

Perception, motivational factors and barriers for Continuous Professional Education (CPE) among nurses in two teaching hospitals in Colombo, Sri Lanka

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Introduction: Continuous Professional Education (CPE) is considered as the systematic maintenance, improvement and broadening of knowledge and skills, and the development of personal qualities necessary for the execution of professional, technical duties throughout the individual's working life.

Objective: To examine the nurses' perception, motivational factors and the barriers to Continuous Professional Education (CPE) among nurses in two teaching hospitals in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

Method: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted by randomly recruiting 507 registered nurses with more than one year of experience from the nurses' registry at Colombo South Teaching Hospital and Sri Jayewardenepura General Hospital. A self-developed and pretested self-administered questionnaire was used to collect data after receiving Ethical approval and analyzed by SPSS version 23.0 software.

Result: The majority were Female (91.3%). Among them, 99.5% perceived CPE as a valuable and worthwhile strategy for maintaining clinical competence and efficient care. Good public image (99.5%), Developing leadership capabilities (95.8%), Peer encouragement (93.9%), Obtaining skills and allowance (90.9%), Opportunity for promotion (91.7%), Role model who demonstrates the value of career development (95.5%) were identified as the motivational factors for CPE. Lack of supportive work environment (90.3%), Lack of opportunities for promotion (88.9%), Lack of information about the educational programmes (83.2%), Lack of funding (91.5%), Lack of motivation to study again (87.8%), Inability to cope well with academic studies (77.1%), Negativity due to unpleasant past experiences in academia (73%), Lack of funding (91.5%) and Lack of time because of job responsibilities (92.1%) were the identified barriers for CPE.

Conclusion: This study highlighted nurses' strong recognition of CPE's importance for clinical proficiency. Motivations included a positive image, leadership growth, peer encouragement, and career advancement. Barriers encompassed work environment issues, limited promotion avenues, and personal obstacles. Socio-demographic factors significantly influenced motivations and barriers, emphasizing the need for targeted strategies to enhance nurses' CPE engagement, ultimately elevating patient care quality.

Keywords: *continuing professional education, registered nurses' perceptions, motivational factors, barriers, and associated factors*