

## Original Research Article

# Antecedent Factors Motivating Nurses' Participation in Continuous Professional Development in Kenya

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Received: 17.08.2022

Accepted: 24.09.2022

Published: 28.09.2022

**Journal homepage:**<https://www.easpublisher.com>**Quick Response Code**

**Abstract: Background:** Maintaining one's professional competence in today's quickly evolving environment is essential, and it is crucial that nurses at all levels of the healthcare system demonstrate an interest in continuing professional education that lasts a nurse's whole career. **Purpose:** The purpose of this study was to determine factors motivating nurses' participation in continuous professional development in Kenya. **Methodology:** A cross sectional descriptive study was conducted in Narok County Referral hospital. A mixed method approach, which provided for triangulation that sought convergence and corroboration of the results from questionnaire, was adopted. Purposive sampling was used to recruit 40 respondents for the study. Data was checked for completeness and consistency and then entered into SPSS version 26.0 for analysis. Descriptive statistics used included frequencies, percentage, mean and standard deviation. **Findings:** Results of the mean and standard deviation revealed that majority of the respondents agreed that career development prospect had motivated them to participate in continuous professional development (M =4.15, SD =0.802). Similarly, the respondents were of the view that they participated in continuous professional development in order to keep themselves up to date with the constant changes in the nursing profession (M =4.40, SD =0.810). Upgrade skills and knowledge and to increase professionalism was another factor that motivated nurses to participate in continuous professional development as depicted by the mean and standard deviation (M = 4.30, SD = 0.939). **Conclusion:** Due to the complexity of the health care system, nurses are required to remain relevant in their area of practice. Continuous professional development equips the nurse with knowledge and skills to perform nursing care professionally. The critical component in achieving favorable results for quality patient's nursing care is achieved by lifelong learning through continuing professional development.

**Keywords:** Motivation, Continuous Professional Development, Nurses, Lifelong Learning.

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## INTRODUCTION

The progression of one's career and participation in ongoing education are crucial aspects of motivating and retaining health care workers. The recent initiatives that have been implemented by health sector organizations all around the world are a clear indication of the growing importance of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) to the nursing profession [1]. Working together, learning together is the title of a paper that was issued in 2020 by the National Health Service (NHS) in the United Kingdom. This document outlines a vision for lifelong learning inside the NHS. A national nursing association in the United States of America established a strategic plan to address the complex and interrelated reasons that have resulted in a rising shortage of nurses. The goal of the plan was to find a solution to the problem. It

emphasizes the importance of professional development opportunities that are supported by a variety of resources such as paid time off, education days, cost reimbursement, or as part of the scheduled workday in its nursing agenda for the future [2]. The healthcare needs of Africa exist within the context of a rapidly shifting health and disease landscape, while at the same time, the constantly advancing fields of science and technology demand that nurses and midwives continually update their knowledge and skills in order to reduce health disparities [1].

The knowledge and abilities that are acquired at the end of formal undergraduate and postgraduate professional nursing education are not sufficient to maintain competence and performance over the course of a career. It is expected of healthcare professionals that they will stay current in their practice through the

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use of effective knowledge management practices (evidence-informed practice) and self-directed learning strategies. This can be accomplished by participating in continuing education programs that are organized or by engaging in individual learning activities (lifelong learning). In a healthcare system that is rapidly evolving and becoming increasingly stressed as a result of under-funding, an inadequate number of health care workers, and limited access to data on performance or current health outcomes, it is expected of healthcare professionals that they will effectively engage in strategies for lifelong learning. These difficulties are made even more difficult by the growing attention paid by professionals and members of the general public to issues concerning the varying quality of care that is provided, the security of the healthcare system, and the frequency of adverse events. As a whole, these worries have contributed to a greater awareness of the importance of ongoing professional development [2].

Extant literature on effect of CPD on nursing practice has focused more on nurses' performance and patient's outcomes [3]. From the point of view of managers and nurse educators, a significant amount of information has been documented on continuing professional development (CPD). In addition, there is a sizeable body of research that focuses on the relationship between motivation and nursing education [4] within the context of undergraduate nursing. On the other hand, there is scant documentation regarding the factors that motivate continuous professional development. A more in-depth understanding of the reasons that nurses pursue continuing professional development (CPD) may help in the development of more effective learning environments, which target educational strategies for the specific requirements of individual learners. In addition, having an understanding of various motivations can have an effect on the planning, delivery, and assessment of educational programs. As a result, the purpose of this study was to investigate and describe the various factors of motivation that influence nurses to participate in continuous professional development programs. Therefore, the aim of this study was to explore and describe motivational factors that influence nurses to engage continuous professional development program.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) refers to the educational activities that are planned with the intention of building upon the educational and experiential basis of the professional nurse for the purpose of maintaining, enhancing, and extending the knowledge, expertise, and competence of health professionals after they have graduated from their training [10]. The term Continuing Professional Development (CPD) has been subject to much debate. It is used interchangeably with such terms as continuous professional education, in-service education, continuing education, lifelong learning, professional development

[5], workforce advancement [1], on the job training and staff development. How professionals maintain and develop their knowledge for their professional life defines continuous professional education [1], while CPD includes the informal manner of gaining knowledge and experience, education provided "on the job" to build staff capacity, and efficiency has traditionally and previously been defined as in-service education [6].

Continuous professional development in health care disciplines is accepted as an essential expectation of professional practitioners [7]. According to [8], in order for the nursing profession to reach a level of professionalism, nurses need to acquire more skills, pursue higher education, and commit to engaging in learning throughout their entire lives. This finding is consistent with the one that was made by [9], who suggested that the knowledge obtained through basic professional education has a half-life of approximately 2.5 years, and that at the end of that period, the knowledge that has not been enhanced through further education and training will become outmoded or obsolete. The Nursing Council of Kenya was influenced to include the requirement of CPD in the Nurses' Code of Conduct by the wave of globalization that concerned the development of nursing. Every year, nurses need to participate in at least forty contact hours' worth of continuing professional development activities. Since this statement was added, registered nurses have engaged in continuing professional development (CPD) activities. The message that nursing is a dynamic profession in which nurses must regularly update their knowledge and skills to keep up with change is reinforced when compliance is made mandatory. Regardless of the pressures from the outside world, it is expected of professionals like nurses that they will keep being current.

CPD is an ongoing process that occurs outside of formal undergraduate and postgraduate training and enables individual health professionals to maintain and improve standards of medical practice through the development of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors. Renewal of one's professional knowledge on an annual basis is required in order to continue working in one's field. Every professional practitioner is held to the standard of continuously improving their skills through continuing education in their respective field of health care [3].

Nurses' CPD draws a lot from the Adult Learning Theory. The theory has the following assumptions: adults are self-directed learners, bring a wealth of experience to the educational setting, should be ready to learn, learning is problem-centred and adult learners are self-motivated by internal factors [11]. In pursuit of lifelong learning, nurses have to participate and be committed to CPD [12]. Malcolm Knowles was the first to theorize how adults learn, introducing the

concept that adults and children learn differently. According to [13], earlier teachers of adult learners perceived learning to be a process of active inquiry and not only reception of transmitted content. These teachers invented teaching techniques that actively engaged learners in inquiry. The author further emphasized that in the teaching/learning interaction the teacher should play the role of a facilitator in learning as teachers are no longer regarded as the owners of knowledge. Knowles proposed that adult learning is a process of self-directed inquiry. In order to be effective, teaching should take place in a cooperative learn climate. "Six elements or core principles" Knowles' work outlines promoting optimal learning and their implications for mandatory continuing professional development programmes are: the learner's need to know; self-concept; prior experience; readiness to learn; orientation to learning, and motivation to learn [13].

## METHODS

A cross sectional descriptive study was conducted in Narok County Referral Hospital. A mixed method approach, which provided for triangulation that sought convergence and corroboration of the results from questionnaire, was adopted. The instrument was developed with considerable attention given to construct clear and unambiguous items. When items were developed, care was taken to use simple language and short sentences that were neither double-barreled nor leading. A close-ended questionnaire and the Likert

scale were used. This questionnaire was developed based on a literature search on the main tools related to CPD. Purposive sampling was used to recruit participants for the study. Purposive sampling involves the selection of information rich subjects that enhance credibility of the study [14]. Purposive sampling was chosen because it is best for gaining in-depth understanding of complex concepts and was used to select participants that would most benefit the study.

Data was checked for completeness and consistency and then entered into SPSS version 26.0 for analysis. Descriptive statistics used included frequencies, percentage, mean and standard deviation. Further, permission to conduct the study in the hospital facility was sought and granted by the medical superintendent. All respondents invited to participate in the study were given an explanatory statement that provided details of the study and what it entailed, and assurances that all information would be treated in strict confidentiality and that they would remain anonymous. They were further required to fill consent form prior to participating in the study. Return of completed questionnaires was verified for completeness.

## FINDINGS

### Descriptive Analysis

#### Demographic Characteristics

The demographic characteristics of respondents are summarized in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Respondents**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
<b>Age</b>	20-29 Years	11	27.5	27.5	27.5
	30-39 Years	18	45.0	45.0	72.5
	40-49 Years	7	17.5	17.5	90.0
	Over 50 Years	4	10.0	10.0	100.0
<b>Gender</b>	Male	8	20.0	20.0	20.0
	Female	32	80.0	80.0	100.0
<b>Marital Status</b>	Single	4	10.0	10.0	10.0
	Married	24	60.0	60.0	70.0
	Separated	6	15.0	15.0	85.0
	Divorced	4	10.0	10.0	95.0
	Widowed	2	5.0	5.0	100.0
<b>Qualification</b>	Certificate	3	7.5	7.5	7.5
	Diploma	25	62.5	62.5	70.0
	Degree	10	25.0	25.0	95.0
	Masters	2	5.0	5.0	100.0
<b>Length of Service</b>	0-3 Years	4	10.0	10.0	10.0
	4-7 Years	4	10.0	10.0	20.0
	8-11 Years	19	47.5	47.5	67.5
	12-15 Years	9	22.5	22.5	90.0
	Over 15 Years	4	10.0	10.0	100.0

Source: Field Data, 2020

Findings in Table 1 above reveals that a majority of the respondents were aged between 30-39 years (45%) and were of female gender 32(80%) who were married 24(60%). Moreover, most of the

respondents had diploma qualification 25(62.5%). In Addition, a majority of them 19(47.5%) had served as nurses for between 8-11 years.

### Motivational Factors Influencing Participation in Continuous Professional Development among Nurses

The study further sought to establish motivational factors that influenced nurse’ participation

in continuous professional development. Responses gathered from the respondents were analyzed and the findings presented were interpreted by the generated results of the means and standard deviations output as shown in Table 2.

**Table 2**

Descriptive Statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Career advancement prospects and promotion	40	4.15	.802
Keep oneself up to date with changes in the profession	40	4.40	.810
Upgrade skills and knowledge and to increase professionalism.	40	4.15	1.350
In order to fine-tune my nursing skills	40	4.30	.939
Be abreast with the latest technological advancement	40	4.53	.640
Establish connection with other people from various professions-networking	40	3.65	1.189
Break from routine work schedule	40	2.80	1.506
Compliance with regulatory requirement to continue practicing	40	4.02	1.310
Improve my ability to offer quality health care	40	4.45	.749
	40		

Source: Field Data, 2020

Findings in Table 2 reveal that a majority of the respondents agreed that career development prospect had motivated them to participate in continuous professional development (M =4.15, SD =0.802). Similarly, the respondents in the study were of the view that they participated in continuous professional development in order to keep themselves up to date with the constant changes in the nursing profession (M =4.40, SD =0.810). Upgrade skills and knowledge and to increase professionalism was another factor that motivated nurses to participate in continuous professional development as depicted by the mean and standard deviation (M = 4.30, SD = 0.939). In addition, majority of the respondents were also undecided with regards to participating in continuous professional development in order to establish connection with other people from various professions (M = 3.65, SD = 1.189). They however unanimously disagreed that they participated in continuous professional development in order to break away from routine work schedule (M = 2.80, SD =1.506). Findings further revealed that the respondents agreed that they participated in continuous professional development in compliance to the regulatory requirement of the nursing council of Kenya (M = 4.02, SD = 1.310). In addition, the respondents were in agreement that they participated in continuous professional development in order to improve their ability to offer quality health care (M = 4.45, SD = 0.749).

### DISCUSSION

Participation in professional developmental activities is very essential for nurses who are frontline health workers. This enables the nurse to have sufficient up-to-date knowledge and skills to maintain and improve quality of patient care. The findings of this study are in support of previous research findings for instance, it lends support to the findings of [15] whose

findings concluded that the most common factors which motivated nurses’ to participate in continuous professional development were improvement of knowledge, fine-tuning of nursing skills and technological advancement. A study conducted by [16] revealed that most of the nurses expressed primary reason for their participation in CPD was personal and professional interest followed by licensure requirements and advancement in the career. The findings of this study are also supported by a study conducted by [17] which established that CPD keeps nurses abreast of new developments in nursing and helps to be more productive in their career.

### CONCLUSION

The nursing profession must evolve to meet the demands of an increasingly complex and dynamic health care environment. Due to the complexity of the health care system, nurses are required to specialize in a variety of fields and continually educate themselves on the most recent developments in the medical field. The critical component in achieving favorable results for patients is the presence of registered nurses who, early in their careers, demonstrate a high level of preparedness and who, later in their careers, demonstrate a commitment to continuing their professional development. Nurses are required to have knowledge that is current as well as skills that are up to par. The incorporation of evidence-based best practices into patient care and an awareness of recent technological advancements in the healthcare system are both facilitated for nurses who take part in activities designed for their continuous professional development (CPD). Administrators and nurse educators have a responsibility to encourage nurses to participate in continuing professional development (CPD) and discover ways to overcome obstacles that may prevent them from doing so.



## LIMITATIONS

A simply literature-based designed questionnaire which was used for data collection, along with the small research sample constitute limitations that should be considered

## FUNDING

This research received no external funding.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I acknowledge the support offered by the School of Medicine, Moi University.

## DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

The author declares no potential conflict of interest

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**Cite This Article:** Janepher Masai (2022). Antecedent Factors Motivating Nurses' Participation in Continuous Professional Development in Kenya. *East African Scholars Multidiscip Bull*, 5(9), 213-217.