
Master's Thesis

Increasing Profitability in Healthcare Organizations through Employee Satisfaction Approaches

Steven Michael Munteer

Distinguished Thesis Award, Independence University School of Healthcare

Abstract: Optimal performance in the workplace leads to increased customer satisfaction and, as a result, organizational profitability. One way to achieve optimal performance from employees is to increase their levels of satisfaction. Many different strategies are analyzed in their effectiveness to increase employee satisfaction levels. Effective training was shown to be a top strategy and was proven to have strong and positive effects on employee satisfaction. Different leadership styles are another way to effectively impact employee satisfaction. Autocratic styles were found to be negative in relation to employee satisfaction levels. However, cooperative leadership styles (such as democratic and laissez-faire styles) showed positive satisfaction levels. Good employee benefit packages also had a positive and significant impact on employee's quality of life and thus, good employee satisfaction. Helping employees to overcome and reduce the effects of stress were found to be important to their satisfaction levels because stress was found to impose highly negative effects. A system of rewards and recognition was found to be significantly important to employees and even motivated employees to work harder to achieve more rewards and professional recognition. Motivation was found to be more effective in a system of total rewards where extrinsic and intrinsic rewards and recognition strategies were implemented. One or more of these methods can be used to aid in increasing employee satisfaction in the healthcare industry. This increase in employee satisfaction will lead to an increase in profitability.

Keywords: employee satisfaction, customer satisfaction, motivation, profitability

Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction of the Study

Profitability, which quite simply means the ability to obtain a profit, is the lifeblood of the business world. A business without profit will not be in business in the near future. This is especially true in the expensive and fast paced healthcare community. Organizations need to be able to perform better while spending less. This is difficult when understanding that staffing is a huge expense to an organization. Therefore, achieving better quality work from your employees is optimal. Employee satisfaction, or job satisfaction, is “one of the most important factors to get optimal work result” (Barasa, Gunawan, & Sumali, 2018, p. 44).

Optimal work results for employees set the stage for higher levels of customer or patient satisfaction. If the patients are satisfied with their care, they will keep coming back for more excellent care. Each time they come back for that care, they augment the profitability of the organization. Not only are their return visits generating profit for the organization, but they are attracting new clientele for future profit. Word of their excellent care and treatment will be spread among family, friends, and neighbors who in turn will look to the organization for help when they or a loved one need care. These all become profitable experiences that lead to overall success of the organization. The biggest question is where should the focus of an organization lie: the employee or the patient? Sir Richard Branson, an English philanthropist and businessman, once said, “clients do not come first. Employees come first. If you take care of your employees, they will take care of the clients” (as cited in Pearce, 2016). Satisfaction among employees will encourage them to perform better care of patients and lead to increased profitability. There are several methods for an organization to achieve profitability through employee satisfaction. Some of these methods will be focused on throughout this thesis study.

Background of the Problem

In order for an organization to be profitable and successful, it must be able to bring in more revenue than its expenses. Poor employee performance and employee turnover equal large expenses and can be an expensive burden on an organization’s goal to be profitable. Banga (2012) states “staff retention and employee satisfaction have significant a role in an

organization's success" (p. 1832). Satisfied employees lead to good organizational performance while unsatisfied employees lead to high turnover rates.

Employee turnover is a very costly process, especially in specialized fields such as healthcare. For example, according to the 2016 National Healthcare Retention & RN Staffing Report, "the average cost of turnover of a nurse ranges from \$37,700 to \$58,400" (as cited in University of New Mexico, 2016). If employees are trained in their job but leave shortly afterwards, the organization suffers because it must then replace the employee at a high cost and lose money previously invested on them with no future gains. Employees must be motivated and encouraged to work as efficiently as possible to make it worth their cost.

Motivation is defined as "the psychological process through which unsatisfied needs or wants lead to drives that are aimed at goals or incentives" (Borkowski, 2011, p. 105). Motivated employees can be directed to a certain goal such as performing their best so that their customers, or patients in the healthcare world, are taken care of. The problem lies with how to motivate employees to perform better. Klopotan, Mjeda, and Kurečić note that "acknowledgment for work well-done, respect by supervisors, job satisfaction, satisfying working conditions, good communication and collegial respect have a direct impact on the employee's satisfaction" (2018, p. 158). Implementing strategies such as these will increase satisfaction levels for employees and performance. If implemented correctly, it can lead to increased patient satisfaction and future profitability.

Problem Statement

Klopotan, Mjeda, and Kurečić (2018) conducted a study around "the importance of monitoring the employee satisfaction parameters in the public and private sector, which show that satisfied employees represent the main pillar of any organization's and company's development" (p. 158). In order to achieve optimal work performance and profitability, the employees need to be motivated and satisfied in their jobs. Unsatisfied employees lack the will to be efficient and productive. They are possibly only in it for a paycheck and not much else. They will do the bare minimum instead of trying to exceed expectations. Those types of employees don't inspire productivity and profitability. Satisfied employees will be open to the goals of profitability and productivity. In this modern society, money is always a motivator to succeed at one's job. According to Smith, Joubert, and Karodia (2015), "salary is often a

measure of an employees' value or importance to the company, and employees correlate what they are worth to the money that the company is willing to spend on them" (p. 52). However, most organizations cannot depend on salary alone for motivation. Other methods must be in place as well. Strategies such as effective training, efficient leadership styles, employee benefits and work environment, stress reduction techniques, and an implemented system of rewards and recognition are all ways that profitability can be reached through employee satisfaction.

Purpose of the Study

Understanding how to motivate employees will open the door to realized goals through their increased work ethic. Turnover must be reduced in order to maintain profitability. This study is meant to show how increased employee satisfaction may result in increased employee performance and patient satisfaction levels. Profitability then follows.



Figure 1: Satisfaction to profitability flowsheet

There are several techniques and strategies that can be used in augmenting employee satisfaction. This study will also confirm that the strategies of efficient training, effective leadership styles, desirable benefits/work environment, emphasis on stress reduction, and through implementing rewards and recognition will increase employee satisfaction and therefore, organizational profitability. Each strategy will be looked at and analyzed to show struggling companies in and outside of the healthcare world how to become more profitable by making their employees happier.

Research Questions and Hypothesis

The principle theme behind this study is the understanding that employee satisfaction will lead to patient satisfaction and profitability. Following this point, this study will focus each strategy as a selling point for this relationship. Thus the research question is:

1. Do effective training, effective leadership styles, good HR benefit packages, stress reduction techniques, and a system of rewards and recognition make employees more satisfied in the workplace?

The hypotheses to prove will address each strategy and will be later mentioned in Chapter 3: Methods. Therefore they will be broken down into the following hypotheses:

- H1_a Training and individual development will have a strong and positive impact on employee satisfaction levels.
- H1_o Training and individual development will not have a strong and positive impact on employee satisfaction levels.
- H2_a Differing leadership styles will have significant impacts on employee satisfaction.
- H2_o Differing leadership styles will not have significant impacts on employee satisfaction.
- H3_a Employee benefit packages will positively affect employee satisfaction.
- H3_o Employee benefit packages will not positively affect employee satisfaction.
- H4_a Stress in the workplace will have a significantly negative affect on employee satisfaction levels and behavior.
- H4_o Stress in the workplace will not have a significantly negative affect on employee satisfaction levels and behavior.
- H5_a Rewards and recognition will play an important role in satisfying employees and encouraging good performance.
- H5_o Rewards and recognition will not play an important role in satisfying employees and encouraging good performance.

Definition of Terms

The following terms will be studied throughout this paper and will be defined as such:

Employee Satisfaction. This is defined as the level of gratification or contentment one has with his/her professional position and responsibilities.

Motivation. Motivation is “a psychological process resulting from the interaction between the individual and the environment” (Latham & Pinder, 2005, p. 486).

Customer/Patient Satisfaction. This is the level of contentment that the patient, who is a customer in the medical world, shows the organization. It can be evident by future transactions and visits.

Profitability. Ability to gain a profit after expenses.

Assumptions and Limitations

The studies contained within this paper are studies performed around the world in different modes of business. Some are small in structure and some are large. Some directly involve healthcare occupations while others are different business ventures. This study assumes that the principles discussed hereafter apply to small and large organizations as well as private and public organizations. The results are assumed to work for these different groups with the acknowledgement that there may be some differences in application. Budget, number of employees, and company size play a part in the implementation of the discussed employee satisfaction strategies but do not negate or limit their effect on employee satisfaction. Also, it is to be assumed that a combination of one or more strategies together will aid in increasing employee satisfaction better than one individual strategy by itself.

Limitations to this paper include a lack of large sample sizes in some cases where small private organizations are studied. Not all employees in the study groups responded to the questionnaires and surveys, nor were willing to participate. Therefore, much of the data retrieved are from smaller study populations. This study is also limited in the fact that there are many more strategies and methods to produce desired employee satisfaction rates than the five being studied here.

Summary

Employee satisfaction is a tool that can be used to gain loyalty and trust of employees as well as motivating them to perform better in their tasks and responsibilities. This follows the theory of organizational justice which states:

Individuals develop beliefs about the inputs they provide in their employment relationship as well as about the outcomes (in the form of tangible and intangible compensation and benefits) they receive in return, and they form attitudes about the ratio between inputs and outcomes in relation to the corresponding ratios they perceive among comparison others (Latham & Pinder, 2005, p. 504)

Using strategies such as effective training, inspiring leadership styles, pleasing employee benefit packages, stress reduced environments, and implementation of rewards and recognition, will increase employee satisfaction. If employees gain much from an organization they will be encouraged to give much in return as well. Increased employee satisfaction levels will encourage better employee output. This increase in employee output or performance levels will positively affect patient satisfaction levels. Once satisfied, the patients will return for future care and these loyal customers will add to the profitability of an organization. Profitability will keep an organization's head above the waters of business failure.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Overview

The healthcare field is a complex and competitive market that uses medical care as its main focus. Liebler and McConnell state that “although the setting and practitioners have developed and changed, the underlying theme remains: how to provide health care that is the best, most effective, accessible, and affordable, in a stable yet flexible delivery system” (2017, p. 2). Its patients are its customers and the healthcare market is designed to attract new patients and retain current patients. Mittal (2016) looked at past studies on customer satisfaction and its relationship to customer loyalty and discovered that the assumption is true that satisfaction is a precursor to loyalty (p. 569). Organizations can use this to understand that in order to gain customer loyalty, the organization needs to satisfy the customer or, in the healthcare world, the patient. Patients want the best doctors and nursing staff to give preventative care. They choose

insurance plans that allow them to be seen at particular hospitals where they can be given excellent emergency care. Patients regularly shop around and consult with doctors and staff to select the right care when selecting elective procedures such as cosmetic or orthopedic surgery. Dissatisfied customers, Mittal notes, “will almost certainly switch their service companies” (2016, p. 570). Whether it is for preventative care, emergency care, elective procedures, or other forms of care, patients are looking to find the best staff to care for their greatest possessions: their own lives and the lives of their loved ones.

Healthcare organizations want to be successful to stay in business and be profitable. They are seeking ways to retain customers while at the same time attracting new customers through good reviews and word of mouth from past patients. Gaining the loyalty of a patient will make this possible. Patient satisfaction is the best path through which this loyalty is earned. In studies where loyalty and satisfaction were both measured, “loyalty was viewed and analyzed as an outcome of satisfaction” (Mittal, 2016, p. 569). Patients with good experiences from their care will be more likely to return for other procedures and will share their experiences with others. Patient satisfaction results in patient loyalty and more stable sources of profitability for the healthcare organizations. The way that the patients are treated matters a great deal. Managers want their employees to perform at their best level of care in order to win over their patients. In a leadership satisfaction study by Cheema, Akram, and Javed (2015), they recognize that customer satisfaction is a result of performance and that employee satisfaction is a way to improve that performance to gain profits (p. 142). Employee satisfaction is a key strategy to getting employees to perform at their most optimal levels.

Turkyilmaz, Akman, Ozkan, & Pastuszak, (2011) define employee satisfaction as “expectations of the employee about the workplace and his attitudes toward his job” (p. 677). Employees respond well to positive environments and want to stay there. As noted by Jha and Dikshit (2015), “a person with a high level of job satisfaction [holding] positive attitudes toward the job tends to be more productive, creative and committed to their employers while a person who is dissatisfied with his or her job holds negative attitudes about the job” (p. 111). There are several strategies to engage employee satisfaction that will benefit the organization. Not all ways will work for everyone and often times a mixture of methods and strategies must be used to motivate employees. Some of these strategies include effective training, good leadership styles,

desired employee benefits, stress reducing strategies, and implementation of rewards and recognitions.

Employee Satisfaction through Effective Training

Sir Richard Branson once gave some good advice for training and satisfying employees: “train people well enough so they can leave, treat them well enough so they don’t want to” (as cited in Meah, #36). Training is a vital part of an organization. Employers want employees to understand their jobs and employees want to feel confident to do their jobs without the fear of doing something wrong and becoming unemployed. Training is beneficial on multiple levels. Haccoun and Saks state “when a training program is effective, trainees will be satisfied (level I), they will have learned the material (level II), they will behave differently on the job (level III), and the organization will be better for it (level IV)” (Haccoun & Saks, 1998, p. 35). An employee who is new to a job wants to be productive and keep their employment. Without proper training they will feel insecure and lack confidence and will not perform at their best. They will feel that the organization doesn’t really care about their comfort or their need to perform well. They may question if the organization really wants them to be there at all. They could lose interest in their performance and even look elsewhere for a better situation. When employees receive effective training, “they gain self-confidence of making their jobs, they perceive career development opportunities, and they think that their companies make investment in them” (Turkyilmaz et al., 2011, p. 682).

Employees who feel that their company is making an investment in them through training in conjunction with their goals and values can develop a feeling of importance. Training employees correctly to improve patient satisfaction through “values described in the mission statement will have a positive relationship with return on assets” (Hirota, Kubo, Miajima, Hong, & Park, 2010, p. 1139). Liebler and McConnell (2017) report that the most effective strategy for changing employee behavior and increasing satisfaction is through organized and formal training programs (p. 375). These training programs can be organized and implemented in various ways according to the means and desires of management. Spears and Parker (2002) noted that “employees exhibit greater satisfaction when new employee training, in-house training, and support for continuing education are each provided” (p. 13).

Not only do employees need to be trained effectively, they need to be able to measure their training levels. Spears and Parker find that “a system of improved training programs and support combined with effective specific feedback can increase employee satisfaction” (2002, p. 15). Systems of feedback and constructive criticism should be implemented to show the importance of the training being received and so that the employee can have a measuring stick of where they need to be to be successful in their responsibilities. Overall, training can have a positive effect on employee satisfaction and motivation. This training will not only benefit the employee’s happiness but will also improve the quality of performance throughout the organization.

Employee Satisfaction through Effective Leadership Styles

A leader is not always the same thing as a manager. Peter Druker and Warren Bennis use the adage “management is doing things right; leadership is doing the right things.” (as cited in Borkowski, 2011, p. 178). Sir Richard Branson has similarly pointed out that “a good leader doesn’t get stuck behind a desk” (as cited in Meah, #61). However, a manager can be an effective leader and boost the employee satisfaction of his/her employees. Managers have a responsibility to “utilize their roles as liaisons and monitors to scan the environment for opportunities and minimize threats” (Borkowski, 2011, p. 96). If the manager looks out for threats to his/her employees and eliminates them, that manager will gain trust and loyalty. No one wants to work for an individual who will stab them in the back for personal gain. Employees want a manager who looks out for his/her department. Conflict resolution is considered “vital in the health care environment because individuals’ wellness is compromised psychologically, socially, and often physically in conjunction with mental illness” (Smith, Tutor, & Phillips, 2001, p. 37).

Employee’s satisfaction depends on the environment set in place by a leader. Ur-Rehman, Mansoor, and Bilal state “the best suited leadership style in any organization is that which inspires subordinates potential and working ability to enhance efficiency in process of organization for achieving his objectives” (2012, p. 27). Carvalho, Rivera-Castro, Silva, and Carvalho (2018) look at factors affecting job satisfaction and see a correlation between “contentment with the organization and professional capacity of the immediate superior and his interest in the employee activities and the understanding between them” (p. 207). Different

leadership styles can be applied to motivate employee satisfaction and usually requires more than one style at a time. Borkowski finds that a leader who “is able to respond to ever-increasing levels of environmental uncertainty through the utilization of more than one style of leadership will be most likely to increase employee’s levels of motivation, satisfaction, and productivity” (2011, p. 203).

One study performed by Ur-Rehman, Mansoor, and Bilal (2012) compares the employee satisfaction levels of two different leadership styles; initiating structure and consideration. Initiating structure is very task-oriented and consideration is focused on the employee-leader relationship. Although they find that both styles have positive relationships to employee satisfaction the consideration method is preferable. They go on to say that “if any organization wants highly positive satisfied employees than it should adopt consideration leadership style” (p. 36). Focusing on the employees and their needs will help leaders gain trust and support while boosting the employee satisfaction levels.

Another study focuses on three leadership styles: autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire leadership methods. Autocratic leaders are focused more on performance and less on people relationships and contain all the power in the leader’s hands. Democratic leadership styles focus on the employees and the manager works with the employees and shares decision making and other leadership responsibilities with the employees. A laissez-faire style of leadership is very relaxed and is not task nor employee centered. In this style, the leader does very little and lets the organization flow as needed. This study shows that autocratic has a negative relationship with employee satisfaction but is positive with performance. Laissez-faire has a positive employee satisfaction relationship but a negative performance relationship. Democratic styles showed positive relationships in both employee satisfaction and performance but is difficult to develop this style compared to autocratic and laissez-faire styles. However, “the observations of the study indicate that all three leadership styles have their own importance with regard to enhancing employees’ motivation and performance” (Fiaz, Su, Ikram, & Saquib, 2017, p. 152). The way leadership is administrated will have a significant effect on how employees are motivated and satisfied in their jobs.

Employee Satisfaction through Good HR Employee Benefits

Organizations in healthcare can find it difficult to find a good pool of candidates due to specialized education and training levels. For example, one study states that “one of the most important worldwide problems in the health system is shortage of expert and skilled nurses” (Tabataba'i-Nasab, Rahmani, Enjezab, & Rezaee, 2017, p. 862). However, “even for employers with a good pool of job candidates, loyalty is important for containing high recruitment and training costs” (Waner, Winter, & Mansfield, 2007, p. 292). Money is many times thought of as the best motivator to aid in this goal for increased satisfaction and loyalty. Jha and Dikshit state “indeed the efficiency wage theory predicts that firms with higher levels of pay will have better overall employee performance” (2015, p. 111). Although this theory is strong, in a competitive wage market, it is difficult to satisfy employees with wages alone and keep them loyal. Waner et al. point out that “understanding employee needs and translating them into action will involve communicating effectively and solving the problem, rather than throwing money at the symptom” (2007, p. 292). Traditional employment benefit packages contain benefits such as basic insurance coverage in health, dental, and medical. Waner et al. also note that “human resource managers should keep current on what type of benefits and leave policies will attract new hires” (2007, p. 294). There are several strategies and methods to attract employees and entice them to stay. Some current methods “include salary, promotion, vacation, tuition reimbursement, sick leave, medical insurance, life insurance, maternity or paternity leave, eldercare leave, discriminatory leave, and company support and counseling” (Waner et al., 2007, p. 291). Implementation of employee benefits such as these can motivate employees to stay with the organization because of increased levels of employee satisfaction.

Jha and Dikshit (2015) find “employee benefit, welfare as well as satisfaction, is extremely important in an organization because it is what productivity depends on” and that “satisfied employees are more likely to be creative and innovative and come up with breakthroughs that allow a company to grow and change positively with time and changing market conditions” (p. 113). An analysis of employee satisfaction among employees in a steel manufacturing plant and a coal processing plant in Asia is performed in a study by Jha and Dikshit (2015). They discuss some benefit strategies such as discounts for weekly groceries, gifts, services, help with purchasing cars, extended maternity/paternity leave, child care payment

support, crisis helplines for employees, grievance counseling, and help with education. This study shows that through the use of special benefits and privileges, quality of their jobs is high and “employees are highly motivated to achieve the goals” of the company (p. 118).

Employee Satisfaction through Stress Reduction Techniques

The healthcare world can be a very stressful place to work. Workplace stress happens when “the challenges and demands of work become excessive, the pressures of the workplace exceed the worker’s ability to handle them, and job satisfaction turns to frustration and exhaustion” (Lambert & Lambert, 2008, p. 38). When working with patients, particularly in emergency settings, it can be very difficult coping with death and patients who are at death’s door. Even stable patients can be demanding and require much attention. A floor full of needy patients can cause staff to be stressed out by the fact they do not have time for everything. Qureshi et al. state “stress creates negative employee behavior as it leads employees toward low work morale, absenteeism, low job satisfaction, and intentions to quit from the job” (2015, p. 111). High levels of stress make it difficult for an employee to feel satisfied. Tharke and Shroff call job satisfaction and job stress “the two hot focuses in human resource management researches” (2016, p. 471). Employers should want their employees to be happy at work. Sir Richard Branson has said, “happiness is the secret ingredient for successful businesses. If you have a happy company it will be invincible.” (as cited in Meah, 2019, #23). Alexander Bruggen (2015) studied the negative effects of stress on employee satisfaction and his data “revealed support for the negative linear relationship between job stress and job performance because whenever workers reported high stress, their performance was mainly low, and whenever they reported low stress, their performance was rather high” (p. 2379). Studies have shown that stress has a negative relationship on individuals. One study done by Qureshi, Iftikhar, Janjua, Zaman, Raja, and Javed (2015) discusses past results on this topic, saying they “show that occupational stress has a negative impact on life satisfaction, while it has a positive impact on the three dimensions of burnout i.e., motional exhaustion, lack of personal accomplishment and depersonalization” (p. 94). These dimensions of burnout are the exact opposite of what employees need to succeed in giving quality care to patients. Therefore, healthcare organizations need to implement ways to deal with stress in the workplace.

Researchers are in agreement that “organizations and individuals can use preventive or proactive coping strategies...to change negative events into positive experiences and growth opportunities” (Borkowski, 2011, p. 260). Coping strategies are not universal for all. Some need to be more active to cope with it and some need to take a break. However, “accumulating evidence has convincingly demonstrated the efficacy of PA [physical activity] in reducing stress and its related symptoms both in supervised as well as in unsupervised forms” (van der Zwan, de Vente, Huizink, Bogels, & de Bruin, 2015, p. 258). Another example is that some people over eat and some people do not eat enough even though “it is known that healthy lifestyles (e.g., nutrition and exercise) provide a protective shield against the experience of stress” (Borkowski, 2011, p. 255). Organizations can implement ways for employees to reduce their stress levels through exercise, healthy eating habits, relaxation, and other coping methods in order to strengthen their employees’ satisfaction and positive thinking. Thakre and Shroff indicate that “organizations should intervene to reduce organizational role stress and induce a favorable work climate among employees in order to increase job satisfaction and job involvement” (2016, p. 476).

Employee Satisfaction through Rewards and Recognition

Rewards and recognition are ways for employers to build satisfaction amongst their employees. Liebler and McConnell find that “through rewards and positive sanctions, the manager seeks to motivate workers to conform, thereby limiting the amount of control that must be imposed” (2017, p. 204). If employees are motivated to achieve positive rewards, the manager will have a much easier time in managing and achieving organizational goals. Individual incentives will “encourage and give priority to individual results of employees and encourage targeted behavior, which contributes to better quality and a better customer feedback” (Klopota, Buntak, & Droždek, 2016, p. 305). Furthermore, Williams (2005) states that “employees work best when motivated by the tasks they perform, thus, the process of motivation hinges on allowing people to achieve rewards that satisfy their personal needs” (p. 2). Not all rewards will motivate individuals and “to ensure the effectiveness of reward strategies, the organization must consider the uniqueness of the circumstances and the diversity of their employees” (Smith, Joubert, & Karodia, 2015, p. 82). Some employees prefer recognition over a system of rewards.

In a study of employment satisfaction, Smith, Joubert, and Karodia (2015) notes that most employees agree that “recognition for a job well done improves morale and motivation, and that incentives affect job performance in a positive manner” (p. 51). Klopota, Mjeda, & Kurečić (2018) further explain that acknowledgment and recognition for good quality work “have a direct impact on the employee’s satisfaction” (p. 158). Wolper (2011) also added to this in stating that “job satisfaction, productivity, and retention are related to professional recognition” (p. 321). Satisfied employees are pleased with their work and will continue to work well to receive the recognition and rewards they feel they are entitled to.

In a study of employee satisfaction among steel and coal plant workers, Jha and Dikshit (2015), cite that “the reward and recognition policy of the organization promotes involvement in improvement initiatives [and] participation in events that enhance [the] company’s image” (p. 118). A system of rewards could include from company swag, gift cards, prizes, and cash bonuses. Recognition could consist of employee of the month privileges, a party, switching office locations, or gaining new job titles. Healthcare organizations will have to find the correct rewards and recognition strategy that will benefit their employees just as long as they realize the importance of implementing them.

Summary

Research has shown that employee satisfaction has a significant impact on employee performance and customer satisfaction. Different strategies and methods have been implemented in businesses and organizations around the world to augment their own employee’s satisfaction levels with their work. Employees need to have a good reason to do what they do every day besides earn a pay check. When they are satisfied with their work, they do exactly that. Healthcare is a very person oriented field. The patients are seen by medical personnel and can have a positive or negative interaction with them. It is very hard to create an honest positive interaction when the employee is in a negative frame of mind with what they are doing. Satisfaction is vital to creating the optimal environment for care to be given. Understanding that there are ways for employees to be satisfied and to perform their best, administrators can look for managers that possess the skills to motivate and excite employees. Creating employee satisfaction is not always cheap. However, if administrators can understand that the profitability from gaining customer loyalty, referrals, and avoiding high levels of employee turnover is

greater than the expenses to get there, they will be more apt to following through with these methods.

Managers can develop high levels of standards of training and implement better training structures. Now they can understand that the time and money spent on training is worth the high levels of return they can get out of it. Administration can use this information to hire managers who are people oriented and that care for the well-being of their employees as well as the goals at hand. They will strive to hire leaders and not just managers. They will try to not only seek out these great leaders but will try to train and build up current managers into effective leaders that help employees to enjoy their work.

Organizations can understand the need for impactful benefit packages and perks for employees. They can research what other organizations and companies are trying and can be creative and innovative in ways to make an employee friendly atmosphere. They will be able to make employees happier without having to break the bank to keep up with desired salaries. Benefits can be very effective in making employees glad they work for the organization and will want to continue to do so.

Managers and administrators can work on ways to keep employees healthy physically and mentally as they develop techniques to reduce stress in the workplace. An employee who is tasked to work in a stressful environment, like healthcare, will most likely choose to work for an organization that is more beneficial to their health. Not to mention, their employees will be able to be more productive and profitable longer if the organization strives to reduce stress or makes stress easier to overcome.

Administrators and managers will also be able to experiment with ways to reward and recognize their employees, knowing the actions will pay off with a happier staff. They can understand that as they give incentives and positive recognition to their employees, the morale and performance will increase. By gaining employee trust and loyalty, their work as administrators and managers will become easier. Happier employees will have less conflict and will be more open to new ideas and goals of the department or organization.

If healthcare organizations want to increase their patient satisfaction and profitability, employee satisfaction is the place to start. As illustrated above, employee satisfaction can be used as an effective tool to help an organization become more successful and profitable. It will

increase employee performance, reduce employee turnover, and build a more enjoyable working atmosphere. It does require effort and innovation on the part of managers and administrators to select the right methods and strategies that will be more effective for their staff. Organizations will also find out that a happier and more satisfied staff is easier to manage. Managers and administration will be able to see that there is a positive relationship between the five strategies discussed here and employee satisfaction. Thus, they will be more willing to put forth the time, money, and resources needed to implement these strategies. Doing so will ultimately augment their future profitability and success. Sir Richard Branson summarized this perfectly by saying “if you look after your staff, they will look after your customers. It’s that simple” (as cited in Investor in Customers, 2016).

Chapter 3: Methods

Introduction

Employee satisfaction is more than just job enjoyment. It is the act of being engaged with their job. Employee satisfaction or employee engagement can be described as a “structure which bonds employees to perform their jobs better and more energetically” (Cheema et al., 2015, p. 140). It serves as a motivator to perform well to take care of clients in the hope that they will continue to invest in the service or products offered. Employees that are satisfied with their job and responsibilities will have the desire to continue to perform well and reap the personal benefits that satisfaction can bring. The organization in turn will reap higher patient satisfaction levels and increased profitability. Several strategies can be implemented to develop employee satisfaction. Five such strategies include productive training, effective leadership styles, impactful HR benefits for employees, stress reduction techniques in the workplace, and a system of rewards and recognition for excellent performance. This paper utilizes several pre-existing studies to develop both quantitative and qualitative data on how these methods and strategies can increase employee satisfaction. They directly respond to the research question presented earlier:

1. Do effective training, effective leadership styles, good HR benefit packages, stress reduction techniques, and a system of rewards and recognition make employees more satisfied in the workplace?

Each of these studies will be used to prove the hypotheses also presented earlier in this paper:

- H1_a Training and individual development will have a strong and positive impact on employee satisfaction levels.
- H1_o Training and individual development will not have a strong and positive impact on employee satisfaction levels.
- H2_a Differing leadership styles will have significant impacts on employee satisfaction.
- H2_o Differing leadership styles will not have significant impacts on employee satisfaction.
- H3_a Employee benefit packages will positively affect employee satisfaction.
- H3_o Employee benefit packages will not positively affect employee satisfaction.
- H4_a Stress in the workplace will have a significantly negative affect on employee satisfaction levels and behavior.
- H4_o Stress in the workplace will not have a significantly negative affect on employee satisfaction levels and behavior.
- H5_a Rewards and recognition will play an important role in satisfying employees and encouraging good performance.
- H5_o Rewards and recognition will not play an important role in satisfying employees and encouraging good performance.

Five studies will be utilized to explain how each of these five proposed strategies will affect and relate to employee satisfaction levels.

Studies

Study 1: Empirical study of public sector employee loyalty and satisfaction (2011).

In study 1, Turkeyilmaz et al. (2011) aimed to determine employee satisfaction levels among employees in the public sector among developing countries. This study looked at how employee empowerment/participation, working conditions, rewards/recognition, teamwork, and training/development impacts employee satisfaction levels. They also sought to see the relationship between employee satisfaction and employee loyalty levels. The focus for this particular paper will be on the data collected on training/development.

This study was focused on employees from the public insurance sector in Turkey because of a large social security restructuring that took place in Turkey in recent years from when this study occurred. They performed 246 face to face surveys among employees in the Istanbul Branch of Social Security Department. Of the 246 surveys, 220 were accepted as satisfactory for use in the study. Researchers used a survey developed from literature review data that contained multiple questions regarding each employee satisfaction predictor category. Each question contained a five point rating scale ranging from “very low” to “very high”. The survey also contained a demographic section where gender, age, job status tenure, and education levels were analyzed for report. Using a Structural Equation Modeling technique (SEM), which uses a combination of structural analysis and multiple regressions, researchers were able to test their hypotheses between the observed and latent variables being studied. Unidimensionality was also measured because the “manifest variables are connected to the latent variables in a reflective way” (Turkeyilmaz et al., 2011, p. 686). The Cronbach’s alpha score was over 0.80 for each item being studied, and was therefore considered unidimensional and acceptable. Using these tools, these researchers were able to gather accurate and representable data for the employees in what makes them satisfied in their workplace.

Study 2: Leadership styles and employees’ motivation: Perspective from an emerging economy (2017). Researchers Fiaz, Su, Ikram, and Saquib used this study to understand the effects of differing leadership styles on employee satisfaction levels in Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA), an energy resource organization in Pakistan. They state that “leadership style is considered being the most important determinant to increase employee motivation” (Fiaz et al., 2017, p. 144). Although not centered in a healthcare

environment, the autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire leadership styles are discussed and how they directly affect employee satisfaction levels within the WAPDA organization. This study is aimed at organizations and how they can better achieve employee satisfaction and influence profitability.

These researchers used a stratified sampling strategy to attain 110 participants who were proportionately distributed among high and middle level managers. These participants were given a closed ended Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire or the (MLQ) with questions regarding the autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire styles of leadership as the study's independent variables compared to the dependent variable of employee satisfaction. To prove the validity of the questionnaire results, Cronbach's alpha test was used. They found that "the overall alpha coefficient for the four items is 0.787, signifying that the items have relatively high internal consistency and thus survey instrument is expected to generate pragmatic results" (Fiaz et al., 2017, p. 150). Statistical software was used to analyze and quantify the data along with an analysis of variance test (ANOVA).

Study 3: Employee satisfaction: A comparative study between Tata Steel and Central Coalfield Limited, Ranchi (2015). The researchers in this study, Jha and Dikshit, wanted to understand the relationship between certain motivational factors and actual employee satisfaction levels. The participants from this study were employees from two major companies, Tata Steel, located in Mumbai, Maharashtra, and Central Coalfield Limited (CCL) in Ranchi, the capital city of Jharkhand, India. These two companies are largely responsible for developing Jharkhand and Maharashtra into what it is today. Tata Steel is a fortune 500 company with over 80,000 employees. CCL has control of over 14% of the coal in India and employs over 46,000 employees.

The methodology of this study is qualitative by nature and is both analytical and descriptive in its methods. Relevant books, articles, and government reports are used to gather information regarding the benefits offered to the employees from both companies. Jha and Dikshit (2015) also used their own professional observation and "consultation with eminent scholars" (p. 113), in their research. These expert scholars in the field were consulted and their analyses were used in constructing the results for this study. The researchers begin with a basic comparison of both companies and their overall organizational success. They outline some of

the key benefits and employee perks used in their company and discuss the reactions of employees with these benefits. These researchers, guided by consulted experts, report how these different motivational methods increase employee satisfaction in the way in which the employees help the companies be successful and profitable.

Study 4: Empirical investigation of mobbing, stress and employees' behavior at work place: quantitatively refining a qualitative model (2015). Researchers Qureshi, Iftikhar, Janjua, Zaman, Raja, and Javed organized a study to understand the affects to stress on employee's behavior at work. Their study was designed to show that stress negatively affects employee behavior and job satisfaction. They used quantitative methods through the use of questionnaires. These questionnaires were "taken from relevant literature that attempted to gather information regarding all the variables i.e., causes of mobbing, mobbing behavior, stress (psychological and physiological) and employee behavior" being studied (Qureshi et al., 2015, p. 96). They used a five point Likert scale in their questionnaire structure with a few opened ended qualitative questions. Some scales were used in the data analysis, namely the Instrument for Stress-Oriented Job Analysis to help measure stress levels along with social stress scales. The survey questionnaires were administered to a sample size of 450 employees from the organization called Higher Education Institutions of Pakistan. The demographics were measured and reported to ensure variability of participants.

These surveys were administered to the employees and analyzed using an explanatory factor analysis (EFA) method. This method "is a technique/method in order to investigate whether a number of variables of interest are linearly related to a smaller number of unobservable factors" (Qureshi et al., 2015, p. 97). These researchers used charts to organize the data and its relationships with each other. Findings were compared with literature review sources for confirmation of results and patterns.

Study 5: The impact of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards on employee motivation at a medical devices company in South Africa (2015). This study has to do with methods of how to increase employee motivation through intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. The researchers for this study, Smith, Joubert, and Karodia, studied a medical devices company in Johannesburg, South Africa for a quantitative survey study. The population focus of the study consisted of approximately 60 individuals who worked in the company. Since the company size is on the

small side, the researchers strove to make every able participant a member of the sample size. Human resources aided in reaching out and arranging time for employees to take this survey project. Researchers were able to give out 56 surveys and received 40 completed surveys back. This means that 66.7% of the total amount of employees was represented in the study. This provides accurate data regarding the majority of the organization's population. Since the sample size goal was 100% no sampling process was needed or used in this study.

The questionnaire contained 57 questions and was broken up into four smaller sections. The first section was based on the demographics. Demographics of those being surveyed to determine any patterns or limitations found among the participants. The next section's aim was "to establish to what extent employees perceive rewards to be a motivator" (Smith, Joubert, & Karodia, 2015, p. 48). After this, questions were asked regarding current rewards and the employee's perceptions of their satisfaction as a result. Finally, the last section was about whether the employees felt that intrinsic or extrinsic rewards did more for their satisfaction levels for work. They also note which rewards that the employees feel that would motivate them the best between the two and could give suggestions for the company. The researchers noted that the individuals in the study "were eager to give suggestions on additional motivating rewards" (Smith et al., 2015, p. 74). To insure internal consistency and reliability, Cronbach's alpha was computed for each of the later three sections: rewards as motivators, current rewards and employee satisfaction, and what motivates employees. All three alpha levels were high at .823, .817, and .899 respectively. This signifies that the results produced very consistent and reliable data. Data was compared with principles from the literature review for conformational support.

Summary Analysis

These studies all take part in achieving a common purpose: do they result in higher levels of employee satisfaction? Employers need to understand that employee satisfaction will not only benefit the employee but the organization will "benefit because motivated employees ensure a team that is empowered, optimistic, adaptable, creative and successful, all of which potentially improve the effectiveness and success of an organization" (Smith, Joubert, & Karodia, 2015, p. 80). Understanding these strategies and seeing them achieve success in different organizations gives credibility and optimism for other employers and organizations to follow in their own implementation of these strategies.

Around the world, cultures, ethnicities, gender, and social classes of individuals are different and may require different strategies to motivate employees. These studies, from around the world, illustrate their own strategies differently. Whether it is through training, leadership styles, benefits, stress reduction techniques, rewards and recognition, or other methods, employee satisfaction is achievable. It may take more observation and engagement from managers and administrators but it is possible. For example, Smith, Joubert, and Karodia (2015) mention that when it comes to “the effectiveness of reward strategies, the organization must consider the uniqueness of the circumstances and the diversity of their employees” (p. 82). Each and every organization, especially in healthcare, will need to find ways to increase their employee productivity through employee satisfaction. These researchers prove that there are several beneficial ways to do so.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

Employee motivation is considered “an essential part of the company’s success [as well as] its ability to attract and retain top performers in an increasingly competitive environment” (Smith, Joubert, & Karodia, 2015, p. 82). There are different strategies and methods that healthcare organizations can implement in order for employees to be satisfied in their jobs and ultimately be successful. The studies mentioned in this paper aim to prove that these different methods and strategies increase satisfaction and motivation levels among employees. All of these studies have been conducted within the last five years with the exception of one study performed seven years ago. They produce relevant information regarding employees of today and their reaction to employee satisfaction methods. Their goal is to prove the hypotheses proposed by the researchers in each case study. Study 1 has to do with how training affects employee satisfaction. Researchers looked at the impact of training on employees. The hypothesis and null hypothesis for this strategy of training are:

- H_{1a} Training and individual development will have a strong and positive impact on employee satisfaction levels.
- H_{1o} Training and individual development will not have a strong and positive impact on employee satisfaction levels.

Through the use of face to face surveys, researchers were able to look at the effectiveness of training on satisfaction and organizational loyalty levels.

Study 2 refers to the impact that leadership styles have on employees in the Water and Power industry in Pakistan and their satisfaction and motivation levels. This quantitative study uses a questionnaire distributed among middle and high level managers in a large business to look at autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire leadership styles and the reactions from the employees. The hypothesis and null hypothesis that relate to this study are:

- H2_a Differing leadership styles will have significant impacts on employee satisfaction.
- H2_o Differing leadership styles will not have significant impacts on employee satisfaction.

This study will look at the effects of autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire leadership styles and their resulting effect on employee behavior and satisfaction.

Study 3 is a qualitative study comparing the satisfaction levels in two very prominent businesses in India. Many factors are involved with benefit packages for employees being a primary one. These researchers want to acknowledge the role that good employee benefits can have on employee satisfaction levels. The third hypothesis and null hypothesis relating to benefit packages are:

- H3_a Employee benefit packages will positively affect employee satisfaction.
- H3_o Employee benefit packages will not positively affect employee satisfaction.

This study will show the need for human resource departments to focus on benefit packages to attract and retain employees.

Researchers in Study 4 looked at a phenomenon called mobbing and other sources of workplace stress. The term mobbing is referred to as a psychological aggression by one or more individuals in the workplace. It is very similar to the concept of bullying in the workforce. These researchers used quantitative survey results to prove that there were significant relationships between causes of mobbing, mobbing behavior, and stress on employee behavior. For the purpose of this paper, emphasis will be placed on the relationship between stress and

employee behavior and satisfaction. Therefore, the hypothesis and null hypothesis under review for this section are:

- H4_a Stress in the workplace will have a significantly negative affect on employee satisfaction levels and behavior.
- H4_o Stress in the workplace will not have a significantly negative affect on employee satisfaction levels and behavior.

The final study being examined is one that researches a medical supply company with a system of rewards and recognition in place. The hypothesis and null hypothesis regarding rewards and recognition are:

- H5_a Rewards and recognition will play an important role in satisfying employees and encouraging good performance.
- H5_o Rewards and recognition will not play an important role in satisfying employees and encouraging good performance.

The researchers in this study will give us information whether rewards and recognition will play an important role in increasing satisfaction levels among employees. If it is proven to be beneficial, then organizations will understand that funding, resources, and energy should be dedicated towards implementing a reward/recognition system into their own structure.

Findings from the Studies

Study 1: Training vs. satisfaction. The survey administered in this study helped researchers to understand how training affects customer satisfaction. Turkyilmaz et al. gathered all the data from their surveys and used an Outer Model Algorithm to see how well the manifest variables relate to their latent variables. In this study the latent variables are: empowerment and participation (EP), working conditions (WC), reward and recognition (RR), teamwork (TW), training and individual development (TPD), job satisfaction (JS), and job loyalty (JL). These variables were affected by the manifest variables which in this study are: participation in decisions (EP1), participation in meetings (EP2), employee empowerment – initiative (EP3), physical working conditions (WC1), work measurement (WC2), recognition (RR1), rewards

(RR2), just and fair corporate policy (RR3), fair promotion (RR4), efficient teamwork (TW1), conflict resolution (TW2), sharing problems (TW3), importance of training (TID1), importance of personal development (TID2), being content with the type of work (JS1), enjoying the job (JS2), learning and growth potential (JS3), feeling important (JS4), desire to continue working at the same institution (JL1), and recommending the institution to others (JL2).

Ideally, researchers wanted to see loading values above 0.70 to show that there was more shared variance between the two types of variables than error variance. In this study, all of the constructs showed a positive and large correlation that the manifest variables were a good measure of the latent variables. The communality was another value used to explain more valid variance than error. Values greater than 0.50 indicate a strong positive variance and all of these values fall in to this category. This means that all the correlations and relationships between the manifest and latent variables were high, positive, and acceptable. Turkeyilmaz et al. indicate that the second stage “involves the non-iterative application of ordinary least squares (OLS) regression for obtaining loadings, path coefficients, mean scores and location parameters for the latent and manifest variables” (2011, p. 686). These results produce significantly positive results for the hypotheses postulated by the researchers.

According to the inner model results, it can be seen that “all six hypothesized relationships between the effecting factors and employee satisfaction, and relationship between [employee satisfaction levels] are confirmed” (Turkeyilmaz et al., 2011, p. 688). Looking at the Regression Coefficients values, they deduced that training has the highest impact on employee satisfaction with a value of 0.2191 followed closely by working conditions, and reward/recognitions. All of these factors, however, have relevance and support in increased employee satisfaction levels.

Study 2: Leadership styles vs. employee satisfaction. In order for the researchers to analyze the effects of leadership styles on employee satisfaction, they used a multiple regression analysis for the three independent variables of autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire leadership. The mathematical formula used in this study is illustrated in the regression model in Equation 1 (Fiaz, Su, Ikram, & Saquib, 2017, p. 149).

$$EM_{pfe} = \beta_0 + \beta_1(AL) + \beta_2(DL) + \beta_3(LF) + \eta_i + \varepsilon_{it} \quad (1)$$

- EM_{pfe} = Employee's Motivation (process-focused evaluation)
- AL = Autocratic Leadership
- DL = Democratic Leadership
- LF = Laissez-faire
- η_i = unobservable heterogeneity
- ε_{it} = error term
- β_0 = constant variable
- $\beta_1, \beta_2, \& \beta_3$ = Proportionate change in dependent variable due to independent variables.

The results from the questionnaire were analyzed and used with this formula and software data to make the following data presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Hypothesis testing results (Fiaz, Su, Ikram, & Saquib, 2017, p. 152).

Model	Unstandardized		Standardized		<i>t</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Decision</i>
	<i>B</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>Beta</i>				
(Constant)	0.990	0.294			3.37	0.001	
AL	-0.192	0.067	-0.294		-2.87	0.005	Significant
DL	0.083	0.079	0.092		1.05	0.164	Insignificant
LF	0.079	0.070	0.107		1.12	0.009	Significant
EM	0.411	0.079	0.496		5.23	0.000	

According to the researchers, the significance of the data should be less than 0.05 to be considered statistically significant. Therefore, the values for autocratic leadership styles were negative and yet significantly relevant. The democratic leadership values were positive and appear similar to the values for laissez-faire values but are not very noteworthy with a significance value of 0.164. The laissez-faire leadership style values were positive and yet all also have a substantial amount of reliable significance at a value of 0.009. The researchers pointed out that the correlation of the independent variables (AL, DL, and LF) had an impact on the dependent variable (employee satisfaction).

Compared to the literature review, autocratic leadership styles have a significantly negative effect on employee satisfaction while laissez-faire styles result in a significantly positive effect. According to other researchers and other studies, democratic should also be significantly positive as well but does not show up in the data analysis as such. However, the researchers pointed out that the “discrepancy is understandable as the bureaucratic environment hardly allows employees to participate in decision making, and thus there is lack of democratic leadership” (Fiaz et al., 2017, p. 152).

Study 3: Benefit packages vs. employee satisfaction. Researchers in this study looked at employee satisfaction among two prominent but different business organizations in India. They looked at the traits and characteristics of each organization and how satisfied the employees were as a result of it. Since these were two of the largest organizations in India, employee satisfaction and therefore retention was important. Researchers pointed out that in the steel company, Tata Steel, the employees had been treated very well since the beginning of the organization. They note, “the Human Resource Management of the company is compassionate with the employee’s wellbeing and their satisfaction” (Jha & Dikshit, 2015, p. 114). In this study, researchers compiled lists of employee perks and benefits. They then consulted with experts in the field and described how well the employee satisfaction levels responded to these benefits. Some of these benefits from the Tata Steel and Central Coalfield Limited (CCL) organizations are listed in Figure 2.

25 days of holiday time	Additional anniversary holiday entitlement	Private medical insurance	Memberships of Tata Steel's social facilities	Discounted goods and services in the community
Maternity and Paternity leave for birth or adoption	Financial help through childcare vouchers	Employee crisis assistance programs	Attractive pay and financial benefits	Grievance handling programs
Housing assistance	Good medical care	Education assistance	Counseling services	Specific benefits for female employees

Figure 2: Tata Steel and Central Coalfields Limited employee benefits examples (Jha & Dikshit, 2015, pp. 113-114).

Jha and Dikshit and human resource experts analyzed both companies' employee satisfaction levels and recorded the following qualitative results. The Tata Steel employees expressed their highest satisfaction with both financial and non-financial incentives including recruitment and training. Next, employees in Tata Steel were satisfied with their identity and place in industrial relation. Tata Steel is among the top ten steel producers in the world and the second most geographically diversified steel producers. Employees enjoyed feeling that they were part of something big. Researchers also found that motivation, cooperation, and coordination were better in Tata Steel than in CCL. A mixed feeling emerged regarding Tata Steel's work ambience and quality of work life and their scope of career development was found to be minimum and tough. The overall image of the organization was high but in the private sector, organizational freedom of the employee was limited due to an ever present feeling of stress and pressure in the workplace.

CCL, however, had highly satisfied employees. They were also very satisfied in recruitment and training programs. Jha and Dikshit state "the employees are provided enough opportunities to implement their various ideas leading to work simplification, productivity, cost reduction, and improved productivity through teamwork" (2015, p. 117). Researchers also pointed out that attrition, or employee turnover, was low in CCL because the employees quality of life was high. This was primarily due to the fact that the benefit amenities and welfare packages provided to each employee and their families were so beneficial and attractive. At the

same time, however, their income satisfaction was low and there was mixed feelings regarding CCL's career development and advancement policy. CCL still provided satisfaction in that employees were motivated to achieve personal and company goals.

Study 4: Stress reduction techniques vs. employee satisfaction. As mentioned earlier, researchers Qureshi, Iftikhar, Janjua, Zaman, Raja, and Javed (2015) wanted to test the relationships of mobbing behavior and stress in the workplace on how it affects employees. Mobbing occurs in difficult work environments and can be a major form of workplace stress. Mobbing behavior is not the only source of stress seen in the workplace, however. Stress of any kind will have a negative effect on an employee. In order for the researchers to confirm their hypotheses, they mapped out the flow of the constructs (Qureshi, et al., 2015, p. 108).

Researchers in this study compiled the results of the survey questionnaires using the measuring construct formula in Equation 2 (Qureshi, et al., 2015, p. 109).

Then, using a Structural Equation Model (SEM), the data was illustrated. The pathways showed direct and indirect relationships and the strength of correlation in those relationships. The researchers documented that the causes of mobbing directly affected mobbing behavior. They also proved that mobbing behavior directly affected stress. Most importantly to this paper, stress was seen as having a directly negative affect on employee behavior. This was evidenced in the value of -0.63 for stress and employee behavior and showing that they had a direct relationship with each other.

$$WAC = \frac{F_i}{\sum_{n=1}^i F_i} \times R_i \quad (2)$$

- WAC = weighted average of construct
- F_i = Factor loading of item i
- R_i = Response of respondent i

Another item of importance for this paper is that employee behavior has a high level of correlation with employee satisfaction with a value of 0.62. Low employee behavior levels will correlate to low employee satisfaction levels.

Study 5: Rewards and recognition vs. employee satisfaction. Researchers in this study gathered data through their questionnaire surveys on if rewards and recognition are reliable means of producing employee satisfaction. They also recorded data on how the actual company was doing in relation to handling rewards and recognition to the employees. The final section of responses dealt with what the employees felt would motivate them. Some of their results that relate directly to the hypothesis in this paper have been detailed in Figures 7-10. A first point to notice is based on the results from the survey question whether it is important to the employee to be rewarded for their contribution to the company. All respondents reported positively that rewarding employees is important. Figure 3 shows that 63% said they strongly agreed that it was important to be rewarded for their contributions and 37% of respondents simply agreed with the statement. There were no respondents who disagreed with this statement in any degree.

Next, employees unanimously reported that they agreed that they were willing to work harder and increase their work efforts in order to gain more rewards. This is shown in Figure 4 with 63% of respondents stating they strongly agree with the statement.

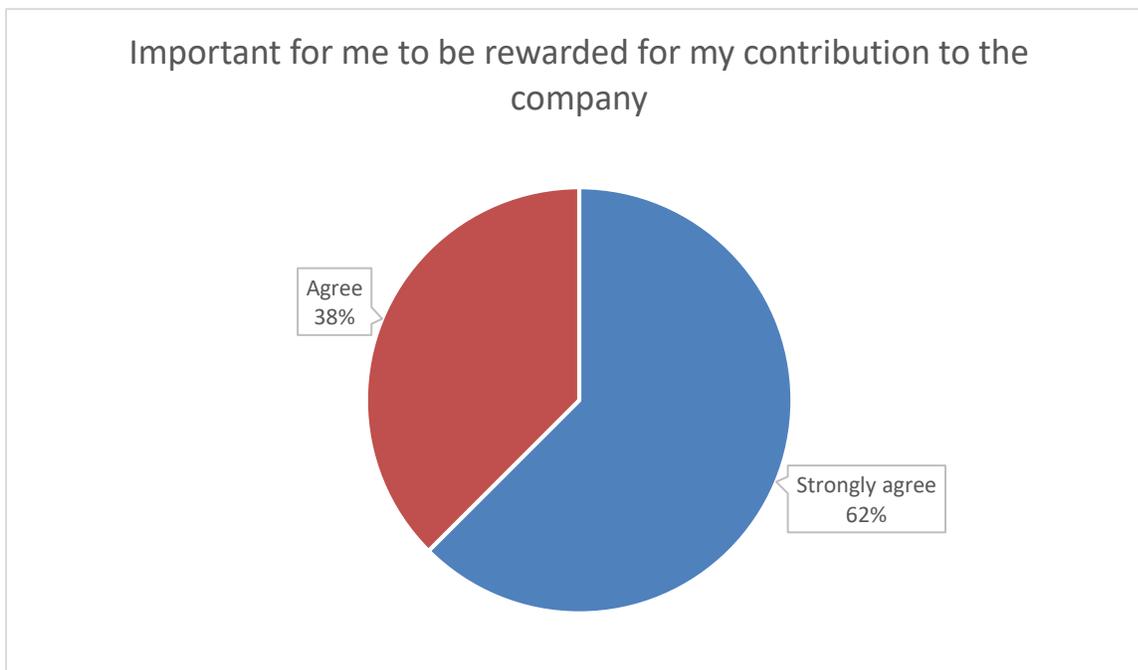


Figure 3: Importance of rewards (Smith, Joubert, & Karodia, 2015, p. 48).

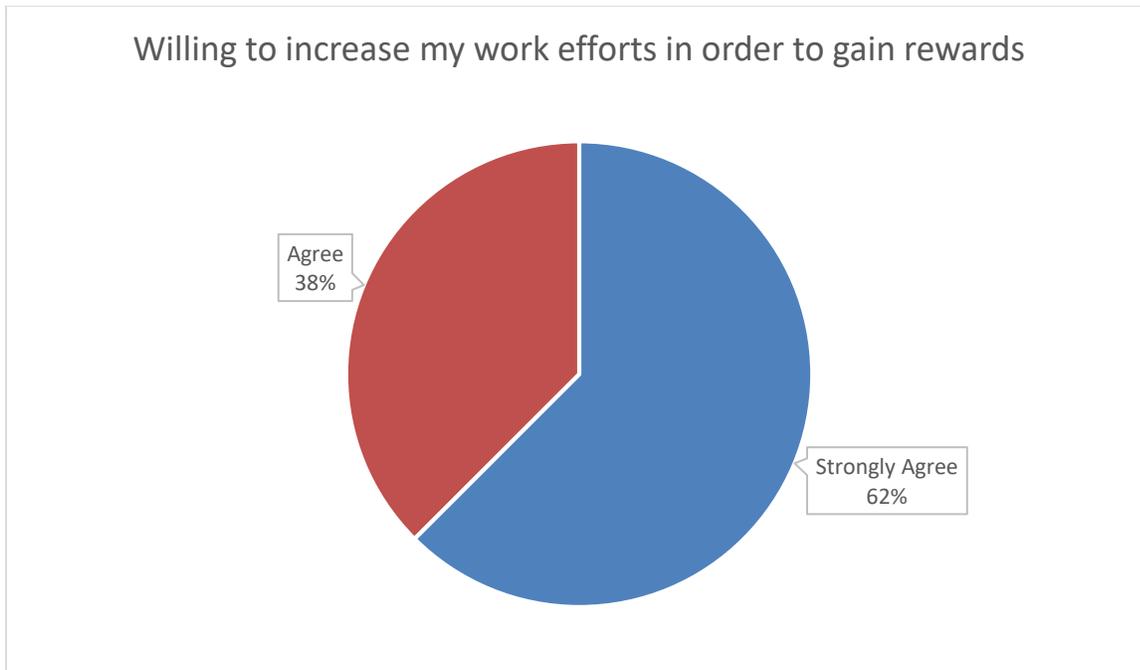


Figure 4: Increase work effort for more rewards (Smith, Joubert, & Karodia, 2015, p. 49).

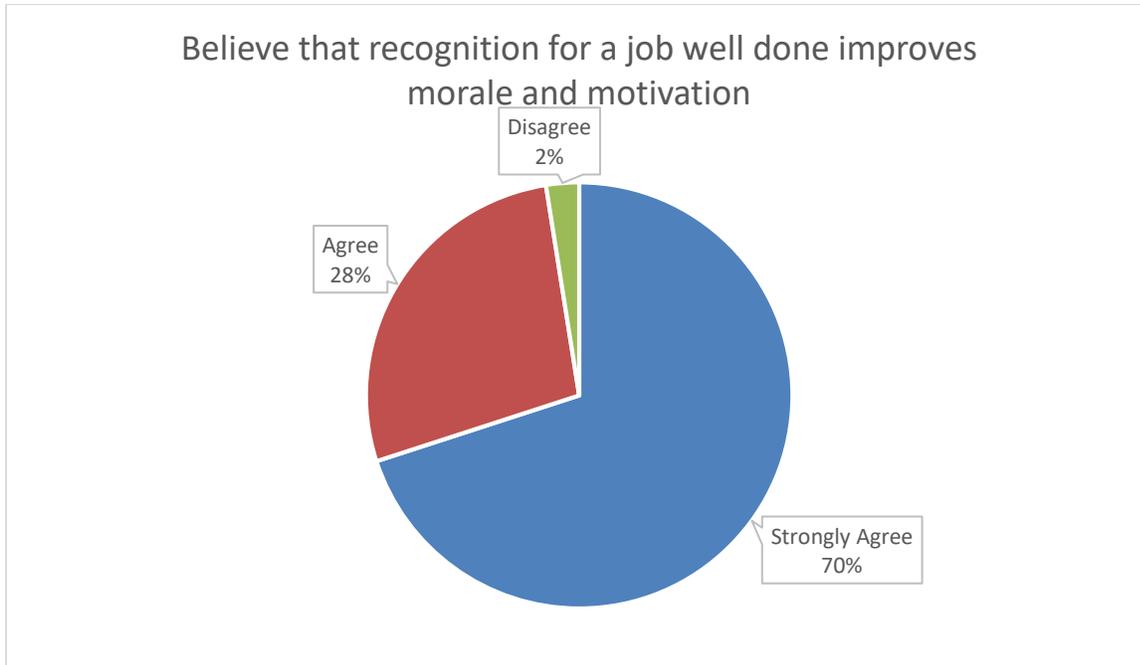


Figure 5: Does recognition improve morale and motivation? (Smith, Joubert, & Karodia, 2015, p. 50).

Employees were also asked about their opinion of how recognition affects their morale and motivation. According to the data presented in Figure 5, 70% of respondents strongly agreed and 28% simply agreed while 2% disagreed that recognition improves company morale and motivation for employees in the workplace. From this, researchers deduced that “being recognized consequently has a positive connection to morale and motivation” (Smith, Joubert, & Karodia, 2015, p. 50).

Data on how the company was actually performing regarding implementation of rewards and recognition were not shown here due to the fact that the information was more specific to the managers in the company than is needed in this paper. However, the last portion of the survey regarding whether extrinsic or intrinsic rewards were more desirable from the employees was relevant to this study and were included. Intrinsic rewards are intangible rewards that increase personal satisfaction through “psychological rewards that employees get from doing meaningful work and performing it well” (Smith, Joubert, & Karodia, 2015, p. 74). Extrinsic rewards are tangible rewards, such as pay and bonuses, which motivate and satisfy employees.

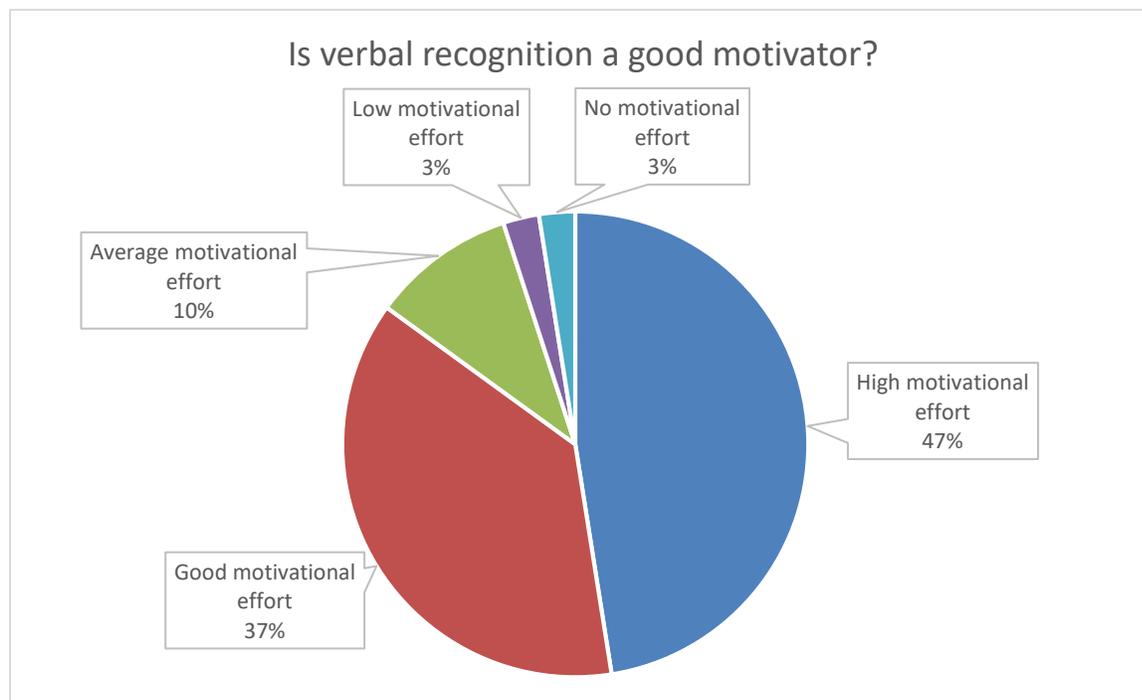


Figure 6: Is verbal recognition a good motivator? (Smith, Joubert, & Karodia, 2015, p. 69).

Table 2

Descriptive statistics for all 20 motivator items (Smith, Joubert, & Karodia, 2015, pp. 75-76).

Variable	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Thirteenth Cheque (Extrinsic)	40	4.77	0.42
Annual Salary Increase (Extrinsic)	40	4.73	0.51
A Feeling of Ongoing Growth or Development (Intrinsic)	40	4.38	0.84
Competence (Intrinsic)	40	4.35	0.89
A Sense of Significant Contribution and Accomplishment (Intrinsic)	40	4.33	0.89
Verbal Recognition (Intrinsic)	40	4.25	0.93
Empowerment by Delegation of Tasks (Intrinsic)	40	4.25	0.95
Tuition Reimbursement or Company Contribution to Further Education (Extrinsic)	40	4.05	0.90
Feeling a Spirit of Teamwork and Collaboration (Intrinsic)	40	4.03	0.97
Allocation of Meaningful Tasks/Projects (Intrinsic)	40	4.02	0.86
More Senior/Prestigious Title (Extrinsic)	40	4.00	0.88
More Leave Days (Extrinsic)	40	3.95	0.75
Healthy Interpersonal Relationships (Intrinsic)	40	3.95	0.95
Challenging/Demanding Tasks that Fit my Abilities (Extrinsic)	40	3.90	0.67
Benefits, such as Health Insurance and Pension (Extrinsic)	40	3.90	0.74
Organizational Culture Fit (Intrinsic)	40	3.80	0.85
Daily Job Responsibilities and Duties (Extrinsic)	40	3.73	0.93
Long Service Award (Extrinsic)	40	3.67	0.94
Company Stock Shares (Extrinsic)	40	2.80	1.11
More Sick Leave Benefits (Extrinsic)	40	2.62	0.77

According to Figure 6, verbal recognition, an intrinsic motivator, was shown as having a high motivational effect on employees with a response of 47%. 37% of respondents said that it was a good motivational tool and 10% thought of it as an average motivator. Only 6% reported that there was low or no motivational effect from verbal recognition. Table 2 lists the motivator items that were surveyed to the employees in order of their means. For ease of interpretation, extrinsic means have been marked in red and intrinsic means have been marked in blue. The top two most requested motivators were a thirteenth cheque, otherwise known as a holiday bonus, and an annual salary increase. Verbal recognition was tied for 6th position overall and the 4th best intrinsic motivator with a mean of 4.25.

Summary of Findings

These studies have been used to show that employee satisfaction can be achieved through a variety of methods. In study 1, researchers showed that training was not only an acceptable strategy for increasing employee satisfaction but was the most significant variable in the study.

In study 2, researchers recorded data on the significance that leadership styles have on employee satisfaction. They recorded that autocratic and laissez-faire leadership styles had a significant impact on employees and their motivation to work. Autocratic leadership styles caused a negative impact and laissez-faire invoked a positive impact on employees. Democratic had a positive impact according to literature review but the results of this study were not in agreement. Researchers explain this difference because the culture where this study was performed was very heavy in autocratic leadership and the employees were not very familiar with democratic leadership situations.

In study 3, a qualitative analysis of two companies was presented. The researchers, alongside experts in the field, described the strategies and benefits that both companies offer their employees and how it affected the overall employee satisfaction. It was reported that these companies had highly motivated employees who were dedicated to their jobs. Their quality of life was high for them and their families and they responded well to the training and benefits provided by the companies.

Study 4 depicted stress in the workplace. Researchers aimed their study on mobbing, or bullying, and how it causes negative stressful impacts on employees. They were able to prove

that there were significant relationships between mobbing behavior and stress and, more importantly, that stress has a very negative relationship with employee satisfaction.

Study 5 was a study where researchers surveyed employees about using a system of rewards and recognition. Rewards were found to be unanimously positive in not only as factors of satisfaction but also motivators for employees to work harder in their roles. Recognition was reported to have high levels of motivation and morale and verbal recognition was a top 6 motivator when the employees were asked to choose techniques that the company could use in increasing morale and motivating employees.

The following chapter will discuss these results more in depth and will confirm or deny the validity of the hypotheses mentioned in this study. Implications and suggestions will be presented for health industry companies to implement in their own organizations. Recommendations will also be offered as how to further research this important field of study.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations

Introduction

Motivated employees are an important part of an organizations success. Smith, Joubert, and Karodia define motivation as “the driving force which leads individuals to want to act, perform, or do something without pressure or manipulation” (2015, p. 41). Motivated and satisfied employees will want to work hard to perform optimally for the organization. Increasing the employee satisfaction levels will increase employee production levels which in turn increases customer satisfaction and organizational profitability. Understanding ways to start this process, by increasing employee satisfaction, needs to be very important for employers and organizations wanting to increase profitability. The research studies and literature review found in this paper leads to a proposed answer to the research question posted earlier:

1. Do effective training, effective leadership styles, good HR benefit packages, stress reduction techniques, and a system of rewards and recognition make employees more satisfied in the workplace?

To affectively answer this, several hypotheses have been formed and studied throughout this paper.

-
- H1_a Training and individual development will have a strong and positive impact on employee satisfaction levels.
 - H1_o Training and individual development will not have a strong and positive impact on employee satisfaction levels.
 - H2_a Differing leadership styles will have significant impacts on employee satisfaction.
 - H2_o Differing leadership styles will not have significant impacts on employee satisfaction.
 - H3_a Employee benefit packages will positively affect employee satisfaction.
 - H3_o Employee benefit packages will not positively affect employee satisfaction.
 - H4_a Stress in the workplace will have a significantly negative affect on employee satisfaction levels and behavior.
 - H4_o Stress in the workplace will not have a significantly negative affect on employee satisfaction levels and behavior.
 - H5_a Rewards and recognition will play an important role in satisfying employees and encouraging good performance.
 - H5_o Rewards and recognition will not play an important role in satisfying employees and encouraging good performance.

These studies aim to show that these strategies work in other occupational settings and should be investigated further. In this concluding chapter, a review of the findings from these studies will be put forth to either confirm or deny the postulated hypotheses. Also, recommendations will be offered to organizations for further development as well as to researchers to advance and promote beneficial research on this very important topic.

Interpretation of the Findings

Study 1: Training vs. satisfaction. Researchers Turkeyilmaz, Akman, Ozkan, and Pastuszak (2011) performed a quantitative survey study regarding employee satisfaction levels among employees in the public sector of Turkey showing that employee satisfaction can be positively affected by multiple methods. They looked at “five main factors, which are named empowerment and participation, working conditions, reward and recognition, teamwork and training, and personal development” (p. 689). The data listed in the previous chapter of this paper points out that training and personal development were the top most important factors toward increasing satisfaction among employees. This data coincides with literature review data and Turkeyilmaz et al. (2011) note that “training of workforce provides various benefits to organizations such as fewer production errors, increased productivity, decreased turnover and improved safety” (p. 689). These same researchers also pointed out that the learning environment built off of training also creates a better organizational culture and can enhance innovation and creativity. Training is crucial for an organization because of the increased benefits of productivity and profitability alone, but if also able to create a comfortable and enjoyable atmosphere for employees, training becomes an invaluable tool. The researchers pointed out that because of the positive consequences from training, close evaluation on training needs should be conducted and scheduled to be implemented and that “necessary financial resources should be available for such efforts,” (p. 689).

Another interesting take away from this study was that rewards and recognition was the third most important construct for increasing employee satisfaction. This construct will also be discussed in a later section of this paper, but Turkeyilmaz et al. (2011), concluded that organizations need to implement a system of rewards and recognition on the personal and department level to encourage employee involvement and support teamwork. (p. 690). These principles of rewards and recognition, training, and personal development have a very positive impact on employee satisfaction. All of the postulated hypotheses of the aforementioned study were positive and were confirmed by the researchers. H1_a of this study is also confirmed, which is that a positive and strong relationship exists between training and employee satisfaction levels.

Study 2: Leadership styles vs. employee satisfaction. Researchers in this quantitative study surveyed and looked at the effects of different leadership styles on employee satisfaction

and behavior among employees in the water and power companies in Pakistan. According to Fiaz et al. (2017), “observations of the study indicate that all three leadership styles have their own importance with regard to enhancing employees’ motivation and performance” (p. 152). Even though autocratic leadership styles were seen as a negative factor, they still carry heavy importance to employee satisfaction levels. Since the culture of the area being studied is heavily accustomed to autocratic power and it cannot be eliminated completely, researchers point out that the “dominance could be reduced to a certain level by the training of prospective leaders in an appropriate way to enhance employees’ motivation” (p. 152).

As mentioned in the previous chapter, democratic leadership styles did not show the same positive effectiveness that laissez-faire techniques did. Fiaz et al. reasoned this to the fact that the culture and bureaucratic environment limits the power and decision making to a select few and most employees were not familiar with the idea of sharing this responsibility in a democratic relationship (2017, p. 152). Noting the positivity of democratic and laissez-faire leadership styles, the researchers also mentioned that democratic and laissez-faire styles can increase productivity because they “will boost employees’ morale and the resultant voluntarily behavior will improve efficiency and effectiveness of the organization” (p. 153). Laissez-faire leadership was found to be very positive and conducive to the employees’ concept of satisfaction because there was more power and decision making placed in their hands with very little meddling of managers above them (p. 153).

In this study, with the exception of a lack of significant value for democratic leadership style, leadership proved to be an important factor in employee satisfaction. Autocratic and laissez-faire styles were on opposite sides of the power spectrum from a manager’s point of view and yet both proved to play highly significant roles in satisfaction. Autocratic produced negative effects on employees regarding their satisfaction while laissez-faire proved to be very positive. Differing leadership styles will have a significant impact on employee satisfaction, and therefore the hypothesis for this paper being tested, H2_a, is confirmed.

Study 3: Benefit packages vs. employee satisfaction. In this qualitative study, researchers Jha and Dikshit (2015) illustrate how well employee benefit packages affect employee satisfaction. In their study, they mention that the employees of Tata Steel were very satisfied with their financial and non-financial incentives with an emphasis on recruitment and

training (p. 117). Tata Steel employees also enjoyed working for a globally successful company and had high levels of cooperation, coordination, and motivation amongst its employees. Central Coalfield Limited employees were also very satisfied with the many benefits and lifestyle comforts offered by the company. Attrition, or exhaustion and turnover rates, was very low among both companies. This is mainly due to the excellent quality of life and benefits provided to the employees.

It is interesting to note though, that Jha and Dikshit (2015) point out that financial satisfaction was quite low in the companies yet the employees were still very satisfied because of the wonderful amenities and benefit packages offered to the employees (p. 118). The quality of life was good and employees did not want to part with the benefits. An example of these exceptional benefits is found under the healthcare benefits where “critical medical cases are referred to top hospitals in the country and entire expenses are borne by the company for employees and their dependents” (Jha & Dikshit, 2015, p. 118). Both Tata Steel and CCL boasted highly satisfied employees and benefits played a significant role in it. This confirms hypothesis H3_a which is that employee benefit packages will positively affect employee satisfaction levels.

Study 4: Stress reduction techniques vs. employee satisfaction. Study 4 consisted of a survey administered among the employees of a higher educational institute in Pakistan. The researchers Qureshi, Iftikhar, Janjua, Zaman, Raja, and Javed (2015), researched a concept called mobbing, or also known as bullying, in the workplace. They recorded that “this mobbing behavior has a direct and positive relationship with psychological and physical stress” (p. 111). These researchers noted that some of this behavior stems from organizational causes such as leadership, cultural differences, and unequal power distribution. It all also stems from social causes such as envy and personal causes such as skill/qualification levels and personality differences (Qureshi, et al., 2015, p. 111).

They also confirmed in their results that stress has a significant effect on employees as well. This principle has a direct relation to this paper. This stress has a direct relationship to employee behavior. As stated by Qureshi et al., “stress creates negative employee behavior as it leads employees toward low work morale, absenteeism, low job satisfaction and intentions to quit from the job” (2015, p. 111). Researchers also point out that employee behavior has a direct

effect on producing satisfaction levels (p. 110). Negative employee behavior will produce negative or low satisfaction levels as well as the fact that positive and uplifting behavior will increase satisfaction levels.

The tables and figures mentioned previously all show significant relationships in regards to one another. All of the hypotheses postulated by the researchers in the study were confirmed. This included the hypothesis regarding the significantly negative relation between stress and employee behavior. Thus, hypothesis H4_a for this study is confirmed that stress has significant and negative affect on employee behavior and satisfaction.

Study 5: Rewards and recognition vs. employee satisfaction. In this study, Smith, Joubert, and Karodia (2015) performed a quantitative survey among employees in a medical devices manufacturing company in South Africa. They surveyed the perceived attitudes regarding total reward and recognition practices in the company. They refer to a total rewards system, which “encompasses all elements perceived to be of value to employees, and includes both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards” (p. 79). The resulting data showed a very positive outlook toward rewards and recognition. 63% of respondents replied that they strongly agreed that rewards were important to them and were willing to increase efforts to receive more rewards. The remaining 37% simply agreed with the same statement (pp. 48-49). This study also found that nearly 98% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that recognition for a job well done increased morale and motivation in the workplace (p. 50). These positive results confirm that rewards and recognition increase satisfaction levels in employees.

This study also makes a good analysis of what types of motivators, extrinsic or intrinsic, employees prefer to see in the workplace. Smith, Joubert, and Karodia (2015) noted that aside from two extrinsic motivators involving money and pay, the more commonly selected motivators belonged to the intrinsic category with verbal recognition being a popular and influential motivator (pp. 75-76, 79). These results lead researchers to believe that “a total reward approach seems to be the most efficient way to maximize work motivation in modern times” (p. 82). In conclusion, results confirm that there is a significantly important relationship between rewards and recognition and employee satisfaction. Therefore, hypothesis H5_a for this paper is confirmed.

Organizational Implications

The studies described in this paper all post positive proof that there are many strategies that can be implemented for organizations to improve employee satisfaction which will result in increased employee output, customer satisfaction, and organizational profitability. In study 1, researchers pointed out that executive managers need to create a work environment in which employees receive support in their career development and need to provide career planning and training experiences to enhance their employees. Most importantly, “necessary financial resources should be available for such efforts” (Turkyilmaz et al., 2011, p. 689).

In study 2, researchers suggested that “employees’ motivation, performance, and productivity should increase if they are treated with good leadership styles” (Fiaz et al., 2017, p. 144). In this study, “adoption of democratic and laissez-faire style can lead to generation of positive outcomes on the part of employees” (Fiaz et al., 2017, p. 153). They also pointed out that autocratic leadership styles are negative but can be improved. They noted that “leadership and personality traits can enhance performance by taking care of the negative impacts of bureaucratic environment and ensuring democracy” (Fiaz et al., 2017, p. 153). When employee satisfaction levels respond to different forms of leadership styles, it proves that creating optimal environments based off of positive leadership skills and styles will improve employee satisfaction and motivation levels. The researchers emphasize that “entrepreneurs and leaders need to inculcate appropriate leadership styles to enhance productivity and performance” (Fiaz et al., 2017, p. 153).

Study 3’s researchers concluded that employees will demonstrate better job satisfaction when teamwork is encouraged, organizational image is accepted, occupational development is supported, and attrition is low (Jha & Dikshit, 2015, p. 118). Attrition being low is due to the excellent benefit packages and improved quality of life given to the employees by employers who cared about retaining their employees.

In study 4, it was seen that the negative effect of stress on the physiological and psychological health of an employee is very significant. This being said, “organizations should be aware about what can be the disruptive behaviors that might lead employees toward negative actions/behaviors and creates health problems in them like stress, frustration, aggression, etc.” (Qureshi, et al., 2015, p. 110). In the healthcare world, stress can be a very constant companion

and by reducing stress or developing ways to overcome stress easier, employees will be able to be more satisfied. Qureshi et al. (2015) concluded that employers can reduce effects of stress to create more satisfying environments in their workplaces and will stimulate a more efficient and friendly environment (p. 111).

Lastly, in study 5 researchers deduced that “implementing an effective total rewards system may result in satisfied, engaged, and productive employees, who in turn may create desired business results for this given organization” (Smith, Joubert, & Karodia, 2015, p. 82). Not all rewards and recognition practices will work for all employees. They also found that “to ensure the effectiveness of reward strategies, the organization must consider the uniqueness of the circumstances and the diversity of their employees” (Smith, Joubert, & Karodia, 2015, p. 82).

Recommendations for Action

Healthcare managers and organizations would do well to understand that this data is relevant to a successful future. Implementation of any one method or a combination of these strategies will have an impact on increasing employee satisfaction levels. Employers should begin to plan out how to effectively utilize these tools and how to implement them into action. This will cause an increase in employee performance and patient satisfaction levels and will lead to an increase in productivity. Organizations need to be concerned about the satisfaction and well-being of their employees in order to encourage and motivate them. A happy employee will be a successful and willing employee.

Recommendations for Future Research

The studies presented in this paper were studies gathered from around the world with different ethnic and organizational cultures in the private and public business sector. Healthcare industry workers can also be very diverse in gender, age, ethnicity, culture, and beliefs and be private or public sector based. But, in order to truly show that healthcare workers will experience similar increases in satisfaction levels, more studies should be performed in the actual healthcare industry regarding the strategies mentioned in this paper. Also, some of the studies shown here had limited sample sizes and it would be beneficial to see a more diverse and larger sample size for future research and study. Future researchers would do well to investigate a larger selection of possible strategies to study. Most organizations will need more than one method to effectively increase their profitability through employee satisfaction. If future

research is done on the popular and acceptable methods that healthcare workers would prefer, administrators and managers may adopt more of these methods into their business strategies and invest more time, money, and effort into their implementation.

Conclusion

Increasing productivity in the healthcare field is vital to an organizations tenure and success. Research has demonstrated that “continuing business success depends significantly on highly motivated employees who are productive and creative” (Smith, Joubert, & Karodia, 2015, p. 39). Satisfied customers will return and refer friends which increase an organization’s success and productivity. Creating a better customer friendly environment where optimal work performance is seen and appreciated will satisfy customers. This optimal work performance can be achieved in many different forms and ways but is seen throughout this paper to be achieved through employee satisfaction levels. Employee motivation can be “a way to achieve unusual goals, in which they put effort above and beyond stated organizational goals” (Fiaz et al., 2017, p. 144). Returning to the quote by Sir Richard Branson mentioned earlier in this paper, “clients do not come first. Employees come first. If you take care of your employees, they will take care of the clients” (as cited in Pearce, 2016).

Part of taking care of one’s employees is to create an environment where they are satisfied, and motivated to work. The findings in the studies throughout this paper show that there are significant relationships between strategies such as effective training, effective leadership styles, good employee benefit packages, stress reduction techniques, and a system of rewards and recognition and increasing employee satisfaction and performance levels. As noted by Turkyilmaz et al., “empirical evidence suggests that job satisfaction is an antecedent to organizational loyalty of employees” (2011, p. 682). This organizational loyalty will benefit the company as employees strive to work their best and to continue to be motivated. Future research can be furthered in the healthcare industry to cement this principle into any organization’s plans of operation and success. After all the efficiency and protocols are in place, an important factor will be to have motivated employees to perform their best to take care of their patients. It is important for organizations to understand that “employee motivation is one of the most essential parts of a company’s success, performance, development, and survival” (Smith, Joubert, & Karodia, 2015, p. 43).

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