

Profession Related Intra-Correlation Satisfaction Levels in Palestinian Physiotherapists: An exploratory study

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Abstract

Aim of Study: *The aim of the present study was to investigate the level of job satisfaction of physiotherapists in Palestine and to how much extent those levels are intra-correlated .*

Methods: *Researchers used the cross-sectional descriptive analytical approach, where data was collected through a questionnaire. The target population was physiotherapists in Palestine. A sample of 60 physiotherapists was conveniently selected. Program of SPSS was used to analyze data, where means were extracted, in addition to percentages and standard deviations to answer study questions .*

Results: *The research results showed that the overall mean of the sample responses on the main scope was (2.59). This means that the research sample of physiotherapists confirmed that the overall satisfaction level with their profession is low. Further, it was found that there is a strong relationship between each domain and the overall level of satisfaction. The most effective domain on the overall satisfaction level was the leadership growth as viewed by the physiotherapist, then comes the work environment. The least effective domain was salaries, promotions, and incentives.*

Conclusions: *The findings of the present research confirmed consistently the results of some other previous research findings in relation to level of satisfaction of the studied physiotherapists. Researching a further bigger sample in size is necessary to come out with a big picture of results .*

Keywords: *Satisfaction, Physiotherapists, Palestine, Health Care Profession.*

Introduction

In Palestine, the Ministry of Health (MOH) is the main health care provider in addition to other organizations like the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) and some other private health work sectors that provide physiotherapy interventions and related services. The demand on such interventions and related services increased dramatically during the Al Aqsa Uprising (i.e., the second Intifada) in 2000, and of course all came to accommodate the needs of Palestinians with disabilities and injuries in ramification of the uprising. Professional physiotherapists and their assistants provided services to all ages in this respect (Hillis, 2008).

During 2004, the physiotherapy departments in the MOH hospitals in Gaza Strip and West Bank offered about (62,588) sessions. The main bulk was rendered in the Gaza Strip MOH hospitals (45,465), with a total of (72.64%). Nowadays, the number of physiotherapy departments (PTD) in MOH hospitals is estimated as: eight departments and two PTD in Primary Health Care (PHC), seven PTD in UNRWA, three PTD in medical services for Police and General Security and many others in the NGOs and private health sector which offer physiotherapy services (Hillis; 2008). It should be noted that internal conflicts and the siege imposed by the Israeli occupation made the healthcare in the public sector unsustainable (Smith, 2015).

Of course, the number of departments has changed since then, but due to the lack of resources, the researchers were not able to trace or give accurate statistics.

When it comes to job satisfaction, it is one of the most popular and widely researched topics in the field of organizational psychology apart from its relation with life satisfaction, (Hassard et al., 2018; Helbling and Kanji, 2018; De Coning et al., 2019). Employees who have higher job satisfaction are usually less absent, more productive, and more likely to display organizational commitment, and be satisfied with their lives (Krekel et al., 2019; Singh and Jain, 2013; Śliwiński et al., 2014). There are a variety of factors that may influence a person's level of job satisfaction. Some of these factors include payments and benefits, perceived fairness of the promotion system, quality of the working conditions, leadership, social relationships, and job per se (Alva and Lobo, 2016; Eker et al., 2004; Kota et al., 2018). Other influences include the management style and culture, employees' involvement, empowerment and autonomous workgroups (Aleisa, et al., 2015; Parvin & Kabir, 2011).

Further, others factors were identified in the literature. For example, some studies highlighted that intrinsic context factors, which included a sense of autonomy, peer recognition, and challenges to develop skills, are more important determinants of job satisfaction than extrinsic factors, such as pay and remuneration, among medical and allied health professionals (Oyeyemi, 2009; Oyeyemi et al., 2012). In addition, the ability to help people, along with flexibility of workload have been highlighted in physiotherapy specific literature as influential on job satisfaction (Bacopanos & Edgar, 2016; Mulcahy et al., 2010). Post graduate professionals were found to be more satisfied as compared to their undergraduate counterparts (Gupta, and Joshi, 2013).

When it comes to psychological factors, psychosocial demands were also found to have significant influence on physiotherapists' job satisfaction (Brattig et al., 2014; Corrado et al., 2019). Furthermore, there is growing evidence that current trends in employment conditions may be eroding the levels of job satisfaction and directly damaging the physical and mental health of employees (De Witte et al., 2016; Faragher et al., 2005).

Study objectives

The study aimed to assess the level of satisfaction of physiotherapists in Palestine with their profession, identify the differences of high and low degree of satisfaction among physiotherapists in Palestine and investigate the intra-correlation effects of the studied domains within the overall level of satisfaction among those physiotherapists.

Methodology

A. Study design: This research study is quantitative cross-sectional where a questionnaire was developed to draw descriptive, analytical and correlation outcomes.

B. Population and sample: The targeted population of the study represented per assumption all physiotherapists in the West Bank (a part of the Occupied Palestinian Territories). A sample of total number of 60 volunteers had been selected conveniently to participate in the present study. The enclosed Table 1 as well as Figure 1 below describes the sample.

Table 1: Demographic information of the studied physiotherapy participants.

Demographics	Variables/counts	Percentages
Gender	Males	28%
	Females	32%
Age	20-25	41.70%
	26-30	3.30%
	31-35	28.30%
	36-40	18.30%
	More than 41	8.30%
Social status	Single	30.00%
	Married	70.00%
Professional experience	1-5 years	33.30%
	6-10 years	23.30%
	11-15 years	23.30%
	More than 16	20.00%
Educational level	Diploma holders	16.70%
	Bachelor holders	70.00%
	Master holders	6.70%
	Ph.D., holders	6.70%
Working place	Private center	46.70%
	Governmental institution	30.00%
	Lecturer at university	20.00%
	Civil institution	3.30%
Working nature	Working as an officer (though he or she is a therapist)	10.00%
	Director	13.30%
	Employer	70.00%
	Lecturer	6.70%
Work type	Daily work	90%
	Part time	10.00%
Work hours per day	More than 7 hours	73.30%
	Less than 7 hours	26.70%

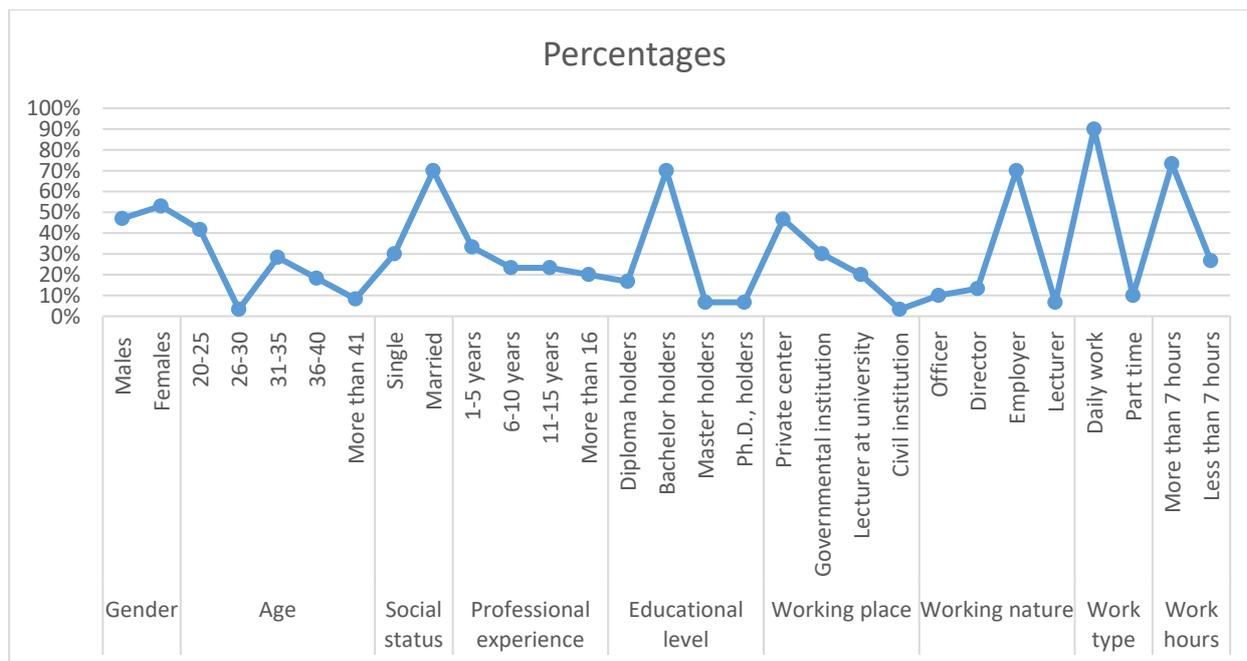


Figure 1: Numbers, frequencies, and percentages of participants.

C. Data collection tools: For the purpose of data collection, the researchers developed a validated questionnaire (i.e., paper-based), consisting of several parts: Part I represents the study demographics, and part II represents study domains of satisfaction, that were decided on the bases of the previous literature reviewing of the subject and related study works. The domains contained different statements that addressed satisfaction and other related levels with the total of 50 items. The researchers used a 1-5 scaling (very low- low- moderate- high- very high) to rate the responses of the investigated participants. The participants were instructed to estimate the degree of their satisfaction regarding each item/ on the questionnaire. Regarding validity, a content validity was assured by asking some experts in the field of psychology and behavioral sciences as well physiotherapy and rehabilitation sciences to assess and evaluate its content and indicate to how much extent that content is valid in measuring what it is intended to measure. Reliability was calculated by Cronbach’s Alpha, and it was found as equal as to (0.89), a value which was suitable enough to proceed ahead with the present study.

D. Procedures: The developed questionnaire was distributed for data collection via self-report, of course after seeking permission of the targeted physiotherapists, and the organizations where they are employed. Data were collected by the researchers themselves, and all at the end were set for coding to be statistically analyzed.

E. Data analysis: The data, after careful check and coding, was analyzed via SPSS to present the same in descriptive statistics (frequencies, means, and standard deviations). Further, inferential statistics tools were performed to investigate the set levels of significance to seek correlations between the study domains.

F. Ethical considerations: Confidentiality and privacy of participants was preserved (anonymously dealt with), and all participants were approached on the bases of informed consent that was signed by the participants themselves, and all were assured that the collected data was for the purpose of scientific research use only.

G. Limitations: Limitations were noticed mainly in the case of the availability of the volunteers to participate in the study although many expressed their interest but the lack of time hindered their readiness to participate.

Results and discussions:

To know the level of satisfaction of the studied physiotherapists regarding their profession, the degrees of sample responses were calculated and distributed as depicted in Table (2).

Table 2: Means of the responses of the level of satisfaction.

0	1	2	3	4
Very low	Low	Moderate	High	Very high
1-1.80	1.81-2.60	2.61-3.40	3.41-4.20	4.21-5.0

Table 3: Means and standard deviations of the participants on the domains of study.

Study domains	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
a) Staff regulation and instructions	60	0.57	4.00	2.5048	.88160
b) Leadership growth as viewed by the employees	60	1.00	4.00	2.7048	.86991
c) Work environment	60	0.88	4.00	2.6250	.78317
d) Relationships between the employees	60	1.00	4.00	2.7800	.80734
e) Salaries promotion and incentives	60	.30	3.50	2.1900	.74029
f) Appreciation of work and self-realization	60	1.20	4.00	2.6200	.74806
g) Affinity to the institution and relationship with the officials	60	1.17	4.00	2.7194	.72648
Overall satisfaction level with the profession	60	1.33	3.86	2.5920	.65819

The means of the sample responses on the research domains b, c, d, f and g **were** found to be 2.70; 2.62; 2.78; 2.62; 2.71 respectively. With reference to Table (2) above, these responses were moderate. On the other hand, the means of the sample responses on the research domains a and e were 2.50; 2.19 respectively. According to Table (2), these responses were low. Regarding the research sample and related responses on the overall satisfaction level with the profession, it was found low, too.

To test the relationship between each domain and the overall level of satisfaction, Pearson Correlation Coefficients (r) were calculated, and the results were as shown in Table (4).

Table 4: Correlation coefficients of satisfaction domains compared to total level of domains.

Study satisfaction domains		Intra-correlation coefficients (r)
1. Staff regulation and instructions	Pearson Correlation	.826**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	60
2. Leadership growth as viewed by the employees	Pearson Correlation	.909**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	60
3. Work environment	Pearson Correlation	.833**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	60
4. Relationships between the employees	Pearson Correlation	.769**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	60
5. Salaries promotion and incentive	Pearson Correlation	.751**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	60
6. Appreciation of work and self-realization	Pearson Correlation	.814**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	60
7. Affinity to the institution and relationship with the officials	Pearson Correlation	.895**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	60
Total satisfaction degree	Pearson Correlation	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	
	N	60

** Correlation significance at the level of 0.01 (2-tailed)

The findings indicate that there is a kind of positive high correlations between each and every domain of the study and the overall level of satisfaction (total satisfaction domains). It appears that the most dominating domain on the overall satisfaction level of physiotherapist in Palestine is the leadership growth, followed by the affinity to the institution and relationship with the officials and work environment. However, the least dominating domain was related to salaries, promotions and incentives.

In general, the present study results showed that the investigated physiotherapists in Palestine have a low overall satisfaction level with their profession (mean = 2.5920, standard deviation = .65819); an outcome that goes in contrary with Rajitha Alva and Michelle Lobo (2016), who have reported over all moderate levels of satisfaction.

Leadership style does matter in the job satisfaction among physiotherapists. This finding agrees with Alkassabi, et al., (2018), in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Also, it is noted from previous research findings that attention on salary structure and review of job helped increase the level of satisfaction (Bayzid, et al., 2019).

In analyzing the factors that contributed to job satisfaction among physiotherapists, previous research found that higher salaries led to better human relations, and better human relations led to higher levels of satisfaction (Alameddine et al., 2017; Pritchard RD., and Karasick BW., 1973; Stith et al., 1998). This finding contradicts the present study findings.

In other research, leadership support, professional autonomy, and mentorship requirements were highlighted as needed to implement direct access to what enhance job satisfaction related issues, especially patient satisfaction and higher work efficiency (Alnaqbi, et al., 2021).

The findings from an online survey in Austria concluded that the analysis of job satisfaction according to work arrangements suggested several approaches to increase or maintain a high level of job satisfaction, which may be addressed by employers and professional physiotherapy organizations. On top of such approaches were those practices that increased recognition and autonomy as well as opportunities for exchange and networking with colleagues. Also, more flexible work schedules might be helpful to integrate the demands of private patients and employer workloads (Latzke, et al., 2021).

Undoubtedly, such an outcome is much helpful and fruitful to make us understand what is necessary to develop Palestinian physiotherapists and increase their job satisfaction.

Conclusions

The study findings show that physiotherapists in Palestine have moderate satisfaction on some domains and low or even the absence of that satisfaction on some other domains. Generally speaking, a low satisfaction level was observed, and strong correlations between domains and the overall level of satisfaction were clearly observed, too. Consequently, such an outcome may lead us to conclude that good things and bad things correlate.

Implications

The present findings and related conclusions may be implemented theoretically to improve physiotherapy curricula in higher education and clinical training settings, where leadership, management, supervision, positive coping strategies and motivation related skills are implemented and emphasized to reinforce physiotherapy job satisfaction issues. More, policies, whether in public or private sectors, have to be reconsidered to address all those issues that might yield job satisfaction and the redesigning of work settings that may assure job satisfaction

Recommendations

It is recommended to consider further research efforts on larger samples to explore more on such a topic; a small sample study is not sufficient for a big picture of job satisfaction. To add more, all concerned Palestinian physiotherapy syndicates and associations have to do their best to follow up and embrace all what empower the status of their profession and uplift the morale of physiotherapists in the field. In addition, physiotherapy organizations and professional associations may draw on our findings to positively influence job satisfaction of physiotherapists. More specifically, staff regulations and clear-cut instructions of practice, salaries, promotions, work incentives, and affinity issues should be seriously handled, as much as possible by the Palestinian Ministry of Health (MoH).

Acknowledgments

We are much grateful to those Palestinian PTD and centers and private clinics that contributed generously through their employees and logistics, to make this study successful.

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مستويات الرضا المتعلقة بالعلاقة المتبادلة بين المعالجين الفيزيائيين الفلسطينيين: دراسة

استكشافية

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ملخص

هدف الدراسة: جاءت الدراسة الحالية بهدف فحص مستوى الرضا الوظيفي في وسط المعالجين الطبيعيين الفلسطينيين، ومحاولة التعرف إلى أي مدى تكون تلك المستويات في حالة ترابط فيما بين أبعادها ومجالاتها.

الطريقة: استخدم الباحثون الطريقة التحليلية الوصفية، وعلى وجه التحديد المنهج المستقطع، وقد جمعت البيانات من خلال استبانة أعدت خصيصاً لغرض الدراسة. وفيما يتعلق بالمجتمع المستهدف، فقد مثل المعالجين الطبيعيين في فلسطين. وعن العينة وحجمها، فقد تم اختيار عينة متبصرة من 60 معالجاً ومعالجة.

النتائج: أظهرت النتائج - فيما يتعلق بالمتوسط الكلي لاستجابات المفحوصين على مختلف أبعاد أداة القياس ومجالاته - أنّ هناك وسطاً حسابياً يساوي (2.59). وهو ما يعني وجود شيء ما من الرضا الوظيفي الكلي، وإن كان منخفضاً. يضاف إلى ذلك، وجود نوع من الترابط فيما بين كل بعد وكل مجال من أبعاد الرضا الوظيفي، ومجالاته، والرضا الكلي عن أداة القياس. ومن تلك النتائج تبين أنّ البعد القيادي ومجاله كان الأبرز رضا، يليه بعد الرضا عن بيئة العمل ومجاله. أما البعد والمجال الأقل رضا، فكان بعد المرتبات ومجاله، يليه بعد الترقيات، فالحوافر.

الاستنتاجات: أكدت الدراسة الحالية - من خلال نتائجها - على ما سبق، وعلى ما توصل إليه باحثون سابقون في موضوع الدراسة ذاته، وعلى عينات وبيانات متباينة في وسط المعالجين الطبيعيين. كما استنتج أنّ هنالك ضرورة ماسة لمزيد من البحث في الموضوع ذاته من خلال اللجوء إلى عينات أكبر حجماً، للخروج بصورة أوضح وأفضل.

الكلمات الدالة: الرضا، معالجون طبيعيون، فلسطين، مهنة رعاية صحية.