

Research Article

Attrition and Retention Practices in Healthcare Sector: Perception of Staff Nurses during Covid-19 Pandemic

J. Ann Louisa Paul¹ and Clayton Michael Fonseca^{2*}

^{1,2}Department of Social Work, Sacred Heart College (Autonomous), Tirupattur, Tamil Nadu, India
clayton@shctpt.edu*; +91 9042147007

Received: February 20 2022/Accepted: May 3 2022/Published: 07 June 2022

Abstract

Attrition among nurses is a real issue affecting the hospital and health care organization during the prevailing pandemic. Hence, the pressure to reduce attrition rate among the staff nurses is of urgent concern. This research was conducted to study the attrition and retention practices as perceived by staff nurses during the covid-19 pandemic at a multi-specialty hospital in Bangalore. In the prevailing pandemic outbreak, it is the health care employees who stand as warriors in the frontline. In spite of rendering highly dedicated service to the covid victims these health care employees had to face threatening and pressure from patient's families too. Apart from this these employees had to face alienation from neighborhood, extreme stress and psychological burnouts which some time resulted in quitting the job itself. Analysis revealed that more than significant majority (85%) of the respondents expressed that they experienced high attrition impact and almost all (95%) of the respondent's experience that hospital maintains standard retention strategies to retain its assets. The researcher has have presented some suggestions to curb attrition of nurses in hospital sector.

Keywords: Attrition, health care organization, staff nurses, burnouts, retention strategies.

Introduction

The life threatening Covid-19 pandemic has led to an unprecedented strain on healthcare services globally. Considerable changes in healthcare delivery have necessarily taken place. These have included cessation of routine services, repurposing of clinical areas, and redeployment of staff to unfamiliar clinical environments and in some circumstances, the rationing of services. The impact of these modified working conditions on safety culture and psychological well-being are poorly understood. Traumatic events or adverse conditions during natural disasters, conflict, and pandemics had lead the Nurses to burnout. Burnout leads to poorer patient safety outcomes. Burnout among Nurses is composed of two elements i.e. exhaustion linked to excessive job demands and disengagement linked to insufficient job resources. During the covid-19 pandemic healthcare systems have faced rising demands and limited resources, as such, it is important to understand the corresponding rates of burnout. The attrition among nurse doesn't cause only because of low salary the rationale varies like demanding schedule, excessive work volume, lack of reward or recognition for the milestones achieved, no recognition for contribution and job performances, very poor opportunity

for promotion and career development, lack of collaboration and cooperation among the employees due to poor work environment etc. Shortage of skilled health workers due to attrition causes struggle to build and maintain workforce in healthcare for delivering quality healthcare services. Employee retention is the most important factor that contributes to the organization's progress. Failing to retain an efficient employee is costly to the bottom line and thus creates organizational complications such excess work load to be absorbed by co-workers, insecure co-workers, extra time investment for recruiting, hiring and training new recruit. Therefore, retaining key employees is critical for an organization for the long term health and success. Alhmoud and Rjoub (2019) conducted a research on the title "Total rewards and employee retention in a middle eastern context". The key aim of the research was to explore the relationship between total rewards and employee retention in the specific context of Islamic banks in Jordan. The findings of this article help to paint a relatively detailed picture of this relationship. Based on these findings, it is strongly recommended that efforts to minimize turnover in Jordan's Islamic banks must incorporate carefully designed total rewards strategies incorporating extrinsic, intrinsic, and

*Corresponding author

social rewards aimed at motivating employees, and satisfying their particular needs. In addition, by understanding the total rewards and retention relationship, human resource management and managers can develop policies and strategies for not only retaining the qualified employees but also to become more profitability and successful. Weerathna (2019), stated that, high turnover rates of talented experts might represent a danger to the business or association, because of the human resources lost abilities, preparing, and information lost. Quite, given the regular specialization of talented experts, these workers are probably going to be re-utilized inside a similar industry. Sthyavathi (2021), published a research on "A study on employee attrition in one of the leading hospital". The study concludes that the primary justification behind weakening is family circumstances, higher examines, wellbeing reasons, elective job opportunities and deficient installment. Insufficient payment, work pressure, outside pressure greatly contributed to high worker turnover rates in the organization. Deshmukh *et al.* (2021) conducted their study on "Modeling attrition to know why your employees leave or stay". The study concludes that the present ecological elements impact each part of business, be it advertising, money, activities or human asset. Ability deficiency has turned into a worldwide issue for associations. One of the significant difficulties looked by any association is the expansion in the degree of representative steady loss. The review has attempted to fabricate a prescient model by utilizing calculated relapse and comprehend the particular factors that lead to steady loss.

Significance of the study

Employee attrition in the healthcare industry is rapidly increasing, which means that HRs is scrambling to improve retention and employee happiness. If attrition is high in a hospital the immediate consequences are severe like loss of valuable knowledge and experience, loss of morale, loss of belief on the hospital and ability to perform, and none of these parameters are quick or replaceable. Understanding the causes for attrition and an overview of attrition rate among Nurses we can employ long term workforce planning strategies to manage attrition in such a way that does not hamper the organization's production. The study will reveal how attrition has an impact on Employee satisfaction, recruitment, selection policies. Employee retention is crucial for a Hospital's successful functioning and attrition rate is the metric that provides insight on how well the hospital retains its Human Capital. Therefore, by understanding relevant and effective retention strategies attrition among medical practitioners can be minimized with relevance to Covid -19 pandemic. Keeping the above facts in view, this study was aimed with the following objectives.

1. To study the factors leading to attrition among staff nurses.
2. To understand how gender affects attrition among Staff Nurses.
3. To analyze the existing retention practices followed in the hospital.
4. To investigate the primary reasons that leads to attrition during covid pandemic.
5. To find if monetary benefits can retain the employees in this Hospital.
6. To assess and find out the strategies used to retain the nurses during the prevailing pandemic.
7. To evaluate whether the nurses are satisfied with their job profile, working hours, training provided to them.

Methodology

Study design: Descriptive research was held to collect information on the perception about Attrition and Retention strategies among staff nurses in a multi-specialty hospital at Bangalore. Using the approach of simple random sampling, data was gathered from sixty Staff Nurses belonging to M.Sc., B.Sc., GNM and ANM Nursing departments. Self-structured Questionnaire was used as tool to collect data through Google Form Template. SPSS V.20 was used to compute statistical tables and charts. This helped in obtaining reliable and concrete results and statistics to arrive at reliable judgments based on the data. The primary sources for the study were 60 Staff Nurses responses from the mentioned Multi-Specialty Hospital. And the secondary sources of data are books, journals, websites, reports, manuals, newspapers and periodicals.

Results and Discussion

From Table 1 it can inferred that more than half (55%) of the respondents are experiencing low psychological support required in a hospital. It also says that almost all (96.7%) of the respondents have experienced high working environmental impact. And also around all (96.7%) of the respondents have experienced high individual factors impacting attrition among Nurses. It also infers that more than vast majority (91.7%) of the respondents are been impacted by these organizational factors and almost all (96.7%) of the respondents have experienced high pandemic impact which in turn had affected attrition among Nurses. In terms of overall attrition more than significant majority (85%) of the respondents have faced factors that impact attrition and the last dimension is the overall retention strategies almost all (95%) of the respondent's experience that there is high retention strategies applied in the management. Table 2 illustrates that, there is no significant difference between male and female respondents and organization factors impacting attrition.

Table 1. Distribution of respondents based various dimensions that impact attrition among staff nurses.

Factors	Low level	High level
Psychological factors	33	27
Environmental factors	2	58
Individual factors	2	88
Organizational factors	5	55
Pandemic factors	2	58
Overall attrition factors	9	51
Retention strategies	3	57

Table 2. Karl Pearson's Co-efficient of Correlation between the monthly income of the respondents with regard to the various dimensions of attrition and retention strategies.

Dimensions	Correlation value	Statistical inference
Psychological Total	0.438**	P<0.01 Significant
Environmental Total	0.040	P>0.05 Not significant
Individual Total	-0.101	P>0.05 Not significant
Organizational Total	0.156	P>0.05 Not significant
Pandemic Total	-0.251	P>0.05 Not significant
Overall Retention Strategies	0.270*	P<0.05 Significant
Overall Attrition practices	0.260*	P<0.05 Significant

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level; *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.

It can be also observed from the Table 2 that there is no significant difference between the gender of the respondents and the dimensions of the study which include psychological, environmental, individual organizational, pandemic total, overall retention strategies, and overall attrition strategies. Table 3 illustrate that there is a significant relationship between the hours of working/day of the respondents and Environmental and Overall Retention Strategies. It also infers that there is no significant relation between hours of working/day of the respondents and other factors like psychological, individual, organizational, pandemic total, overall attrition strategies among nurses. Table 4 illustrate that there is a significant relationship between the number of training programmes attended by the respondents and other factors like Environmental, Organizational, Pandemic factors and Overall Retention Strategies. It also infers that there is no significant relation between Department of the respondents and other factors like Psychological, Environmental, Individual, Organizational and Overall Attrition Strategies.

Conclusion

Shortage of skilled health workers due to attrition causes struggle to build and maintain workforce in healthcare for delivering quality healthcare services. Employee retention is the most important factor that contributes to the organization's progress. Failing to retain an efficient employee is costly to the bottom line and thus creates organizational complications such excess work load to be absorbed by co-workers, insecure co-workers, extra time investment for recruiting, hiring and training new recruit. This research was specially done in relevance to the prevailing covid-19 pandemic. As the researcher's wanted to study whether pandemic has any relevance with attrition among nurses and to check if it has retained the nurses in the profession. Therefore, from the study it was inferred that almost all (96.7%) of the respondents have experienced high pandemic impact like lack of provision of PPE's to the nurses, shortage of nurses in the covid ward and unscheduled staffing, alienation from the neighborhood and friends circle, loss of several deaths etc., These were all the factors that influenced the employees to think of leaving the job.

Table 3. 't' test between gender of the respondents with regard to various dimensions of attrition and retention strategies.

Variable	Mean	Std. deviation	Statistical inference
Psychological total			t= 0.656
Male (5)	41.20	3.194	P= 0.515
Female (55)	39.56	5.470	P>0.05
			Not Significant
Environmental total			t= 0.849
Male (5)	31.40	6.025	P= 0.399
Female (55)	29.42	4.913	P>0.05
			Not Significant
Individual total			t= 0.764
Male (5)	37.40	5.941	P= 0.448
Female (55)	35.31	5.856	P>0.05
			Not Significant
Organizational total			t= 0.273
Male (5)	27.20	5.586	P= 0.786
Female (55)	26.55	5.095	P>0.05
			Not Significant
Pandemic total			t= 0.054
Male (5)	32.40	4.775	P= 0.957
Female (55)	32.51	4.311	P>0.05
			Not Significant
Overall retention strategies			t= 0.418
Male (5)	30.40	5.595	P= 0.677
Female (55)	29.15	6.476	P>0.05
			Not Significant
Overall attrition strategies			t= 0.819
Male (5)	28.20	5.541	P= 0.404
Female (55)	25.91	5.851	P>0.05
			Not Significant

Table 4. Karl Pearson's Co-efficient of Correlation between the Hours of working/per of the respondents with regard to the various dimensions of Attrition and Retention strategies.

Dimensions	Correlation value	Statistical inference
Psychological total	-0.188	P>0.05 Not Significant
Environmental total	-0.350**	P<0.01 Significant
Individual total	0.030	P>0.05 Not Significant
Organizational total	-0.192	P>0.05 Not Significant
Pandemic total	0.192	P>0.05 Not Significant
Overall retention strategies	-0.254*	P<0.05 Significant
Overall attrition practices	-0.023	P>0.05 Not Significant

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level; *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.

Suggestions

Retaining key employees is critical for an organization for the long term health and success. For this, the Human Resource department needs to revisit the overall employee retention strategies at least once a year to make necessary adjustments to make the organization more conducive for the human capital. From this research the researcher was able to find out various reasons for attrition among nurses and some strategies that are used in the hospital to retain its human assets. The results obtained helped the researcher to find out the various factors that can increase attrition. Suggestions can also help in finding out the key areas that can be worked out for the betterment of the employees. The opinions or choices put forwards through suggestions can help the future researchers and also bridge the research gap. The following suggestions can be used for curbing attrition among nurses and increases retention.

- Introducing rewards systems at hospital setting too.
- Facilitating transportation provision, flexible shift timings and providing accommodation facilities for the employees and maintain high ethical standards.
- Other welfare measure like providing incentives and promotions to economical weaker employees to motivate them on a humanitarian ground.
- Environmental factors like providing fair selection of employees for training.
- Maintaining cordial relationship with the employee by the administrative heads can be effectively implemented for the benefits of employees.
- Conducting workshops for the employees to enhance their work life balance, workshops on group dynamics, and career guidance sessions for health care employees.
- The organization can work on the emotional wellbeing of its employees, as every staff nurses was going through a period of trauma stress and strain.
- Providing employees with breaks and rest times
- Inculcating employee engagement activities.
- Conduct frequent and relevant training and collect feedbacks to analyze the needs of the employee.
- Increasing employee involvement in decision-making and job planning.
- Ensuring the all the Nurses are provided with PPE's for the safety of the nurses for the quality patient care.

From the presented study based on the present analysis it is evident that the attrition rate is rather high in the hospital setting. Though the organization has taken various initiatives in attempting to retain staff nurses it was found that life was greater than all efforts as the pandemic threatened every human being's life on this planet.

As staff nurses were involved in addressing the covid victims and facing the death of near ones they would have undergone severe mental pressure, strain and burnout making them even think of leaving the job. The management should ensure that they work for the emotional wellbeing of the employees and to support them to face such challenging situations at workplace. Such kind of environment will create a positive atmosphere for work and thus reduce the overall turnover of the hospital and increases the retention of nurses for the smooth functioning of the hospital.

References

1. Ajaya Kumar, D.R. 2016. A study on employee retention strategies in Indian Manufacturing Industries. *Int. J. Managmnt. Res. Social Sci.* 3(4): 5-11.
2. Catherine, A.V. and Fonceca, C.M. 2022. Employee Stress and its Impact on their Job Performance. *J. Acad. Indus. Res.* 10(3): 34-38.
3. Joshi, M.J. 2009. *Hospital Administration*. (1, Ed.) Haryana: ISBN 978-81-8448-676-6.
4. Dave, N.V. 1991. *Hospital Management*. (81-7100-293-5, Ed.) New Delhi.
5. Elango, L. and Michael Fonceca, C. 2021. Data on work life balance experienced by women police officials of Tirupattur District, Tamil Nadu, India. *Int. J. Aquat. Sci.* 12(2): 667-673.
6. Eusebia S Shava, A. H. (2018, January 1). Factors associated with the attrition of Nurses in public in public health facilities in Khomas region of Namibia. *Journal of Medical Case Reports & Reviews*, 1(1).
7. Fonceca, C.M., Keerthivasan, S., Anandan, C.C., Arockiaraj, K. and Lisa, E. 2022. Exploring the reasons for street hawking, challenges and quality of life of street vendors. *J. Positive School Psychol.* 3609-3618.
8. Fonceca, C.M. and Samuel, J.A.U. 2017. CSR Responsiveness vs. Corporate Business Ethics–A Critical Analysis. *Asian J. Managmnt.* 8(2): 123-126.
9. Goyal, D.K. 2013. *Hospital Administration and Human Resource Management* (Sixth Edition ed.). Delhi: Patpargani Industrial Estate.
10. Kaur, R. 2017. Employee retention models and factors affecting employee retention in IT Companies. *International Journal of Business Administration and Management*, 7.
11. Fonceca, C. M., Raj, S. P., & Anandan, C. R. C. (2017). Managerial effectiveness: A critical analysis. *Journal of Business and Management*, 19(8), 47-52.
12. Mahesh, K. S. (2017, April 7). Employee Attrition Models - A conceptual framework. *Int. J. Engg. Managmnt. Sci.* 4(4)23-48
13. Mishra, K. 2021. Reducing attrition of employees in health care sector. *Int. J. Trend Sci. Res. Develop.* 5(3): 24-56.
14. Rabiyaathul Basariy, R.R. 2019. A study on attrition-turnover intensions of employee. *Int. J. Civil Engg. Technol.* 10(01): 15-26.
15. Shilpa, N. 2015. A study on reasons of attrition and strategies for employee retention. *Int. J. Engg. Res. Appl.* 5(12): 36-41.
16. Jebaseelan, A. and Michael Fonceca, C. 2021. Transdisciplinary Research: A social work perspective. *Int. J. of Aquat. Sci.* 12(2): 549-557.
17. Vora, A.A. 2016. *Hospital Maangement from Service Sector Prespective* (1 Edition ed.). Delhi: The Health Science Publishers.

Cite this Article as:

Louisa Paul, J.A. and Fonceca, C.M. 2022. Attrition and retention practices in healthcare sector: Perception of staff nurses during covid-19 pandemic. *J. Acad. Indus. Res.* 11(1): 11-15.