

MOTIVATION AND JOB SATISFACTION OF WORKERS IN HEALTHCARE ORGANIZATIONS

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Abstract:

Healthcare workers' motivation and job satisfaction have been the subject of numerous studies, but there is still a lack of empirical data about the factors that affect job satisfaction among healthcare employees in developing countries. The purpose of this study was to investigate the link between motivation and job satisfaction as well as to assess the factors that predict job satisfaction among healthcare employees. A cross-sectional survey was conducted in March and April 2024 in Niksic, Montenegro, involving 88 healthcare workers (doctors and nurses) who completed self-administered questionnaires using a five-point Likert scale. The results indicated positive correlations between extrinsic motivation and job satisfaction ($r = 0.30$, $p < 0.01$) and overall motivation and job satisfaction of healthcare workers ($r = 0.22$, $p < 0.05$). Multiple linear regression analysis showed that extrinsic motivation was a significant positive predictor of job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.36$, $p < 0.01$). Furthermore, a significant negative predictor of job satisfaction was the type of organization—primary or secondary healthcare ($\beta = -0.26$, $p < 0.01$). These findings suggest that higher levels of extrinsic motivation and employment in primary healthcare centers are associated with greater job satisfaction.

Keywords: job satisfaction, motivation, healthcare, workers

MOTIVACIJA I ZADOVOLJSTVO POSLOM RADNIKA U ZDRAVSTVENIM ORGANIZACIJAMA

Apstrakt:

Postoji mnogo istraživanja o motivaciji i zadovoljstvu poslom radnika u zdravstvenim organizacijama, ali nedostaju empirijski dokazi o tome koji razlozi utiču na zadovoljstvo poslom zdravstvenih radnika u zemljama u razvoju. Cilj ovog istraživanja bio je procijeniti prediktore zadovoljstva poslom kod zdravstvenog osoblja kao i povezanost između zadovoljstva poslom i motivacije. Ova studija presjeka je sprovedena tokom marta i aprila 2024. u Nikšiću, u Crnoj Gori na 88 zdravstvenih radnika (ljekara i medicinskih sestara), pomoću upitnika koji su sami popunili na petostepenoj Likertovoj skali. Rezultati su pokazali



da postoje pozitivne korelacije između ekstrinzične motivacije i zadovoljstva poslom ($r = 0,30$, $p < 0,01$), i ukupne motivacije i zadovoljstva poslom zdravstvenih radnika ($r = 0,22$, $p < 0,05$). Analiza višestruke linearne regresije pokazala je da je ekstrinzična motivacija značajan pozitivan prediktor zadovoljstva poslom ($\beta = 0,36$, $p < 0,01$). Osim toga, vrsta organizacije (primarna ili sekundarna zdravstvena zaštita) bila je značajan negativan prediktor zadovoljstva poslom ($\beta = -0,26$, $p < 0,01$). Nalazi pokazuju da veća ekstrinzična motivacija i rad u domu zdravlja (tj. u primarnoj zdravstvenoj zaštiti) podrazumijevaju i veće zadovoljstvo poslom.

Ključne riječi: zadovoljstvo poslom, motivacija, zdravstveni radnici

INTRODUCTION

Human resource management is a crucial element of the management process. To understand the significance of competent individuals in an organization, it is essential to view humans and organizations as interconnected entities. Most well-managed organizations recognize their employees as the primary drivers of quality and success. When an organization achieves its objectives, it is considered effective. An effective organization ensures that its members work cohesively, are committed, and experience job satisfaction. Achieving employee satisfaction and commitment requires strong and effective motivation at all levels. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), health systems can only function with the support of healthcare workers. Improving health service coverage and realizing the right to the highest standard of health depend on the availability, accessibility, acceptability, and quality of healthcare workers (Mamatha et al., 2023).

Job satisfaction can be characterized as a general attitude toward one's work or as a set of attitudes regarding specific aspects or components of the job. Both the global method and the aspect approach can provide a comprehensive picture of employee job satisfaction. Most research on job satisfaction has focused on particular groups of employees, as some job types, such as those in healthcare, appear to be more closely associated with pathological issues like burnout and workplace stress (Zhang et al., 2016).

Motivation can be characterized as the factors that inspire individuals to act in specific ways to achieve organizational or personal objectives. Employee performance is directly influenced by motivation, with many researchers arguing that only motivated workers can engage with the organization and demonstrate dedication, effectiveness, and job satisfaction. Consequently, research on the factors that promote workplace motivation can enhance the theoretical foundations of individual and social conditions that optimize well-being and performance (Ryan and Deci, 2000).

Research often categorizes job characteristics into two major groups: extrinsic factors and intrinsic factors. Intrinsic components refer to the fundamental qualities of a job, reflecting people's emotional reactions to aspects of the work itself. Salary and other non-job-related issues are examples of extrinsic factors. The significance of differentiating between intrinsic and extrinsic job aspects, goals, requirements, demands, and motivational factors is emphasized by many researchers, including Bhatnagar and Srivastava (2012).

While there is extensive research on the motivation and job satisfaction of healthcare workers, there is still a lack of empirical data on the variables affecting job satisfaction among healthcare professionals in developing nations. Numerous studies have revealed that healthcare professionals have differing opinions about their jobs. Healthcare workers' job satisfaction varies; some studies show high levels of satisfaction, while others show dissatisfaction (Khamlub et al., 2013; Barili et al., 2022). As far as we know, no prior research has been conducted on the topic of job satisfaction among healthcare professionals in Niksic, Montenegro. Thus, the goal of this study was to assess the factors that influence job satisfaction among healthcare workers and investigate the link between motivation and job satisfaction. Based on existing studies, we hypothesize that motivation positively affects healthcare workers' job satisfaction.

METHODS

The sample for this research comprised 88 respondents, including doctors and nurses employed in two distinct health organizations: "Health Center Niksic" and "General Hospital Niksic" in Montenegro. This research was conducted as a cross-sectional survey utilizing a pre-designed and thoroughly adapted questionnaire tailored for this study. The questionnaire contained 12 items to assess motivation (6 questions related to intrinsic factors and 6 related to extrinsic motivation factors) based on Herzberg's Theory of Motivation-Hygiene (Karaferis et al., 2022). The sociodemographic and job-related variables examined included gender (1 = male, 2 = female), age, length of service in years, profession (1 = nurses, 2 = doctors), and type of organization (1 = primary healthcare, i.e., health center, 2 = secondary healthcare, i.e., hospital).

Job satisfaction among healthcare workers was assessed using a single-item measure of overall job satisfaction as suggested by Wanous et al. (1997), using the question "How satisfied are you with your current job?". A five-point Likert scale was employed for the motivation questions, ranging from 1 = "not important to me" to 5 = "extremely important to me." For the overall job satisfaction question, respondents selected one grade on a scale from 1 = "very dissatisfied" to 5 = "very satisfied."

Following the ethical approval from the relevant institutions, the research was conducted in March and April 2024. The questionnaire was completed anonymously and without time constraints. Data reported in the study were analyzed using IBM SPSS statistical software (version 21). Descriptive statistics, Pearson's correlation analysis, and multiple linear regression analysis were utilized to analyze the collected data.

RESULTS

Characteristics of the sample

Of the total number of respondents, 46 (52.3%) were female, while 42 (47.7%) were male. The average age of the respondents was 42.92 ± 10.17 years. Table 1 shows detailed descriptive statistics for the investigated variables.

Table 1:
Descriptive statistics of the sample (N = 88)

Variable		N (%)
Gender	Male	42 (47.7)
	Female	46 (52.3)
Age in years (M $\pm$ SD)		42.92 $\pm$ 10.17
Profession	Nurses	26 (29.5)
	Doctors	62 (70.5)
Length of service in years	1–10	36 (40.9)
	11–20	14 (15.9)
	21–30	35 (39.8)
	≥ 31	3 (3.4)
Type of organization (primary or secondary healthcare)	Primary (health center)	32 (36.4)
	Secondary (hospital)	56 (63.6)
Intrinsic motivation (M $\pm$ SD)		3.28 $\pm$ 0.49
Extrinsic motivation (M $\pm$ SD)		3.41 $\pm$ 0.64
Overall motivation (M $\pm$ SD)		3.34 $\pm$ 0.44
Job satisfaction (M $\pm$ SD)		3.17 $\pm$ 1.29

The results of the Pearson correlation analysis performed to determine the level and type of association between the variables are presented in Table 2.

Table 2
Correlation matrix

	Age	Gender	Profession	Length of service	Type of organization	Intrinsic motivation	Extrinsic motivation	Overall motivation	Job satisfaction
Age	1	0.05	0.52**	0.82**	-0.16	-0.02	0.04	0.01	0.16
Gender	0.05	1	-0.07	0.07	0.03	0.13	0.12	0.12	-0.10
Profession	0.52**	-0.07	1	0.52**	-0.17	-0.11	-0.04	-0.09	0.00
Length of service	0.82**	0.07	0.52**	1	-0.10	-0.81	0.09	0.02	0.14
Type of organization	-0.16	0.03	-0.17	-0.10	1	-0.11	0.20	0.08	-0.19
Intrinsic motivation	-0.02	0.13	-0.11	-0.08	-0.11	1	0.17	0.69**	-0.00
Extrinsic motivation	0.04	0.05	-0.49	0.09	0.20	0.17	1	0.82**	0.30**
Overall motivation	0.01	0.12	-0.09	0.02	0.08	0.69**	0.82**	1	0.22*
Job satisfaction	0.16	-0.10	0.00	0.14	-0.19	-0.00	0.30**	0.22*	1

Note: ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

Intrinsic work motivation was significantly positively related to overall motivation ($r = 0.69$, $p < 0.01$). Additionally, the factors comprising extrinsic work motivation were significantly positively related to overall motivation ($r = 0.82$, $p < 0.01$). These findings suggest that both extrinsic and intrinsic rewards are equally important for workers to be more generally motivated.

Job satisfaction was significantly positively related to extrinsic motivation ($r = 0.30$, $p < 0.01$) and to respondents' overall motivation ($r = 0.22$, $p < 0.05$). These findings indicate that higher job satisfaction correlates with higher motivation among healthcare workers, and vice versa.

Table 3 presents the regression analysis between the independent variables and the dependent variable.

Table 3*Regression model of job satisfaction*

Dependent variable: job satisfaction			
Predictors	β	t	VIF
Age	0.17	0.95	3.37
Gender	-0.12	-1.23	1.04
Profession	-0.14	-1.16	1.49
Length of service	0.01	0.10	3.44
Type of organization	-0.26**	-2.54	1.12
Intrinsic motivation	0.87	0.83	1.10
Extrinsic motivation	0.36**	3.47	1.11
R ²	0.20		
adj. R ²	0.14		
F Ch.	2.98**		
Durbin-Watson	1.93		

Note: ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

Variance inflation factor (VIF) analyses were used for assessing multicollinearity; as the VIF values in the job satisfaction regression model were less than 5, no problems were detected. Additionally, the Durbin-Watson statistic in the regression model was within the acceptable range of 1.5 to 2.5, indicating no autocorrelation problems.

The regression model explained 14% of the variance in job satisfaction (adj. $R^2 = 0.14$, $p < 0.01$). In this model, extrinsic motivation was a significant positive predictor of job satisfaction, accounting for most of the variance ($\beta = 0.36$, $p < 0.01$). These findings suggest that higher levels of extrinsic motivation are associated with greater job satisfaction. The type of organization (primary or secondary healthcare) was also a statistically significant negative predictor of job satisfaction ($\beta = -0.26$, $p < 0.01$), suggesting a higher level of job satisfaction among healthcare workers in primary healthcare centers compared to those in hospitals (secondary healthcare).

DISCUSSION

This study aimed to examine the impact of motivation (intrinsic and extrinsic) on the job satisfaction of healthcare workers in primary and secondary healthcare organizations in Montenegro. As hypothesized, our findings confirmed that motivation positively affects job satisfaction, aligning with global research (Kitsios and Kamariotou, 2021; Karaferis et al., 2022; Aljumah, 2023).

The correlation analysis revealed that both intrinsic and extrinsic work motivations were significantly positively related to overall motivation. This was expected, given

that our study utilized a questionnaire based on Herzberg's dual-factor theory, consisting of 12 questions to assess employee motivation (Karaferis et al., 2022). The first six questions addressed intrinsic motivation factors: incentives for extra effort and productivity improvement, recognition of contributions and progress, opportunities to take initiative and use resources, participation in important decision-making, prospects for advancement or promotion, and opportunities for developing new knowledge and skills. Intrinsic motivation was operationalized as the arithmetic mean of responses to these six questions. The remaining six questions pertained to extrinsic motivation factors: staff training, seminars and training in new systems and technologies, good supervision and support from senior managers, appreciation and good reputation, flexible working hours, satisfactory salary, and job security. Extrinsic motivation was operationalized as the arithmetic mean of responses to these six questions, while overall motivation was represented by the sum of responses to all 12 questions.

Interestingly, intrinsic work motivation was not statistically significantly associated with greater job satisfaction, contrary to findings in the literature (Morris et al., 2022; Karaferis et al., 2022). Job satisfaction in our study, measured on a scale from 1 to 5, averaged 3.17, mirroring findings from Khamlub et al. (2013) in a sample of 164 healthcare workers. While single-item measures of psychological constructs are typically discouraged due to assumed low reliability, Scarpello and Campbell (1983) concluded that a single-item measure of overall job satisfaction is preferable to a composite scale (Wanous et al., 1997). Thus, it can be concluded that respondents from two healthcare institutions in Niksic, Montenegro, were generally satisfied with their jobs, a finding consistent with research in Norway, Japan, and England (Nylenna et al., 2005; Burnard et al., 1999; Wada et al., 2009).

Contrary to expectations based on prior research, sociodemographic characteristics did not significantly predict job satisfaction in our study, although previous studies often found significant relationships between demographic characteristics (such as gender and age) and job satisfaction indicators (Rahman et al., 2020; Montuori et al., 2022).

In our regression model, the primary predictor of job satisfaction was extrinsic motivation. Respondents with higher levels of extrinsic motivation also reported higher job satisfaction, consistent with findings from other studies (Mafini and Dlodlo, 2014; Aljumah, 2023).

According to Mafini and Dlodlo (2014), five extrinsic incentive factors—promotion, compensation, supervision, quality of work life, and teamwork—were found to have statistically significant associations with job satisfaction. Moreover, job-related factors were highly significant predictors of job satisfaction, especially depending on the type of organization (primary or secondary healthcare) (Mafini and Dlodlo, 2014). Our results indicated that healthcare workers in primary healthcare (i.e., health centers) experienced higher job satisfaction compared to those in secondary healthcare (i.e., hospitals). Similar results were found in Greece, where job satisfaction was lower in secondary healthcare institutions compared to primary

ones, especially in areas related to communication, operating procedures, contingent rewards, and the nature of the job (Karaferis et al., 2022; Karaferis et al., 2023).

Limitations and future research directions

Despite the significant scientific and practical implications of our study, several limitations must be acknowledged. First, the research utilized a self-assessment questionnaire. Although the survey was conducted anonymously, it is not possible to completely eliminate the potential for socially desirable responses and self-reporting bias. Second, our study focused on only two healthcare organizations in Montenegro, with relatively small sample sizes due to limited resources. This presents challenges in generalizing the findings, as they may not represent all healthcare workers in Montenegro.

Future research should consider larger sample sizes, improved sampling methods, and the use of multiple survey instruments to provide more robust evidence of job satisfaction among healthcare workers. This approach would enhance the generalizability and validity of the findings, offering a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing job satisfaction in healthcare settings.

CONCLUSION

The research revealed that motivation is significantly positively related to greater job satisfaction, as expected. Job satisfaction impacts work performance, absenteeism, and turnover, and can sometimes lead to significant psychological conditions such as burnout. It also influences overall life quality, including interpersonal interactions, family connections, and perceived health status (Montuori et al., 2022).

Given the substantial impact of job satisfaction on life balance, health, and the economy, and knowing that motivation is positively related to job satisfaction, it is imperative to establish programs that effectively strengthen worker motivation. Additionally, it is crucial to enhance the general public's understanding of the importance of job satisfaction and the benefits of adopting a positive attitude towards professional life.

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REZIME

Ovaj rad se bavio ispitivanjem efekata motivacije (intrinzične i ekstrinzične) na zadovoljstvo poslom zdravstvenih radnika u organizacijama primarne i sekundarne zdravstvene zaštite u Crnoj Gori. Rezultati su pokazali da postoje pozitivne korelacije između ekstrinzične motivacije i zadovoljstva poslom, kao i ukupne motivacije i zadovoljstva poslom zdravstvenih radnika. Analiza višestruke linearne regresije pokazala je da je ekstrinzična motivacija značajan pozitivan prediktor zadovoljstva poslom. Pored toga, vrsta organizacije (primarna ili sekundarna zdravstvena zaštita) bila je značajan negativan prediktor zadovoljstva poslom. Nalazi pokazuju da veća ekstrinzična motivacija i rad u domu zdravlja (tj. u primarnoj zdravstvenoj zaštiti) podrazumijevaju i veće zadovoljstvo poslom. Kao što je pretpostavljeno, naši nalazi su potvrdili da motivacija pozitivno utiče na zadovoljstvo poslom, što je u skladu sa istraživanjima sprovedenim širom svijeta. S obzirom na značajan uticaj koji zadovoljstvo poslom ima na ravnotežu između privatnog i poslovnog života, zdravlje i cjelokupnu ekonomiju, a imajući u vidu da je motivacija blisko povezana sa zadovoljstvom na poslu, neophodno je razviti programe koji efikasno podstiču i jačaju motivaciju zaposlenih. Takođe, važno je unaprijediti svijest javnosti o značaju zadovoljstva na poslu i benefitima koje donosi pozitivan stav prema profesionalnom životu.