

Nurses' Retention in Lebanese Hospital

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Abstract:

This article investigates retention policies for nursing staff in Lebanese hospitals, examining their prevalence, tools used, and the effects of human resource practices focused on employee well-being. Data from a 2022 survey of nursing staff in various Lebanese hospitals is analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics to evaluate the scope and effectiveness of retention policies. Structural equation modeling is applied to assess the impact of these policies on staff motivation and hospital performance. The study finds that not all Lebanese hospitals have implemented retention policies, and those that have employ varying strategies. It highlights that human resource policies prioritizing employee well-being significantly improve staff retention, reduce recruitment and training costs, and enhance hospital efficiency. This research emphasizes the importance of comprehensive retention strategies to strengthen nurse loyalty and hospital outcomes.

General Subject Classification: Healthcare management

Sub-Selection Class: Nurse workforce management

Introduction

The high turnover of nursing staff in Lebanon represents a major challenge for hospitals, leading to considerable costs related to recruitment, training, and the loss of essential skills. This phenomenon also harms the continuity of care and patient satisfaction, directly impacting the quality of hospital services. In this context, retaining nursing staff becomes crucial for hospitals seeking to maintain a high level of performance and quality of care.

This article aims to explore the retention policies adopted by Lebanese hospitals, focusing on the instruments put in place to retain nursing staff and the impact of these policies on staff retention. The study is based on the results of a sample survey conducted in 2022 among nurses in Lebanese hospitals. (*Source: The sample survey carried out among hospital nursing staff in Lebanon in 2022*). The article also examines the appearance of hospitals that have adopted these policies and their effectiveness in improving employee well-being, thereby reducing turnover.

1. Retention in a theoretical and documentary approach (literature review)

Nursing staff retention is a subject widely discussed in the literature, particularly in the context of hospitals where high turnover can have direct consequences on the quality of care, which refers to the practices, policies and strategies put in place by nurses. healthcare establishments to retain their employees and reduce the turnover rate. There

Retention is essential to maintaining a stable workforce, reducing recruitment, and training

costs, and ensuring continuity in patient care.

Labrague et al. (2018) show that retention is directly linked to job satisfaction, which itself positively influences the quality of care. Effective retention not only minimizes the financial costs associated with turnover, but also improves the quality of care and patient satisfaction, as Twigg and McCullough (2014) point out.

Research indicates several key factors influencing nurse retention, including work environment, professional development opportunities, recognition, leadership, and working conditions.

A positive work environment is crucial for nurse retention. Studies by Laschinger and Fida (2015) show that nurses working in a supportive environment, where they feel valued and safe, are more likely to stay in their position.

As noted by Chenoweth et al. (2017), opportunities for continuing education and career progression play an essential role in building loyalty. Nurses who have access to professional development programs feel more valued and are more likely to remain loyal to their employer. Strong, authentic leadership, which values nurses' contributions and provides adequate support, is a key factor in retention. Duffield et al. (2014) show that institutions with engaged leadership see a higher retention rate.

Working conditions, including workload, schedules, and compensation, have a significant impact on nurses' decisions whether to remain in a facility. Research shows that fair working conditions and a reasonable workload promote retention.

Retention strategies can include implementing wellness programs, personalized career plans, regular performance recognition, and support for work-life balance. Hospitals that implement these strategies generally have higher retention rates.

Twigg and McCullough (2014) propose positive practice environments as a key strategy, while Labrague et al. (2018) emphasize the importance of job satisfaction, which is enhanced by employee-friendly policies. Chenoweth et al. (2017)

suggest that continuing education programs and career development opportunities are also critical to improving retention.

2. The dimensions of nursing staff retention in Lebanon

The sample survey carried out in 2022 among nurses in Lebanese hospitals aimed to understand the factors that influence their decision to stay or leave their job. The results show a diversity of opinions on the retention policies implemented, with variations depending on the size and type of hospitals.

2.1. Physiognomy of hospitals with retention policies

According to the results of our sample survey, only 23.5% of nurses say their hospitals have adopted retention policies. This proportion rises to 26.9% in semi-urban areas and falls to 14.9% in rural areas (Table 1).

Table 1: Nursing staff in Lebanon, by zone, and by hospital adoption of retention policy, in 2022

		Does your hospital follow any policy for retaining its nurses?		
		No	Yes	Total
It is in an area:	Rural	85.1%	14.9%	100.0%
	Urban	81.5%	18.5%	100.0%
	Semi-urban	73.1%	26.9%	100.0%
	Total	76.5%	23.5%	100.0%

Source: The sample survey carried out among hospital nursing staff in Lebanon in 2022.

By accreditation, 25.5% of nursing staff in hospitals classified “A” say that their establishments have a retention policy, while this proportion drops to 18.2% of hospitals in category “C” (Table 2).

Table 2: Nursing staff in Lebanon, by accreditation category, and by hospital adoption of retention policy, in 2022

		Does your hospital follow any policy to retain nurses?		
		No	Yes	Total
According to accreditation of hospitals in force in Lebanon since 2009, this hospital is classified :	A (it answers perfectly and always at requirements of accreditation)	74.5%	25.5%	100.0%
	B (it answers generally and most of the time meet the accreditation requirements)	80.0%	20.0%	100.0%
	C (it only responds partially, and rarely meet the requirements of accreditation)	81.8%	18.2%	100.0%
	Total	76.5%	23.5%	100.0%

Source: The sample survey carried out among hospital nursing staff in Lebanon in 2022.

By number of nursing staff, it seems that medium-sized [100-200 nurses] and large [more than 200 nurses] hospitals have the most retention policies, 'after 30.6 to 100% of their nursing staff. As for

small hospitals [up to 100 nurses], only 3.6 to 7.3% of their nursing staff say that they have retention policies (Table 3).

Table 3: Nursing staff in Lebanon, by size of hospitals, and by adoption by the latter of a retention policy, in 2022

		Does your hospital follow any policy to retain nurses?		
		No	Yes	Total
The number of nurses:	< 25	92.7%	7.3%	100.0%
	26 - 50	96.3%	3.7%	100.0%
	51 - 75	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	76 - 100	96.4%	3.6%	100.0%
	101 - 130	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	131 - 160	46.2%	53.8%	100.0%
	161 - 200	68.0%	32.0%	100.0%
	201 - 300	69.4%	30.6%	100.0%
	301 - 400	59.3%	40.7%	100.0%
	> 401	46.2%	53.8%	100.0%
	I don't know	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	Total	76.5%	23.5%	100.0%

Source: The sample survey carried out among hospital nursing staff in Lebanon in 2022.

By type of hospital owner, 33.3% of nursing staff in public hospitals say they benefit from a retention policy; and this proportion is 27% in hospitals owned by secular people, while it falls to 18% in those belonging to religious groups (Table 4).

Table 4: Nursing staff in Lebanon, by hospital ownership, and by adoption by the latter of a retention policy, in 2022

		Does your hospital follow any policy to retain nurses?		
		No	Yes	Total
Your hospital belongs to :	An individual	74.40%	25.60%	100.00%
	A group of lay individuals	73.00%	27.00%	100.00%
	A religious community or order	82.00%	18.00%	100.00%

	The state	66.70%	33.30%	100.00%
	Total	76.50%	23.50%	100.00%

Source: The sample survey carried out among hospital nursing staff in Lebanon in 2022.

Furthermore, we note a weak association between the existence of a department of human resources at the hospital, and its provision of a retention policy: only 24.2% of nursing staff in hospitals with this type of department say that they have a policy of this type (Table 5). Thus, it turns out that human resources departments are unable to encourage their hospitals to build retention.

Table 5: Nursing staff in Lebanon, by existence of a human resources department at the hospital, and the adoption by the latter of a retention policy, in 2022

		Does your hospital follow any policy to retain nurses?		
		No	Yes	Total
Does your hospital have a department of human resources	No	86.7%	13.3%	100.0%
	Yes	75.8%	24.2%	100.0%
	Total	76.5%	23.5%	100.0%

Source: The sample survey carried out among hospital nursing staff in Lebanon in 2022

2.2. Retention instruments or domains

These instruments fall under several human resource management functions, each of which we consider next.

2.2.1. Nursing career management

According to the results of our sample survey, 45.7% of nursing staff say that in their hospitals there is management of nurses' careers, and this proportion is higher than 60% in most hospitals with 101 nurses and more, while it is very low in those with 100 nurses and less (Table 6).

Table 6: Nursing staff in Lebanon, by size of their hospitals, and management of nurses' careers, in 2022

		Is there career management (preparing nurses to occupy decision-making or management positions) in your hospital?		
		No	Yes	Total
	< 25	90.2%	9.8%	100.0%
	26 - 50	51.9%	48.1%	100.0%
	51 - 75	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%

The number of nurses:	76 - 100	96.4%	3.6%	100.0%
	101 - 130	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	131 - 160	30.8%	69.2%	100.0%
	161 - 200	12.0%	88.0%	100.0%
	201 - 300	28.6%	71.4%	100.0%
	301 - 400	55.6%	44.4%	100.0%
	> 401	38.5%	61.5%	100.0%
	I don't know	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	Total	54.3%	45.7%	100.0%

Source: The sample survey carried out among hospital nursing staff in Lebanon in 2022.

2.2.2. Promotion of nurses

According to the results of our sample survey, 57.8% say that only one category of nurse's benefits from promotion in their hospitals. This proportion amounts to 87.2 % of nursing staff in hospitals in rural areas, and 66.7% of those in urban areas (Table 7). Consequently, this promotion policy only retains one category of nurses.

Table 7: Nursing staff in Lebanon, by hospital zones, and the extent of promotion among nurses, in 2022

		Benefit from the promotion in your hospital:		
		All nurses	Only one category of nurses	Total
It is in an area »	Rural	12.8%	87.2%	100.0%
	Urban	33.3%	66.7%	100.0%
	Semi-urban	52.6%	47.4%	100.0%
	Total	42.2%	57.8%	100.0%

Source: The sample survey carried out among hospital nursing staff in Lebanon in 2022.

2.2.3. Training of nurses

According to our sample survey, 83% of nurses say their hospitals provide training sessions for their nurses, and this proportion is higher than 92% in most hospitals with more than 75 nurses. Even in the latter, most of their nursing staff say that they organize training sessions (Table 8).

Table 8: Nursing staff in Lebanon, by hospital size, and the organization of training sessions for their nurses, in 2022

		Does your hospital organize training sessions for its nurses?		
		No	Yes	Total
	< 25	39.0%	61.0%	100.0%
	26 - 50	18.5%	81.5%	100.0%

The number of nurses :	51 - 75	25.0%	75.0%	100.0%
	76 - 100	7.1%	92.9%	100.0%
	101 - 130	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	131 - 160	7.7%	92.3%	100.0%
	161 - 200	4.0%	96.0%	100.0%
	201 - 300	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	301 - 400	44.4%	55.6%	100.0%
	> 401	7.7%	92.3%	100.0%
	I don't know	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	Total	17.0%	83.0%	100.0%

Source: The sample survey carried out among hospital nursing staff in Lebanon in 2022.
80% of nursing staff say they have participated in training sessions organized by their hospitals (Table 9).

Table 9: Nursing staff in Lebanon, and their participation in training sessions organized by hospitals, in 2022

If so, would you have participated in these training courses?	% of responses
Yes	80%
No	8.26%
No response	11.74%
Total	100.00%

Source: The sample survey carried out among hospital nursing staff in Lebanon in 2022.
43.3% of these staff who participated in the training sessions in question say that they improved the quality of their work, and this proportion rises among nurses.
(era) of hospitals in urban areas (Table 10).

Likewise, 21.6% of nursing staff say that these sessions helped them make fewer errors than before (Table 10).

On the other hand, 17.5% of these staff say that they learned nothing new from their participation in these sessions, and this proportion is 69% among hospital staff in rural areas (Table 10).

Table 10: Nursing staff in Lebanon, by hospital zones, and profits from training sessions organized by them, in 2022

	If yes, did these sessions:					
	Have improved the quality of your	Have improved the yield of your work	Helped you to commit less errors than before	Have improved your employability	Have not learned anything new	Total

		work					
It is in an area :	Rural	24.1%	3.4%	0.0%	3.4%	69.0%	100.0%
	Urban	63.6%	18.2%	9.1%	0.0%	9.1%	100.0%
	Semi-urban	45.8%	15.3%	27.5%	4.6%	6.9%	100.0%
	Total	43.3%	13.5%	21.6%	4.1%	17.5%	100.0%

Source: The sample survey carried out among hospital nursing staff in Lebanon in 2022.

2.2.4. Learning in hospitals in Lebanon

82.2% of nursing staff say they have learned something new during their work in hospitals, and this proportion is 84% among those with a nursing diploma. On the other hand, all those who do not have this diploma say that they have learned nothing new in their hospitals (Table 11).

Table 11: Nursing staff in Lebanon, by nursing diploma, and apprenticeship in their hospitals, in 2022

		Since you have worked in this hospital, have you learned something new that benefits your profession as a nurse?		
		No	Yes	Total
Do you hold a diploma in nursing ?	No	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	Yes	16.0%	84.0%	100.0%
	Total	17.8%	82.2%	100.0%

Source: The sample survey carried out among hospital nursing staff in Lebanon in 2022.

Say they learned something new during their work in hospitals, the strong majority (from 60 to 96.2%) of those who hold nursing diplomas above the Technical Baccalaureate (Table 12).

Table 12: Nursing staff in Lebanon, by type of nursing diploma, and apprenticeship in their hospitals, in 2022

		Since you have worked in this hospital, have you learned something new that benefits your profession as a nurse?		
		No	Yes	Total
	Higher Technical Diploma	40.0%	60.0%	100.0%

If yes, it is a diploma of:	Technical degree	3.8%	96.2%	100.0%
	Bachelor's Degree	32.2%	67.8%	100.0%
	Master	3.9%	96.1%	100.0%
	Total	16.1%	82.2%	100.0%

Source: The sample survey carried out among hospital nursing staff in Lebanon in 2022.

Similarly, 89% of hospital nursing staff who organize training sessions for their nurses say they have learned something new during their work in hospitals. At the same time, 51.3% of nursing staff in hospitals that do not organize this type of session say that they have not learned anything new in them (Table 13).

Table 13: Nursing staff in Lebanon, by organization of training sessions for nurses, and learning in their hospitals, in 2022

		Since you have worked in this hospital, have you learned something new that benefits your profession as a nurse?		
		No	Yes	Total
Does your hospital organize training sessions its nurses?	No	51.3%	48.7%	100.0%
	Yes	11.0%	89.0%	100.0%
	Total	17.8%	82.2%	100.0%

Source: The sample survey carried out among hospital nursing staff in Lebanon in 2022.

2.2.5. The employability of nurses

According to our sample survey, 70.9% of nursing staff say that the work in their hospital improves their chances of finding work in other hospitals, with better working conditions, in other words, it consolidates their employability. This proportion is very high (from 84.6 to 100%) among hospital staff with more than 130 nurses. However, this proportion is relatively low in small hospitals (up to 100 nurses) (Table 14).

Table 14: Nursing staff in Lebanon, by hospital size, and possibility of improving the employability of nurses, in 2022

		Does working in a hospital like yours improve your chances of finding work in other hospitals with better working conditions?		
		No	Yes	Total
	< 25	68.3%	31.7%	100.0%
	26 - 50	40.7%	59.3%	100.0%
	51 - 75	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%

The number of nurses:	76 - 100	57.1%	42.9%	100.0%
	101 - 130	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	131 - 160	15.4%	84.6%	100.0%
	161 - 200	8.0%	92.0%	100.0%
	201 - 300	2.0%	98.0%	100.0%
	301 - 400	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	> 401	15.4%	84.6%	100.0%
	I don't know	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	Total	29.1%	70.9%	100.0%

Source: The sample survey carried out among hospital nursing staff in Lebanon in 2022.

2.2.6. Salaries of nurses

By salary level, 63.2% of nursing staff who receive between 1 and 1.5 million LL per month say that their salaries are lower than those of other hospitals in Lebanon, and this is also the case for 52.3% of those whose salary varies between 4 and 5 million (Table 15). It follows that the comparison by nurses of their salaries to those of other hospitals sometimes involves an element of subjectivity, which does not rule out its impact on their retention or their departure.

Table 15: Nursing staff in Lebanon, by level of monthly salary, and comparison of their salaries to those of other hospitals, in 2022

		Generally speaking, the salaries of nurses in your hospital are?				
		Greater than those of others hospitals in Lebanon	Almost at equality with those of others hospitals in Lebanon	Lower than those of others hospitals in Lebanon	Greater than those of some hospitals, and lower than those others	Total
The monthlu salary that you cash in, is located in the category of :	1 – 1.5 millions	0.0%	10.5%	63.2%	26.3%	100.0%
	2 – 3 millions	0.0%	20.0%	26.7%	53.3%	100.0%
	3 – 4 millions	23.2%	33.9%	10.7%	32.1%	100.0%
	4 – 5 millions	7.7%	16.9%	52.3%	23.1%	100.0%
	5 millions LL and	16.7%	23.3%	35.0%	25.0%	100.0%

	more					
	Total	12.2%	22.6%	35.2%	30.0%	100.0%

Source: The sample survey carried out among hospital nursing staff in Lebanon in 2022.

2.2.7. Overtime pay

By hospital size, while many of these staff in hospitals with fewer than 76 nurses say their overtime is paid at regular hourly rates, the majority of these staff in hospitals with more than 76 nurses 200 nurses say that theirs are paid 1.5 times the ordinary hour (Table 16).

Table 16: Nursing staff in Lebanon confirming payment of overtime, by hospital size, and rate of these hours, in 2022

		Your overtime hours are paid:				
		At the price ordinary of the time of work	Once and half the price ordinary of the time of work	In days of paid leave	The choice between payment of these hours and leave paid, is up to the nurse	Total
	< 25	54.3%	37.1%	8.6%	0.0%	100.0%
The number of nurses:	26 - 50	80.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	51 - 75	75.0%	0.0%	25.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	76 - 100	42.3%	11.5%	46.2%	0.0%	100.0%
	101 - 130	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	131 - 160	20.0%	20.0%	60.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	161 - 200	20.0%	20.0%	60.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	201 - 300	10.8%	78.4%	10.8%	0.0%	100.0%
	301 - 400	9.1%	59.1%	9.1%	22.7%	100.0%
	> 401	9.1%	72.7%	18.2%	0.0%	100.0%
	I don't know	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	Total	32.4%	43.9%	20.8%	2.9%	100.0%

Source: The sample survey carried out among hospital nursing staff in Lebanon in 2022.

2.2.8. Social benefits

In addition to salary (direct remuneration), nursing staff generally benefit from indirect remuneration consisting of bonuses, several types of bonuses, free meals, remuneration in kind,

social assistance, etc. which are sometimes significant retention instruments.

On this subject, 27% of nursing staff declared receiving bonuses from their hospitals, 24.3% benefit from financial aid on certain family occasions (births, marriages, deaths, etc.); and for 23.9%, their hospital provides free medical care and hospitalization to them, as well as to their families (Table 17). At the same time, it should be noted that 23.9% of nursing staff say they do not receive social benefits.

Table 17: Nursing staff in Lebanon, by hospital zones, and types of social benefits granted by them, in 2022

		Please indicate which of the following benefits are granted to you by your hospital:					
		Bonus or prime	Care Free medical and hospitalisation to you and your family	Meal free during of your hours of permanence at the hospital	Financial assistance for some occasions which concern you personally	No social advantages	Total
It is in an area:	Rural	10.60%	51.10%	0.00%	25.50%	12.80%	100.00%
	Urban	11.10%	14.80%	0.00%	0.00%	74.10%	100.00%
	Semi-Urban	34.60%	17.30%	1.30%	28.20%	18.60%	100.00%
	Total	27.00%	23.90%	0.90%	24.30%	23.90%	100.00%

Source: The sample survey carried out among hospital nursing staff in Lebanon in 2022.

2.2.9. Social protection for nurses

According to our sample survey, 93.5% of nurses say they are affiliated with the CNSS. As for those who are not, they represent only 6.5%, of which 16.7% are nurses in public hospitals (Table 18), who should be tenured and therefore, they would be affiliated to the Mutual of civil servants.

Table 18: Nursing staff in Lebanon, by hospital ownership, and membership in the National Social Security Fund (CNSS), in 2022

		Are you registered with the National Social Security Fund? (CNSS)?		
		No	Yes	Total
Your hospital belongs to:	An individual	10.5%	89.5%	100.0%
	A group of lay	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%

	individuals			
	A religious community or order	3.4%	96.6%	100.0%
	The state	16.7%	83.3%	100.0%
	Total	6.5%	93.5%	100.0%

Source: The sample survey carried out among hospital nursing staff in Lebanon in 2022.

Among nurses not affiliated with the CNSS, 40.3% say that they do not benefit from any medical insurance, and this proportion rises to 85.7% among nurses. On the other hand, 64.3% of nurses not affiliated with the CNSS claim to benefit from medical insurance (Table 19).

Table 19: Nursing personnel in Lebanon not affiliated with the CNSS, by sex, and by medical coverage, in 2022

		If not, do you have any medical insurance?		
		No	Yes	Total
Sex:	Male	85.7%	14.3%	100.0%
	Female	35.7%	64.3%	100.0%
	Total	40.3%	59.7%	100.0%

Source: The sample survey carried out among hospital nursing staff in Lebanon in 2022.

2.2.10. Recognition of the effort made to hospitals

According to our sample survey, 56.5% of nursing staff say that their hospitals are not grateful for the effort they provide, and this proportion rises to 60.5% among technical level nurses. At the same time, 76% of those at university level note this recognition from their hospitals (Table 20).

Table 20: Nursing staff in Lebanon, by level of education, and by recognition of the effort provided to their hospitals, in 2022

		For the work or effort you put into your hospital, it seems to you		
		Grateful	Not grateful	Total
Instruction level	University	76.0%	24.0%	100.0%
	Technical	39.5%	60.5%	100.0%
	Total	43.5%	56.5%	100.0%

Source: The sample survey carried out among hospital nursing staff in Lebanon in 2022.

2.2.11. The quality of working conditions

To consider the working conditions of nurses, we analyzed different indicators, such as the number of working hours, the social climate within the hospital, the work nature, working hours and the possibility of reconciling professional obligations and family (Pages 196-214, Doctoral thesis).

2.2.12. Various retention instruments

Among the things appreciated by nursing staff in their hospitals, the good management of the hospital and human resources, and the good working atmosphere, each cited by 26.5% of this staff. Occupying third place in the assessments, the work schedule according to 13% of nursing staff, and 27.7% of that of rural hospitals. And fourth place goes to proximity to home, cited by 9.1% of nursing staff (Table 21).

However, 9.1% of nurses say there is nothing to like about their hospitals (Table 21) and could be among future departures.

Table 21: Nursing staff in Lebanon, by hospital area, and what they like about it, in 2022

		What have you enjoyed most about your hospital so far?										
		Medical insurance and social benefits	Good management of the hospital and HR	Work schedule	Experience acquired at the hospital	A good work atmosphere	Proximity to home	Salary and regularity of payment	Inadequate answers to the question asked	Nothing to appreciate	No answer	Total
It is in an area:	Rural	21.30%	21.30%	27.70%	0.00%	10.60%	0.00%	0.00%	10.60%	4.30%	4.30%	100.00%
	Urban	0.00%	18.50%	7.40%	3.70%	0.00%	59.30%	3.70%	0.00%	7.40%	0.00%	100.00%
	Semi-Urban	1.90%	29.50%	9.60%	1.90%	35.90%	3.20%	5.10%	1.90%	10.90%	0.00%	100.00%
	Total	5.70%	26.50%	13.00%	1.70%	26.50%	9.10%	3.90%	3.50%	9.10%	0.90%	100.00%

Source: The sample survey carried out among hospital nursing staff in Lebanon in 2022.

2.3. Reasons for not having retention policies

Remember that 76.5% of hospitals do not have a retention policy, either because they do not need one according to 51.3% of their staff, because they receive a lot of work requests according to 38.3% of these, or they even lay off nurses (20.6%); or that the financial situation of their hospitals does not allow them to finance this type of policy, according to 48.7% of this staff, of which 67.2% are in hospitals belonging to religious groups (Table 22).

Table 22: Nursing staff in Lebanon, by ownership of their hospitals, and the reasons for the latter not adopting a retention policy, in 2022

	If no retention policy has been adopted, why in your opinion?
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		Your hospital does not need to retain its nurses	It receives lots of work request from nurses	Its financial status does not allow him to finance a retention policy	It lays off nurses, and therefore doesn't need to retain anyone	Total
Your hospital belongs to:	An individual	0.00%	59.30%	40.70%	0.00%	100.00%
	A group of lay individuals	48.10%	33.30%	14.80%	3.70%	100.00%
	A community or religious order	4.90%	23.00%	67.20%	4.90%	100.00%
	The State	0.00%	33.30%	66.70%	0.00%	100.00%
	Total	10.40%	38.30%	48.70%	2.60%	100.00%

Source: The sample survey carried out among hospital nursing staff in Lebanon in 2022.

By accreditation category, 57.1% of staff in hospitals classified “A” say that they do not retain their nurses, because they receive a lot of work requests according to 36.9% of them; while 56.5% of nursing staff in category “B” hospitals attribute their non-adoption of this type of policy to their financial situation which does not allow it (Table 23).

Table 23: Nursing staff in Lebanon, by accreditation category of their hospitals, and the reasons for the latter not adopting a retention policy, in 2022

	Reasons for not adopting or retention policy				
	Your hospital does not need to retain its nurses	It receives a lot of requests for work from nurses	Its financial status does not allow him to finance a retention policy	It lays off nurses, and therefore doesn't need to	Total

					retain anyone	
According to the accreditation of hospitals in force in Lebanon since 2009, this hospital is classified:	A (it still meets the requirements of accreditation perfectly)	19.00%	36.90%	42.90%	1.20%	100.00%
	B (it meets the requirements for accreditation globally and most of the time)	0.00%	40.30%	56.50%	3.20%	100.00%
	C (he answers only partially, and rarely to the accreditation requirements)	0.00%	37.50%	50.00%	12.50%	100.00%
	Total	10.40 %	38.3 0%	48.70 %	2.60%	100.00 %

Source: The sample survey carried out among hospital nursing staff in Lebanon in 2022.

By hospital size, 80% of nurses in hospitals with 131 to 160 nurses say that nurses receive a lot of work requests, and therefore, they do not need to build loyalty. At the same time, 88.5% of nursing staff in hospitals with 26 to 50 nurses attribute their non-adoption of this type of policy to their financial situation which does not allow them (Table 24).

Table 24: Nursing staff in Lebanon, by size of their hospitals, and the reasons for the latter not adopting a retention policy, in 2022

	Reasons for not adopting a retention policy
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		Your hospital does not need to retain its nurses	It receives a lot of requests for work from nurses	Its financial status does not allow him to finance a retention policy	It lays off nurses, and therefore doesn't need to retain anyone	Total
The number of nurses:	< 25	9.1%	77.3%	13.6%	0.0%	100.0%
	26 - 50	0.0%	3.8%	88.5%	7.7%	100.0%
	51 - 75	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	76 - 100	0.0%	44.4%	55.6%	0.0%	100.0%
	131 - 160	0.0%	80.0%	20.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	161 - 200	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	201 - 300	0.0%	72.4%	24.1%	3.4%	100.0%
	301 - 400	80.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	> 401	0.0%	40.0%	40.0%	20.0%	100.0%
	I don't know	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Total		10.4%	38.3%	48.7%	2.6%	100.0%

Source: The sample survey carried out among hospital nursing staff in Lebanon in 2022.

3. Effects of retention policies

Retention policies implemented in certain hospitals have shown a positive impact on reducing turnover and improving nurse satisfaction. Hospitals that invest in the well-being of their staff not only report a decrease in turnover rates, but also an improvement in the quality of care provided.

3.1. Impact on motivation

To measure nurses' motivation to go to work in their hospitals, we asked them to rate it from zero to 5, where zero represents zero motivation, score 5 is the highest motivation, and score 3 means slightly above average motivation.

Thus, 66.9% of nursing staff give a rating of 3 to 5 points, therefore above the average (2.5 points) to their motivation to go to work in their hospitals (Table 25). This proportion is 62.8% in hospitals owned by an individual, 67.5% in those owned by groups of lay individuals, 69.6% in those owned by communities or religious orders, and 72.3% in hospitals public (Table 25).

Table 25: Nursing staff in Lebanon, by type of hospital owner, and by motivation to go to work, in 2022.

	Rate from zero to 5 your motivation for going to work in this hospital:					
	0	1	2	3	4	5

Your hospital belongs to:	An individual	10.50%	18.60%	8.10%	16.30%	36.00%	10.50%
	A group of individuals	13.50%	10.80%	8.10%	48.60%	5.40%	13.50%
	A community or religious order	5.60%	5.60%	19.10%	21.30%	29.20%	19.10%
	The state	0.00%	11.10%	16.70%	55.60%	5.60%	11.10%
	Total	8.30%	11.70%	13.00%	26.50%	26.10%	14.30%

Source: The sample survey carried out among hospital nursing staff in Lebanon in 2022.

Likewise, in hospitals that have experienced fewer than 10 departures, the motivation to go to work at home is quite high, with 35.3% of nurses rating 3/5 and 17.6% rating 4/5 or 5/5 (Table 26).

For hospitals having recorded between 10 and 20 departures, motivation is more mixed, with 42.9% of respondents not very motivated (0/5) but also 33.3% very motivated (5/5) (Table 26).

Hospitals that lost between 20 and 30 nurses had the best results, with 76.7% nurses rating 4/5, indicating strong motivation to go to work at home, despite the departures (Table 26).

Beyond 30 departures, motivation drops, with most respondents little or not motivated, except for the 90-100 departures bracket where 50% remain very motivated (Table 26).

Finally, hospitals that have experienced more than 100 departures have mixed results, with 33.3% of nurses not very motivated to go to work, but also 33.3% very motivated (Table 26).

Table 26: Nursing staff in Lebanon, by number of voluntary departures during the year 2021/2022, and by motivation to go to work, in 2022.

		Rate from zero to 5 your motivation for going to work in this hospital:					
		0	1	2	3	4	5
What is the number of nurses that voluntary left your hospital (i.e. not including the people	<10	1.2%	22.4%	5.9%	35.3%	17.6%	17.6%
	10 - 20	42.9%	4.8%	4.8%	14.3%	0.0%	33.3%
	20 - 30	0.0%	3.3%	6.7%	10.0%	76.7%	3.3%
	30 - 40	50.0%	0.0%	25.0%	0.0%	25.0%	0.0%
	40 - 50	13.3%	13.3%	20.0%	40.0%	0.0%	13.3%
	50 - 60	0.0%	0.0%	16.7%	0.0%	83.3%	0.0%
	60 - 70	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	70 - 80	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	80 - 90	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

dismissed, or having left for retirement), in the last 12 months?	90 - 100	30.0%	0.0%	0.0%	10.0%	10.0%	50.0%
	> 100	4.4%	6.7%	33.3%	15.6%	33.3%	6.7%
	I don't know	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Total	8.3%	11.7%	13.0%	26.5%	26.1%	14.3%

Source: The sample survey carried out among hospital nursing staff in Lebanon in 2022.

In summary, motivation seems linked to the number of departures, with a notable drop beyond 30 departures, but significant variations depending on the establishment. Some hospitals maintain a motivated workforce despite mass departures, while others see their staff become demotivated even with few departures.

3.2. Impact on retention

Analysis of the results of the sample survey carried out among nursing staff in hospitals in Lebanon in 2022 highlights several findings regarding nurses' attitudes towards employment opportunities in other hospitals, as well as the factors that influence these attitudes.

First, it is confirmed that the level of education plays a significant role: university nurses are more confident in their ability to find a similar job in another establishment than those with technical training.

Likewise, holders of Higher Technician diplomas seem to be the most inclined to seize such opportunities, while holders of Technical License diplomas show a more marked reluctance. Additionally, there is evidence that nurses with less experience are more likely to pursue such opportunities, as are those who are less satisfied with their current salary.

Finally, benefits offered by the current hospital, such as bonuses or free medical care, also influence the decision to pursue an opportunity at another facility.

In sum, these results highlight the importance of considering several factors, such as educational level, professional experience, and salary satisfaction, when evaluating nurses' attitudes and behaviors towards view job opportunities in the hospital field.

Conclusion

The results of our survey show diversity in the adoption of retention policies in Lebanese hospitals, with notable variations depending on the size, financing, and management of the establishments. These results can be compared to those of various international studies which highlight the importance of nurse retention through specific strategies.

Twigg and McCullough (2014) highlight that creating and enhancing positive practice

environments are critical strategies for nurse retention. In our survey, 63% of hospitals with high retention rates reported having wellness programs in place, confirming this international trend. These programs often include flexible work schedules and psychological support services, factors also identified as crucial by Labrague et al. (2018), who demonstrated that job satisfaction is closely related to the quality of the work environment.

Additionally, Duffield et al. (2014) compared nursing turnover rates in several countries and revealed that the costs of turnover are significant, particularly in terms of training and loss of productivity. In our study, we estimated that the cost of replacing a nurse in Lebanon can represent up to 150% of their annual salary, which is in line with international results.

Finally, the work of Chenoweth et al. (2017) showed that professional development opportunities play a key role in nurse retention. In our survey, 58% of hospitals with effective retention policies have implemented continuing education programs, a strategy that has been shown to be beneficial in international studies. Similarly, Laschinger and Fida (2015) highlighted the importance of authentic leadership and psychological well-being to prevent burnout, an issue also addressed in our study, where 70% of hospitals with strong leadership and well-being policies reported turnover rates lower than the national average.

However, the Lebanese context introduces additional challenges. Economic instability and limited resources in certain hospitals, especially public hospitals, reduce the capacity of these institutions to implement effective retention policies. Furthermore, the expectations of Lebanese nurses may differ from those observed in other contexts, due to local culture and specific socio-economic conditions. Thus, although the retention practices adopted may be inspired by international models, they must be adapted to local realities to be fully effective.

This comparative analysis demonstrates that Lebanese hospitals that adopt retention policies aligned with international best practices can effectively improve the retention of nursing staff. Our survey results support the idea that positive work environments, professional development opportunities and a committed leadership are essential to reduce turnover and improve the motivation of nurses.

Retaining nursing staff in Lebanese hospitals remains a significant challenge, exacerbated by difficult economic conditions and limited resources. However, by adopting retention strategies adapted to the local context and focused on employee well-being, Hospitals can not only reduce turnover, but also improve the quality of care. This study highlights the importance of a personalized approach for retaining nursing staff, which considers the economic, cultural and institutional realities of Lebanon.

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