

Determinants of job satisfaction among healthcare providers: A case of selected public hospitals in Ilala Municipality

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Abstract

Issues of job satisfaction in organizations have become an important field of investigation for researchers. Although employees deserve to be motivated fairly and with respect, the same feeling has not been reflected among healthcare workers in Ilala District. The study specifically examined the factors affecting the performance of healthcare employees, the perceptions of healthcare workers regarding the existing employees' benefits, and identifying employees' benefits that satisfy their needs. This was a mixed study where 114 questionnaires were distributed to healthcare workers using convenience sampling. Qualitative data was collected using an unstructured interview, and the information generated was analyzed using content analysis. On the other hand, the quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics. The study found that lack of career advancement, demanding jobs, and the fact that jobs are consuming a lot of time were among the factors affecting employee job satisfaction. Additionally, extra duties, a lack of annual leave, and maternity leave were among the benefits perceived to be important in influencing employee job satisfaction, while timely provision of wages, good supervisory qualities, good policies and rules, good co-worker relations, and good working conditions were the benefits that are needed to boost employee job satisfaction. The findings imply that the government should provide employees with timely benefits if it has the intention of boosting employee job satisfaction. The finding also confirms the two-factor theory assumption that employees will only be satisfied if they are well motivated. Additionally, the private healthcare sector can also learn from this study and make sure that employee benefits are timely approved. Keywords: employees' job satisfaction, healthcare workers, public hospitals, Ilala Municipal Council.

Keywords: *Employees' job satisfaction, healthcare providers and public hospitals*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Healthcare workers are the prime backbone for the success of any health system that manages health-related problems (Rosami, 2021). Despite their importance, they suffer from poor working conditions that contribute to their dissatisfaction (Nyang'ori, 2021). The World Health Organization (WHO) has reported that about 40 percent of professionals in the healthcare cadre (including nurses and doctors) experience job turnover as a result of job dissatisfaction caused by long working hours, underpayment, and a lack of work balance (Abate & Mekonnen, 2021). Furthermore, it is reported that 40% of all the professionals in the healthcare system in the world will leave their employment in the coming years due to unsatisfactory work benefits (Goetz, 2013).

In Sub-Saharan African countries, only 50 percent of the required staff are available and willing to serve the rural population (Zakerian, 2013). In countries such as Ethiopia, most healthcare professionals are not satisfied with their jobs, and this has been linked to limited employee incentives, low salaries, long working hours, and limited support from hospitals. The situation has made them start looking for jobs elsewhere (Khamlub, 2013). A similar situation has also been reflected in other countries in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), such as Kenya and Uganda (Sara, 2016). According to a study conducted in South Africa, Timothy (2010) found that race plays a crucial role in employees' job satisfaction, with black workers showing less satisfaction than white workers.

In the context of Tanzania, healthcare public professionals are working in an unfriendly working environment (Wells, 2011). Employees are required to work with limited working tools, long working hours, limited support, and limited employee benefits (Stanton, 2005; Wells, 2011). On top of this, public health care workers also suffer from poor facilitation of transport, a lack of communication, and limited means of motivation to enable them to perform their responsibilities at their best. These factors are affecting their performance (Shemdoe, 2016). Other factors that affect their performance include a massive workload, risky job roles, remote working areas, an adequate salary, and non-salary benefits. These challenges not only affect their performance but also lead to job dissatisfaction (Stanton, 2005; Wells, 2011) and increase labor turnover (Shemdoe, 2016). For example, Muhimbili National Hospital (MNH) attended 378,057 patients in 2022/23 compared to 367,213 patients in 2021/22 from different parts of Tanzania, but the current number of health workers is less than what is required (URT, 2023).

The same case has also been reported in other public hospitals, such as Mnazi Mmoja Health Center, Madonna Hospital, Tabata General Hospital, Jakaya Kikwete Cardiac Institute, Ocean Road Cancer Institute, Amana Regional Referral Hospital, and Emilio Mzena Memorial Hospital. Due to these challenges, the government of Tanzania has tried to develop health sector reforms, policies, guidelines, plans, and strategies to improve the working conditions of health workers. On top of that, the government also formulated a health sector strategic plan for 2021–2026 to improve the working environment, offer health care facilities to ease their jobs, improve the salary scales, employ more health workers in both rural and urban centers, and increase the supply of medicines and medical centers in every ward in the country (Ministry of Health, Communication Development, Gender, and Children, 2021–2026).

Despite all the efforts, healthcare workers in Tanzania are still suffering from miserable working conditions, long hours of work, low salaries, and being forced to work in an unsafe environment. While studies such as Gloria (2016), Sabria (2013), Msanya (2015), and Eltruda (2011) examined job satisfaction, Studies addressing job satisfaction in the healthcare sector in Tanzania are lacking. There are limited studies that have examined factors affecting employee job satisfaction in Ilala public hospitals. Furthermore, information regarding employees' perceptions of existing employee benefits was not known, and on top of this, different kinds of employee benefits that boost job satisfaction were not known. Therefore, this study is intended to close the existing knowledge gap. The assessment of this study is vital because the results add knowledge to job satisfaction studies since there are limited empirical works in the context of Tanzania and the health sector.

Furthermore, it is reported that staff in Tanzania's public healthcare systems are highly dissatisfied with their working conditions and bonuses (Jessica, 2019). Additionally, a lack of a proper working environment can impact health workers' job satisfaction (Mary, 2018). Other issues that have a significant impact on employee job satisfaction, including untimely payments and long working hours, are reported to be among the key determinants affecting employee job satisfaction (Weathington et al., 2000). Therefore, all these challenges indicate that this study is needed to solve the existing problems. The information from this study will also help policymakers restructure their policies to include employee benefits and highlight that the benefits should be offered timely to attract job satisfaction. The findings of this study can also act as a catalyst for private hospitals to ensure the timely provision of employee benefits. This would influence employees' job satisfaction more easily and may reduce the rates of labor turnover.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a pragmatic philosophy to optimize the use of mixed-methods methodology during data collection as well as data analysis. This is because qualitative data were employed to supplement the numerical information collected in the questionnaires. Collecting and analyzing both qualitative and quantitative data in the same study can provide a more comprehensive understanding of a research problem and increase the validity and reliability of research findings.

The population for this study covers all healthcare workers in public hospitals. Based on 2022 statistical data, there are 1114 healthcare employees (Ministry of Health Data, 2022). The sample size for this study was obtained from an updated list of healthcare workers in public hospitals in Ilala municipality (N = 1114), which was provided and used to select the most appropriate respondents for the study. Sample size was calculated by the following formula: $n = N / (1 + N \cdot e^2)$ $n = 1114 / (1 + 1114 \times 0.10^2)$ $n = 114$, where n = number of samples, N = total population = 1114, and e = standard error of sampling (10%). For this study, the sample size of 114 respondents was considered to be reasonable.

This study employed the survey method as one of the techniques to collect quantitative data. 114 questionnaires were distributed to healthcare employees, who were asked conveniently to take part in the study. Healthcare workers who were found at their working areas during the data collection period were conveniently asked to take part in the study. This technique was selected because it provides information quickly, is affordable, and also allows researchers to collect data from a larger population. In order to have a representative sample, both junior and senior healthcare employees were conveniently contacted and requested to participate in the study. All healthcare workers who were employed for more than five years were asked to participate in the study. The reason to include respondents with five years of working experience was due to the fact that they have been in their workplaces long enough to share their views regarding job satisfaction. The decision to take part in the study was left entirely to healthcare workers.

This study was conducted at Ilala Municipal Council since most of the largest public healthcare centers are located there. Examples of these healthcare centers include Muhimbili National Hospital, Amana Referral Hospital, Ocean Road Hospital, and Mnazi Mmoja Hospital. Additionally, in these hospitals, there are more healthcare employees; hence, it was easy to get a diverse group of respondents who took part in the study.

The quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive analysis with the aid of a statistical package for social science (SPSS) version 20, while the qualitative part was analyzed using content analysis. Before analysis, the data was cleaned to check for missing data and identify outliers.

3.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1 Respondents' demographic characteristics

According to Table 1 overall descriptive data, the majority of healthcare workers in each group were between the ages of 40 and 49 and 50 and above, representing 75% of the total surveyed healthcare workers, of which 79% were male and the rest 21% were female. Furthermore, the results show that the majority of the healthcare workers working in public hospitals in Ilala Municipality attained the certificate level of education (49%), followed by diploma holders (27%), while most of them worked in the departments of NHIF (67%) and medical department (18%) as NHIF officers and medical doctors, respectively.

Table 1: Respondents' demographic characteristics

Categories	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sex		
Male	90	79
Female	24	21
Age		
20-29	11	10
30-39	18	15
40-49	35	31
50 and above	50	44
Educational Level		
Certificate level	56	49
Diploma level	31	27
Bachelor degree	19	17
Master's degree	8	7
Departments		
Administration	5	4
Medical	20	18
Accounting	7	6
Human resources (HR)	6	5
NHIF	76	67
Job position		
Administrator	5	4
Medical doctor	20	18
Accountant	7	6

Categories	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Human resources officer	6	5
NHIF officer	60	53
Nurse	16	14

Source: Field data (2023)

3.2 Factors Affecting the Performance of Health Care Employees in Public Hospitals

One of the specific research objectives was to assess the factors affecting the performance of healthcare employees in public hospitals. The results from the descriptive analysis indicated that 47% of all the respondents agreed that lack of personal achievement was one of the factors affecting their performance, while 9% were neutral. Surprisingly, in this study, 67% of all the respondents strongly disagreed that lack of recognition in their workplaces was never a determinant factor affecting their performance. This implies that healthcare workers are abiding by the health guidelines and that they work diligently to meet their targets, regardless of whether they are being praised for working hard or not. Additionally, 44% of all the respondents have claimed that their performance is affected by heavy workloads, that the work is too demanding (58%), lack of career advancement (82%), and too demanding work (92%). Table 2 offers a summary of respondent’s demographic characteristics. This finding implies that public hospitals need to develop succession career plans to satisfy healthcare workers. This will encourage them to work hard. Furthermore, even though the nature of respondents’ work is too demanding, a schedule needs to be in place to allow them to work in shifts. This will motivate employees, and their performance will be improved. The findings of this study confirm Temesgen et al.'s (2019) and Amare et al.'s (2021) findings that a lack of training opportunities, lack of appreciation, poor working environments, and heavy workloads affect employee performance significantly.

Table 2: Factors Affecting the Performance of Health Care Employees in Public healthcare centers

Categories	1	2	3	4	5
Lack of personal achievement is affecting my performance	14%	0%	9%	47%	30%
Lack of recognition in this office is affecting my performance	67%	13%	0%	0%	20%
More responsibilities in this office is affecting my performance	10%	4%	0%	44%	39%
The nature of my work is too demanding hence it affects my performance	12%	6%	8%	16%	58%

Lack of career advancement support from the management is affecting my performance	0%	0%	0%	92%	8%
My job is taking much of my time hence it is difficult for me to do personal growth	0%	0%	0%	82%	18%

Source: Field data (2023)

3.3 Perception of Healthcare Workers in Public Hospitals regarding the Existing Employee Benefits

In this study, respondents were asked to mention their perception regarding the employee benefits existing benefits they have been receiving since they were employed in the public hospitals. Most of the interviewees mentioned that extra duty payments, annual leave, maternity leave, allowances, health insurance, and pension benefits are the kinds of benefits they have been receiving since they were employed in various public hospitals in Ilala District.

“Since I was employed in this hospital, I have been getting overtime allowance, payments, maternity leave, annual leave, and health insurance. These work benefits pushed me to come to work and do more for our employer” (in-depth interview, health worker).

Interviewees from various departments in public hospitals said that extra duty payments, annual leave, maternity leave, allowances, health insurance, and pension benefits are important for them to be satisfied with their jobs. Although respondents declared that they have been receiving some of the benefits from the government, they are still not satisfied. This finding somehow goes contrary to the demands of the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OSHA) of 2003. OSHA states that it is the duty of every employee to receive benefits because motivated employees are more productive (Msanya, 2020; Gloria, 2016).

3.4 Employee’s Benefits that Satisfy the Needs of Healthcare Workers in Public Hospitals

In this study, respondents were also asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement regarding benefits that satisfy their working morale. The results found that 86% agreed that timely provision of wages, good supervisors’ qualities (63%), good policies and rules (%), good co-worker relations (48%), and good working conditions (39%) were among the crucial benefits that boost their working morale. These findings support past related findings by Leshabariet et al. (2008), who found that one of the causes of low working morale was untimely employee payments. A similar situation was also reported in 2005 at the Mkapa HIV/AIDS Foundation. Table 3 offers a summary of the results.

Table 3: Employee’s benefits perception offered at the public healthcare centers

Statements	1	2	3	4	5
Good working conditions satisfy my working desire	9%	4%	13%	39%	35%
Good co-worker relations satisfy my working morale	13%	0%	7%	48%	32%
Good policies and rules satisfy my working desire	4%	1%	9%	59%	27%
The good qualities of a supervisor satisfy my working morale	0%	0%	0%	37%	63%
Provision of wages on time satisfies my working desire	0%	0%	0%	14%	86%

Source: Field data (2023)

4.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study intended to examine job satisfaction among healthcare providers using a case of public hospitals in Ilala municipality. The study found that lack of career advancement, demanding jobs, and too many responsibilities were the main determinants affecting job satisfaction among healthcare employees in Ilala municipalities. Furthermore, extra duty payments, annual leave, maternity leave, and allowance provisions were among the existing benefits they have been receiving from their employers, although they were not satisfied. Additionally, healthcare workers also claimed that timely provision of wages, good supervisory qualities, good policies and rules, and good working conditions are among the benefits that improve their job satisfaction.

Although there is extensive research on job satisfaction at the global level, studies of the same nature in the context of developing countries such as Tanzania and specifically the Ilala Municipal Council are lacking. Therefore, the current study has closed the existing knowledge gap. This study advised the government to make sure that there are succession career plans to advance employees in their career ladder, as this will satisfy employees. Additionally, work schedules should be maintained to avoid long working hours. Also, the government should make sure that salaries are provided on time. Other employee benefits, such as annual leave and maternity leave, among others, are supposed to be provided timely to encourage employees to perform better.

5.0 LIMITATIONS AND AREAS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

Although the study adds new knowledge in the area of job satisfaction, this study was a cross-sectional one; hence, it limits the generalization of study findings to contexts other than the healthcare sector. Therefore, it is advised that future studies be conducted using a longitudinal study; this way, one would be able to capture respondents’ true feelings. Also, another comparative study addressing

issues of job satisfaction between public and private hospitals needs to be conducted; this way, the findings of this study could be validated. Also, the main focus of this study was on highlighting the extent to which employee job satisfaction was affected by different factors, including lack of career advancement, job demands, timing, and limited employee benefits. Other studies could focus on addressing other issues, such as employee teamwork spirit and employee personality. These issues may have a significant impact on employee job satisfaction.

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