

The Influence of Remuneration on the Retention of Registered Nurses in Public Hospitals in Kiambu County, Kenya

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Abstract: Employee retention is a critical focus for management, requiring strategic identification of influential factors and the application of effective retention rules. This study specifically investigates the impact of motivational strategies on the retention of registered nurses in public hospitals in Kiambu County, Kenya. The primary objective is to examine the relationship between working conditions, professional development, remuneration, interpersonal relationships, and the retention of registered nurses in this context. Guided by Herzberg's two-factor theory and Maslow's hierarchy of needs, the research adopts a correlational research design. The study encompasses a population of 450 registered nurses and 11 human resource officers from selected public hospitals in Kiambu County, with a sample size of 211 registered nurses and 11 human resource officers. Data collection involved questionnaires and interviews, and quantitative analysis employed descriptive and inferential statistics, including correlations, linear and stepwise regression, and Chi-square. The Pearson Chi-Square value is 15.889 with an associated p-value of 0.025. Since this p-value is less than the significance threshold of 0.05, we conclude that there is a statistically significant relationship between remuneration and the retention of registered nurses at a 95% confidence level. Consequently, we reject the null hypothesis. In spite of their origin, nature of practice, or work settings, registered nurses have a common interest that is, they are committed professionals who uphold a holistic philosophy of care that requires remuneration which determines their expectations and how they fit in the challenging workplace.

Keywords: Employee, Retention, Motivational Strategies, Registered Nurses Remuneration.

1. Introduction

A. Background to the Study

For the last two decades there has been a high rate of migration of registered nurses from public hospital to private, from rural to urban facilities, inter-country and resignation to other professions because of lack of motivation. Frustration leads to high migration of the nursing profession according to (Manongi, Marchant, & Bygbjerg, 2006) leads to shortage of staff, increase of overtime hours and job stress, increase burnout and long patients' waiting list. The migration of registered nurses leads to a rise on recruitment and orientation costs

(Lehasa, 2008), it is essential to know the factors that affect registered nurses' motivation and take appropriate action.

A report by World Health Organisation (WHO) of 2010a, states that for quality health care outcomes to be realised a global shortage of 4 million health workers must be met. However, according to records from the (WHO and GHWA, 2014) the shortage rose to 7.2 million and is further predicted to reach 8 million by 2030 and 12.9 million by year 2035 (Misenda et al., 2017). Shortage of registered nurses at any time poses a threat to the achievement of the Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The WHO together with the World Bank did estimates to conclude that about 400 million people across the world do not receive health care services including affordable medicine, with the International Labour Organization adding that about 80% of population from 44 world countries are without any health protection depriving them of their right to health.

Motivation is a process which begins with a physiological or psychological deficiency or need that triggers behaviour or a drive that is aimed at achieving a goal or a need (Poonam-Jasleen, 2015). It refers to the elements that arouse desire and the energy in persons to act under their own volition with a motivation as an element which inspires personnel to work and maintain interests that lead them to innovation and increased productivity. Herzberg dual factor theory classifies motivation into two categories; that which deal with the content and that which deal with the process. He further explains that the employee motivation is a function of both hygiene and motivational factors. These factors lead an employee towards achievement and recognition. The motivation of employees is both an extrinsic and intrinsic process, any lack of this can cause problems within the organisation (Azar & Shafiqhi, 2013). Huczynski and Buchanan (2013) argued that motivation is a result of working towards the achievement of stated goals and involves the process of attaining these goals. Furthermore, Peters (2015) says that the underlying concept of motivation is the driving energy that drives individuals to work towards the achievement of stated goals. Motivational processes are intended to drive individuals towards the achievement of these

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goals.

B. Statement of the Problem

In the past two decades, a significant challenge has emerged in the healthcare sector, with registered nurses migrating from their work stations to more promising environments. This migration has led to a shortage of healthcare workers in hospitals. According to the Kenya Healthcare Workforce report, there is a severe deficit of nurses, with a current ratio of only 8.3 practicing nurses per 10,000 population, compared to the World Health Organization's recommended ratio of 25 nurses per 10,000 patients.

Kenya faces a dual challenge of nurses migrating from rural to urban areas and from the public to private healthcare sectors. The Kenya Health Workforce Information System (KHWIS) indicates that there are 19,591 registered nurses deployed across 4,187 healthcare facilities, including private and faith-based institutions. However, the number of registered nurses working in private hospitals is not officially reported to the Ministry of Health.

C. Significance of the Study

The importance of this study was to give the statistical significance on the influence of motivational strategies on the retention of registered nurses that may enable policy makers; build a more accruing body of knowledge that will have the facts to enlighten them of future plans on the retention of registered nurses in the public hospitals for both theory and practice. This would enable the hospital management to be able to improve on or search for motivational strategies that will bring about answers to matters affecting registered nurses and behavioural results in regards to retention or migration.

This could also inform the management as to how to sustainably make the nurses fully motivated and engaged, to attain the established goals by having the nurses settled in their working stations as the handlers of hospital's wealth. The study allows policy makers to take institutional audit of promissory chatty acts anticipated by the registered nurses' payoffs promised in the Common Bargain Agreement had their expectations.

2. Literature Review

A. Remuneration and Retention of Registered Nurses in Public Hospitals

The correlation between employee retention and job compensation has garnered significant attention from researchers. Nevertheless, scholars are divided on the subject of the correlation between remuneration and employee retention. There is an argument positing that an individual's choice of employer influences both job satisfaction and compensation Splinter (2007). The gap between the degree of received reward and the level of motivation of the nurses' expectations through compensation package is a motivational tool that affects the retention of registered nurses (Ryan and Deci, 2000). To others like Gardner, Van Dyne, and Pierce (2004) remuneration has a direct effect on job retention. Study done in Canada established that remuneration affected registered nurses' turnover (Lum,

Kervin, Clarke, Reii-Sirola (2007). Though good remuneration decreases nurses' turnover, it did not result to job satisfaction. However, a study done by Cowin (2002) in Australia showed there is a relationship between the pay and the dissatisfaction as other qualifications were not considered for pay rise. A study done in Nigeria indicated that remunerations is an important measure of health care professionals' response to the increasing challenges and demands Nursing and Midwifery Council of Nigeria (NMCN 2020). Toughest challenge institutions are faced with today is how to maintain their vigour and ambitions. Because of their crucial character registered nurses can be referred to as "the blood life of the institution". In Australia, a study conducted by Manongi (2006) about remuneration and retention of registered nurses shows that individual bonuses are linked to performance appraisals. In spite of their origin, nature of practice, or work settings, registered nurses have a common interest that is, they are committed professionals who uphold a holistic philosophy of care that requires remuneration which determines their expectations and how they fit in the challenging workplace. In India health industry is labor intensive, where inequality of service is ultimately linked to productivity, skills, remuneration, retention of healthcare providers as professionals (Rowell, 2003). A study carried out by Manila (2011) showed that increasing pay levels, merit pay and allowances that are comparable in the labour market have a critical role in health workers, more stable job while inadequate pay keeps them on lookout for better jobs. It is in part the quality of the relationship between the manager and the worker that determines the probability of continuous interaction where the future sales prospects will depend on the quality of the relationship (Busch, 2003). According to Colgate and Hedge (2011), relationship is a process of building and managing collaborative manager worker and other value chain relationship to increase worker's value, retention and productivity. Interpersonal relationship thrives in trust. Crosby, Evans and Cowless (2010) describe this as a feature of relationship quality, along with satisfaction and retention of worker's work- life balance.

The effect of hardship allowances on the retention of registered nurses in South Africa is insignificant. Nurses view these allowances as unfair efforts to incentivize them to stay in rural hospitals. It has been noted in Cameroon and Zimbabwe that there are disparities in the distribution of incentives for nurses (Mathur, 2006). One major issue, as noted by Mutale (2013), is the lack of professional drive. When it comes to job security, fairness in equal opportunities, relationships among colleagues, physical limitations, client demands, unfulfilled expectations, and unmet expectations, there is a lack of comprehensive research on the motivation and retention of registered nurses in developing nations Kaye (2002). A study conducted in Ethiopia examined the relationship between compensation and the retention of registered nurses. The findings indicated a significant variation in the remuneration of nurses based on their age (Abraham Y, 2013).

Moncraz, Zhao, and Kay (2009), established that good remuneration increases commitment amongst registered nurses. For institutions to effectively retain their employees, better

remuneration and quality work life were identified as long-term factors Shieds, M.A. and Ward, M. (2001). Registered nurses in Uganda Complain of not earning enough salary compared to other civil servants of equitable professions (UNMU, 2018). In the midst of covid-19 pandemic the health institution faces its biggest challenge from a high need of money to provide preventive equipment's, improving of work environments, and offer salary supplements according to World Bank Blogs, Zahid Hasnain, (2020). The objective of this research is to examine the potential influence of compensation on the retention of registered nurses in Kiambu County, Kenya, with a particular emphasis on any statistically significant results. The motivation of individuals within an organization is significantly influenced by compensation. A remuneration system that is fair and impartial cultivates motivation and inspiration among employees, which ultimately leads to increased societal productivity. (Chin and Han, 2008) Yermack (2004) are positing that profit maximization influence organization activities.

Mrrayan (2005) found that low remuneration for registered nurses salaries contributed to lack of job satisfaction and poor job retention rates. Ryten (2002) As the need for registered nurses increases, the pool of available nurses continue to diminish due to the fact that there is no motivation and the nurse opt to leave the facilities for better working environments, budget cuts resulted in unfavourable and unhealthy working environment, lack of professional development opportunities, low wages and benefits, poor interpersonal relationships is causing the migration of registered nurses to better working environments with better terms of service Manogi (2006). This has forced nursing professionals to work as part-time casuals outside the regular working hours hence leading to poor quality patient care and disillusionment of nurses with their profession. The problems raised by the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario (RNAO) are an urgent call to action for nurses' retention by the provincial and federal government. The migration of health workers has economic losses of health services because of reduced capacity of workforce, loss of supervisors who are experienced to supervise and induct the young nursing population, loss of mentors for health science trainers who graduates and are inexperienced, lack of public health researchers as those who migrate can no longer contribute to local health research, there is the loss of tax revenue because they no longer pay tax to the home country and

the loss of job creation where they will not engage domestic workers when they leave Palmer (2006). The objective of this research endeavours is to evaluate the impact of compensation on the retention rate of registered nurses employed in public institutions located in Kiambu County, Kenya.

3. Methodology

The study adopted a Correlational research design. The research was conducted in Kiambu County, Kenya. Kiambu County is in the former Central Province of Kenya. Kiambu borders Machakos in the East, Murang'a to the North, Nyandarua to the North, Kajiado and Nairobi from the South. Kiambu County is well located bordering Nairobi the capital city of Kenya. Kiambu County is densely populated with an estimate population of 2,489,179 people. The study targets a population of 1800 registered nurses and 11 human resource officers from selected public hospitals in Kiambu County spreading across 110 health facilities. A questionnaire and an interview schedule were used for data collection. The filled questionnaires were collected by the assistant researcher and checked for completeness before they are received by the researcher to do final verification

4. Results and Findings

A. Descriptive Analysis on the Influence of Remuneration on Retention of Registered Nurses

Compensation for extra work does not highly motivate the registered nurses at their working stations, this is not true because most of the respondent disagreed with a rate of 89(29.9%) and 82(27.6%) strongly disagreed. Respondent that agreed and strongly agreed were 50(16.7%) each and 27(9.2%) of the respondent neither agreed nor disagreed.

Good bonuses are not strategies to influence the retention of registered nurses, this is not true as most of the respondent disagreed with a rate of 113(37.9%) and 89(29.9%) strongly disagreed. Next were respondent that strongly agreed with a rate of 36(12.1%) followed by respondent that agreed who had a rate of 34(11.5%) and finally respondent that were neutral were 26(8.6%).

Salaries paid to registered nurses are not strategies to influence their retention at their working place, most of the respondent disagreed with response rate of 84(28.2%) followed by those that agreed with a rate of 70(23.6%), next were

Table 1
Respondents rating on remuneration and retention of nurses

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Compensation for extra work does not highly motivate the registered nurses at their working stations.	82 (27.6%)	89 (29.9%)	27 (9.2%)	50 (16.7%)	50 (16.7%)
Good bonuses are not strategies to influence the retention of registered nurses.	89 (29.9%)	113 (37.9%)	26 (8.6%)	34 (11.5%)	36 (12.1%)
Salaries paid to registered nurses are not strategies to influence their retention at their working place.	63 (21.3%)	84 (28.2%)	31 (10.3%)	70 (23.6%)	50 (16.7%)
Non-cash incentives do not influence the retention of registered nurses.	55 (18.4%)	92 (31.0%)	53 (17.8%)	53 (17.8%)	44 (14.9%)
Subsistence cash allowances do not influence the retention of registered nurses.	51 (17.2%)	110 (36.8%)	41 (13.8%)	55 (18.4%)	41 (13.8%)
The registered nurses are not satisfied with the non-cash incentives they receive.	31 (10.3%)	53 (17.8%)	39 (13.2%)	103 (34.5%)	72 (24.1%)
When registered nurses go for leave, they are not given allowances	70 (23.6%)	101 (33.9%)	31 (10.3%)	55 (18.4%)	41 (13.8%)

Source: Research Data (2022)

respondent that strongly disagreed with a rate of 63(21.3%) followed by respondent that strongly agreed at a rate of 50(16.7%) and finally those respondents were neutral were only 31(10.3%).

Non-cash incentives do not influence the retention of registered nurses, this is not true because most of the respondent disagreed with a rate of 92(31.0%) and 55(18.4%) those who strongly disagreed. Respondent that agreed and those that were neutral were 53(17.8%) each and finally 44(14.9%) those that strongly agreed.

Subsistence cash allowances do not influence the retention of registered nurses, this is not correct since majority of the respondent disagreed with a rate of 110(36.8%) followed by those who did agree with a rate of 55(18.4%), next being respondent that strongly disagreed who had a rate of 51(17.2%) and finally respondent that were neutral and those that strongly agreed were 41(13.8%) each.

Most of the respondent agreed that the registered nurses are not satisfied with the non-cash incentives they receive as they were the highest with a rate of 103(34.5%) followed by respondent that strongly agreed with a rate of 72(24.1%), next were respondent that disagreed with a rate of 53(17.8%) followed by respondent that neither agreed nor disagreed with a rate of 39(13.2%) and respondent that strongly disagreed were 31(10.3%).

When registered nurses go for leave, they are not given allowances, this statement is not true because most of the respondent disagreed with a rate of 101(33.9%) and 70(23.6%) strongly disagreed. The other respondent agreed with a rate of 55(18.4%), followed by respondent that strongly agreed who had a rate of 41(13.8%) and finally respondent that were neutral were only 31(10.3%).

B. Inferential Analysis on the Influence of Remuneration on Retention of Registered Nurses

A chi square was performed to determine the statistical relationship on the influence of remuneration on retention of registered nurses in public hospitals in Kiambu County, Kenya and the results were represented on 2 below;

The results presented in Table 2 summarize the Chi-Square analysis examining the influence of remuneration on the retention of registered nurses in public hospitals in Kiambu County, Kenya. The Pearson Chi-Square value is 15.889 with an associated p-value of 0.025. Since this p-value is less than the significance threshold of 0.05, we conclude that there is a statistically significant relationship between remuneration and the retention of registered nurses at a 95% confidence level. Consequently, we reject the null hypothesis. However, it is important to note that the Likelihood Ratio of 10.431 and Linear-by-Linear Association of 1.645 indicate further

exploration may be warranted for a comprehensive understanding of the relationship.

C. Thematic Analysis on the Influence of Remuneration on Retention of Registered Nurses

In this section of the research the study determined the Influence of Remuneration on Retention of Registered Nurses in Public Hospitals in Kiambu County, Kenya and the following were some of the major aspects highlighted by the respondents;

Were the registered nurses having other benefits from this institution other than their monthly pay package? The study the following from study respondents;

“In the healthcare organizations there was minimal to provide opportunities for professional development, such as continuing education programs, mentorship, and leadership development.”

“There was no provision of the institutions offering the wellness programs to help nurses maintain their health and well-being, which can include access to fitness facilities, nutrition counselling, or stress management resources.”

“Most of the nurses indicated that they didn't have access to flexible work arrangements, such as telecommuting or part-time work, which can help them balance their work and personal responsibilities.”

The study indicated some of the mechanism that should be adopted by medical institution on the appreciation of the registered nurses who perform excellent.

“Offering bonuses and other financial incentives to nurses who exceed performances expectations. This can provide tangible recognition for a job well done.”

“Nurses who perform exceptionally well should benefit from additional training or education to help them develop new skills or advance their careers. Providing these opportunities can show appreciation for their dedication and hard work.”

“The healthcare organizations have awards or recognition programs in place to celebrate outstanding performance. These programs can include nominations from colleagues, patients, or supervisors, and can provide nurses with a sense of pride and accomplishment.”

Healthcare organizations should strive to recognize and reward their nurses for their hard work and dedication to their patients and profession. By the organization values the nurse's contributions and is committed to their professional and personal well-being and this will increase the performance within the hospitals.

The study indicated that the incentives for registered nurses during this time the County is fighting the covid-19 pandemic as the frontlines care givers were the following aspects;

“By the health institutions by ensuring that nurses have access to appropriate PPE is critical in preventing the spread

Table 2

Chi square on the influence of remuneration on retention of registered nurses			
Chi-Square Tests	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	15.889 ^a	298	.025
Likelihood Ratio	10.431	298	.917
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.645	1	.200
N of Valid Cases	11		

Source: Research Data (2022)

of COVID-19 and protecting the health and safety of healthcare workers.”

“The COVID-19 pandemic was found to be emotionally and mentally taxing on healthcare workers. Healthcare organizations or governments may provide resources for mental health support, such as counselling or therapy services.”

“Healthcare organizations or governments should have to provide additional time off or flexible work arrangements to nurses who are on the frontline of the COVID-19 pandemic. This would have resulted to increase in work managements and work done during pandemic.”

To address any concerns or complaints that registered nurses may have about their relationships with hospital management, it is important for healthcare organizations to have open communication channels and a system in place for employees to voice their concerns or grievances.

The satisfaction of registered nurses with the health and personal safety measures provided by their employers or the government may vary based on many factors, including the quality and availability of personal protective equipment (PPE), access to COVID-19 testing and vaccination, and support for mental and emotional well-being.

One approach is to establish regular meetings or forums where nurses can provide feedback and suggestions for improving their work environment, such as through regular performance evaluations or employee engagement surveys. It is also important for healthcare organizations to have a clear policy for addressing any complaints or issues that arise, such as through a formal grievance process or mediation.

It is important for healthcare organizations and governments to continually assess and improve the health and safety measures provided to registered nurses and other healthcare workers, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. This includes listening to feedback and concerns from nurses and ensuring that they have the resources and support they need to perform their essential roles effectively while protecting their health and safety.

Overall, it is important for healthcare organizations to foster a positive working environment that values and supports the contributions of all healthcare workers, including registered nurses, and ensures that their concerns are heard and addressed in a timely and effective manner.

5. Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

A. Summary

The third objective was to investigate the influence of remuneration on the ability to retain registered nurses in public hospitals in Kiambu County, Kenya. Based on the findings, a significant portion of the participants (just under 60%) expressed that additional compensation does not serve as a strong motivator for registered nurses. However, respondents exceeding three fifths indicated that good bonuses are a retention tool for registered nurses. The gap between the degree of received reward and the level of motivation of the nurses' expectations through compensation package is a motivational

tool that affects the retention of registered nurses says. To others like remuneration has a direct effect on job retention. According to slightly more than half of the respondents, subsistence cash allowances have an influence on retention of registered nurses. In terms of other forms of rewards, more than half of the respondents indicated that registered nurses are given allowances upon going for leave.

In spite of their origin, nature of practice, or work settings, registered nurses have a common interest that is, they are committed professionals who uphold a holistic philosophy of care that requires remuneration which determines their expectations and how they fit in the challenging workplace. However, a majority of the respondents expressed their dissatisfaction with the non-monetary incentives they received. The overall analysis of compensation revealed that just over half of the participants expressed dissatisfaction with the remuneration provided in public hospitals in Kiambu County.

B. Conclusions of the Study

The research aimed to investigate the impact of motivational strategies on the retention of registered nurses in public hospitals in Kiambu County, Kenya. The research builds upon the foundations of Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Herzberg's two-factor theory. The study found that how the employer communicates and meets the needs of nurses directly affects their satisfaction, which in turn impacts their loyalty, commitment, and cooperation. The firm's attitudes and behaviours ultimately impact the institute's overall performance. It is important to consider human resource management from the standpoint of a group that focuses on effective communication, such as making and keeping promises and fulfilling agreements, which can motivate employees. These prospects may perceive themselves as deserving a commitment (psychological agreement). The findings confirmed the observations made by that ineffective motivational strategies lead to employees refraining from engaging in behaviours that are advantageous to the organization. Instead, their focus shifts towards finding ways to leave the work station and fulfil their needs.

That remuneration has a statistically significant influence on retention of registered nurses.

C. Recommendations for Future Research

- i) There is need to develop programs on psychological counselling in the training programs and service centres for the nurses.
- ii) Data on human suffering of Kenyans and deaths caused by lack of enough health care workers and work overload.

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