

Job satisfaction among Hospital Doctors: A Review of Literature

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Abstract

Job satisfaction is among the most expansively explored subjects in the organizational behavior and human resource management domains. Hence, in healthcare context, satisfied doctors are likely to demonstrate greater productivity and commitment towards their job. Similarly, committed doctors denotes low turnover. However, globalization of health sector has motivated many doctors to migrate for better opportunities, better career growth and greater job satisfaction. The recent years have seen the rapid growth of this people-centric health care sector. For the achievement of effective delivery of health services and doctor retention, job satisfaction among hospital doctors needs to be assured. Therefore, this paper attempts to ascertain the gaps and search the diverse factors impacting job satisfaction. Hence, the previous studies concerning job satisfaction among hospital doctors are reviewed. From the past works, positively correlation was found between monetary benefits, work conditions, recognition, autonomy, achievement, and growth and development opportunities, and job satisfaction.

Keywords: Job satisfaction, hospital doctors, affecting factors.

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INTRODUCTION

Health sector is inherently labor intensive. In this regard, patient care services quality has direct linkage to the satisfaction experienced by employees towards their job, motivation as well as their willingness to employ resources to the task at their workplace. In a related study, Bhattacharjee [1] mentioned the utmost importance of job satisfaction among doctors, considering that the public today are do not regard doctors as valuable as they were in the past.

Job satisfaction has become an important subject to study for researchers. Doctors in hospitals deserve to be treated fairly and with respect. Job satisfaction to some extent is a reflection of good treatment. Job satisfaction can also be considered as indicator of emotional well-being. Governments and Managers of hospitals should concentrate on job satisfaction of doctors because dissatisfied doctors are more likely to provide inferior medical services. Job is a main source of income as well as an important component of life. Job takes away a large part of worker's day and also contributes to one's social standings. Satisfaction with one's job is an important component for the well-being of employees. According to Locke1 [2], job satisfaction is a self-reported positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or from job experiences.

Spector2 [3] considers job satisfaction as an attitudinal variable which reveals the extent to which individual likes his job, and is always positively correlated with job performance. Job satisfaction is a concept that has been defined by many but the most commonly used definition is the one by Lock [2]. Lock [2] describes job satisfaction as a desirable or pleasurable emotional state which results from one's judgment regarding one's job or job experience. Job satisfaction encompasses multidimensional psychological reactions towards a given job [4].

According to Hulin and Judge [4], these responses contain effective and cognitive and behavioural constituents. Also, job satisfaction has varying scale, particularly with respect to the degree of the employee's cognitive evaluation of the job; it also entails the evaluation of the affective feeling regarding the job. The person's emotional feeling towards his or her job denotes the affective part of job satisfaction. As such, for an individual, the amount of job satisfaction is a reflection of the happiness or pleasure that the individual feels towards his or her job. As indicated by [5], if the work is stimulating, colleagues are welcoming, the opportunities for promotion are good, and supervisor is supportive, the employee will likely be satisfied with his or her job. Likewise, if the happiness or pleasure related to the job prevails over the pains, then, certain job satisfaction level is present.

More satisfied employees appear to initiate a chain of positive action [6]. Meanwhile, in Mullins [7], it was found that the factors impacting workers' job satisfaction include environmental factors (i.e., economy, society, technology used, and government), Cultural factors (i.e., underpinning attitudes, beliefs and values), Organizational factors (i.e., nature and size, formal structure, personnel procedures and policies, employee relations, work nature, working conditions, technology and work organization, supervision and leadership styles, and management systems), Social factors (e.g., relationship with colleagues, group working and norms, interaction opportunities, and informal organization) and also Individual factors (e.g., personality, age, education, marital status, intelligence/aptitudes, orientation towards work).

Importance of job satisfaction among hospital doctors

Hospital personnel have difficulties in meeting the needs of patients, if their own needs are not met. Therefore, hospitals managers have responsibilities to both staff and patients. Doctors' satisfaction and patient satisfaction both are important from the hospital point of view. Patient satisfaction forms one of the main outcomes for quality for patient in hospital. Job satisfaction is an important variable especially in health care settings. Overall growth and job satisfaction are important factors to retain hospital staff in the long run. Hence job satisfaction has become an integral part of theories of motivation and dedication to work. Ensuring hospital Doctors' job satisfaction and motivation is important to effectively deliver health services and to retain doctors. In a hospital setting, employee satisfaction has been found to be positively related to quality service and patient satisfaction.

Medical staff can directly influence patient satisfaction because of their involvement and interaction with patients. Job satisfaction is the degree of favourableness with which the employees view their work. It is an issue that affects the lives of all workers including health professionals and is also a factor that determines whether an employee will remain in a position or seek work elsewhere. Furthermore, job satisfaction can influence the quality of work produced Sharma & Gupta, P. K. [8]. On the other hand, job dissatisfaction among doctors resulting in turnover and migration would exacerbate the current shortage and results in serious understaffing of health care facilities. This has the potential to have a negative impact on the delivery of patient care. Bhatnagar, K., & Srivastava, K. [9].

Objectives of the study

The major objectives of review are

- To evaluate the kind of studies conducted and available in the field of job satisfaction of hospitals doctors.

- To know the importance of job satisfaction among hospitals doctors.
- To determine the gaps in the current literature.

Methodology of the study

This study was carried out by using secondary data listed in different databases of PubMed, Google Scholar, and Research Gate etc. For this purpose, articles were listed in the databases has been reviewed.

Review of Literature

In Russia, Shkolnikova [10] compared the levels of job satisfaction among doctors employed in public and private sectors and found that private sector doctors had the highest level of job satisfaction (67%), while those employed in the departmental and the public sectors reported much lower levels of job satisfaction at respectively 9% and 11%. With respect to salary, the author reported that doctors serving public clinics reported lower levels of satisfaction (11%) as opposed to those serving other types of clinics.

In Yaseen [11], the impact of compensation on the satisfaction of doctors working in Punjab was examined. From the outcomes, the author deduced that the factors of pay, promotion opportunities, recognition, and meaningful work, directly impact the doctors' job satisfaction. Nonetheless, the author found that the dissatisfaction of doctors is primarily caused by the non-existence of appropriate services⁴ structure, in addition to not perceiving their work as important. In regards to the dissatisfaction of doctors toward financial incentives, this study is in support to the findings of Shkolnikova [10].

In Palestine, Talalwih [12] studied the doctors employed in governmental hospitals and reported that financial incentives were the most important, followed by moral incentives and grant specialization to doctors, in impacting the performance of doctors. Meanwhile in Abdullah, Saud [4], the doctors working in Saudi Arabian security force hospital were studied and the authors found that technical improvement and rewards were the most common physical incentives provided to doctors. On the other hand, the most important moral incentives that the doctors were receiving include the practice of quality management, verbal compliment, as well as letter of thanks.

In Libya, among the doctors employed in paediatrics hospital in Benghazi, Ainas Eltarhuni [13] found dissatisfactions with regard to financial incentives. On the other hand, the doctors appeared to be neutral in terms of moral incentives and performance. Among these doctors, the author stated that salaries were the most significant factor that encouraged performance, followed by stability at work, and then good relationship between supervisor and

colleagues. This is in line with the findings of Shkolnikova [10] and Yaseen [11] concerning the dissatisfaction among doctors in regards to the received/offered financial incentives.

In a cross-sectional study among Indian doctors, Sharma *et al.* [8] examined their satisfaction level towards their job and the impacting factors. Comprehensive customized questionnaire was employed to gather the data, and from the obtained outcomes, the authors indicated the expression of satisfaction among the majority (74%) of doctors towards their job. From the outcomes, the authors identified 9 factors that have significant linkage with these doctors' job satisfaction. In no particular order, these factors are as follows: freedom to select the favored working method, physical work conditions, attitude of peers, acknowledgment for good work, attitude of immediate superior, and pay rate, opportunity to employ their abilities, inter- and intra-departmental management, and responsiveness towards the suggestions made by these doctors. The authors also reported the similarity in regards to the pattern of high fraction of satisfaction among the Indian doctors with developed countries' doctors.

In a tertiary hospital located in Delhi, Kaur *et al.* [14] examined job satisfaction among doctors and the numerous related factors. From the results, the authors concluded the dissatisfaction among a significant proportion of doctors with their pay and with the average amount of work hours apportioned to them. Also, many of these doctors were of the view that their working environment was poor. Among the factors found to have significant linkage to dissatisfaction include the average number of daily work hours and the number of monthly nightshifts.

In Estonia, Kaarna [15] examined the job satisfaction level as well as the factors linked to job satisfaction. For the purpose of this study, the respondents were grouped into 5 occupational categories as follows: physicians, other health professionals, nurses and nursing associates, administrative staff, and support staff. From the obtained results, the author concluded a positive link between job satisfaction and the following variables: planning, relationship with the supervisor, and the sense of belonging towards the organization. The author further indicated a significant negative link between job satisfaction and the variables of knowledge, unrealistic expectation, and work stress. Kaarna [15] and Kaur *et al.* [14] are in agreement in terms of their discovery of a significant negative link between job satisfaction and work hours or stress.

In Sudan, Suliman [16] examined the factors impacting job satisfaction among junior doctors of teaching hospitals in River Nile State, and from the obtained results, the author found the factor of

workload to be the cause job dissatisfaction among doctors, which may impact the stress level of the doctors. Additionally, the author reported time pressure caused by workload as contributor to low job satisfaction. Also, age, expertise, and field of work were reported as the crucial job satisfaction predictors among doctors. Meanwhile, as opposed to their peers in other specialties, internal medicine and pediatrics doctors appeared to report low satisfaction. Contrariwise, the situation is reversed in Switzerland, where the Internal medicine specialists and pediatricians reported greater satisfaction level compared to their peers in other specialties. Such differences may be linked to the fact that in developed countries, primary care doctors are the ones dealing with most cases in communities. This prevents the needless hospitals admission to medical and pediatrics wards. The finding of this study is in agreement with Kaur *et al.* [14] in regards to the dissatisfaction among doctors concerning the provision of financial incentives and the allocated work hours in their organization.

At a tertiary care hospital in Lahore, Atif, Khan and Maqbool [17] examined job satisfaction among doctors and found discontentment among a lot of doctors towards their job. As found, doctors consistently have to deal with significant amount of stressors in both their private and professional life. Similarly, the authors indicated the importance of job satisfaction in the achievement of high work quality. In essence, job satisfaction encompasses a person's compassion towards his work, or how much he/she adores or despises his/her job. In this regard, the satisfaction felt by a doctor towards his/her job significantly improves his/her services and vice versa, and to a certain degree, this impacts the degree of satisfaction felt by the patient towards the health care provision. In addition, the behavior of doctor with his/her colleagues and patient is majorly dictated by his/her job satisfaction level.

In the context of eastern India, Bhattacharjee [1] examined the tertiary care hospital doctors' job satisfaction level and its associated factors. From the results, the author concluded that 59.6% of the doctors were satisfied, and that working space was the most important contributing factor to job satisfaction. Also, the author found that the satisfied doctors shared the following characteristics: male, older in age, working in preclinical or par clinical departments, and were working in the respective department for at least 5 years.

Job satisfaction among government hospital permanent employees was examined in Jaiswal [18], and as shown by the employed index, job satisfaction was highest among nurses (0.68). Meanwhile, the satisfaction of doctors was reported at 0.66, support staff at 0.63 and technicians at 0.62. In this study, the author found 9 uncorrelated and critical factors that are

linked to job satisfaction which explained 68.09% of the variability, and they are: communication, pay/salary, benefits, rewards, working conditions, the supervision system employed by the organization, co-workers, workload, and career aspects. Furthermore, for all classes of respondents, the author reported a positive link between the score of job satisfaction and the factor scores (units) of communication (0.133), benefits (0.110), working condition (0.027) and coworkers (0.032). On the other hand, the author reported a negative relation between the score of job satisfaction and organizational supervision system (0.118), workload (0.093), rewards (0.035), pay/salary (0.034) and career prospects (0.017). Nonetheless, among doctors, co-workers (0.023 units) denoted a negative link.

In a study by Martins [19] in Nigeria on Job satisfaction among doctors and nurses in medical center Yola, it was found that more than half (57.5%) of respondents appeared to feel satisfied or very satisfied with their work, while 18.9% expressed neutrality, and 23.5% expressed dissatisfaction or high dissatisfaction towards all aspects of their work. In this medical center, the author reported greater level of satisfaction among doctors as opposed to the nurses towards the facilities provided by the hospital ($t=2.007$, $p=0.046$). On the other hand, the nurses expressed significantly more satisfaction with their pay and benefits ($t=-3.20$, $p=0.002$).

DISCUSSION

Considering that doctors have direct impact on the safety of patients and the quality of health service, job satisfaction among doctors is an important concern. In a relevant study, Bhattacharjee [1] reported that more than 50% of the study respondents expressed satisfaction towards their job. Similar findings were also reported in studies among doctors in Chandigarh and Delhi. Contrariwise, in Pune, a study was carried out among Armed Forces Medical College physicians and the results showed only 40% of respondents were satisfied with their job. Hence, it appears that there are differences in terms of the level of satisfaction among doctors in different medical centers. However, such disparity may also be attributed to the use of different instruments in job satisfaction measurement.

In addition, similar studies carried out in both developing and developed countries appeared to generate different outcomes; difference in job satisfaction. For instance, a study on doctors in 10 European Union countries concluded that only 25% of doctors were dissatisfied. Such results may be linked to the perks and privileges included with the job, primarily salary, in developed countries. Meanwhile, a study in Karachi reported 32% dissatisfied doctors, while in Sri Lanka, 43.6% of doctors reported dissatisfaction. Thus, it can be construed that the doctors' job satisfaction has high linkage to pay, recognition, workload, meaningful

work, work pressure, work hours, work conditions, supervision, opportunities for promotion.

In Shkolnikova [10], Yaseen [11], and Ainas Eltarhuni [13], salaries and financial compensation were found as the causes of dissatisfaction among doctors. In a different study, Kaur *et al.* [14] reported work hours and salary as the factors leading to dissatisfaction among doctors. Relevantly, Suliman [16] and Atif and Khan [17] reported workload as causing job dissatisfaction among doctors, which, may also impact the doctors' level of stress. Contrariwise, doctors' satisfaction in hospitals was also reported in several studies. For instance, Sharma *et al.* [8] found that the majority (74%) of physicians expressed satisfaction towards their job, and this satisfaction was linked to their work conditions, autonomy in the selection of the desired working method, acknowledgement for good work, attitude of peers and of immediate boss, pay rate, and opportunity to employ their abilities.

In a study by Kaarna [15], the author found a positive link between job satisfaction and several factors including: planning, relationship with the supervisor and a sense of belonging towards the organization. On the other hand, the author reported a significant negative linkage between job satisfaction and knowledge, impracticable expectation and work stress. Hence, from these past findings, it can be deduced that job satisfaction has linkage to various factors as follows: wages, supervision, working conditions, and work pressures, just to name a few. In this regard, it appears that if these factors are desired and viewed as good in the workplace, job satisfaction is likely to develop, and vice versa.

CONCLUSION

Many factors have been found to contribute to job satisfaction among hospital employees. Among the crucial predictors include salary, incentives, and working conditions. Intrinsic factors were also reported to impact job satisfaction and these include achievement, recognition, accountability, and personal growth opportunity. All these reported factors share similarities with Herzberg's motivators in his two-factor theory as well as with Maslow's esteem and self-actualization needs in his well-known hierarchy of needs. Evidently, past researchers have proven that job satisfaction generates job performance and organizational commitment. Consequently, employee turnover will decrease. Hence, for hospitals whose patient experience has linkage to employee's satisfaction; the needs of the employees must be prioritized. Also, it is important for management of this hospital forms an environment that will enhance job satisfaction and commitment. The literature review also found significant amount of gaps especially pertaining to sample size, population as well as the employed tools in the assessment of the aforementioned job satisfaction

impacting factors. More large-scale uniform researches covering this domain are therefore necessary, in order that job satisfaction in hospitals particularly in teaching hospitals can be more comprehensively studied, considering that doctors employed in this hospital perform two major tasks: teaching and attending to patients.

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