abroad (3.16) obtained the highest mean scores, suggesting that respondents perceived better professional growth and long-term career prospects overseas. Intention to work abroad

(3.11) was also rated high, reflecting a strong willingness to seek employment outside the country. Meanwhile, work environment abroad (2.96) and compensation abroad (2.89) were likewise interpreted as High, indicating that respondents perceived better working conditions and financial benefits in foreign healthcare systems.

Overall, the findings suggested that migration intention among Filipino respiratory therapists was high, driven by perceived advantages in career development, working conditions, and economic opportunities abroad.

Julipie S.M.et al, Job Satisfaction, Career Advancement, And Economic Opportunities as Determinants of Respiratory Therapists' Migration

5. Relationship between Job Satisfaction, Career Advancement, Economic Opportunities, and Migration Intention among Filipino Respiratory Therapists

Table 5. Relationship between the Level of Job satisfaction and the Level of Migration Intention among Filipino Respiratory Therapists

Job satisfaction	Migration intention				
	Intention to work abroad	Career opportunities abroad	Compensation abroad	Work environment abroad	Long-term career alignment abroad
Department support	r=-0.054 Negligible correlation p=0.569	r=-0.034 Negligible correlation p=0.719	r=-0.043 Negligible correlation p=0.646	r=-0.028 Negligible correlation p=0.770	r=-0.043 Negligible correlation p=0.649
Workload manageability	r=0.009 Negligible correlation p=0.926	r=0.007 Negligible correlation p=0.940	r=0.052 Negligible correlation p=0.581	r=0.133 Low correlation p=0.160	r=0.044 Negligible correlation p=0.639
Recognition and appreciation of contributions	r=0.053 Negligible correlation p=0.573	r=-0.124 Low correlation p=0.190	r=0.079 Negligible correlation p=0.401	r=0.037 Negligible correlation p=0.695	r=-0.154 Low correlation p=0.103
Leadership communication and support	r=0.062 Negligible correlation p=0.511	r=0.065 Negligible correlation p=0.494	r=0.137 Low correlation p=0.147	r=0.178 Low correlation p=0.058	r=-0.027 Negligible correlation p=0.772
Work-related emotional exhaustion	r=0.149 Low correlation p=0.113	r=0.197* Low correlation p=0.035	r=0.030 Negligible correlation p=0.748	r=0.008 Negligible correlation p=0.931	r=0.194* Low correlation p=0.039

*Significant @ 0.05

Correlation Coefficient (r)

0.00 – 0.19

0.20 – 0.39

0.40 – 0.59

0.60 – 0.79

0.80 – 1.0

Interpretation

Very weak / Negligible correlation

Weak / Low correlation

Moderate correlation

Strong correlation

Very strong correlation

Table 5 presented the relationship between job satisfaction and migration intention among Filipino respiratory therapists. The results showed that most dimensions of job satisfaction—departmental support, workload manageability, recognition and appreciation of contributions, and leadership communication and support—had negligible to low correlations with migration intention, with p-values greater than 0.05. This indicated that these variables did not have a statistically significant relationship with respondents' intention to work abroad.

However, work-related emotional exhaustion showed a statistically significant low negative correlation with career opportunities abroad ($r = -0.197, p = 0.035$) and long-term career alignment abroad ($r = -0.194, p = 0.039$). This suggested that emotional exhaustion had a weak but

significant relationship with selected aspects of migration intention.

Overall, the findings indicated that job satisfaction variables generally did not significantly influence migration intention, except for limited associations involving emotional exhaustion. This implied that migration decisions among Filipino respiratory therapists were more likely influenced by other factors rather than job satisfaction alone.

Julipie S.M.et al, Job Satisfaction, Career Advancement, And Economic Opportunities as Determinants of Respiratory Therapists' Migration

Table 6. Relationship between the Level of Career Advancement Opportunities and the Level of Migration Intention among Filipino Respiratory Therapists

Career advancement opportunities	Migration intention				
	Intention to work abroad	Career opportunities abroad	Compensation abroad	Work environment abroad	Long-term career alignment abroad
Career growth opportunities	r=-0.021 Negligible correlation p=0.824	r=-0.087 Negligible correlation p=0.360	r=0.075 Negligible correlation p=0.431	r=-0.077 Negligible correlation p=0.417	r=-0.050 Negligible correlation p=0.595
Promotion clarity	r=-0.094 Negligible correlation p=0.319	r=-0.192* Low correlation p=0.041	r=0.113 Low correlation p=0.232	r=0.001 Negligible correlation p=0.993	r=-0.133 Low correlation p=0.157
Training and development support	r=-0.124 Low correlation p=0.189	r=-0.213* Low correlation p=0.023	r=0.039 Negligible correlation p=0.68	r=0.006 Negligible correlation p=0.946	r=-0.137 Low correlation p=0.147
Supervisory guidance	r=0.026 Negligible correlation p=0.781	r=-0.117 Low correlation p=0.215	r=0.138 Low correlation p=0.143	r=0.205* Low correlation p=0.029	r=-0.015 Negligible correlation p=0.878
Long-term career outlook	r=-0.120 Low correlation p=0.204	r=-0.262** Low correlation p=0.005	r=0.009 Negligible correlation p=0.928	r=0.073 Negligible correlation p=0.438	r=-0.225* Low correlation p=0.016

**Significant @ 0.01, *Significant @ 0.05

Correlation Coefficient (r)

- 0.00 – 0.19**
- 0.20 – 0.39**
- 0.40 – 0.59**
- 0.60 – 0.79**
- 0.80 – 1.0**

Interpretation

- Very weak / Negligible correlation
- Weak / Low correlation
- Moderate correlation
- Strong correlation
- Very strong correlation

Table 6 presented the relationship between career advancement opportunities and migration intention among Filipino respiratory therapists. The results showed that most indicators of career advancement—career growth opportunities, promotion clarity, training and development support, supervisory guidance, and long-term career outlook—had negligible to low correlations with migration intention, with most p-values greater than 0.05. This indicated that these variables were generally not statistically significant.

However, several indicators showed statistically significant low negative correlations. Promotion clarity was significantly related to career opportunities abroad (r = -0.192, p = 0.041), while training and development support was also significantly related to career opportunities abroad

(r = -0.213, p = 0.023). In addition, long-term career outlook showed significant relationships with career opportunities abroad (r = -0.262, p = 0.005) and long-term career alignment abroad (r = -0.225, p = 0.016). These findings suggested that certain aspects of career advancement had weak but significant relationships with selected dimensions of migration intention.

Overall, the findings indicated that career advancement opportunities had limited influence on migration intention. This implied that while some aspects were associated with migration decisions, they were not strong determinants and may be influenced by other factors.

Julipie S.M.et al, Job Satisfaction, Career Advancement, And Economic Opportunities as Determinants of Respiratory Therapists' Migration

Table 7. Relationship between the Level of Economic Opportunities and the Level of Migration Intention among Filipino Respiratory Therapists

Economic opportunities	Migration intention				
	Intention to work abroad	Career opportunities abroad	Compensation abroad	Work environment abroad	Long-term career alignment abroad
Salary equity	r=-0.255** Low correlation p=0.006	r=-0.381** Low correlation p=0.000	r=-0.085 Negligible correlation p=0.368	r=-0.085 Negligible correlation p=0.368	r=-0.342** Low correlation p=0.000
Statutory benefits	r=-0.157 Low correlation p=0.095	r=-0.159 Low correlation p=0.091	r=-0.166 Low correlation p=0.077	r=0.070 Negligible correlation p=0.459	r=-0.086 Negligible correlation p=0.363
Institutional incentives	r=-0.228* Low correlation p=0.015	r=-0.306** Low correlation p=0.001	r=-0.154 Low correlation p=0.101	r=0.103 Low correlation p=0.276	r=-0.272** Low correlation p=0.003
Compensation transparency	r=-0.212* Low correlation p=0.024	r=-0.344** Low correlation p=0.000	r=-0.094 Negligible correlation p=0.317	r=0.004 Negligible correlation p=0.963	r=-0.264** Low correlation p=0.005
Financial growth prospects	r=-0.238* Low correlation p=0.011	r=-0.291** Low correlation p=0.002	r=-0.046 Negligible correlation p=0.626	r=0.062 Negligible correlation p=0.512	r=-0.329** Low correlation p=0.000

**Significant @ 0.01, *Significant @ 0.05

Correlation Coefficient (r)

- 0.00 – 0.19**
- 0.20 – 0.39**
- 0.40 – 0.59**
- 0.60 – 0.79**
- 0.80 – 1.0**

Interpretation

- Very weak / Negligible correlation
- Weak / Low correlation
- Moderate correlation
- Strong correlation
- Very strong correlation

Table 7 presented the relationship between economic opportunities and migration intention among Filipino respiratory therapists. The results showed several statistically significant low negative correlations between economic opportunity indicators and migration intention. Salary equity, institutional incentives, compensation transparency, and financial growth prospects were all significantly related to intention to work abroad, career opportunities abroad, and long-term career alignment abroad, with p-values less than 0.05. In contrast, statutory benefits showed low but non-significant relationships with migration intention.

These findings indicated that lower perceived economic opportunities were associated with higher migration intention among respondents. Although the strength of the correlations was low, the consistent significance across multiple indicators suggested that economic factors played a meaningful role in shaping migration decisions. Overall, the findings indicated that economic opportunities had the most observable relationship with migration intention among the variables. This implied that financial considerations were a key factor influencing the intention of Filipino respiratory therapists to seek employment abroad.

Julipie S.M.et al, Job Satisfaction, Career Advancement, And Economic Opportunities as Determinants of Respiratory Therapists' Migration

6. Action plan can be developed to enhance job satisfaction, career advancement, and economic opportunities in order to reduce the migration of Filipino respiratory therapists.

Table 8. Proposed Action Plan to Reduce the Migration of Filipino Respiratory Therapists

Category	Strategy / Program	Objective	Key Actions	Responsible Unit	Budget Allocation	Success Indicator (%)
Economic Enhancement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Salary Standardization and Market Benchmarking Structured Incentive and Hazard Compensation Program Transparent Compensation Framework 	To improve salary equity and competitiveness; strengthen institutional incentive systems; and enhance compensation transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct salary benchmarking across comparable institutions Advocate inclusion of RTs in institutional salary standardization policies Implement periodic salary review mechanisms Provide hazard pay and risk-based compensation Introduce performance-based and retention bonuses Develop and publish salary progression frameworks Align promotion systems with financial incentives Conduct regular compensation briefings for staff awareness 	Hospital Administration, Department of Health (DOH), RT Professional Organizations, Human Resources Department	₱500,000 – ₱1,000,000 annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 80% of RTs report improved salary satisfaction At least 75% perceive fairness and transparency in compensation
Career Advancement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respiratory Therapy Clinical Ladder Program Institutional Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and Specialization Support Supervisory Mentorship 	To establish clear career progression pathways; enhance training and professional development; and strengthen supervisory guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a structured clinical ladder with defined competency levels Link advancement opportunities to certifications and competencies Establish specialization 	RT Department, Hospital Administration, Training and Development Office	₱300,000 – ₱700,000 annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 85% of RTs report improved career development opportunities At least 80% report clarity in promotion and advancement pathways

Julipie S.M.et al, Job Satisfaction, Career Advancement, And Economic Opportunities as Determinants of Respiratory Therapists' Migration

	Program		<p>tracks within respiratory therapy practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide hospital-funded training programs and CPD opportunities • Establish partnerships with local and international training institutions • Offer scholarship grants for advanced training • Assign senior RTs as mentors to junior staff • Conduct annual career planning and development sessions • Implement leadership and supervisory development programs 			
Job Satisfaction Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workload Management Review System • Recognition and Professional Visibility Program • Leadership Communication Enhancement 	To reduce emotional exhaustion; enhance recognition and professional value; and strengthen organizational support and communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement RT-to-patient ratio monitoring systems • Conduct regular workload assessments and audits • Introduce rotation of high-intensity assignments • Establish recognition programs (e.g., RT Excellence Awards) • Increase RT representation in institutional committees • Highlight RT contributions in organizational 	RT Department, Hospital Administration	₱200,000 – ₱500,000 annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 85% of RTs report improved overall job satisfaction • At least 80% report reduced burnout levels • At least 80% report improved leadership support and communication

Julipie S.M.et al, Job Satisfaction, Career Advancement, And Economic Opportunities as Determinants of Respiratory Therapists' Migration

			<p>communications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct regular feedback forums and engagement sessions • Establish formal communication and feedback channels • Provide leadership and communication training for supervisors 			
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Rationale: RESPIRE Action Plan is a strategic framework designed to enhance retention and reduce migration intention among Filipino respiratory therapists by addressing key determinants, including job satisfaction, career advancement, and economic opportunities.

The acronym RESPIRE represents the following components:

- R – Retention Enhancement
- E – Economic Opportunities
- S – Satisfaction (Job Satisfaction)
- I – Institutional Support
- R – Recognition and Rewards
- E – Engagement and Empowerment

Table 8 presented the proposed action plan based on the findings of the study. The interventions were organized into three strategic domains: economic enhancement, career advancement strengthening, and job satisfaction sustainability. This framework reflected the results, which identified economic opportunities as the most influential factor associated with migration intention, while also recognizing the roles of career development and workplace conditions in workforce retention.

The economic enhancement strategies focused on improving salary equity, strengthening institutional incentives, and enhancing compensation transparency. Career advancement strategies emphasized structured professional growth through training, development programs, and mentorship. Meanwhile, job satisfaction strategies focused on sustaining positive workplace conditions through effective workload management, recognition, and improved leadership communication.

Overall, the action plan provided an integrated approach addressing financial, professional, and organizational factors to support workforce retention and reduce migration intention among Filipino respiratory therapists.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, Filipino respiratory therapists were generally satisfied with their job, indicating

that workplace conditions, leadership support, and workload management were favorable, although recognition and appreciation of contributions remained relatively lower compared to other aspects of job satisfaction. Career advancement opportunities were perceived to be available, particularly in terms of supervisory guidance and training support; however, limitations in promotion clarity and long-term career outlook indicated the need for more structured and transparent professional growth pathways. In contrast, economic opportunities were only slightly experienced, especially in salary equity and financial growth prospects, suggesting that compensation competitiveness and long-term financial advancement remained insufficient.

Migration intention among Filipino respiratory therapists was found to be high, reflecting a strong inclination toward overseas employment. The study further revealed that job satisfaction and career advancement opportunities did not demonstrate significant relationships with migration intention, while economic opportunities showed a significant relationship, indicating that financial conditions were the primary determinant influencing migration decisions. Overall, the findings suggested that although workplace and professional development factors were generally acceptable, economic disparities remained the most critical factor driving migration intention among Filipino respiratory therapists, highlighting the need to strengthen compensation systems and financial growth opportunities to support workforce retention.

RECOMMENDATION

In light of the findings and conclusions of the study, healthcare institutions are encouraged to maintain and further enhance initiatives that promote the job satisfaction of respiratory therapists, particularly in the area of recognition and appreciation of contributions. These may include structured recognition programs, effective workload management systems, and supportive leadership practices that foster a positive organizational climate and improved workforce retention.

Department leaders should strengthen career advancement structures through the implementation of clinical ladder programs, transparent promotion criteria, structured mentorship systems, and accessible continuing professional development opportunities to improve long-term professional outlook within the country.

Hospitals should prioritize the improvement of economic compensation structures by reviewing salary scales, strengthening institutional incentive programs, and ensuring compensation transparency, as economic opportunities were found to be significantly associated with migration intention. Establishing structured salary progression systems and retention-based financial incentives may help reduce outward mobility among respiratory therapists.

National health authorities should consider policy reforms that enhance salary standardization, hazard pay allocation, and long-term financial security for respiratory therapists, particularly those assigned to high-acuity and critical care settings, in order to address the high level of migration intention and improve workforce retention.

Respiratory therapy associations should intensify advocacy efforts aimed at improving economic recognition, expanding scope of practice, and promoting structured specialization pathways to elevate the professional status and competitiveness of the field locally.

Finally, healthcare institutions are encouraged to implement the proposed action plan focusing on economic enhancement, structured career progression, and job satisfaction sustainability, while conducting periodic monitoring of migration intention trends to evaluate the effectiveness of retention interventions.

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Julipie S.M.et al, Job Satisfaction, Career Advancement, And Economic Opportunities as Determinants of Respiratory Therapists' Migration

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