

Healthcare Workers Satisfaction in COVID-19 Health Institutions

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Abstract

Background: Healthcare workers experienced uncertainty when COVID-19 was established, particularly in their employment stability, financial state, and work and home environment. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic caught healthcare systems off guard, and healthcare professionals had to contend with a lack of required equipment such as face shields, masks, gowns, and respirators. Thus, the current study aimed to find out the healthcare workers satisfaction with their work conditions at the COVID-19 institutions in the Duhok Governorate.

Method: The study adopted a descriptive (cross-sectional) design at the five institutions of COVID-19 in the Duhok governorate established by the Duhok General Directory of Health in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq from October 31st, 2021, through October 22nd, 2022, on 238 healthcare workers who agreed to be subjects in the present study, the data were collected by using a Likert scale questionnaire with applying a direct interview technique to obtain healthcare workers-related information, descriptive statistics were done to calculate the HCW's overall and subdomain satisfaction toward working in COVID-19 institutions by applying the by dividing the total questionnaire's scores into three levels (cut-off point).

Results: The study reveals that nearly half (48.3%) of the healthcare workers in COVID-19 health institutions show average satisfaction regarding overall job satisfaction domain toward working in such institutions.

Conclusion: Nearly half of those workers showed average satisfaction regarding the overall domain of job satisfaction toward working in such institutions.

Keywords: HCWs • Job Satisfaction • COVID-19 • Health Institution

Introduction

Many cases with a similar presentation of pneumonia with an unknown origin were recorded in December 2019 in Wuhan, Hubei province, China. The results of the directed immense scientific efforts to determine the cause-related agent indicated novel single-stranded RNA virus was responsible for these clinical manifestations. This type of virus was known as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus-2 (SARS-CoV-2), then later as Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) [1]. The World Health Organization (WHO) described COVID-19 in March 2020 as a global pandemic disease due to its rapid spread, and it resulted on April 19, 2021, in more than 141 million cases with three million deaths globally [2]. As stated by Chirico et al., as a global public health issue, the COVID-19 pandemic has affected the majority of life domains and sectors, including the health sector [3]. For example, this novel pandemic has affected most healthcare workers within the hospital and non-hospital settings in Italy and many other countries. Afulani et al. mentioned that during the COVID-19 epidemic, healthcare workers (HCWs) are confronting unprecedented professional obstacles [4]. Several studies have documented the prevalence of depression, distress, and anxiety among frontline HCWs since the pandemic's beginning. However, a few researchers have studied how job satisfaction has impacted over time. While the results of published studies presented that in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the HCWs are very dissatisfied with their job worldwide.

According to a study has been done by Khadka and Chaulagain, in the healthcare service delivery system, every healthcare professional worker is considered an essential member of such healthcare services [5]. Due to the developed medical technology and the demand for more complex patient care, healthcare organizations need a competent and skilled workforce. That's why Job satisfaction among healthcare workers is regarded as a measurement tool that should be included in program-related quality improvement. So, a lack of job satisfaction can increase staff turnover and absenteeism which leads to providing low-quality of healthcare services. Thus, in many nations, organizations pay significant attention to their employee's subjective well-being and how it affects their jobs.

Researchers mentioned that Job satisfaction is a multifaceted function with numerous variables. For this reason, a person's satisfaction may be changed with one or more aspects of his or her job while dissatisfied with others [6]. Job satisfaction is commonly discussed and examined as a significant part of organizational psychology and behaviour because it examines the physical and mental well-being of workers and workplaces from the viewpoint of psychological and human resources [7]. Regarding patients and the health care system, its importance as a whole professional satisfaction in health care workers is closely related to the organization of work, human relationships, and absence from work. Thus, a great impact on the quality of health care is affected by the job satisfaction of healthcare workers on work efficiency, effectiveness, and at the same time healthcare costs [8]. Yami et al. stated that numerous variables affect health services,

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including human resources, the delivery system, and health infrastructure [9]. Furthermore, Human resources are a crucial component in the delivery of health care. For these reasons, the satisfaction of healthcare employees towards their job is very important to increase employee motivation and productivity. So, higher job satisfaction results in good employee performance and greater patient satisfaction. According to the critical role that healthcare professionals play in determining the efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability of healthcare systems, it is crucial to understand what motivates them and to what extent they are satisfied by the organization and other contextual variables. Job satisfaction is also an essential part of ensuring the quality of care, as dissatisfied healthcare providers

Aim and objectives

This study aims to find out the healthcare workers satisfaction with the work conditions at the COVID-19 institutions in the Duhok Governorate.

Methodology

The present study has adopted a descriptive design (cross-sectional) at the five institutions of COVID-19 in the Duhok governorate and established by the Duhok General Directory of Health in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (Burn COVID-19 Hospital, Lalav Hospital, Azadi Hospital, Golan Hospital in Akre, and Zakho Emergency Hospital), which have been distributed in four districts (Duhok, Zakho, Akre, Semel) from October 31st, 2021 through October 22nd, 2022. The general population of COVID-19 hospitals was limited and changed periodically. That's why the researcher included all healthcare workers in these hospitals as a general population for the current study. Thus, the total study population which has recruited depending on the study's inclusion criteria reached (247) healthcare workers who agreed to be subjects in the present study after clarifying its aim and objective, while those who have less than one month of working in the COVID-19 institutions, and those did not present at the time of data collection have excluded from being subjects in the present study. The current study used a Likert scale questionnaire that is constructed throughout the review of

relative kinds of literature and encompasses two parts. The first part deals with the socio-demographic information (Gender, age, hospital, level of education, category of employee, type of job, marital status, work experience, and economic-related information), and the other part concerns the healthcare workers job satisfaction, which includes 47 questions that are distributed in seven satisfactions subdomains (11 questions stand for the nature of work, seven an interpersonal relationship, four for payment and allowances, seven for the work environment, seven for training programs, six for grievance and redressal, and four for management and employees), these questions which are rated from highly dissatisfied to highly satisfied and scored from one to five respectively, and the data were collected by applying a direct interview technique to obtain healthcare workers-related information. The data was entered into IBM SPSS statistics software version 23 to apply the statistical analysis and the HCW's overall and subdomain satisfaction toward working in COVID-19 institutions was done by applying the cut-off point by dividing the total questionnaire's scores into three levels (Low satisfaction, Average satisfaction, and High satisfaction), and then the descriptive statistical methods were done as (frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, and confidence interval of the scores).

Results and Discussion

The study shows about one-half of the health care workers were male (51.7%), aged 20-29 years (51.3%), (51.3%) were residents of Duhok city, (53.4%) were married, (47.9%) had a bachelor's degree, and (59.7%) of them had moderate economic status (Table 1). Also, less than half of the participants work at Burn (COVID-19) Hospital (45.8%), while about half of them work as permanent employees (51.7%) and were nurses (51.3%), and nearly two-thirds of them had <1-9 year of work experience (65.5%) (Table 2). Besides, a large proportion of healthcare workers show average satisfaction in all subdomains of their job satisfaction in the COVID-19 health institutions (Table 3). Likewise, nearly half (48.3%) of the healthcare workers in COVID-19 health institutions show average satisfaction regarding the overall job satisfaction domain toward working in such institutions (Table 4).

Table 1. Distribution of COVID-19 healthcare workers by some of their demographic variables.

Demographic characteristics	Frequency (%)	
Gender	Male	123 (51.7)
	Female	115 (48.3)
Age	20-29	122 (51.3)
	30-39	57 (23.9)
	40-49	46 (19.3)
	50 and more	13 (5.5)
Residency	Duhok	122 (51.3)
	Semel	79 (33.2)
	Akre	19 (8.0)
	Zakho	18 (7.5)
Education	High school nursing	27 (11.3)
	Technical diploma	83 (34.9)
	Bachelor degree	114 (47.9)
	Higher education	14 (5.9)
Marital status	Single	111 (46.6)
	Married	127 (53.4)
Economic Status	Low 15-41	12 (5)
	Moderate 42-68	142 (59.7)
	High 69-96	84 (35.3)

Table 2. Distribution of healthcare workers in COVID-19 institutions by their work-related variables.

Work-related variables		Frequency (%)
Place of work	Burn (COVID-19) Hospital	109 (45.8)
	Lalav Hospital	79 (33.2)
	Azadi Hospital	12 (5.0)
	Akre (Golan Hospital)	20 (8.4)
	Zakho (Emergency Hospital)	18 (7.6)
Employment status	Permanent employee	123 (51.7)
	Volunteer	36 (15.1)
	Contract employee	79 (33.2)
Job	Physician	25 (10.5)
	Nurse	122 (51.3)
	Pharmacist	13 (5.5)
	Radiologic technician	7 (2.9)
	Laboratory technician	30 (12.6)
	Physiotherapist	5 (2.1)
	Anesthesia technician	23 (9.7)
	Others	13 (5.4)
Work Experience	< 1-9 Years	156 (65.6)
	10-19 Years	56 (23.5)
	20-29 Years	17 (7.1)
	30-39 Years	9 (3.8)

Table 3. Subdomain levels of job satisfaction of COVID-19 institutions healthcare workers.

Levels of job satisfaction		Freq (%)	Mean (SD)	95% CI
Nature of work satisfaction level	Low satisfaction	60 (25.2)	40.80 (8.080)	39.77-41.83
	Average satisfaction	111 (46.6)		
	High satisfaction	67 (28.2)		
Inter-Personal relationship satisfaction level	Low satisfaction	63 (26.5)	25.50 (5.934)	24.75-26.26
	Average satisfaction	106 (44.5)		
	High satisfaction	69 (29)		
Payment and Allowances satisfaction level	Low satisfaction	64 (26.9)	9.75 (4.095)	9.22-10.27
	Average satisfaction	92 (38.7)		
	High satisfaction	82 (34.5)		
Satisfaction toward the work environment	Low satisfaction	63 (26.5)	21.87 (5.912)	21.12-22.63
	Average satisfaction	109 (45.8)		
	High satisfaction	66 (27.7)		
Satisfaction toward training	Low satisfaction	66 (27.7)	17.02 (8.059)	15.99-18.05
	Average satisfaction	112 (47.1)		
	High satisfaction	60 (25.2)		
Satisfaction toward Grievance and Redressal	Low satisfaction	67 (28.2)	17.95 (6.298)	17.15-18.75
	Average satisfaction	110 (46.2)		
	High satisfaction	61 (25.6)		
Satisfaction toward Management and Employees	Low satisfaction	76 (31.9)	12.44 (3.781)	11.96-12.92
	Average satisfaction	89 (37.4)		
	High satisfaction	73 (30.7)		

Table 4. Overall job satisfaction levels of COVID-19 institutions healthcare workers.

Level	Freq (%)	Mean (SD)	95% CI
Overall job satisfaction level			
Low satisfaction	62 (26.1)	145.34 (30.535)	141.44-149.24
Average satisfaction	115 (48.3)		
High satisfaction	61 (25.6)		

Healthcare care workers related variables

According to the present study results, the majority of the 238 healthcare employees who work in COVID-19 institutions of different ages who participated in this study were between 20-29 years of age. Regarding education, they held a bachelor's degree. Moreover, and according to gender, males outnumbered girls, and lastly, the majority of responders were married.

Furthermore, the current results present that less than half of the participants worked at Burns Hospital (COVID-19 Hospital). While approximately half of them worked as permanent employees and were nurses, roughly two-thirds had less than one to nine years of work experience and had moderate economic status.

Similarly, Ibadi and Hamedon's research study about Job satisfaction and motivations of healthcare workers at selected hospitals in Al-Najaf Al-Ashraf City, Iraq, indicated that most participants were between the ages of 20-29 years of age [10]. Also, the current study agreed with the study results conducted by Sabbar and Kassim on the relationship between workplace-related violence and job satisfaction among nursing staff, showing that (67%) of them are young in the age group 20-29 years [11]. Furthermore, a study has been done by Izci et al. in Erbil city on 250 participants, including doctors, nurses, and other healthcare workers showed that approximately 44.4% of them had bachelor's degrees and the majority of them were married [12]. Moreover, other research papers published by Naeem and Jasim at Al-Muthanna governorate hospitals on self-efficacy for critical care nurses indicated that the majority of the nurses graduated with a bachelor's degree and were married [13]. Also, researchers worked on the mental health of staff who worked in intensive care during the COVID-19 study research. They selected 709 healthcare staff to participate in their study; the nurses made up (49%) of all healthcare staff who participated in this study [14].

In fact, at the time of the outbreak, the plan that the Government of Duhok governorate drew encompasses specifying the Burn hospital as the first to receive and admit patients with COVID-19. That's why most of the staff recruited for working with this condition were permanent and young male employees with no more than nine years of work experience.

Healthcare care workers job satisfaction

The current research data analysis of 238 participants who responded to all the assessment tool questions regarding the job satisfaction of healthcare workers who worked in COVID-19 institutions in the Duhok governorate reveals that a large proportion of them exhibit average pride in all subdomains related to such satisfaction when working in these institutions. Furthermore, notwithstanding the evidence, nearly half of those workers showed average satisfaction regarding overall job satisfaction domain levels toward working in such institutions.

Research by Ibadi and Hamedon in Kufa, Al-Najaf-Iraq, indicated that more than half of the respondents were satisfied with their jobs, despite their knowledge about constraints that are affecting the health of workers [10]. Also, other researchers in Erbil city in the Kurdistan region of Iraq studied the job satisfaction among nurses in Rzgary Teaching Hospital, presenting that the Nurses who work in this hospital were satisfied with their job [15]. Moreover, only two areas of the Job Satisfaction Survey, "partners" and "nature of work," indicated that the nurses at the Athalassa hospital were satisfied with their jobs. However, many stated their dissatisfaction with the "promotion chances". They were neutral regarding the other six

factors (salary, general advantages, moral rewards, operational procedures, supervision, and communication). In general, neither work satisfaction nor dissatisfaction was expressed by the hospital's nurses [16]. Other study results showed only 4.1% of respondents were satisfied with their salary and benefits, while almost 92% of respondents stated that they were unsatisfied with this element [17].

Several researchers have shown in their study results that good relations among colleagues, along with the support of superiors and subordinates, generally create a feeling of satisfaction [18,19]. Also, research on social networks has been done by Bonache shows that social support through workers networks affects job satisfaction [20].

Conclusion

The present study concluded that healthcare employees who work in COVID-19 institutions were young adults, held a bachelor's degree, and were males; furthermore, approximately half of them worked as permanent employees and were nurses with less than one to nine years of work experience. Moreover, a large proportion of healthcare workers exhibit average satisfaction in all subdomains related to working in COVID-19 health institutions in the Duhok governorate; likewise, nearly half of those workers showed average satisfaction regarding the overall domain of job satisfaction toward working in such institutions. Therefore, the study recommends that healthcare institutions of COVID-19 consider increasing healthcare workers satisfaction by respecting the job satisfaction aspects included in the current research to enhance their productivity and performance, especially during a disease outbreak and disaster.

Limitations of the Study

The main obstacle that the researcher faced in the study processes was periodic changes in healthcare workers and their workplaces.

Ethical Considerations

Before the study has undertaken the approval by the Scientific Committee of the College of Health and Medical Technology of Duhok Polytechnic University, Ministry of Health, research Ethics Committee in the General Directorate of health in the Duhok Governorate, Directorate of Health in Zakho District, and Directorate of health in Akre District, also oral informed consent from healthcare workers was obtained to be subject in the present study.

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