

# **Pacific Heads of Nursing & Midwifery Meeting**

Réunion des directeurs des soins infirmiers et obstétricaux du Pacifique

## **Exploring factors influencing motivation and retention of nurses in Kiribati – A qualitative study**

Presenter: Maii I Terubea

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# Introduction

## **Globally**

- Motivation and retention are key concerns globally . No exception for nurses(WHO, 2010)
- Shortfall of 13 millions of nurses worldwide for high turnover.
- 20% quitting their job in 2020 for poor motivation and retention (ICN,2021)

## **Regionally**

- Chronic nursing shortage in pacific of rising concern (Fiji Times, 2020)
- Fiji nurses leaving job due to poor employment, stress, fatigue and lack of compensation (Fiji Nursing Association, 2022)

## **Local Kiribati**

- Kiribati nurses are migrated to neighboring countries for better employment.
- There is a turnover rate of Kiribati nurses at 25.2% which still poorly managed and ignored.

# Background



## Kiribati:

- 33 low lying dispersed atolls, 21 inhabited islands
- The smallest country in the world.
- Land size 811 square kilometers

## Kiribati Healthcare system:

- The Kiribati government (MHMS) runs the country's public healthcare system
- 934 employees: 60 doctors, 479 nurses, and 395 other health support workers
- 3 services: Hospital, Public Health and Nursing.

## The Nursing:

- 479 nurses or 51.3% health workforce
- All health centers / clinics across the country manned by nurses without doctors.

# Statement of Problem

Turnover of Kiribati nurses for past two decades			
Country	Number of nurses	Turnover reason	Percentage of the nursing workforce
Australia	35	Appointed new job in age care nursing Recently migrated	7.3%
New Zealand	20	Under the PAC scheme migration	4.2%
Fiji	4	Deployed nursing positions	0.8%
Marshal	8	Employed within nursing services in this country.	1.7%
Tuvalu	8	Got new nursing and midwifery jobs	1.7%
Nauru	7	Appointed new nursing jobs	1.5%
Kiribati Taiwan/China	38	Resignation, termination and got new position outside Nursing. Change profession/ Enrolled to Medicine Schools.	8%
<b>Total nurses</b>	<b>120</b>		<b>25.2% turnover rate</b>

Source: Extract from PSO staff list (MHMS, Nursing Division), 2000 onward.

- 25.2 % rate of turnover among Kiribati nurses
- Migration: Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Marshal, Tuvalu, Nauru
- Change career: doctors, teachers, health programs and projects within the country (WHO, UN, UNICEF, KFHA etc).

# Literature Review

**Management,  
leadership and  
supervision**



A manager's capacity to solve problems, effective leadership, competent supervision, and staff dynamics affect an employee's motivation (Bhatnagar et al, 2017, Wallis et al, 2008).

**Financial and  
economic  
consideration**



Low salary and benefits make people want to quit their jobs more (Negussie, 2012) .



# Literature Review

## **Positive work environment**



Health professionals favor modern working environments with advanced communication technologies, better water, and sanitation systems (Henderson & Tulloch, 2008).

## **Professional development and lifelong learning**



Education, training, and professional growth were associated to a higher degree of motivation, according to two-thirds survey respondents (Kamanzi & Nkosi, 2011).

# Aim and Research Questions

## **Aim of the study**

- This qualitative study sought to explore nurses' perceptions of potential factors influencing their motivation and retention.

## **Research Questions**

- What is the perception of factors influencing nurse's motivation in Kiribati?
- What factors make nurses demotivated at work in Kiribati?
- What are the factors influencing nurses to remain in their nursing work/job?
- What are factors that contribute to the intention of nurses leaving their job?
- What strategies might enhance nurse's motivation and retention?



# Results

## Demographic characteristics of participants

Categories	Details	Number involved	Percentage (%)
Sex	Male	13	41
	Female	19	59
Age	Under 30 years	4	12
	31- 40 years	12	38
	41- 50 years	14	44
	51- 60 years	2	6
Positions	Senior Nursing Officers	1	3.1
	Medical Assistants	3	9.4
	Midwives	3	9.4
	Registered Nurse (Hospital)	11	34.4
	Registered Nurse (Public Health)	8	25
	Nurses no longer in the service	6	18.7
Qualifications	Diploma in General and Obstetric Nursing	16	50
	Higher qualification in Nursing	3	9.4
	Public Health qualification	4	12.5
	Midwifery qualification	4	12.5
	Medical Assistants qualification	3	9.4
	Other nursing specialty qualification	2	6.4
Years of experience	Less than 5 years	5	16
	5- 10 years	5	16
	Over 10 years	22	68
Work status	Current nurses	26	81.25
	Former nurses	6	18.75

# Results

This study confirmed four factors influencing nurse's motivation and retention of nurses in Kiribati. These are:

- Management and leadership failure
  - √ Organizational injustice
  - √ Lack of managerial support
  - √ Lack of supervision
- Financial and economic consideration
  - √ Lack of compensation (salary and entitlement)
  - √ Underpaid and pending allowances
  - √ Lengthy and stressful payment process
- Work environment condition
  - √ Poor working environment (Lack and unavailability of resources, Hazardous unsafe workplace, workspace insufficient, etc)
  - √ Excessive workload (shortages of nursing workforce, burnout and fatigue)
- Education and Training (CPD)
  - √ Training and education are highly competitive
  - √ Limited opportunities for rural nurses
  - √ Lack of specialization
  - √ Lack of managerial support

# Recommendations: Government

- MHMS/ Government to consider high rate of turnover as key issue and to act promptly to address.
- Development of policy and strategies to address factors hinders nurse's motivation and retention.
  - Review pay, compensation allowances and benefit packages
  - Strengthening and improving the work facilities, resources and equipment.
  - Invest on the nursing through creating opportunities for training and education.

# Recommendations: Development Partners

- Assisting on improving work environment through donations of equipment and resources to enhance work quality for health care.
- Provide fund for maintenance and renovation of old facilities and buildings.
- Funding and offering trainings for capacity building (in-house training, update workshops, short courses and work attachments for refresher and for exchanging knowledge to maintain the nurses' competencies for quality care
- Updating nursing procedures and guidelines.

# Conclusion

This study concluded that nurses in Kiribati have exposed to factors contributed to affecting motivation and retention. This include factors related to: Management and leadership, financial and economic consideration, work environment, and nursing education and training (CPD)

Even though nurses have been demotivated for various reasons there still many nurses remain in the nursing because of their passionate for the nursing profession and because of their self dedication and devotion to work for their family.

Nurse mangers and leaders should consider the development of policies and strategies on retention and motivation targeting to address all the factors recognized in this study so future turnover of nurses controlled and are continuously motivated.

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