

# Evaluating Pharmacists' Motivation and Job Satisfaction Factors in Saudi Hospitals

Nabila BENSLIMANE<sup>a</sup> and Mohamed KHALIFA<sup>a,1</sup>

<sup>a</sup> *King Faisal Specialist Hospital and Research Center, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia*

**Abstract.** High turnover rate among healthcare professionals is a very expensive price that healthcare organizations might pay if they don't have the proper strategies for motivating and satisfying their employees. Healthcare organizations should be able to identify areas that require more attention. Many studies discussed the vital link that bonds job satisfaction with motivation, which has a major impact on productivity, innovation, and overall organizational performance. Our study explored the level of job satisfaction and factors that motivate pharmacists in Saudi hospitals using mixed quantitative and qualitative methods. From pharmacy managers' point of view; financial rewards are more important than non-financial incentives and benefits. This contradicts with pharmacists' opinions; who ranked recognition, promotion, job satisfaction, job feedback, autonomy and task significance among the most influential motivators to pharmacists. These results show that managers need to revise their plans and provide further attention to ensure that effective motivation and retention strategies are put in place.

**Keywords.** Job Motivation, Job Satisfaction, Pharmacists, Hospitals.

## Introduction

An employee's affective reaction toward job plays an important role in work motivation, satisfaction, and retention. Employee turnover intention and actual turnover rates are highly dependent on job satisfaction and job attractiveness [1]. This significant relationship was proved through different theories, such as Mobley's theory, which discuss that the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover is significant and consistent and that job satisfaction changes can be used to evaluate current job conditions and characteristics [2]. One research looked deeper into the dynamic relationship that links job satisfaction to turnover intention; researchers argue that job satisfaction can widely vary through career life depending on different factors; taking a decision to leave the work can be done under uncertainty in an effort to avoid risky choices [3]. Job satisfaction can serve as a key performance indicator. The organization should then be able to identify areas that require more attention toward employee job satisfaction and boost performance. Many studies have shown the vital link that bond job satisfaction with motivation, which has a major impact on productivity, innovation, and overall organization performance [4]. Trust is another important element to study employees' motivation. Trust contributes to overall success of organizations. Organizational trust include mainly two dimensions; depth and locus, which are involved in three main areas; benevolence, integrity and transparency [5].

---

<sup>1</sup> Corresponding Author. Consultant, Medical Informatics. Email: dr.m.khalifa@gmail.com.

## 1. Methods

This study used mixed quantitative and qualitative methods. The main objective was to assess the level of job satisfaction and factors that motivate pharmacists in four different hospitals in Saudi Arabia. The questionnaires used in this study were developed and validated through an extensive review of literature with many elements adapted from published research. Two different questionnaires were used; the first was addressed to pharmacy managers while the second was addressed to pharmacists. The first used mainly the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire and had two parts; the first contained four questions about job title; duration of service in current position; duration of service in hospital and previous positions in the same hospital. The second part contained two tables to test Herzberg's two factor theory items including job satisfaction or motivation factors, such as staff development and growth, and job dissatisfaction or hygiene factors, such as work conditions, salary, job security and interpersonal relations. Participants were asked to rank factors that motivate pharmacists most such as salary; job security; promotion; leave; motivational talks; recognition; financial rewards; job satisfaction; job attractiveness. The second questionnaire contained 24 questions for pharmacists. In addition to background characteristics, demographics, and professional information, data was collected to measure pharmacist satisfaction in relation to years of experience; tendency to remain in the current job, and level of trust pharmacists have toward their departments. A scale of ten points was used to make pharmacists rate specific factors motivational effect on their performance. The last part of the questions looked at the five job characteristics that can be used to predict pharmacists' satisfaction. This part was used to test the Job Characteristic theory [6] that explains reasons of higher motivation and job satisfaction.

## 2. Results

Descriptive and inferential statistics were conducted using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS). Among 19 participating pharmacy managers, the majority believed that their pharmacists are satisfied with their general work conditions and career development. From their point of view, salary ranked the highest and strongest (94.7%) motivator, followed by job promotion (52.6%) with job attractiveness ranking weakest (31.6%). The 71 participating pharmacists expressed a low intention to stay at the same work with more than half of them (63.4%) thinking of leaving work, out of these only 46.5% actually went for an interview in another healthcare organization, and 60% are willing to accept a good job offer. Among all participating pharmacists, 78.9% trusted their department while 15% didn't have enough trust. There was no significant relationship between pharmacists' satisfaction and their intention to leave work. Minority (18%) of pharmacists are satisfied with human resource support, (43.7%) reported the lack of motivation in pharmacy departments, (55.7%) are not satisfied with the incentives provided by the hospital, (81.7%) agreed on the existence of good relationships between coworkers. 56% of pharmacists believed their hospital has good safety measures in place, and 45% of pharmacists felt they were well recognized for their team work. Overall results show that 62% of pharmacists' job satisfaction significantly changed from last year. About 70% are motivated by a combination of both financial and non-financial incentives. 76% of pharmacists believed that financial incentives are also essential in motivating them and have a major influence on their

performance. Ranking different motivation factors, Salary was the first with an overall percentage score of 84%, Job Satisfaction came second with a score of 76%, then Job Promotion 66% and came third, Financial Reward 62% came fourth, Job Security 58% came fifth, Vacation 51% came sixth, Recognition 50% came seventh, Job Attractiveness 45% came eighth and finally Motivational talks 43% which came ninth. There was a statistically significant relationship between job satisfaction and freedom at work, job satisfaction and feedback is also statistically significant, in addition to the job satisfaction with tasks significance, however the results of job satisfaction with task identity and skill variety were not significant. Table 1 shows pharmacists opinions regarding different job features and their relative satisfaction percentages.

**Table 1.** Percentage (%) of pharmacists' satisfaction with different job features.

SN	Job Features Studied	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total %
1	There is a good relationship with coworkers	2.8	7.0	8.5	73.2	8.5	75.5
2	We have good safety measures in the hospital	4.2	12.7	26.8	50.7	5.6	68.2
3	Job security exist in the hospital	7.0	21.1	16.9	46.5	8.5	65.7
4	Department recognize and acknowledge our work	5.6	21.1	28.2	40.8	4.2	63.4
5	We have a proper performance appraisal system in pharmacy	12.7	22.5	28.2	29.6	7.0	59.1
6	Managers are motivating their employees	14.1	29.6	16.9	33.8	5.6	57.4
7	We have an effective promotion opportunity in department	12.7	23.9	39.4	22.5	1.4	55.2
8	There is a reasonable periodic increase in salary	21.1	29.6	16.9	23.9	8.5	53.8
9	Satisfied with Human Resource support	11.3	32.4	31.0	16.0	2.0	53.2
10	Satisfied with incentives provided by the department	19.7	36.6	18.3	23.9	1.4	50.2
<b>Total</b>		<b>11.2</b>	<b>23.8</b>	<b>23.2</b>	<b>36.3</b>	<b>5.4</b>	<b>60.2</b>

### 3. Discussion

The variety of skills and task identity had no significant relationship with pharmacists' satisfaction. These results are not consistent with the Job characteristic theory. Task significance and freedom to accomplish duties revealed significant relation with pharmacists' satisfaction; confirming previous research findings of positive association [7]. Job feedback was linked to current job satisfaction and revealed significant relationship; pharmacists who received regular feedback on their performance were highly satisfied compared with those who did not. Overall, job satisfaction is linked to only some characteristics in the Job Characteristic Theory. A combination of financial and non-financial incentives were preferred by participants with no significant relation to their age, nationality, education level or years of experience, this is consistent with previous studies that looked at the positive influence of non-pecuniary rewards such as schedule flexibility, training, and respect and how they create a willingness to remain in the job [8]. Saudi to expatriates pharmacists are 1:3. Saudi Arabia still depends on a large number of expatriates in the healthcare sector [9]. The Saudi Health Human Resources plan for 2015 had a goal of increasing the percentage of Saudi pharmacists' to reach 42% of total pharmacists in the kingdom, the results of this study shows that the current status is way below these figures [10]. Results also show that expatriates' pharmacists have more tendencies to leave work once a better offer is available although changing jobs for expatriates in Saudi Arabia is very difficult and requires approval by the government in addition to a release by the original sponsor. On the

other hand Saudis showed higher tendency to remain at their current job. Both groups Saudis and expatriates showed similar trust level to their organization, this results agree with a previous study [9]. There was a statistically significant difference between expatriates feeling valuable in comparison to Saudis. From managers' point of view, financial rewards are more important than recognition; this contradicts with pharmacists' opinion. This result shows that managers are not quite right on their perception toward their employee expectations and might need further attention to ensure that more effective motivation strategies are put in place. Motivation acts as a psychological power that determines direction and behavior.

#### 4. Conclusion

Our study demonstrated the misperception of managers' about the relative influence of different motivators. To decrease pharmacists' turnover and boost department performance toward the hospital goals and objectives, it is essential to identify the key elements necessary for pharmacists' motivation and job satisfaction. With majority of pharmacist of young age; a combination of financial and non-financial incentives act as the strongest motivator as proved in this study. Salary, promotion, job satisfaction, recognition ranked amongst the most powerful motivators to pharmacists. A significant correlation between job satisfaction and job feedback, autonomy, and task significance exists. Human resource management may consider the non-financial incentives while developing strategies. The identification of the correct motivation factors can lead the way to continuous improvement and higher competitive advantage. One of the rapidly growing areas is the use of automation, especially in the pharmacy technology, such as automated drug dispensing systems. Future research should look into the influence of health and biomedical informatics applications on job satisfaction and motivation among pharmacists, in addition to investigating the potential roles of pharmacists on the success of hospital information systems and electronic health records.

#### References

- [1] W.R. Boswell, A.J. Shipp, S.C. Payne, S.S. Culbertson, Changes in newcomer job satisfaction over time: examining the pattern of honeymoons and hangovers, *J Applied Psychology* **94** (4) (2009), 844.
- [2] W.H. Mobley, Intermediate linkages in the relationship between job satisfaction and employee turnover, *Journal of applied psychology* **62** (2) (1977), 237.
- [3] G. Chen, R.E. Ployhart, H.C. Thomas, N. Anderson, P.D. Bliese, The power of momentum: A new model of dynamic relationships between job satisfaction change and turnover intentions, *Academy of Management Journal* **54** (1) (2011), 159-181.
- [4] B. Aziri, Job satisfaction: A literature review, *Management research and practice* **3** (4) (2011), 77-86.
- [5] M. Pirson, D. Malhotra, Foundations of organizational trust: what matters to different stakeholders?, *Organization Science* **22** (4) (2011), 1087-1104.
- [6] R. Hackman, E. Lawler, G. Oldham, Job characteristics theory, *Organizational Behavior: Essential theories of motivation and leadership* **1** (2005), 75.
- [7] P. Bhandari, R. Bagga, D. Nandan, Levels of job satisfaction among healthcare providers in CGHS dispensaries, *Journal of Health Management* **12** (4) (2010), 403-422.
- [8] L. Morris, Quits and job changes among home care workers in Maine: The role of wages, hours, and benefits, *The Gerontologist* **49** (5) (2009), 635-650.
- [9] U. Yavas, M. Luqmani, Z. Quraeshi, Organisational commitment, job satisfaction, work values: Saudi and expatriate managers, *Leadership & Organization Development Journal* **11** (7) (1990), 3-10.
- [10] WHO, *Country Cooperation Strategy for WHO and Saudi Arabia 2006-2011*, World Health Organization Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean, 2006.