

Retention of Nurses in A Tertiary Hospital in the Philippines

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Abstract

The research study on nurse retention stems from the need to address workplace challenges such as high nurse turnover, high nurse-to-patient ratios, limited financial incentives, and the migration of skilled nurses abroad, which are prevalent in both private and public hospitals. The purpose of this study is to identify and understand why nurses choose to stay and assess the level of influence, the level of job satisfaction and the level of retention on organizational culture, hospital engagement, financial rewards, and career advancement opportunities. Random Sampling Technique was adopted with an ideal sample size of two hundred and three (203) respondents who completed the 4-point Likert Rating Scale questionnaire. The study highlights that nurses thrive when pride, teamwork, a supportive work culture, and career growth opportunities intersect. The study recommends strategies including skill-based pay allowances, shuttle services, communication training, staffing high-demand wards, and on-site wellness spaces that can enhance nurse engagement and promote well-being among healthcare staff.

Keywords: retention, nurses, hospital, organizational culture, hospital engagement, financial rewards, career advancement opportunities

INTRODUCTION

One of the most important pillars of the hospital is the healthcare workers. They provide the utmost care to patients and significantly impact patient experiences as they interact with them the most. The point of care starts from the moment the patient enters the hospital and continues until the patient is discharged. The Philippines' overseas population is a significant source of remittances, which greatly support the national economy, and thus transnational mobility has enjoyed widespread support (Jenny Elmaco, 2022). Filipino nurses are renowned globally for their high-quality healthcare service, which is why they are in demand in foreign countries. Some characteristics they possess that make them distinctive from other nurses are a strong work ethic, appealing hospitality and an authentic personality to patients and co-workers. The Filipino culture emphasizes the value of hard work and dedication. Filipino nurses are known for their commitment to providing quality patient care, their willingness to work long hours, and their dedication to their profession. This strong work ethic is highly valued by healthcare systems globally, making Filipino nurses a sought-after resource in the industry (GrowInc., 2023).

Organizational Culture is often defined as the values and symbols that are understood and displayed by an organization so that members of the organization feel they belong to one family and create a condition that members of the organization feel different from other organizations (Tiffany Bisbey et al., 2021). It is a social system that helps unite the organization by providing appropriate standards for what employees should say and do (Jon Kenedi et al., 2022) such as delivering quality outputs, improving personal

competencies and being creative and innovative.

Hospital Engagement is an organizational practice that includes emotional and rational factors concerning enthusiasm, passion, satisfaction, confidence, empowerment, and positive attitudes. It is positive, proactive behavior in the workplace and towards the organization brought about by a combination of motivated, emotionally attached employees: integrated, enlightened people-management activities, and empathetic managers (Paul Turner, 2020). It includes the commitment, morale and participation of employees who remain in the organization. In all areas, hospital engagement is linked to long-term work, transformations in how people work, where they work, what they expect from work, and the workplace (Setyo Riyanto et al., 2021).

Financial Rewards, in this paper, refer to monetary benefits provided to employees as a form of recognition for their dedication and service to clients. These incentives play a significant role in enhancing employee motivation, job satisfaction, and overall performance.

Career Advancement Opportunities are a process of increasing individual employability achieved in realizing the desired career (Dewi Niati et al., 2021). It is an educational process that uses systematic and organized procedures where non-managerial employees learn technical knowledge and skills for limited purposes. The more employees who are given the opportunity to take part in training can improve company performance (Anwar Mangkunegara, 2016). It is a step that companies can use to maintain and increase employee productivity and prepare for an employee's future career (Dewi Niati et al., 2021).

The nursing workforce is most likely to stay if it includes doing meaningful work, a positive and engaging work environment and feeling healthy and safe. Feeling valued by a manager and efforts to create positive working environments were ranked with high importance. Other respondents stated greater recognition for their work is the most effective approach to keeping employees in their jobs along with the ability to take more breaks (Gretchen Berlin et al., 2022).

1. DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

1.1 Research Design and Methodology

The study used Descriptive Quantitative Research Design which focuses on collecting, analyzing, presenting gathered data, and providing insights into the research. It aimed to gather measurable data to aid the statistical analysis of a sample population and explain the characteristics of a demographic segment (Unimrkt Research, 2022). This type of research design focused more on answering the “what” questions rather than the “why” questions which emphasizes the features of a demographic sample.

1.2 Population and Locale

This research study was based on the Random Sampling Technique by distributing questionnaires with a 4-point Likert Scale rating where respondents rated their agreement/disagreement or level of influence/satisfaction/retention from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree, to permanent nurses with a minimum of five (5) years in service from the different units of the hospital. Based on a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error, the ideal sample size was calculated to be two hundred and three (203) respondents from a total population of four hundred and twenty seven (427) from the permanent positions in the Nursing Service. The study was conducted at a tertiary hospital in the Philippines from November 2024 to March 2025.

1.3 Data Gathering Tools

The research was conducted with survey questionnaires that were distributed to nurses assigned to the different wards of the hospital. The questionnaire was divided into three (3) parts – Level of Influence,

Employee Job Satisfaction and Employee Retention. The first part focused on how the four (4) factors influenced them to stay in the institution. The second part emphasized how satisfied they are with the organization's culture, engagement, rewards, and career growth. The last part focused on why they stayed in the hospital. The Cronbach's Alpha Test was used to measure the consistency and reliability of the questionnaire. The questionnaire demonstrated high internal consistency across all aspects, with Cronbach's Alpha scores of 0.941 for Level of Influence, 0.887 for Job Satisfaction, and 0.927 for Employee Retention. The overall reliability score of 0.941 confirms that the questionnaire is very reliable.

1.4 Data Gathering Procedure

The paper has gone through ethical review and was approved by the institution's Research Ethics Committee (REC). The survey questionnaire was validated using the IBM SPSS Statistics software to test its reliability by using the Cronbach's Alpha method before distributing it to the target respondents.

1.5 Treatment of Data

This research study was based on Quantitative Data and the weighted mean computed was used in Percentage Analysis to determine which factor mostly influences the nurses' stay in the hospital. In this study, a Likert Scale was used to measure the perceptions of the respondents. A 4-point Likert Scale was used because the respondent's opinion was essential without being neutral on a specific topic. One of the advantages of using a 4-point rating scale is its suitability for studies when a specific opinion is required. The correlation between the respondents' level of agreement and their ratings of influence, satisfaction and retention can be described through a structured scale. When a respondent selects Strongly Disagree, it reflects perceptions such as Not Influential, Not Satisfied, and Very Low retention. A response of Disagree corresponds to Slightly Influential, Slightly Satisfied, and Low retention. Agree corresponds to Influential, Satisfied, and High retention and the selection of Strongly Agree represents Very Influential, Very Satisfied, and Very High retention. Furthermore, in Table 1, the weighted means were interpreted as follows: Not Influential in the point range of 1.00 – 1.75, Slightly Influential in 1.76 – 2.50, Influential in 2.51 – 3.25, and Very Influential in 3.26 – 4.00. The means in Table 2 were interpreted as Not Satisfied in the point range of 1.00 – 1.75, Slightly Satisfied in 1.76 – 2.50, Satisfied in 2.51 – 3.25, and Very Satisfied in 3.26 – 4.00. The weighted means in Table 3 were interpreted as follows: Very Low retention level in the point range 1.00 – 1.75, Low retention level in 1.76 – 2.50, High retention level in 2.51 – 3.25, Very High retention level in 3.26 – 4.00.

Table 1. Four-Point Likert Scale of the Level of Influence

Range	Descriptive Rating
1.00 – 1.75	Not Influential
1.76 – 2.50	Slightly Influential
2.51 – 3.25	Influential
3.26 – 4.00	Very Influential

Table 2. Four-Point Likert Scale of the Level of Satisfaction

Range	Descriptive Rating
1.00 – 1.75	Not Satisfied
1.76 – 2.50	Slightly Satisfied
2.51 – 3.25	Satisfied
3.26 – 4.00	Very Satisfied

Table 3. Four-Point Likert Scale of the Level of Retention

Range	Descriptive Rating
1.00 – 1.75	Very Low
1.76 – 2.50	Low
2.51 – 3.25	High
3.26 – 4.00	Very high

2. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Culture has been called “the way of life for an entire society” (Victoria Akpa et al., 2021). Organizational Culture affects the performance of the employees, as well as the establishment of their relationships with their clients, their co-workers and the higher management. Research shows that when employees are committed and share the same norms and values as the organization, it can increase performance towards achieving the overall organizational goals (Victoria Akpa et al., 2021).

Hospital Engagement influences an employee’s emotional, physical, mental and behavioral well-being. According to research, Setyo Riyanto, et al. (2021) state that hospital engagement is a sense of emotional attachment to work and organization which results in a positive relationship between hospital engagement and individual performance.

Walters Ngwa, et al. (2019) believe that if employees are adequately rewarded for their efforts, they will stay longer and work with the utmost dedication and commitment. Furthermore, dynamic organizations used to have an effective reward and recognition program to boost staff morale and motivation, which led to organizational effectiveness in the long run (Syed Hussain et al., 2019).

Career Advancement Opportunities promotes professional growth of employees and enriches their knowledge, skills and abilities that improve organizational performance. It is a process of increasing individual employability achieved in order to realize the desired career and therefore, every employee must be given the opportunity to develop their abilities and career and are expected to provide the best results for the company (Dewi Niati et al., 2021).

Therefore, these four factors result in employee loyalty to the healthcare institution. Didit Darmawan et al. (2020) state that employee loyalty is not only measured by how long the employee works but how employees' commitment when working must also be considered. Employees who remain loyal to the organization are less likely to look for new jobs. The employee loyalty shown is also supported by a strong desire to continue the membership of a company, organization, or work based on the company's vision and core values and make maximum efforts in the interests of the company, and there is a willingness to work overtime (Didit Darmawan et al., 2020).

2.1 Level of Influence to Nurses

Table 4. Level of Influence

Factor	Indicators	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Rating
Organizational Culture	I am proud to be part of this organization.	3.23	Influential
	I feel that my colleagues value my opinions	2.87	Influential
	I have the freedom to make important decisions at my work.	2.86	Influential
	The management listens to my suggestions at work.	2.77	Influential

	I feel appreciated at work.	2.70	Influential
Hospital Engagement	The friendliness and support of staff in my department encourages me.	3.02	Influential
	The hospital acknowledges and respects everyone's contribution.	2.86	Influential
	Pertinent updates at work are shared equally in my department.	2.81	Influential
	The reasonable amount of work I am expected to do motivates me.	2.74	Influential
	I observe that the organization is fair to all employees.	2.72	Influential
Financial Rewards	I believe that monetary incentives play a key role in achieving the hospital's goals.	3.22	Influential
	I want to seek a higher-paying job than my current position.	3.22	Influential
	The incentives and benefits given influence my level of performance.	2.88	Influential
	The benefits we receive are as good as most other hospitals offer.	2.82	Influential
	I feel that the current compensation system is fair and just.	2.70	Influential
Career Advancement Opportunities	My daily tasks align closely with my professional skills.	3.10	Influential
	I regularly receive skill evaluation from my supervisor.	2.99	Influential
	I am already content with my current position at work.	2.85	Influential
	I have the materials and equipment I need that enriches my skills.	2.78	Influential
	There is a high chance of a promotion at my job.	2.60	Influential

2.1.1 Organizational Culture: The results indicate that fostering a culture that nurtures employees' physical, emotional and mental well-being enhances both their personal and professional growth, leading to improved performance. This environment also empowers employees to unlock their full potential and effectively accomplish tasks. This suggests that the organization's culture plays a significant role in the retention of nurses. This positive cultural climate not only supports nurses' physical, emotional and mental well-being but also fosters an empowering environment where they feel valued, heard and granted autonomy in decision-making. A culture that effectively nurtures and values its nursing staff serves as a critical foundation for sustaining workforce stability in a challenging healthcare landscape. Moreover, the empowerment inherent in such a culture likely translates into higher quality patient care, as nurses who feel supported and influential are more motivated to excel in their roles. This culture-driven engagement fuels both professional growth and personal fulfillment, enabling nurses to unlock their full potential and deliver improved healthcare outcomes. Ultimately, continuing to reinforce and develop this culture will be essential for the hospital to maintain its competitive edge and meet the evolving demands of healthcare delivery.

2.1.2 Hospital Engagement: Employee involvement in an institution is crucial for promoting harmonious work relationships. As shown in the table above, these findings underscore the vital importance of a supportive and fair work environment in enhancing nurse engagement, which is a cornerstone for both

employee well-being and organizational effectiveness. When nurses perceive their workload as reasonable and their contributions as acknowledged and respected, it nurtures a sense of fairness and belonging that drives motivation and commitment. This perception of fairness mitigates stress and fosters trust in the institution, which is critical for sustaining high morale amidst the demanding healthcare setting. The prominent influence of collegial support highlights that positive interpersonal dynamics serve not only as motivators but also as buffers against burnout by creating a collaborative and caring work culture. Such an environment enhances teamwork, communication and shared responsibility, which are essential components for delivering consistent, high-quality patient care. Furthermore, transparent communication, as evidenced by equitable sharing of pertinent updates, reinforces the nurses’ sense of inclusion and empowerment, which further elevates engagement. This transparency helps build an informed workforce that feels involved in organizational processes rather than isolated, thereby cultivating loyalty and reducing turnover intentions.

2.1.3 Financial Rewards: A good compensation system is essential for attracting and retaining employees, as it boosts morale and reduces turnover. It also ensures that employees feel valued and are motivated to perform at their best. In the table above, it is important to note that these incentives nurses receive lead to improved productivity which contributes to the hospital’s overall goals. However, when employees seek high-paying jobs than their current roles, it indicates financial dissatisfaction, which can impact the retention of healthcare workers. Their continued dedication to patient care, even as they advocate for improved compensation, speaks to the resilience and passion embedded in healthcare workers. The fact that they dream of better conditions while maintaining their responsibilities highlights the tension between personal financial stability and organizational goals.

2.1.4 Career Advancement Opportunities: When nurses work in roles that match their strengths, they continue refining their skills, gaining deeper knowledge and becoming leaders in their specialty areas. This growth contributes to a more capable healthcare workforce. Furthermore, hospitals and healthcare institutions benefit from nurses who work in their areas of strength. There is greater organizational success, more effective team collaboration, stronger professional growth and development and reduced stress and burnout.

2.2 Level of Job Satisfaction of Nurses

Table 5. Level of Job Satisfaction

Factor	Indicators	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Rating
Organizational Culture	Team meetings are conducted regularly, fostering collaboration.	3.08	Satisfied
	The motivation and encouragement provided by my department promotes employee satisfaction.	2.85	Satisfied
	The department recognizes employees for their accomplishments.	2.76	Satisfied
	The department fosters a comfortable and supportive working environment.	2.74	Satisfied
	I am satisfied with the work-life balance the hospital promotes.	2.32	Slightly satisfied

Hospital Engagement	I am happy to be working in a team rather than in working alone.	3.11	Satisfied
	I am happy to celebrate our team’s success as a shared achievement.	3.02	Satisfied
	I am satisfied with the good work relationships I have with my colleagues at work.	3.01	Satisfied
	I feel productive at work.	2.97	Satisfied
	Participating in hospital activities boosts my motivation at work.	2.66	Satisfied
Financial Rewards	Financial incentives given in the hospital motivate me more than non-financial incentives.	2.77	Satisfied
	I feel financially secure at my job.	2.61	Satisfied
	The hospital provides enough benefits for my well-being.	2.47	Slightly satisfied
	I believe that the financial incentives provided are fair and equitable.	2.37	Slightly satisfied
Career Advancement Opportunities	I feel that the hospital’s training opportunities encourage me to work better.	3.00	Satisfied
	The department provides training programs that foster my professional growth.	2.99	Satisfied
	I am optimistic about the future of the hospital and its alignment with my career growth.	2.97	Satisfied
	The management monitors my learning and development interventions.	2.94	Satisfied
	I am satisfied with the advancement and promotion opportunities the hospital offers.	2.83	Satisfied

2.2.1 Organizational Culture: In healthcare settings, meetings are beneficial not only to the employees but also to the management because it improves communication and transparency. Issues can be addressed promptly when teams meet regularly. Instead of waiting for problems to escalate, meetings provide a platform for immediate discussions and solutions. Considering that nurses work on a shifting schedule, regular check-ins encourage responsibility, as each member understands their role and progress. Team members feel more engaged when they can contribute to discussions and offer their insights during endorsement sessions every after their duty hours. When employees can share their insights, it helps build relationships and fosters a sense of belonging. Encouraging discussions and recognition boost morale and overall job satisfaction. It strengthens collaboration and teamwork, help fast-track problem-solving and decision-making and increases accountability and engagement. Given that nursing service can be emotionally, mentally, and physically demanding, such affirmation serves as a vital source of motivation and upliftment.

Continuous communication with colleagues is essential in ensuring the continuity and consistency of patient treatment. A good working environment is associated with several benefits such as higher productivity, improved morale, better collaboration, and stronger teamwork.

2.2.2 Hospital Engagement: Nurses generally thrive in a team setting rather than working alone, as collaboration enhances both their work experience and the quality of patient care. Due to the challenging nature of their work, teamwork significantly builds stronger support system and reduces stress which allows nurses to share responsibilities and support one another, reducing the pressure of handling challenges alone. This emotional and professional support helps prevent burnout and creates a more positive work environment. When the success of the team is a shared achievement, both on an individual and organizational level, it encourages continued growth, stronger organizational success and strengthens team bonding and collaboration. The data presented above reflects a high level of satisfaction, supporting the idea that strong team bonding and collaboration not only benefit individual departments but also contribute positively to the overall functioning of the hospital.

2.2.3 Financial Rewards: The table above indicates that nurses express slight satisfaction with the hospital’s provision of benefits, perceiving them as fair and equitable for their well-being. Financial incentives in healthcare often serve as a powerful motivator, influencing work performance, job satisfaction, and overall commitment. It has a direct impact on financial stability that provides immediate relief to financial burdens such as daily expenses, loan repayment, or future savings. Having financial security can reduce stress, allowing employees to focus better on their responsibilities. While public healthcare workers receive standardized salaries, the overwhelming nurse-to-patient ratio often leads to exhaustion, burnout and compromised patient care.

2.2.4 Career Advancement Opportunities: Well-trained staff lead to better patient outcomes, reducing errors and enhancing overall healthcare quality. Since it fosters professional growth, it opens doors for promotions and higher-paying roles, and nurses remain ahead of technological and procedural innovations, ensuring staff are proficient in the latest medical techniques. When an institution supports its employees, it increases job retention since they are satisfied with the learning and development interventions it offers which reduces turnover rates among healthcare workers. It also reduces operational costs, improves organizational efficiency and fosters a positive work environment.

2.3 Employee Retention of Nurses

Table 6. Retention Level

Factor	Indicators	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Rating
Organizational Culture	I find my work engaging which motivates me to stay.	3.01	High
	I feel free asking for advice and support from my supervisor.	3.00	High
	I feel supported by the company to learn from my mistakes and from my own decisions at work.	2.93	High
	There is mutual communication between my supervisor and me.	2.95	High
	My supervisor communicates effectively by promptly informing us.	2.80	High
Hospital Engagement	I find my work meaningful and inspiring.	3.12	High
	Everyone is encouraged to take part in groups or teams.	3.05	High
	My teammates encourage me to excel at work.	3.03	High

	I am comfortable expressing my opinions in team meetings.	2.92	High
	I feel happy coming to work every day.	2.84	High
Financial Rewards	I feel that some incentives are still lacking.	3.26	Very high
	I believe that incentives make employees committed to work in the organization.	3.18	High
	The compensation and benefits motivate me to perform better at work.	3.03	High
	Financial rewards push me to work efficiently.	2.94	High
	Financial incentives influence me to stay at the institution.	2.84	High
Career Advancement Opportunities	In my department, my supervisor encourages me to find new and more efficient ways to do my work.	3.07	High
	I am provided with the training opportunities available at the institution for my job.	2.90	High
	The management uses employee feedback well for continuous growth and development.	2.90	High
	I have the device I need to grow within the organization.	2.88	High
	I am content with the support of the different division chiefs for my career growth.	2.83	High

2.3.1 Organizational Culture: From the data collected, it is evident that there is a high retention rate attributed to the positive organizational culture, as nurses find their work engaging and motivating, which encourages them to stay. Wellness initiatives encourage nurses to prioritize personal well-being alongside professional responsibilities. A better work-life balance, enhanced emotional well-being and improved overall health of employees are only some of the significant benefits wellness sessions offer. The ability to feel free to ask for advice and support from their nurse supervisor is crucial for professional growth, workplace morale and patient care. When nurses feel comfortable approaching their supervisors, they foster a culture of open communication and continuous learning, allowing them to seek guidance on clinical decisions, and workplace challenges without fear of judgment. This encourages problem-solving and teamwork, strengthening both individual confidence and overall unit performance. When nurses are encouraged to participate in group or team activities, it fosters a strong sense of community and belonging within the nursing division, even during challenging times at work. This sense of camaraderie and purpose is essential for maintaining retention at the hospital.

2.3.2 Hospital Engagement: Nurses experience immense emotional fulfillment and find their work meaningful and inspiring when they see the direct impact of their care on patients' lives. The ability to alleviate suffering, provide comfort and witness recovery fosters a deep sense of purpose. Meaningful work is often tied to strong relationships—whether with patients, families, or colleagues—creating a sense of connection and shared humanity. Nurses also draw inspiration from moments of gratitude, when patients express appreciation for their dedication and compassion. These moments reinforce their sense of purpose, reminding them that their service truly makes a difference. Additionally, these encounters strengthen the bond between nurses and patients, creating a more compassionate and supportive healthcare environment.

2.3.3 Financial Rewards: Nurses often feel that financial incentives are lacking because their compensation does not fully reflect the demands and challenges of their work. While salary increases and

bonuses can help, they do not always address deeper concerns such as high workloads, emotional strain and long hours. Many nurses report that financial incentives alone are insufficient to offset the stress and burnout they experience, especially in understaffed healthcare settings. Additionally, standardized salary structures in public healthcare systems may limit the ability to offer competitive pay, making it difficult to retain skilled nurses. When the hospital provides a competitive compensation package that supports employees in achieving their goals, they are more likely to remain committed to the organization.

2.3.4 Career Advancement Opportunities: As individuals, people tend to perform better when their efforts are recognized and appreciated. Constant communication between employees and employers fosters a harmonious work environment, leading to high retention levels of nurses. When supervisors encourage innovation and efficiency, it not only helps improve workflow but also empowers employees to take ownership of their roles. In a healthcare setting, this kind of support can be especially valuable—finding smarter ways to handle tasks can reduce stress, improve patient care and enhance teamwork.

This kind of leadership fosters a sense of autonomy, engagement and professional growth—all of which are critical for nurse retention. Nurses who feel empowered to innovate and improve processes are more likely to stay committed to their roles, as they experience a greater sense of purpose and contribution to the organization. Additionally, when the management actively listens to employee feedback and integrates it into decision-making, it fosters a culture of continuous improvement and hospital engagement. Nurses and other healthcare workers feel heard, respected and empowered to contribute meaningfully to workplace advancements.

3. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of the study show that belongingness within the organization is the most significant factor in retaining nurses in the institution. A positive working environment is another crucial factor that influences the overall mood and performance of an employee. While current financial rewards contribute to nurse retention and loyalty, a prevailing perception remains that additional incentives are needed, which impacts the overall job satisfaction and long-term commitment. Furthermore, the duties and responsibilities of the institution's nurses are mostly aligned with their professional skills. Based on the findings, the institution should consider promoting professional growth without formal promotion by encouraging nurses to enroll in specialized certifications or training programs where the hospital can allocate a skill-based pay differential or allowance after finishing the program. To support transportation, shuttle services could be offered, considering the unpredictable shift rotations of nurses. In addition, strengthening nurse supervisors' communication systems by letting them attend workshops on effective communication so they can receive and act on feedback without defensiveness. Staffing could be improved by assigning additional nurses to high-demand wards by conducting regular ward-level audits to assess if current nurse-to-patient ratios meet care demands, and on-site wellness spaces such as dedicated fitness rooms and meditation areas should be provided to encourage movement and relaxation.

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