

## **A STUDY ON NURSES ATTRITION FACTORS AND RETENTION TECHNIQUES**

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### **Abstract:**

Healthcare industry is one of the world's largest growing industries. Rapid growth is seen visibly even during economy down trend healthcare Industry retained its position at the increasing trend. Corporate Industry has grown enormously in India than any other country. The fact of Indian healthcare industry's competitive advantage completely depends on the large pool of qualified & well-trained medical and Para medical professionals.

Nurses are considered as the backbone of the health care industry. Healing to human sufferings only happens in an environment where a patient is receiving personal care, human to human, and there is where a Nurse excels. Now the burning issue the healthcare industry faces across the globe is "Reducing the Attrition and retaining the skilled and experienced Nursing staff ", and India is no exception to it. The attrition, like in any other sector not only affects the institution, but it imperils the quality care for the diseased people and threatens their life to some extent in the healthcare industry.

Keeping low attrition levels is a major challenge as the demand outstrips the supply of nurses by a big margin. The organization losses key skills, knowledge and business relationships because of attrition. "Whenever a well trained - well adopted employee leaves any organization it creates void that is tough to fill.

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## Nurses Attrition Factors

Both individual, health factors and organisational factors, e.g. leadership, have been shown to be important in RNs' decisions to leave the profession (Leineweber et al., 2016). In the context of nursing internationally, attrition adds substantially to costs and planning uncertainties, undermining the collective pool of workforce talent and experience. Where there is a correlation between attrition and social diversity, two additional implications arise: that there may be mechanisms that counter the achievement of equality of opportunity and outcome (social justice), and that targets for establishing a demographically representative workforce are more difficult to achieve (Mulholland, Anionwu, Atkins, Tappern, & Franks, 2008)

It is predominantly observed that work life balance and prioritization of jobs of nurses always put on the secondary importance by the hospitals as well as nurses themselves. This is causing the serious issues on those fronts. Research shows that salary is the major component of attrition for nurses. At the same time recognition is carrying low impact on the attrition of nurses (Rawal & Pardeshi, 2014). For nurses from the public sector, generally the attrition is much lower, most probably to better job security in the public sector. Understanding the factors that nurses are satisfied and dissatisfied will enable interventional measures be taken to improve the working conditions(Wahab, 2015).

Employers generally consider attrition a loss of valuable employees and talent. However, there is more to attrition than a shrinking workforce. As employees leave an organization, they take with them much-needed skills and qualifications that they developed during their tenure(Dwivedi, 2013). High turnover in any industry can be a concern, especially those that are customer-centric. Industries that deal with people's health are in an even more precarious position. Institutions with high attrition must consider how a "revolving door" of care providers affects the quality of care an institution is able to provide, and the satisfaction of patients with their overall experience(Impact et al., 2016). Nursing leaders need to know the significance and validity of pre-employment testing on nursing retention to best prepare their healthcare organizations for the future(Brandon, 2016)

Attrition negatively impacts job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and patient care

quality. When nurses are empowered to practice in high-quality work environments and are free from supervisor incivility, they are less likely to experience burnout, thereby promoting workplace retention(Buffington, 2012). Conservation of resources theory assumes loss of resources as a cause of job strain. In hospital work, conflicts with supervisors are tested to predict lower resources, that is, supervisory social support, participation possibilities, and appreciation. All three resources are expected to predict, in turn, experienced stress (job strain) and lower job satisfaction, lower affective commitment, and a higher resigned attitude towards the job (job attitudes) (Elfering, Gerhardt, Grebner, & Müller, 2017)

Nurses suffere a moderate level of burnout, younger nurses suffere more than older nurses, and family pressure from being the only child or being married were factors of burnout (Fang, 2017). Not only individual characteristics, but also factors at higher organisational levels may influence the intention to leave. Most proximally, the individual's immediate work setting, is likely to influence the individual's propensity to leave (Leineweber et al., 2016)

Internal and external factors may work independently or interdependently to determine how people handle issues that are related to workplace. Therefore internal factor such as nurses' general self-concept may be one of the mechanisms or mediate how nurses conceive other factors such as job satisfaction which may in turn influence whether or not they may experience burnout (Nwafor, Immanel, & Obi-nwosu, 2015)

For ICU nurses, sources of job dissatisfaction are potentially remedied with simple interventions. Adequate staffing is necessary but not sufficient for a positive work environment. Administrators should address the factors that directly affect their nurses' levels of job satisfaction, as it will ultimately result in less staff turnover and greater patient care (Tao, Ellenbecker, Wang, & Li, 2015). Personal stress has been found to negatively affect work roles which result in employees experiencing high burnout(Khamisa, Peltzer, Ilic, & Oldenburg, 2016)

There are nine factors that determine a person's satisfaction with their job or career. All of these factors certainly mold into the nursing profession. These include (1) extrinsic rewards; (2) their co-workers; (3) professional opportunity; (4) praise and recognition; (5) satisfaction with their

schedule; (6) benefits; (7) the ability to make decisions and be heard; (8) task variety; and (9) their physical workspace (Jones, 2004). Although wages are often seen as one of the most obvious factors influencing staff retention, it is difficult to draw firm conclusions on the effects of improving remuneration(Jelfs, Knapp, Giepmans, & Wijga, 2013)

Though there are many causes for staff turnover in an organization, all of those do not have negative impact on well being of an organization. Organizations should differentiate between voluntary and involuntary turnover and take actions on the one under their control. Voluntary turnovers are those caused by the employee out of his/ her own choice (e.g. to take job in other organization for better salary) while involuntary turnovers are because of the decision of management (e.g. dismissal for gross misconduct) (*Employee Turnover and Retention*, n.d.). The work conditions at a given organization are more important for a nurse satisfaction with their current job, whereas the number of years until retirement is more important for a nurse satisfaction with their career and these concepts should be examined separately (Mazurenko, 2014)

Factors that attributed to the intention to leave included unhappiness with pay, shift worked, higher number of reported incidents, and many changes that occurred in the practice environment overtime (Thomas, 2012)

Depressive factors cause both physical and mental problems, such as fatigue, irritability, lack of concentration, unhappiness, depressive sensation, depersonalization and emotional exhaustion. Negative stress-related causes not only have an impact on nurses' wellness but also their caregiving to patients (Bahad, 2017). The best predictors of job satisfaction were workload, uncertainty about patients' treatment, behavioural disengagement and positive reframing which may be characterized as factors inducing stress, as well as years of experience in nursing (demographics) (Trivellas, Reklitis, & Platis, 2013)

Another problem is that a high turnover rate increases the workload of the remaining nurses, leading to lower overall job satisfaction and forming a vicious cycle. Since healthcare organizations have long suffered from a shortage of nursing personnel, better management of

factors affecting the turnover of nurses is warranted (Chang & Cho, 2016). The fact that not all nurses who are exposed to the same organisational and job-related factors will develop burnout has led to the belief that individual factors may play an important role in the development of burnout (Geuens, Braspenning, Bogaert, & Franck, 2018)

There are several factors which could contribute for nursing turnover. Their services are liable to be terminated at any time. They are less benefited as compare to government employees. For instance there is no opportunity for nurses to get deputation for higher education, study loan from the organization (Dwivedi, 2013). Competitive psychological climate is positively related to turnover intention and is negatively related to affective commitment. Additionally, it is also revealed that affective commitment is negatively related to turnover intention and it mediates the relationship between competitive psychological climate and turnover intention (Gim, Mat, & Ramayah, 2015)

### **Retention Techniques**

Measures aiming to improve the practice environment and schedule flexibility would be a promising approach towards increased retention of registered nurses in both their current workplaces and the nursing profession as a whole and thus a way to counteract the nursing shortages (Leineweber et al., 2016). At the Organizational level attention to retention of existing nurses by reducing of job demands/work overload may be achieved by hiring new nurses to reduce nurse/patient loads, enhancing communication among healthcare professionals to reduce frustration in trying to gain clarity when transmitting information, providing support from nurse supervisors to nurses, and increasing rewards and recognition (Wazqar, Kerr, Regan, & Orchard, 2017). There is a positive relationship between effective manager/leader behaviours and increased staff retention (Alshmemri, 2014)

Nurse retention is an issue healthcare organizations cannot afford to ignore. The nursing shortage continues to impact healthcare in this country which increases the importance and urgency of retaining nurses. Job success, also referred as job satisfaction, is a key indicator of a nurse's intent to stay(Brandon, 2016). Employee retention is the ability of holding the talented and valuable employees in the organization from leaving from their job for a longer period of time

than the competitors. Employee retention is different from that of turnover intention. Employee retention is refer to the duration of employee to be employed in an organization while turnover intention was meant by the amount of employee wants to leave the organization(LAM CHEE LIANG , LAW SIEW FOON, LOO YOO JIA, NG WAN YIN, 2015)

Total rewards not only helps in retention but also motivates employees through a continuous process of psychological, sociological, economic and political exchanges (Shoaib, Aamir, Adnan, Qazi, & Hussain, 2015). Creating an organizational culture of retention may reduce nurse turnover. Focusing on why nurses leave and identifying factors why nurses stay are essential(Buffington, 2012). Evidence suggests strengthening clinical mentorship and supportive supervision of novice nurse-midwives will facilitate retention of them (Squires, Martelly, Niles, & Budin, 2015)

Nurse leaders need to identify factors in the work environment that can influence increased retention and attract new direct care nurses in order to maintain an adequate workforce(Thomas, 2012). Dissatisfaction with management styles has been shown to be a major driver in nurse job dissatisfaction and turnover (Jelfs et al., 2013). Factors such as competitive salary, friendly working environment, healthy interpersonal relationships and job security were frequently cited by employees as key motivational variables that influenced their retention in the organizations (*Employee Turnover and Retention*, n.d.)

The value that hospitals place on their staff will have a direct effect to their commitment to the organization. “Enhancing culture and building programs to reinforce these values is critical to driving retention.(Silvers, 2013). Increment in salary and allowances rated the best influence on recruitment and retention of nurses. Lack of nursing leadership; sense of job security and work environment were the major factors influencing recruitment and retention of nurses. There is need for adequate human resource planning; increased efforts and formulation of policies that will improve recruitment and retention of nurses (Oyetunde & Ayeni, 2014)

While it is important to ensure that salaries and benefits are competitive, overall pay raises tend not to be a cost-effective recruiting and retention tool, as raises would have to be given to all

healthcare workers and the balance between pay scales need to be maintained (Mattke, Martorell, Mattke, & Martorell, 2005). While an overwhelming majority of organizations view retention as a “key strategic imperative” it is not evident in operational practice/planning. Almost all hospitals have retention initiatives, however, less than half have translated these into a formal retention strategy (Nursing, 2017). The absence of a robust causal model incorporating organizational, professional and personal variables is undermining the development of interventions to improve nurse retention (A, While, & Barriball, 2005)

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By understanding the effect of work environments on nurse attitudes and behaviours that are relevant to staff retention, organizations can then introduce strategies to correct work environment deficiencies (Rawal & Pardeshi, 2014) Creating conditions that promote employee engagement has the potential to positively influence retention and improve the patient experience(Montgomery, Spânu, Adriana, & Panagopoulou, 2015). Trust shapes the employee’s turnover intentions. Organisations which are to promote trust among members are able to gain support from their employees. A high level of trust will is likely to improve the individual’s integrity (Osman<sup>a</sup>, Noordin, Daud, & Zailani, 2016)

Acute care hospitals’ might improve their success regarding nurse job satisfaction and retention by offering nursing career models with more opportunities for clinical advancement(Biegger, Geest, Schubert, & Ausserhofer, 2016). Health care managers involved in the development of nurse retention strategies should address organizational leadership and consider development of comprehensive career-development programs. Policy makers should consider allocating additional resources to ensure that RN workforce is of adequate size, is qualified, and is able to provide high quality care(Mazurenko, 2014)

Health managers and health workers perceive motivation (incentives) and factors that both give job satisfaction and increase retention differently. Whilst health managers perceive working

conditions and financial incentives; the health workforce indicated fair treatment and recognition and appreciation as the most important factors for job satisfaction and retention (Anaba & Tersbøl, 2015)

## Conclusion

Today the burning issue there in Indian Health Care Industry facing is "Nursing Attrition". This Scenario is not only in India but also across the globe. Reasons are many; they are Lack of technical skills, Low Confidence level, Poor Communication skills, Professional Decorum, Family burden, Financial Problem and Lucrative Salary Packages. Corporate Health care Industry is spending huge money on Nursing training and Development. But retention rate is very low. So the Nursing knowledge bank is drained abroad. Their they are paid high and work burden is less. It is vice versa in our home country. Here the researcher feels that this issue needs to be added at the earliest to improve the quality of care, better, Patient satisfaction and family focused environment to the customers as well as to the patient.

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