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Job satisfaction of dietitians in government hospitals Khartoum State

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Abstract

Background: Job satisfaction is defined as subjective well-being at work; it can have a major impact on the quality of work performance. Low job satisfaction is a major cause of turnover among health care providers. Dietitians among health care team are a key part of patients care, and serve an influential role in assisting – nutrition- related behavior. The purpose of this study is to investigate the level of job satisfaction of dietitians in government hospitals, Khartoum State, Sudan. Methods and subjects: A descriptive hospital – based survey. Sample consists of 50 participants, who are currently employed in government hospitals, in the year 2018. A semi- structured questionnaire was designed, which consisted of two sections; participant’s profiles, and data about job satisfaction of dietitians. Results: The result of the study showed (92%) of participants are female, (54%) of them age (36-51) years, (58%) are married, (52%) have no children, (50%) have working experience (11- 25) years, (58%) have full – time job, (94%) of them are currently work as clinical consultants, (62%) of participants unsatisfied with their salaries, (72%) have good relationship with non-dietitian fellows and enjoy working with them, (56%) of participants unhappy about their work environment due to inadequate equipment and lack of technology. (72%) of participants are proud of their profession. The total score for participant’s job satisfaction is (68.6%), which indicate that they are moderately satisfied. Also they are moderately satisfied with their work load, nature of the job, food service, and promotion. They were slightly satisfied with their increased knowledge and skills, salary, and working environment. They were moderately low satisfied with their communication as dietitians. Conclusion and Recommendation: Job Satisfaction have a major impact on quality of work performance, researchers recommend that hospitals administration and ministry of health should improve working environment to reduce turnover of dietitians, continuous training should be done to increase their knowledge and skills, motivation for them by promotion, and salary level needed to be considered.

Keywords: Job Satisfaction, dietitian, government (hospitals) Khartoum State, Sudan

1. Introduction

Job satisfaction is one of the most complex areas facing institutions to manage their employees [1]. Job satisfaction (JS) has been defined by many authors in different approaches; it is defined as affective orientation of individuals toward their work [2].

Other authors defined JS as subjective well-being at work, and the way how people feel about jobs and its various aspects [3, 4].

Job satisfaction can have a major impact on the quality of work performed [5-7] So that employees can have positive or negative feeling towards that work. The former feeling is described as job satisfaction, and the latter feeling as job dissatisfaction [8].

People’s level of JS can range from extreme satisfaction to extreme dissatisfaction [9].

Several factors can influence job satisfaction which can act as motivators for employees, this often include; financial, rewards, working conditions, content of the job, Co- workers, and promotion, [4] As many factors can effect and lead to job dissatisfaction, which has been found significantly influence absenteeism, accidents, strikes, and turnover of employees [10].

Previous studies have shown that low job satisfaction is a major cause of turnover among health care providers [11, 12] In addition, job dissatisfaction may be a contributing factor associated with shortage of health providers. Dietitians are a key part of patients care, and serve an influential role in assisting nutrition – related behavior. So that registered dietitian advice people what they should eat to achieve a wide range of health goals, such as weight loss, adequate nutrition during malnutrition, cancer, diabetes, hypertension, and other

diseases. Job satisfaction among dietitians have been identified by many authors [13-20] most of these studies focused on dietitians working in United state, Canada, South Africa and Iran. Researchers did not trace any previous study that had been done concerning job satisfaction among dietitians in Sudan.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the level of job satisfaction among dietitians in government hospitals “Khartoum State”.

2. Subjects and Methods

1. Study design and Setting: A descriptive hospital – based survey was used on dietitians in government hospitals in Khartoum State.
2. Study population: A study is carried out among all dietitians who are currently employed in the 13 Khartoum government hospitals, in the year 2018. Subject consists of 50 participants with a response rate of (89.3%)
3. Data collection tolls: Based on related literature and similar tools, a semi – structured questionnaire was designed in English language. It consisted of two sections; participants profiles and data about job satisfaction among dietitians.

The participants profiles include; gender, age, marital status, number of children, university of graduation, working experience, level of education, monthly income, and reason for keeping the current job. Job satisfaction questionnaire designed according to Spector [21], with slight modification. It consists of eleven domains, each one contain four close ended items. A five–point Likert rating scale was used, rating from strongly disagree to strongly agree (1-5). These domains are; salary, promotion opportunities, knowledge and skills, relations with dietitians, recognition from others health professions, reward of the job working environment, food service, nature of the job, communication as a dietitian and work load. The highest possible score for the total job satisfaction is 210 (since two items) in one of the domains were not answered by the participants. This score can be

converted to percentage, for each subscale, the mean score is added and the sum is divided by the number of items, for easy interpretation of the data, these scores were translated into percentage. These percentages were categories into five categories representing the level of satisfaction as:-

- Very low satisfaction (0 -20) %
- Moderate low satisfaction (21-40) %
- Slight Satisfaction (41 -60) %
- Moderate Satisfaction (61 -80) %
- Very Satisfied (81 -100) %

Statistical package for the social science program (SPSS) version 23 was used.

Ethical Consideration:- Approval to conduct the study was obtained from the medical directors of the government hospital. Participants were told that the information will be kept anonymous and used only for research purposes. Also a formal written consent was obtained from each participants before answering the questionnaire.

3-Results and Discussion

Table 1. Shows the distribution of dietitians according to their profiles. Ninety two percent of them are females, similar finding was reported by Roger [22], and in South Carolina [18] that females represent (97%) and (96%) of the study population respectively. More than half (54%) of participants age (36 -51) years, (58%) of them are married, and (52%) have no children.

Majority (80%) of these dietitians graduated from Khartoum and Alahfad. Half of them have working experience (11-25) years, forty four percent have Bachelor degree, and (70%) of them are registered at the National Council for medical and health profession. Most of the participants (76%) have monthly income (1500 -2000) Sudanese pounds.

Seventy percent of dietitians in the study have been in current job, because that is the only available job, most of them (52%) will see themselves in the coming 5 years in another place. This agree with the study conducted for dietitians in Canada’s Ontario Health Care [23] that (49%) of respondents are planning to leave their current positions within (2-5) years.

Table 1: Dieticians Profiles in Khartoum Governmental Hospital

| Variable | Group | No. (%) | Variable | Group | No.(%) |
|--------------------------|----------|---------|--|--------------------|---------|
| Gender | Female | 46 (92) | Registration in National Medical Profession | Yes | 35 (70) |
| | Male | 4 (8) | | No | 15 (30) |
| Age(yrs) | 20-35 | 20 (40) | Monthly Income in SG(pound) | <1000 | 5 (10) |
| | 36-51 | 27 (54) | | 1000-1499 | 7 (14) |
| | >52 | 3 (6) | | 1500-2000 | 38 (76) |
| Marital Status | Single | 15 (30) | Level of Education | Diploma | 1 (2) |
| | Married | 29 (58) | | B.Sc. | 22 (44) |
| | Divorced | 5 (10) | | Honour | 11 (22) |
| | Widowed | 1 (2) | | M.Sc. | 14 (28) |
| | | | | Ph.D. | 2 (4) |
| No. of Children | Non | 26 (52) | Reason for being in current Job | Passion | 13 (26) |
| | 1-2 | 18 (36) | | Available Job | 35 (70) |
| | >3 | 6 (12) | | Close to home | 2 (4) |
| University of graduation | Khartoum | 20 (40) | Where do you find yourself in the next five years? | Same Job Dietician | 20 (40) |
| | Omdurman | 8 (16) | | elsewhere | 26 (52) |
| | Al Ahfad | 20 (40) | | Not as a dietician | 4 (8) |
| | Rabat | 2 (4) | | | |
| Working experience(yrs) | <3 | 7 (14) | | | |
| | 3-10 | 16 (32) | | | |
| | 11-25 | 25 (50) | | | |
| | >25 | 2 (4) | | | |

Previous studies have shown that low job satisfaction is a major cause of turnover among health care providers [4, 11]. In

contrast to dietitians working in Iran, about half of them predicted to stay at their current job for the next 5 years [20].

Table 2. shows the current employment of dietitians in the study, fifty eight percent of them have full-time job. As it is stated earlier that, most of them are married, but have no

children, this agree with the reported fact that women with child bearing age tend to prefer part-time work [24].

Table 2: Current Employment of Dietitians in Khartoum Governmental Hospitals:

| Variable | Group | No. (%) |
|---|---------------------------|---------|
| Current Employment | Fulltime | 29 (58) |
| | Part time | 13 (26) |
| | Military National Service | 8 (16) |
| Field of Dietetics experience | Internal Medicine | 15 (30) |
| | Surgery | 8 (16) |
| | Obstetrics | 5 (10) |
| | Mental Health | 2 (4) |
| | Pediatrics | 16 (32) |
| | Ophthalmic | 2 (4) |
| | Cancer | 2 (4) |
| Primary place of employment | Government hospital | 20 (40) |
| | Medical center | 1 (2) |
| | Private School | 21 (42) |
| | Missing system | 8 (16) |
| Field of current work | Clinical consultant | 47 (94) |
| | Education | 1 (2) |
| | Food service | 1 (2) |
| | Research | 1 (2) |
| Number of dietitian working with you on a routine basic | Alone | 5 (10) |
| | 1 -3 | 11 (22) |
| | 4 -10 | 34 (68) |

Majority (62%) of dietitians have working experience in medicine and pediatrics fields, this is due to spread of diseases and malnutrition in Sudan. Also (94%) of them are currently working as clinical consultants. Regarding the number of dietitians working as a team; it is clear that (68%) of them have (4-10) dietitians work on a routine basis. Table 3. Shows job satisfaction issues according to dietitian’s opinion. Regarding salaries, (50%) of the participants disagree about the pay for their work. This agrees with the

study conducted in South Carolina (18) that (54%) of dietitians did not consider their salary to be commensurate with their experience. Forty eight percents of dietitians will be satisfied with an increment increase in their salary, (52%) feel unappreciated by what they are paid. In fact financial rewards can contribute to job satisfaction; Income has been a controversial source of satisfaction and dissatisfaction for many years [4].

Table 3: Job Satisfaction Issues according to Dietitian Opinion (Salary, Promotion, Knowledge and Skills)

| Issue | SDA* No (%) | DA* No (%) | U* No (%) | A* No (%) | SA* No (%) | Total |
|---|----------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|-------|
| Salary | | | | | | |
| I feel I get paid affair salary for my work | 13 (26) | 25 (50) | 5 (10) | 6(12) | 1(2) | 107 |
| I receive overtime for extra work | 3 (6) | 19 (38) | 5 (10) | 18(36) | 5 (10) | 153 |
| I feel satisfied if my salary increased | 1(2) | 9 (18) | 8 (16) | 24 (48) | 8 (16) | 179 |
| I feel un appreciated by what I paid | 3 (6) | 10 (20) | 6 (12) | 26 (52) | 5 (10) | 110 |
| Total | | | | | | 549 |
| Promotion | | | | | | |
| I am satisfied with my chance for promotion | 4 (8) | 12 (24) | 6 (12) | 24 (48) | 4 (8) | 162 |
| A little chance for promotion in my job | 4 (8) | 9 (18) | 8 (16) | 29 (58) | -- | 138 |
| Different job I can get chance for promotion | 2 (4) | 2 (4) | 9 (18) | 28 (56) | 9 (18) | 190 |
| If I do well I will get promoted | 9 (18) | 14 (28) | 5 (10) | 17 (34) | 5 (10) | 145 |
| Total | | | | | | 635 |
| Knowledge and Skills | | | | | | |
| My knowledge and skills increased by this job | 1 (2) | 3 (6) | 1 (2) | 35 (70) | 10 (20) | 200 |
| My job is meeting my expectation in skills | -- | 5 (10) | 6 (12) | 5 (10) | 5 (10) | 189 |
| I have enough time for counseling patients | -- | 4 (8) | 9 (18) | 4 (8) | 4 (8) | 187 |
| I have enough chance for training in dietitians | 2 (4) | 9 (18) | 2 (4) | 7 (14) | 7 (14) | 181 |
| Total | | | | | | 575 |

SDA* =strongly disagree DA* =disagree U*=uncertain A*=agree SA*=strongly agree

According to promotion opportunities it is clear that (58%) of dietitians agree that there is a little chance for promotion, (56%) believe that different job can get better promotion, and only (34%) of them feel they will get promoted if they do well. Several dissatisfaction with opportunities for promotion among dietitians were reported by many authors [14, 32-34] Seventy percent of respondents believe that their knowledge

and skills increased, (60%) believe that their job is meeting their expectations, (66%) have enough time for patients, and (60%) have a chance for training, these high percentage score indicating that participants are satisfied by the work itself. Similar result was found among hospital dietitians in Korea, in contrast to community dietitians, where there was a significant emotional exhaustion due to extra-work [29].

Table 4: Job Satisfaction issues according to dietitians opinion (relationship with dietitians, other health profession, and job rewards)

| Issue | SDA* No (%) | DA* No (%) | U* No (%) | A* No (%) | SA* No (%) | Total |
|---|----------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|------------|
| Relationship with other dietitians | | | | | | |
| Supervisor for a work well – done | 1 (2) | 4 (8) | 16 (32) | 24 (48) | 5 (10) | 178 |
| I am always informed about projects going on | -- | 3 (6) | 12 (24) | 30 (60) | 5 (10) | 187 |
| I feel threaded by fellow dietitians | 3 (6) | 20 (40) | 19 (38) | 7 (14) | 1 (2) | 138 |
| I feel my fellow dietitians are competitive | -- | 6 (12) | 22 (44) | 20 (40) | 2 (4) | <u>168</u> |
| Total | | | | | | 671 |
| Recognitions from other health profession | | | | | | |
| I receive recognition from non dietitians fellows | -- | 3 (6) | 15(30) | 27(54) | 5 (10) | 184 |
| Non–dietitians fellow show little interest my work | 2 (4) | 7 (14) | 14 (28) | 25 (50) | 2 (4) | 132 |
| I have good relationship with non-dietitians fellow | -- | 5 (10) | 9 (18) | 31 (62) | 5 (10) | 186 |
| I enjoy work with other health profession | -- | 2 (4) | 9 (18) | 33 (66) | 6 (12) | <u>193</u> |
| Total | | | | | | <u>695</u> |
| Job Rewards | | | | | | |
| I received recognition from patients | 4 (8) | 3 (6) | 12 (24) | 24 (48) | 7 (14) | 177 |
| I received recognition from non dietitians fellow | 2 (4) | 1 (2) | 18 (36) | 22 (44) | 7 (14) | 181 |
| I received recognition from dietitians fellow | 1 (2) | 4 (8) | 13 (26) | 25 (50) | 7 (14) | 183 |
| My current job is rewarding | 3 (6) | 5 (10) | 17 (34) | 21 (42) | 4 (8) | <u>168</u> |
| Total | | | | | | 709 |

SDA* =strongly disagree DA* =disagree U*=uncertain A*=agree SA*=strongly agree

Table 4 shows job Satisfaction issues according to dietitians opinion. Forty eight percent of participants, their work is a appreciated by supervisors, (60%) always well informed on what going on, as greater professional involvement is related to greater job satisfaction [39]. Regarding recognition from other health profession, it is clear that (54%) of them receive recognition from others, (62%) have a good relationship with non dietitians fellows, and (66%) enjoy working with others. Similar finding was reported in studies conducted on dietitians in Korea³⁴ and South Florida [35], that they enjoy working with coworker. Labor relationship and work content,

were found to play a major role in individual’s choice to resign or stay [31].

Regarding reward of job, participants indicated that they receive recognition as follow; (48%) from patients, (44%) from non dietitians fellows, (50%) from dietitians fellows, and only (42%) of them believe that their job is rewarding.

Table (5) shows Job Satisfaction issues according to dietitians opinion (working environments food service, nature of the job) fifty eight percent of participants disagree about their work environment, and this is due to inadequate equipments and lack of efficient technology.

Table 5: Job Satisfaction issue according to dietitians opinion (working environments food service, nature of the job)

| Issue | SDA* No (%) | DA* No (%) | U* No (%) | A* No (%) | SA* No (%) | Total |
|--|----------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|------------|
| Working Environment | | | | | | |
| I work in a comfortable environment | 6 (12) | 29(58) | 5 (10) | 7 (14) | 3 (6) | 122 |
| I feel restricted in my work due to limited resource | 2 (4) | 7 (14) | 13(26) | 21(42) | 7 (14) | 126 |
| I have the required equipment to work | 4 (8) | 21 (42) | 11(22) | 12 (24) | 2 (4) | 137 |
| Technologies used in our work place | 10 (20) | 13 (26) | 20 (40) | 5 (10) | 2 (4) | <u>126</u> |
| Total | | | | | | 511 |
| Food Services | | | | | | |
| Food suitability are ensured for patients | 1(2) | 5 (10) | 14 (28) | 26 (52) | 4 (8) | 177 |
| Food acceptability are ensured for patients | 2 (4) | 5 (10) | 14 (28) | 27 (54) | 2 (4) | 172 |
| Safety of food supply are grunted | -- | 7 (14) | 11(22) | 30 (60) | 2 (4) | 177 |
| Financial pressure facing quality of food | 2 (4) | 5 (10) | 11(22) | 28 (56) | 4 (8) | <u>151</u> |
| Total | | | | | | 677 |
| Nature of the Job | | | | | | |
| I sometimes feel my job is meaningless | 9 (18) | 19 (38) | 9 (18) | 10 (20) | 3 (6) | 178 |
| My job is enjoyable | -- | 7 (14) | 6 (12) | 33 (66) | 4 (8) | 184 |
| I feel proud from my profession | -- | 2 (4) | 12 (24) | 34 (68) | 2 (4) | 186 |
| Supported from administration from innovation | 1 (2) | 5 (10) | 24 (48) | 17 (34) | 3 (6) | <u>166</u> |
| Total | | | | | | 707 |

SDA* =strongly disagree DA* =disagree U*=uncertain A*=agree SA*=strongly agree

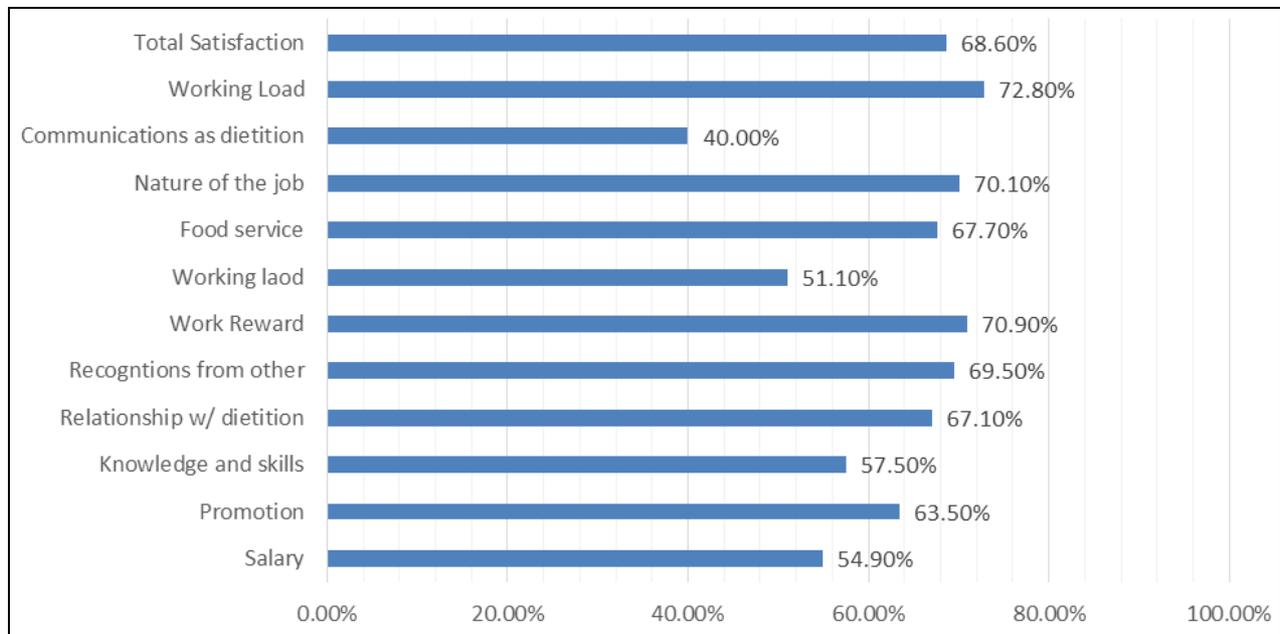
In spite of the working environment, (56%) of dietitians indicated that there is always financial problems facing quantity of food, (60%) guaranteed safety of food supply, and more than half of them ensured food suitability and acceptability for patients, with the limited sources, the above is accomplished may be due to the fact;(66%) of these dietitians feel that their job is enjoyable, and (68%) of them are proud with their profession. Also (74%) have a good communication with others, and (70%) have good friends at work. This agree with several studies conducted on dietitians,

which concluded that; work itself and selected job responsibilities are most important for their job satisfaction [35-37] Table (6) shows opinion of dietitians about working load. Seventy six percent agree that their works load is suitable, and (66%) feel that their work is comfortable in out-patient clinics and in wards. In contrast to a study conducted in Seoul metropolitan indicated that dietitians in the study were emotionally exhausted due to extra-working hours [30]. Job satisfaction score among dietitians in the study is shown in the below figures, which shows that participants in the

study were moderately low (40%) satisfied by communication as a dietitians, while they were slightly satisfied with the increased of their knowledge and skills, working environment and salary, which represented by (57.5%), (51.5%), and (54.9%) respectively. In contrast to a study on dietitians in South Africa, the lowest job satisfaction was for salary [28] Participants are moderately satisfied (63.5%) with promotion, in contrast to dietitians in United States, where they were least satisfied with promotion [14, 32, 36]. Participants are moderately satisfied (70.9%) with rewards of

the work, in contrast to dietitians in Canada where rewards were least satisfied by dietitians in the study [17].

According to the total job satisfaction for the eleven domains, it is clear that participants are moderately (62.3%) satisfied. Similar finding was reported in South Africa where job satisfaction for the study group was (65.7%) [28]. In contrast to dietitian in South Florida, where JS was low [35]. On the other hand JS was found high among renal dietitians in North East Ohio [15] and South Carolina dietitians [26], which was represented by (78), and (79.6%) respectively



* (0-20%) very low satisfaction; (21-40%) moderately low satisfaction; (41-60%) slight satisfaction; (61-80%) moderate satisfaction, (81-100%) very satisfied

Fig 1: job satisfaction score among dietitian in governmental hospital Khartoum state

4. Conclusion and Recommendation

The overall job satisfaction among dietitians in Khartoum State Government Hospital moderately satisfied. They are moderately satisfied with; working loads, reward of the job food service, and promotion. They are slightly satisfied with the increased in their knowledge and skills, salary, and working environment. They are moderately low satisfied with their communication as dietitians.

Since JS have a major impact on the quality of work performance, researchers recommended that hospitals administration and ministry of health should; improve working environment for dietitians, to reduce turnover of dietitians continuous training program should be applied to increase their knowledge and skills, motivating them by promotion, and salary level need to be considered.

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