

Level of Job Satisfaction in Doctors

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Abstract

Background: To assess and compare the level of job satisfaction in different medical specialties and to identify the areas needing improvement.

Methods: A cross-sectional descriptive study was conducted among doctors of Rawalpindi Medical College and teaching hospitals (Holy Family Hospital (HFH) Rawalpindi General Hospital (RGH) and District Head Quarters Hospital (DHQ) over a period of 3 months from April-July 2006. A total of 99 doctors, 33 each from the department of Medicine, Surgery and Basic Sciences were included in the study by non-probability purposive sampling. Medical officers and registrars of medical and surgical units in teaching hospitals and demonstrators of basic sciences employed in Rawalpindi Medical College were included. Data was collected by means of self designed structured questionnaire. A standardized tool, Warr-Cook-Wall scale was used to assess the level of job satisfaction in doctors.

Results: Of the total 99 study participants, 51.5% doctors of basic sciences and 43.9% of clinical sciences (Medicine and Surgery) were satisfied with their total income. Working environment was satisfactory in the opinion of 73% and 66.6% doctors of basic and clinical sciences respectively. Of the study participants, 78.7% were satisfied with the behaviour of colleagues. Overall 60.6% and 44.4% doctors were satisfied with their working hours and system of promotion respectively. Only 42.4% doctors of clinical sciences were satisfied with their work-load. 64.6% were satisfied with the freedom to choose their method of work. Overall job satisfaction was found to be 61.9%.

Conclusion: Majority of the doctors are satisfied with their jobs. However a significant number on the clinical side has reservations regarding income, working hours and system of promotion.

Keywords: Registrars, Medical officers, Purposive sampling, Basic sciences.

Introduction

Doctor's profession has long been one of the most attractive professions in Pakistani society but doctors are increasingly getting dissatisfied with their jobs¹. Job dissatisfaction and stress among doctors affect the quality of health care²

In a study conducted by Janus K et al, job

security, financial incentives, interaction with colleagues and co-operative working relationship with colleagues and management were found to be important predictors of overall job satisfaction among doctors of United States. On the other hand in Germany factors contributing to job satisfaction were opportunities for continuing education, job security, extent of administrative work, collegial relationships and access to specialized technology³

Among Danish general practitioners low job satisfaction was associated with desire to retire early while shorter working hours were associated with higher job satisfaction⁴. The results of a study by Magnavita N et al among Italian radiologists and radiotherapists showed that female doctors had higher levels of organizational discomfort than their male colleagues. Moreover, younger and less experienced doctors had higher strain scores than their older and more experienced colleagues⁵

An imbalance exists between offered medical services and needed health care for the people in rural areas of Pakistan⁶. This enhances the need for provision of conducive environment, financial and professional incentives to the doctors working in rural health facilities to retain them.

The present study was aimed to assess the status of job satisfaction in doctors working in Rawalpindi Medical College and its attached hospitals by identifying different motives and stress factors of doctors' job in our set up.

Subjects and Methods

A cross-sectional descriptive study was conducted among doctors of Rawalpindi Medical College and Teaching hospitals (Holy Family Hospital (HFH), Rawalpindi General Hospital (RGH) and District Head Quarters Hospital (DHQ) over a period of 3 months (April-July) in 2006. A total of 99 doctors, 33 each from the department of Medicine, Surgery and Basic sciences were included by non-probability purposive sampling. Surgeons and physicians included medical officers and registrars working in general surgery, neurosurgery, orthopedics, medicine,

cardiology and paediatric departments. Basic sciences doctors included demonstrators of anatomy, physiology, biochemistry, forensic medicine, pharmacology, pathology and community medicine departments. Job satisfaction was defined as the total of the sentiments related with the job conducted and included all the aspects of job asked in structured questionnaire. A standardized Warr-Cook-Wall scale was used in this study to measure job satisfaction ⁷. Data was collected by structured questionnaire. This sought information regarding satisfaction of doctors with total income, working environment, equipments provided, workload, working hours, system of promotion, recognition and respect given to them by patients, families and behaviour of their colleagues.

Results

Of the total 99 respondents, 17 doctors of basic sciences while 29 of clinical sciences (Surgery / Medicine and Allied) were found to be satisfied with their total income. 24 and 44 doctors of basic and clinical sciences respectively were satisfied with their working environment (Table 1).

Table 1: Different Components of Job Satisfaction from Warr-Cook-Wall Scale

Components	Overall Job Satisfaction	Doctors of Basic Sciences Satisfied	%	Doctors of Clinical Sciences Satisfied	%
Total Income *	46.4%	17	51.5	29	43.9
Working Environment*	55.5%	24	73	31	46.9
Behavior of Colleagues ***	78.7%	27	81	51	77
Working hours**	60.6%	29	87.8	31	46.9
System of Promotion ***	44.4%	14	42.4	30	45.4
Workload **	57.5%	29	87.8	28	42.4
Freedom to choose method of work***	64.6%	21	63.6	43	65.1
Amount of variety in job **	52.5%	15	45.4	37	56
Respect and recognition *	83.8%	24	72.7	59	59.5

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.001$; *** $p > 0.05$

In our study, 29 doctors of basic sciences were found to be highly satisfied with their working hours and workload. On the other hand, only 31 and 28 doctors of clinical sciences were satisfied with their working hours and workload respectively in their concerned departments. However, degree of

satisfaction among doctors from their system of promotion did not differ significantly ($p > 0.05$).

Similarly there was no statistically significant difference in the freedom of respondents to choose their methods of work ($p > 0.05$).

Table 2 displays the degree of satisfaction among doctors about the variety in their jobs. 24 doctors of basic sciences and 59 doctors of clinical sciences seemed to be satisfied with respect and recognition from their families and patients.

Discussion

Significant factors for career satisfaction among doctors include amount of recognition at work, career advancement, schedule flexibility and the fairness of financial compensation. Work place associated with high satisfaction includes academic practice setting and sex-equal opportunity for advancement and sex-equal financial compensation ⁸

Of the total 99 study participants, 51.5% doctors of basic sciences and 43.9% doctors of clinical sciences were satisfied with their total income. This much less degree of satisfaction among doctors of clinical sciences (Medicine / Surgery and Allied) might be due to very low wages as compared to the rising costs of resources. The reason might be that the doctors of clinical sciences have to be on call and they usually come to deal with emergencies even after their working hours. A study among doctors working at teaching hospitals of Bahawalpur concluded that most of the doctors in all ranks and with different qualifications were not satisfied with their job due to lack of proper service structure and low salaries ¹

Results of a study by Unterweger et al showed that factors most important for personal motivation were good working climate, good reputation of the institute and personal recognition. Wage raise and bonus payments were rated less important ⁹.

Table 2: Satisfaction of Doctors with their Working Environment

Doctors	Yes	No	Doctors	Yes	No
Basic Sciences	31	35	Surgery & Allied	11	22
Clinical Sciences	24	9	Medicine & Allied	20	13
X ² cal= 5.89		P<0.05		X ² cal= 66	
				P<0.001	

In present study, degree of satisfaction among doctors of clinical sciences was less as compared to those of basic sciences ($p < 0.05$). However of the total doctors in clinical sciences, those working in the

department of surgery and allied were found to be highly dissatisfied with their working environment than those employed in medical units and allied. Probably this is due to very low strength of female surgeons in our set up who feel much embarrassed working with male surgeons due to insufficient numbers and organizational setup.

Conclusion

Majority of doctors are satisfied with their jobs. Major stress factors are workload, lack of organization, working environment and meager income. Workload of doctors should be reduced with flexible working hours. Moreover, the salary and other incentives of the doctors should be increased. Working environment needs improvement especially for female surgeons.

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