

# FACTORS INFLUENCING OF PROFESSIONAL NURSE RESIGNATION FROM MANKWENG ACADEMIC HOSPITAL, LIMPOPO, SOUTH AFRICA

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## Abstract

Professional nurses are registered nurses who provide comprehensive nursing treatment and care to patients at various levels of health care. Intentions to quit a job are frequently associated with employee motivation and job satisfaction factors. It has been observed that some of the health professional nurses are quitting Mankweng academic hospital more frequently and which is affecting the service delivery. There is no research done regarding the turnover of the Professional nurse from this institution.

**The aim:** The main objective of the study is to figure out what factors concern Professional nurses to quit Mankweng Hospital.

**Material & methods:** The study was a retrospective cross-sectional descriptive quantitative design to analyze the profile of all Professional nurses who quit Mankweng Academic Hospital for 5 years from January 2018 to December 2022.

**Result:** A total of 47 professional nurses resigned over 5 years from different departments. Lack of promotions (34 %) was the key reason which made professional nurses quit their job at Mankweng Hospital. Poor working conditions (12.8 %) and work-related stress (12.8 %) are other important reasons for resignING.

**Conclusions:** Lacks of promotions, poor working conditions, and work-related stress are important factors responsible for quitting jobs. Increased staffing, employee support, and enhanced promotion are vital to address to retain the employee.

**Keywords:** Professional nurse, resignation, promotion, employee, turnover, poor working conditions, stress, Mankweng Hospital.

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## 1. Introduction

Professional nurses are high-level category nurses who obtain their degree after four years of course in South Africa. Professional nurses are registered nurses who provide comprehensive nursing treatment and care to patients at various levels of health care [1]. Shortages and staff turnover have been recognized as one of big concerns for employer and patient care in the healthcare sector worldwide [2]. Employee turnover is described as the circumstances in which employees depart the organization for several reasons and, consequently, affect the organization concerning overall expenditure and the ability to distribute the optimum required services [3].

Some studies stated the importance of health factors, counting fatigue and mental strain at the individual level, regarding nurses' intentions to leave [4–7]. Previous research pointed out that work stress and time pressure affect intentions to leave and staff turnover [5, 8]. Few studies indicated that support from supervisors is important for lowering the intentions of nurses to leave [9, 10].

It has been observed that some of the Professional nurses are quitting Mankweng academic hospital more frequently and which is affecting the service delivery seriously. There is no research done regarding the turnover of the Professional nurse from this institution.

**Aim:** Primary objective of the study is to understand what factors influence health Professional nurses are resigning from Mankweng Academic Hospital. Information from this audit analysis can be presented to the Mankweng Hospital authority to improve retention strategies and plans to prevent high turnover of Professional nurses.

## 2. Material & Methods

The study was a retrospective cross-sectional descriptive quantitative design to analyze the profile of all Professional nurses who quit Mankweng Academic Hospital, Limpopo, South Africa, for a 5-year period from January 2018 to December 2022.

**Study setting**

Mankweng Hospital is situated in Turfloop/Sovenga, 30 km away from Polokwane city, Limpopo Province, South Africa. It is a tertiary academic hospital providing training and clinical services to the population of the Limpopo Province. Currently, 125 professional nurses are working out of 360 approved posts in Mankweng Hospital.

**Study population:** All Professional nurses who quitted from Mankweng Academic Hospital for 5 years from January 2018 to December 2022

**Inclusion criteria.** Professional nurses resigned or went for early retirement from Mankweng Hospital from January 2018 to December 2022

**Exclusion criteria.** A professional nurse who retired at normal retirement age and professional nurse transferred to another hospital.

**Data Collection & Analysis:** Data from the exit interview information sheet for a 5-year period from 2018 to 2022 was collected from Human resource (HR) management. HR usually collect exit interview of all employees when they resign or retire. The data collected were documented in a data collection sheet comprising gender, rank, department/section the employee was working in, the reason for leaving, year of work in the department, suggestion for retention of the employee, rating immediate supervisor (from outstanding to very poor). The collected data were transferred to an Excel spreadsheet. The statistical software package Stata version (Stata Corp, USA) was used for data analysis. Descriptive statistics and frequencies are used to analyze the data.

**3. Result**

A total of 47 Professional nurses resigned from January 2018 to December 2022 from anaesthesia, general surgery, gynaecology, orthopaedics, ophthalmology, and paediatric departments. They worked in Mankweng Hospital for 1 year to 37 years. Details are in **Table 1**.

**Table 1**

Descriptive summary of Professional nurse resignation

Exit interview information	Description	Frequency (%)
1	2	3
Gender	Male	2 (4.3 %)
	Female	45 (95.7 %)
	Total	47
Reasons of resigning	Promotion	16 (34 %)
	Poor working condition	6 (12.8 %)
	Work-related stress	6 (12.8 %)
	Ill health	5 (10.7 %)
	Family reason	5 (10.7 %)
	Relocation to another area	3 (6.4 %)
	Lack of prospect advancement	2 (4.3 %)
	Further study	1 (2.1 %)
	Set up business	1 (2.1 %)
	Personal matter	1 (2.1 %)
	Temporary contract	1 (2.1 %)
Total	47 (100 %)	
Suggestion made for retention	Improve staffing	23 (48.9 %)
	Employee support	8 (17 %)
	Salary adjustment	4 (8.5 %)
	Enhance promotion	3 (6.4 %)
	Improve working condition	2 (4.3 %)
	Recognition	2 (4.3 %)
	Appoint permanently	2 (2.2 %)
	Other (provide prospect advancement, be transparent, Development nursing personnel)	3 (6.4 %)
Total	47 (100 %)	

Continuation of Table 1

1	2	3
Rating supervisor	Outstanding	4 (8.5 %)
	Very good	13 (27.7 %)
	Good	21 (44.7 %)
	Fair	9 (19.1 %)
	Poor	0
	Very poor	0

#### 4. Discussion

A total of 47 Professional nurses resigned over a 5-year period from different departments. Lack of promotions (34 %) was the key reason which made professional nurses resign from Mankweng Hospital. Poor working conditions (12.8 %) and work-related stress (12.8 %) are other important factors responsible for quitting the jobs.

Aluminati stated that huge percentages of employed people are actively looking for a new career path [11]. It showed in the study that 34 % of professional nurses left because of a lack of promotions. Career promotion is one of the contributing factors to employee turnover in hospitals [12].

There are many grounds for resigning personal factors, organizational factors, geographical distance to work or an individual venture for career opportunities which may not be possible to achieve within the existing organization [9, 13, 14]. Resignation of skilled and experienced health professionals can affect any organization, which can be a concern. However, few strategies needed to be taken to improve employee retention [11].

Resignation could affect one's organization. As an alternative to losing employees, one should play other roles and opportunities to help employees find more job satisfaction [11]. Aluminati advocated providing more value to Employees and Improving retention strategies [11]: In our study, one of the important suggestions is made by resigned Professional nurses to support employees (17 %) in order to keep the staff. Salary adjustment is also indicated by a few nurses (8.5 %). Curry et al., 2005 stated supervisor support is of utmost importance in preventing employees from leaving [15]. Employers need to recognize that it takes significantly longer to recruit someone. The solution, then, is to immediately reinforce retention while ramping up recruiting [16].

According to the 2022 NSI National Healthcare Retention & RN Staffing Report, the average hospital turnover rate in 2021 was 25.9 %, revealing a 6.4 % increase over the prior year. Despite their 2021 goal of reducing turnover, hospitals failed to reduce turnover, and in the last five years, hospitals have turned over 100 % of their staff [17]. In our study, the turnover rate of professional nurses was 38 % in the last 5 years in Mankweng Hospital. There is already a shortage of professional nurses in this institution, with only 125 (35 %) posts of professional nurses filled from 360 approved posts. If the turnover rate increases, service delivery will seriously affect this understaffed situation. Why turnover is such a problem in the healthcare industry is the first step to resolving it. Common issues that perpetuate turnover numbers may include the following: lack of workplace engagement, burnout symptoms of stress, anxiety, depression, stiff competition for talent and reaching retirement age. A key to solving the turnover problem lies in the ability to increase employee engagement to attract top talent in a competitive landscape and keep current employees happy, minimizing the risk of staff considering other job opportunities [17].

Healthcare employees are incredibly prone to burnout and fatigue. In the healthcare industry, burnout is primarily caused by staffing shortages, and its impact worsens over time. If hospitals do not address their turnover crisis, patient care will worsen over time. In this study, 25 % of the nursing staff resigned because of Poor working conditions and work-related stress. Employees are more interested in staying and working when the organization has friendly conditions [18]. Approximately 49 % of resigned professional nurses suggested to increase the staff number. Surprisingly, for those of the nurses [16] who resigned because of getting a promotion somewhere, only one [1] of them suggested for enhancing the promotion.

Nonetheless, 8 (50 %) of them advocated increasing the number of staff. The shortage of staff is critical in this institution. Hence the increased number of staff will improve the working condition and reduce burnout, fatigue, and stress, which will, in turn, enhance staff retention.

Some studies demonstrate that support from managers is important for lowering the intentions of nurses to leave [9, 10]. If hospitals do not address their turnover crisis, patient satisfaction will continue to fall, and health care will deteriorate over time.

Neo et al. mentioned that one of the main reasons staff resigns from organizations is their relationship with their immediate superior. Most supervisors are unaware of the relationship between their actions and their decisions with their juniors [19]. Gardner stated that staff engagement is important in the organization, which can improve when supervisors and managers understand how they can help themselves with skills and knowledge to help them understand employees' needs to implement a retention plan [20]. In this study, the employee's relationship with the immediate supervisor is quite good. Over 80 % of professional nurses rated their immediate supervisor as good, very good and outstanding. Only 19 % mentioned fair. Zhao and Zhou stated that lower job satisfaction is associated with a higher rate of turnover [21]. Employees are more influenced to stay and work when the organization is steady and pleasant working conditions [18].

**Research limitations.** It is a retrospective study, and the sample size is small.

**Prospects for further research.** There is a prospect for further Prospective surveys on existing nursing staff to have their opinion, and it will give us more valuable information.

## 5. Conclusions

Lacks of promotions (34 %), poor working conditions (12.8 %) and work-related stress (12.8 %) are important factors responsible for quitting the jobs of professional nurses.

Increased staffing, employee support, and enhanced promotion are vital to address to retain the employee.

## Conflict of interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest in relation to this paper, as well as the published research results, including the financial aspects of conducting the research, obtaining and using its results, as well as any non-financial personal relationships.

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