

FACTORS INFLUENCING THE RELOCATION OF MEDICAL DOCTORS FROM DR. RUTH SEGOMOTSI MOMPATI DISTRICT TO URBAN AREAS

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ABSTRACT

Like many developing countries, South Africa is facing the problem of skills migration, especially those of the essential skills of medical doctors. As a response to this urgent need for quality healthcare, the South African government has made an effort to deliver quality health care services to communities, especially to rural and previously underserved areas. This service delivery is hampered by the relocation of medical practitioners from rural to urban areas. The aim of the research was to gain insight into the factors that influence the relocation of medical doctors from Dr. Ruth Segomotsi Mompati District to urban areas. The focus is on Dr. Ruth Segomotsi Mompati District because it is one of the most rural districts in the North West Province.

The study presents an analysis of the operational issues that stifles the implementation of the recruitment and retention policy of the Department of Health to identify the factors that lead to the relocation of doctors from rural to urban areas that might have been overlooked, or were not included in the policy, and hence, is a continuation of this problem. The study also looked at policy interventions that were made, and whether these interventions were effectively implemented or whether the intervention was relevant or not. Although the study was mainly focused on Dr. Ruth Segomotsi Mompati district of the North West province, factors leading to international migration, national migration and internal relocation of medical practitioners between provinces were looked at to identify whether the causes for relocation at district level and at national and international level have similar causal factors.

The study used questionnaires to ask medical doctors what they regard as the factors that would make them stay in the rural areas and these factors are as follows: Less work load, good salary and incentives, state of the art accommodation, quality medical equipment, recruitment of more nursing personnel, support from management, infrastructural improvement, professional development, family support e.g. child education, security and transport and less crime. Therefore the study recommends that job satisfaction which will improve the retention of medical doctors in rural areas should be improved as well as security issues should be addressed.

DECLARATION

I declare that this research is my own unaided work. It is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Management in the field of Public and Development Management in the University of Witwatersrand, P&DM (Johannesburg). It has not been submitted before any degree or examination in any form.

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_____ Day of _____ 2012

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1	1
INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 BACKGROUND	2
1.1.1 THE PUBLIC HEALTH SYSTEM IN SOUTH AFRICA.....	3
1.1.2 RESOURCE ALLOCATION.....	4
1.1.3 PROFESSIONAL MIGRATION.....	4
1.1.4 PUSH FACTORS	5
1.1.5 PULL FACTORS.....	6
1.1.6 CONCLUSION.....	6
1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT.....	7
1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY.....	7
1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS.....	8
1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY.....	8
1.6 LIMITATIONS.....	9
1.7 OUTLINE OF THE STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT.....	9
CHAPTER 2.....	11
LITERATURE REVIEW.....	..11
2.1 INTRODUCTION.....	11
2.2 THE DOCTOR AS A KNOWLEDGE WORKER.....	11
2.3 FACTORS LEADING TO MIGRATION OF MEDICAL DOCTORS.....	12

2.4 JOB SATISFACTION.....	18
2.5 SOUTH AFRICAN POLICIES TO ADDRESS MIGRATION OF DOCTORS...	18
2.6 PUSH AND PULL FACTORS LEADING TO MIGRATION OF DOCTORS.....	21
2.7 RURAL RETENTION STRATEGIES.....	28
2.8 CONCLUSION.....	29
CHAPTER 3.....	30
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	30
3.1 INTRODUCTION.....	30
3.2 DESCRIPTIVE AND SURVEY RESEARCH METHODS.....	31
3.3 IN-DEPTH SEMI-STRUCTURED FACE TO FACE INTERVIEWS.....	31
3.4 QUESTIONNAIRE.....	33
3.5 RESEARCH APPROACH.....	33
3.6 RESEARCH DESIGN.....	34
3.7 DATA COLLECTION.....	34
3.8 PRIMARY DATA.....	35
3.9 SECONDARY DATA.....	36
3.10 SAMPLING.....	36
3.11 DATA ANALYSIS.....	37
3.12 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY.....	38
3.13 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY.....	39

3.14 LIMITATIONS AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS.....	39
CHAPTER 4.....	41
PRESENTATION OF RESULTS.....	41
4.1 INTRODUCTION.....	41
4.2 DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS.....	41
4.3 QUESTIONNAIRES.....	42
CHAPTER 5.....	47
INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS.....	47
5.1 INTRODUCTION.....	47
5.2 THE FACTORS INFLUENCING RELOCATION OF MEDICAL DOCTORS...	47
5.3 FACTORS THAT WILL INFLUENCE MEDICAL DOCTORS TO STAY.....	50
5.4 CONCLUSION.....	52
CHAPRER 6.....	53
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	53
6.1 INTRODUCTION.....	53
6.2 CONCLUSION.....	53
6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS.....	54
REFERENCES.....	56
LIST OF APPENDICES.....	59
APPENDIX 1.....	59

APPENDIX 2.....	60
APPENDIX 3.....	61
APPENDIX 4.....	62
LIST OF FIGURES	
Figure 1: What are the factors influencing medical doctors to relocate.....	43
Figure 2: If these factors can be addressed will medical doctors stay.....	45
LIST OF TABLES	
Table 1: Ratio of doctors p/100 000 population across provinces, 2001-2004...2	
Table 2: Levels of Workplace Dissatisfaction.....	16
Table 3: Policy initiatives to address Maldistribution of medical doctors.....	19
Table 4: Distribution of South African Health Professionals Abroad.....	24
Table 5: Push and Pull factors in Migration & International Recruitment.....	25
Table 6: Retention gap for Health Professional Graduates 2002-2010.....	26
Table 7: Participating Medical Doctors by District Hospital.....	36

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADHA	Additional Duty Hours Allowance
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ASSA	Actuarial Society of South Africa
CS	Community Service
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
GP	General Practitioner
HPCSA	Health Professions Council of South Africa
HRH	Human Resources for Health
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
NDOH	National Department of Health
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSD	Occupation Specific Dispensation
PHC	Primary Health Care
RHAP	Rural Health Advocacy Project
RSM	Ruth Segomotsi Mompati
SA	South Africa
SAMJ	South African Medical Journal
SAMP	Southern African Migration Programme
TB	Tuberculosis
WHO	World Health Organisation

