

JOB SATISFACTION AMONG DOCTORS WORKING AT TEACHING HOSPITAL OF BAHAWALPUR, PAKISTAN

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Background: Doctor's profession has long been among one of the most attractive professions in Pakistani society, but doctors are increasingly getting dissatisfied with their jobs. The focus of this study is to point out the most prominent factors of job dissatisfaction among doctors working at Bahawal-Victoria Hospital / Quaid-e-Azam Medical College, Bahawalpur. **Methods:** A questionnaire was mailed to a random sample of 60 out of 244 doctors working at Bahawal-Victoria Hospital / Quaid-e-Azam Medical College, Bahawalpur. Questions included satisfaction with respect to designation, income, service structure, career prospects etc. **Results:** Overall 56% doctors were not satisfied with the level of their income. It is found that 92% of all the doctors were neither satisfied with the present service structure nor with the career prospects in Pakistan. Further, 78% of the doctors would like to serve abroad. Main factors contributing towards job satisfaction were designation and working environment whereas service structure turned out to be the source of dissatisfaction. **Conclusions:** Most of the doctors in all ranks and with different qualifications were not found satisfied with their job due to lack of proper service structure and low salaries.

Keywords: Career prospects; cross-sectional study; job satisfaction; medical care; service structure

INTRODUCTION

Job satisfaction is a complex function of a number of variables. A person may be satisfied with one or more aspects of his/her job but at the same time may be unhappy with other things related to the job. For example a doctor may be satisfied with his designation but may not be satisfied with the level of his income.

Job satisfaction/dissatisfaction of a doctor affects his behavior with co-workers, administration and particularly the patients. Quality of medical care and doctor-patient relationship is also dependent on the level of job satisfaction. A number of studies on the topic under investigation were found in the literature. It is reported that 68% of the doctors working in the teaching Hospitals of Karachi are not satisfied with their jobs and female doctors are less satisfied as compared to their male counterparts.¹ Another study suggested that job satisfaction among primary care and specialist physicians in America has declined marginally during the period 1997-2001.² In Lithuania, majority of doctors working at primary health care establishments are not satisfied with their jobs because of social status and workload.³ Other researchers reached more or less the same results.⁴⁻⁹ Increasing workload, and increased inappropriate demands from patients also result in job stress.¹⁰⁻¹¹ Working freedom, salary and fringe benefits are the major factors contributing towards job satisfaction but physicians are most dissatisfied with the workload and the reforms.¹¹ In another study, it is found that doctors were most satisfied with the

autonomy and working environment but the clerical workload was a source of dissatisfaction.¹² Akroiyd and others observed that those working in ambulatory care hospital setting were generally satisfied with the job. The major factor contributing to job dissatisfaction was autonomy.¹³ In a study with job satisfaction and stress at work of general practitioners in New Zealand GP's were found to be satisfied with their jobs. The main causes of dissatisfaction and stress were workload and health care reforms.¹⁴ Haas and others observed that physicians' job satisfaction is positively associated with the patient satisfaction.¹⁵ The purpose of this research is to study job satisfaction among doctors working at B.V.H./Q.M.C. in Bahawalpur.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

This cross-sectional study was conducted at B.V.H./Q.M.C. Bahawalpur. Because of the low cost involved in the collection of the required information, a relatively large sample (nearly 25% of the total population) of 60 regular doctors (excluding those working on contract) was drawn by simple random sampling out of a total of 244 doctors working in the above two institutions. These included the Medical Officers, Senior Registrars, Assistant Professors, Associate Professors and Professors. As expected, the number of Medical Officers, Senior Registrars etc. selected in the sample, were almost proportionally represented. The information was collected through a questionnaire which was mailed to all those selected in the sample in October 2005. First time, only 26 filled questionnaires were received. Two reminders,

with an interval of two weeks, were sent to the non-respondents. In all 53 filled questionnaires were received. Out of these three were dropped because of being incomplete.

Therefore the final count stood at 50. Information about sex, age, qualification, year of qualification, marital status, designation, monthly income, private practice, satisfaction with income/ working environment/ service structure/ availability of research facilities/ grade, and job abroad was collected.

Because of very small number of females in the sample (only four female doctors were selected) comparisons based on sex were not considered.

Job satisfaction was measured with respect to a number of variables such as income, designation, service structure, working environment, political interference, career prospects etc.

Monthly income was measured on 5-point scale from 1 (for Rs.8000 to Rs.13000) to 5 (for more than Rs.30000). Job satisfaction with respect to income, designation, working environment, availability of research facilities, equipment facilities, service structure were measured on four point scale from 1= not satisfied to 4=very much satisfied.

The reason for job abroad included higher salary, social prestige, better living standard, better working conditions and better career prospects.

Percentages, means, standard deviations and correlation (Spearman's ratio) were used to identify the factors significantly related with job satisfaction or dissatisfaction. The p-values of 0.05 and 0.01 were used as the level of significance. SPSS version 10.0 was used for statistical analysis.

RESULTS

Overall, 56% doctors were not satisfied and only 10% are very much satisfied with the level of their income. Among those very much satisfied, 60% are those having M.Phil. or FCPS degree. Among those having MBBS/ BDS degree, 65% are not satisfied with the level of their income Table 1.

Among M.Os/ Registrars/ Demonstrators, 70.59% are not satisfied with the level of their income, whereas only 20% of those working as Assistant Professors above are not satisfied with the level of income.

It is found that, 48% of the doctors are not satisfied with their working environment and out of these 83.33% are M.Os. / Registrars/ Demonstrators. Only 6% are really satisfied with their working environment. Among those working as Assistant Professors or above, 20% are not satisfied with the working environment.

According to Table 2, 92% of all the doctors are not satisfied with the present service structure. All those having MCPS/Diploma are not satisfied whereas 85% of the MBBS/BDS and 94.44% of M.Phil./FCPS are not satisfied with present service structure.

Table 3 shows that 92% of the doctors are not satisfied with the career prospects in Pakistan and out of these 69.57% are M.Os./Registrars/ Demonstrators. None of the Senior Registrar/ Assistant Professors are satisfied with their carrier prospectus in Pakistan.

The results indicate that 78% of the doctors would like to serve abroad and out of these 74.36% are M.Os / Registrars / Demonstrators. Among those working as Assistant Professors or above, 60% are willing to serve abroad.

Table 1: Qualification versus satisfaction with income showing counts

Qualification	Satisfaction with income				Total
	Not satisfied	Some what satisfied	Satisfied	Very much satisfied	
MBBS/BDS	13	5	1	1	20
MCPS/Diploma	8	2	1	1	12
M.Phil/FCPS	7	7	1	3	18
Total	28	14	3	5	50

Table 2: Qualification versus satisfaction with proper service structure

Qualification	Satisfaction with proper service structure				Total
	Not satisfied	Some what satisfied	Satisfied	Very much satisfied	
MBBS/BDS	17	2	1	-	20
MCPS/Diploma	12	-	-	-	12
M.Phil/FCPS	17	1	-	-	18
Total	46	3	1	-	50

Overall, 78% of the doctors would like to serve abroad. Further, 80% of MBBS/BDS, 83.33% of MCPS/Diploma and 72.22% of M.Phil./FCPS degree holders would like to serve abroad. Out of those earning less than Rs. 18,000, 84.38% are willing to serve abroad whereas 33.33% of those earning Rs. 18,000 or more are not willing to serve abroad.

Results in Table 4 show that the doctors were most satisfied with designation (1.98), working environment (1.68) and equipment facilities (1.68) while income level (1.24) and proper service structure (1.08) turned out to be factors causing dissatisfaction. According to Table 5, working environment has strongest correlation with the total job satisfaction scores followed by designation and research facilities. On the other hand proper service structure is least correlated with the job satisfaction.

Table 3: Designation versus career prospectus in Pakistan

Designation	Career prospects in Pakistan		Total
	Yes	No	
M.O./Registrar/ Demonstrator	2	32	34
Senior registrar	-	1	1
Assistant professor	-	7	7
Associate professor	1	2	3
Professor	1	4	5
Total	4	46	50

Table 4: Mean scores of satisfaction with job characteristics

Job characteristics	Mean score*	Standard deviation
Income satisfaction	1.24	0.69
Designation satisfaction	1.98	0.84
Satisfaction with equipment facility	1.68	0.71
Research facility satisfaction	1.30	0.61
Working environment	1.68	0.59
Proper service structure	1.08	0.27

*Four points Likert scale (1=not satisfied to 4=very much satisfied)

Table 5: Correlation between job characteristics and total job satisfaction

Job characteristics	Correlation coefficient	P-value
Income satisfaction	0.427	0.007
Designation satisfaction	0.684	0.001
Satisfaction with equipment facility	0.513	0.002
Research facility satisfaction	0.654	0.001
Working environment	0.739	0.000
Proper service structure	0.222	0.190

DISCUSSION

Our results agree with that of a similar study, which reported that 68% of the doctors working in the teaching Hospitals of Karachi were not satisfied with their jobs¹. Main factors of job dissatisfaction are service structure and low income. Although designation and working environment contribute towards job satisfaction, the mean satisfaction scores are still small. Because of very few female participants differences among male and female doctors job satisfaction was not possible to evaluate.

CONCLUSION

Most of the doctors in all ranks and with different qualifications were not found satisfied with their job due to lack of proper service structure and low salaries.

REMARKS

The present study shed some light on the status of job satisfaction among doctors working at BVH/QMC Bahawalpur. Low income and present service structure are the main factors contributing to job dissatisfaction.

Job satisfaction among doctors may be increased by reforms in service structure and by offering better salary package. A large study on national scale is required to find out the variations between geographical regions/provinces and to study other factors such as job stress, workload, patient satisfaction etc. Such study should be repeated to see the change in the level of job satisfaction and the effects of steps taken in this respect.

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