Purpose

To determine, before and during the 2020-22 coronavirus pandemic, what is the impact of generation of the nurse on

(1) specific turnover risk factors: low meaning and joy in work, low resilience, high occupational fatigue, and high burnout

(2) turnover intentions

Literature Review

Pandemic led to
- Mental health distress in nurses
- Staffing insufficiencies

Burnout higher in nurses than other health care workers
- Leads to turnover
- Results from work-related stress

Chronic occupational fatigue
- Strong predictor of turnover intention
- Can lead to poor job performance

Literature Review (cont.)

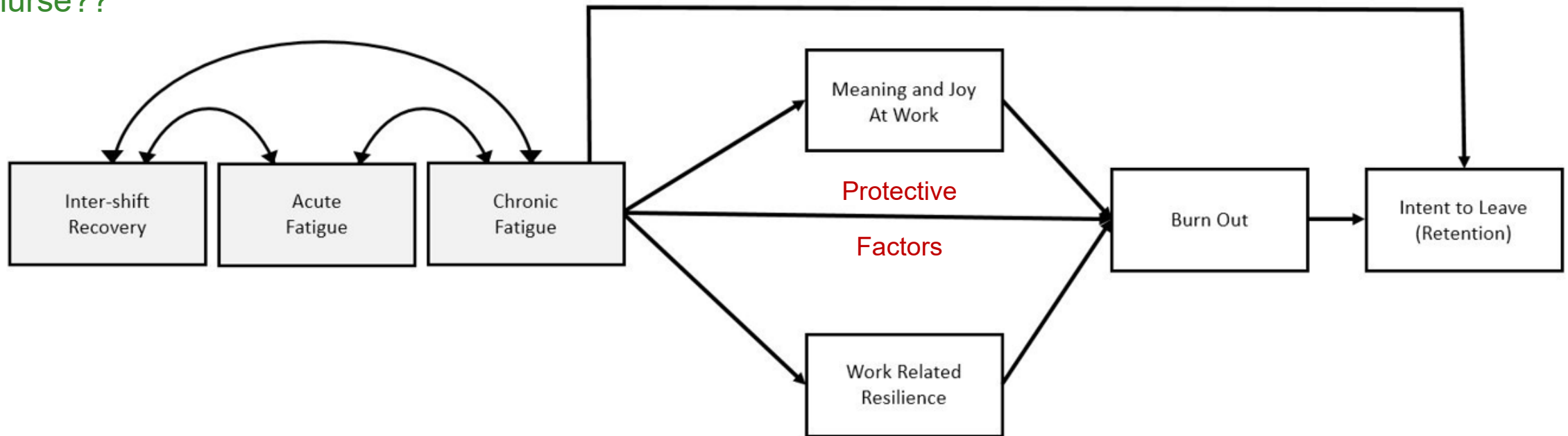Factors found protective of job turnover among nurses

- Meaning & joy in work
- Resilience

Generations of nurses

- Cohorts with different experiences: Gen Z, Y (Millennials), X, Baby Boomers
- May differ in resilience, fatigue, and burnout levels

Study Framework: Workforce Engagement Factors Predicting Intention to Leave

Generation of the nurse??

Methods

Comparative study using data from two correlational studies (2017, 2021)

Sample/Setting

Registered nurses – St Joseph Hospital- Orange

- Employed > 3 months
- Inpatient/outpatient
- Clinical and non/clinical

Measures

- Nurse Characteristics

- Meaning and Joy in Work Questionnaire

- Resilience at Work Scale (only 2021)

- Occupational Fatigue (OFER-15): Acute fatigue, Inter-shift recovery, Chronic fatigue

- Burnout (only 2021) – Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI-HSS): Emotional exhaustion, Depersonalization, Personal accomplishments

- Turnover –Intention to remain in job, organization, nursing

Procedures

- Email invitation with survey link to ~1000 nurses via work email
  - Weekly for 3 weeks (April 2017; April 2021, during downturn in pandemic)
- Completion indicated consent to participate

- Mental health resources information at end of survey (April 2021)

- Complete data: 410 nurses 2017; 147 nurses 2021

Data Analysis

Descriptive data (aggregate)

Each turnover intent risk factor divided into low- or high-risk categories:

a) Pre-established cut-scores (e.g., MBI-HSS)
b) Logical cut-scores agreed upon by research team (e.g., intention to leave hospital)
c) Quartiles (e.g., OFER, MJW)

Generation cohorts (Pew Research Center, based upon birthyear)

Chi-square tests to determine differences among generations

Samples Similar across Study Years

Female (~90%), well educated (82% baccalaureate or higher), specialty certified (52% or higher)

Average ~18 yrs of experience in nursing (average 12 yrs at study hospital)

Worked across all specialty areas; greater portion of 2021 nurses worked in medical-surgical units (36%) than in 2017 (23%) – attributed to unit changes during pandemic

In 2021, smaller portion of participants (20%) were Boomers than in 2017 (29%) with small corresponding increases among 2017 nurses designated as GenX and Millennials – attributed to expected retirement

Proportions of Nurses Experiencing Turnover Risk Factors, Intention to Leave (2017)

Risk Factor	Cut-score	Study 1 2017 (N = 410)			
		Boomer (n = 121)	GenX (n = 163)	Millennial (n = 126)	p-value
Low meaning and joy in work (MJW)	≤ 4	23.1	33.7	35.5	ns
Low resilience at work	-	-	-	-	-
High acute fatigue (AF)	≥ 83.3	13.2	20.3	26.2	0.039
Low inter-shift recovery (IR)	≤ 40	18.2	22.1	38.1	0.001
High chronic fatigue (CF)	≥ 63.3	21.5	23.3	20.6	ns
Burnout					
High EE	-	-	-	-	-
High DP	-	-	-	-	-
High EE + DP	-	-	-	-	-
Low PA					
Turnover intention					
Leave hospital	≥4	6.6	16.0	19.1	0.014
Leave nursing	≥4	4.1	3.1	8.7	ns

Proportions of Nurses Experiencing Turnover Risk Factors, Intention to Leave (2021)

Risk Factor	Cut-score	Study 2 2021 (N = 147)			
		Boomer (n = 30)	GenX (n = 62)	Millennial (n = 55)	p-value
Low meaning and joy in work (MJW)	≤ 4	23.3	30.7	50.9	0.018
Low resilience at work	≤ 5.05	23.3	16.1	38.2	0.023
High acute fatigue (AF)	≥ 76.7	13.3	19.4	36.4	0.029
Low inter-shift recovery (IR)	≤ 40	20.0	17.7	43.6	0.004
High chronic fatigue (CF)	≥ 66.7	26.7	22.6	23.6	ns
Burnout					
High EE	≥27	20.0	24.6	38.2	ns
High DP	≥13	1.5	10.8	25.5	0.014
High EE + DP	-	3.3	6.2	20.0	0.021
Low PA					
Turnover intention					
Leave hospital	≥4	3.3	6.5	14.6	ns
Leave nursing	≥4	6.7	4.8	5.5	ns

Providence

Turnover Risk Factors by Generation
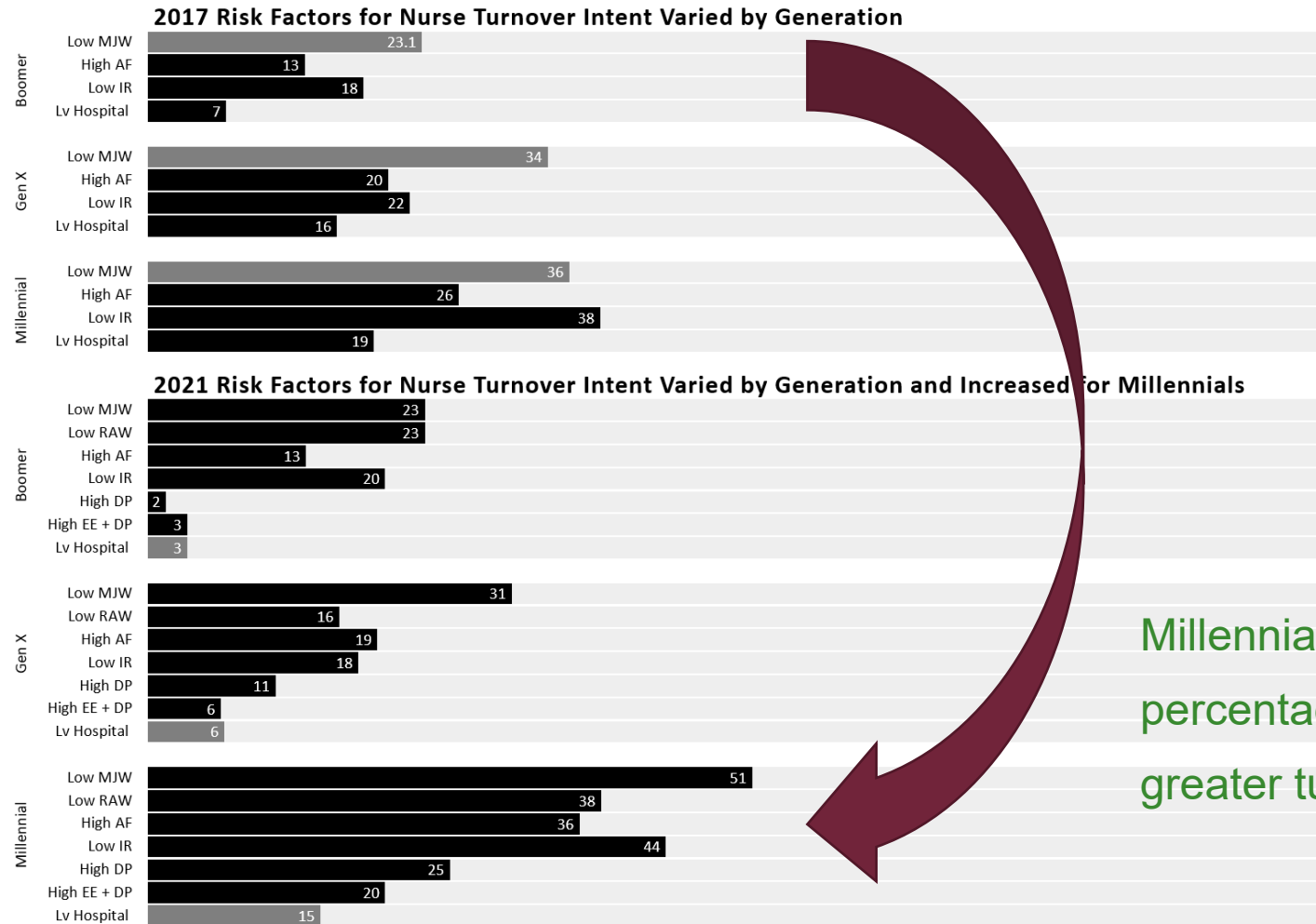
Millennials have greater percentages of all risk factors plus greater turnover intentions

Findings

2017 data: nurse generation differed for *high* acute fatigue and *low* inter-shift recovery with Boomers least affected; Boomers were least likely to report being likely to leave hospital within 6-12 months.

2021 data – collected after significant coronavirus surge – shows a different story: more Millennial nurses have high levels of *low* meaning and joy in work, *low* resilience, *high* acute fatigue, *low* inter-shift recovery, *high* burnout.

And they are the most likely generation (although not significantly differently) to report intention to leave the hospital.

Discussion

First known study to examine whether hospital nurse generations differed on workforce engagement factors linked with turnover intention and to allow comparison of findings before and during the coronavirus pandemic

Suffering in frontline hospital nurses is congruent with findings from the ongoing American Nurses Foundation survey (done each Jan-Feb during the pandemic)

Pandemic Experiences Worse for Millennials

Boomers and GenX nurses remaining relatively constant in experiences with turnover risk while Millennials demonstrate nurses experiencing poor work engagement and higher risk of leaving the hospital setting

Influencing nurse turnover is a complex issue not amenable to any one solution

Findings point to the need to account for nurse generation when developing turnover prevention strategies for hospitals
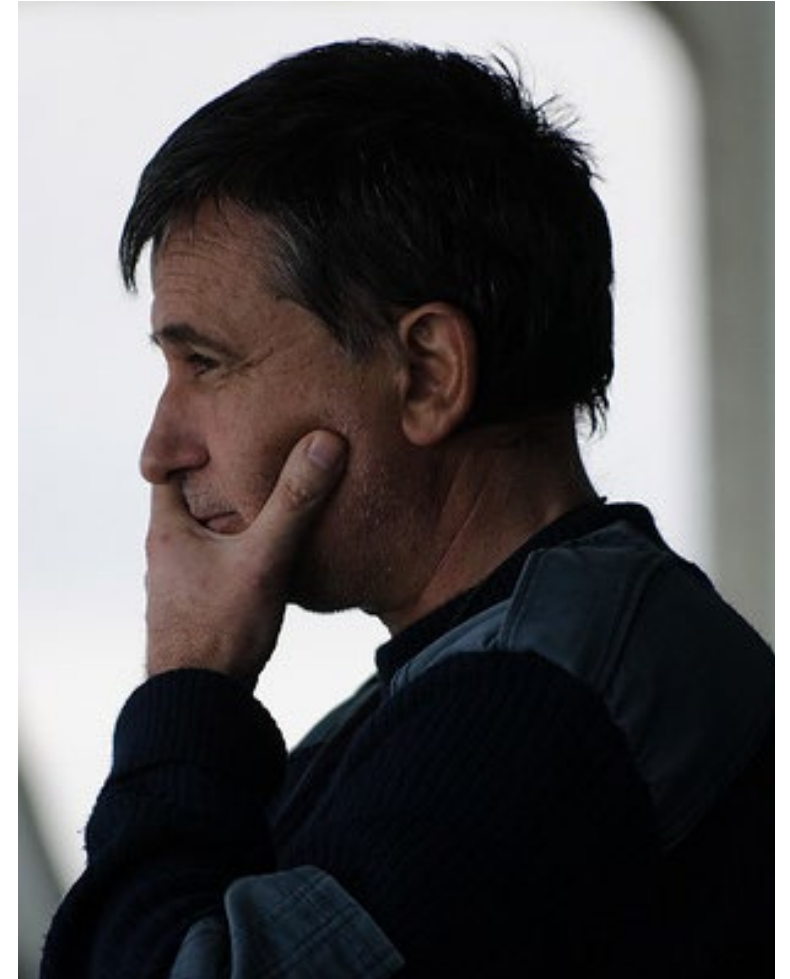
Solutions to Enhancing the Work Environment

- Staffing changes to moderate work demands

- Assisting in personal improvements through encouraging and teaching about better sleep, exercise, and nutrition

- Monitor occupational fatigue and assist nurses to maintain realistic workloads (e.g., caution with overtime, adequate breaks)

- Consider what is important to Millennial nurses (e.g., recognition by leaders, peers and patients/families, adequate leadership support, professional growth opportunities, optimal technology, good coworker relations, alignment of personal and organizational values)

Questions??