

Job satisfaction among community pharmacy professionals in Mekelle city, Northern Ethiopia

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Introduction: Job satisfaction is a multidimensional, enduring, important, and much-researched concept in the field of organizational behavior and has been identified as recognition in one's field of work, level of salary, opportunities for promotion, and achievement of personal goals. Job satisfaction directly affects the labor market behavior and economic efficiency by means of the impact on productivity and turnover of staff. The aim of this study was to assess the satisfaction level of pharmacy professionals in Mekelle city.

Methods: This institution-based cross-sectional study was conducted as a survey and only included voluntary participants. Those participants who did not volunteer to participate were excluded from the study. A structured questionnaire was used as a data collection tool; it was developed from different literature in the English language, and then the original tool was translated to the local language for the purpose of understanding.

Results: In Mekelle, ~100 pharmacy professionals work in private medicine retail outlets. From those, only 60 volunteered to participate in this study. Significant difference in job satisfaction and job stress were observed between those working full-time and part-time, with *P*-values of 0.031 and 0.021, respectively.

Conclusion: From the findings of the current study, it can be concluded that around two-thirds of pharmacy professionals in Mekelle city were satisfied with their professional practice.

Keywords: job satisfaction, pharmacy professionals and retail outlets

Introduction

Job satisfaction is a multidimensional, enduring, important, and much-researched concept in the field of organizational behavior and has been identified as recognition in one's field of work, level of salary, opportunities for promotion, and achievement of personal goals. Job satisfaction directly affects labor market behavior and economic efficiency by means of the impact on productivity and turnover of staff;¹ poor job satisfaction is directly associated with performance, especially for professionals like pharmacists.²

Different factors contribute to job satisfaction such as perceived workload, information technologies, continuing pharmacy education, preceptorship, treatment by management, and other interpersonal interactions, including patient contact and coworker relationships.³ Job satisfaction is a function of career commitment in pharmacists; those committed to their careers and profession will be more satisfied with their current jobs.⁴ A study done in Ireland showed that 57% of community pharmacists were satisfied with their current job "most of the time" and only 5% said they were never or rarely satisfied with their current job. Sixty percent of hospital pharmacists were satisfied with their current job "most of the time". A study conducted in Ireland reported that

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being interrupted by telephone calls, excessive/increased workloads, and not having enough staff are the most common reasons causing stress among pharmacy professionals.⁵

Health care systems cannot function effectively without a sufficient number of skilled, motivated, and supportive health workers, so for effective functioning of any professional practice, satisfaction is the basic requirement.⁶ A study from Saudi Arabia reported that pharmacists had low levels of satisfaction in three areas, which included skills utilization, professional development, and income.⁷

A pharmacist is a practitioner who has a bachelor's degree in pharmacy from a recognized institution and is registered with a licensing authority to practice pharmacy services. Any pharmacy professional may not perform any task out of his/her authorized scope of practice and out of the practice stream in which he/she is registered.⁸ In Ethiopia, pharmacists are the most accessible health care professionals and their major role is compounding and dispensing of medicines. They play a major role in the delivery of medicines to clients and also contribute greatly toward ensuring the provision of quality medicine with appropriate information.⁹

A study reported from Ethiopia showed that pharmacists, in general, derive slightly higher than the average level of job satisfaction, with a mean score of 3.0 ± 1.11 (mean \pm standard deviation [SD]) on the overall job satisfaction item, in a scale of 1–5. In Ethiopia, younger pharmacists (age ≤ 30 years) reported a lower level satisfaction than the middle age group (31–40 years) pharmacists. On the other hand, older pharmacists (age >40 years) reported a higher level of satisfaction for all items than the other age groups.¹⁰ A similar study in Southwest Ethiopia depicted that 59% of pharmacists were satisfied with their working position and 63% of them were satisfied with the working environment. The study also reported that 60.8% of the respondents were satisfied with their job.¹¹

Assessing satisfaction level of pharmacists in Mekelle could make a profound contribution toward improving pharmaceutical care service and increasing customer level of satisfaction. If we know the area with low satisfaction level of pharmacists, we can put in place measures to improve it. The aim of this study was to assess the satisfaction level of pharmacy professionals in Mekelle city.

Methodology

Study area and period

The study was conducted in Mekelle city. Mekelle city is located 784 km north of Addis, which is the capital of Ethiopia. A total of 79 retail outlets were found in Mekelle; from these, 32 were pharmacies and 47 were drug stores.

Study design

In this study, institution-based cross-sectional study design was employed.

Population

Source population

The study included all pharmacy professionals of Mekelle city.

Study population

All pharmacy professionals who were eligible and volunteered to respond to questionnaires.

Sample size determination and sampling procedure

This study was conducted as a survey, and only included voluntary participants. In Mekelle, ~100 pharmacy professionals work in private medicine retail outlets. From those, only 60 volunteered to participate in this study.

Study variables

Independent variables

Sociodemographic variables, including age and sex of respondents, educational level, working area, year of experience, and type of employment, were considered as independent variables.

Dependent variables

Job satisfaction was the outcome variable of this study.

Inclusion and exclusion criteria

All study participants who volunteered to participate were included and those who did not were excluded from the study.

Data collection and management

Data were collected by using structured questionnaires covering questions aimed at assessing the sociodemographic profiles and satisfaction related to working conditions and environment.

Data quality assurance

Pretest of the data collection tool was conducted on five pharmacy professionals. Based on the result of the pretest, necessary corrections were done.

Data entry, analysis, and interpretation

After the data were collected, they were entered and analyzed by SPSS (SPSS Inc, Chicago, IL, USA version 20). A descriptive analysis was done through calculating frequency, mean, and SDs. Statistical tests including one-way analysis of variance were done to check for association between

sociodemographic variables and job satisfaction level. In performing the statistical analyses, *P*-value of 0.05 and confidence interval of 95% was employed.

Ethical considerations

Ethical clearance was obtained from the Ethical Review Committee of the College of Health Science, Mekelle University, for conducting the study. Pharmacy professionals to be interviewed were asked for their consent for participation.

Results

Out of the 60 participants involved in the study, 55 responded to the questionnaires appropriately and completely, which makes the response rate 91.6%. Majority of the respondents were male (N=38, 69.1%) and working in private pharmacies (N=44, 80%) (Table 1).

More than two-thirds (69.1%) of the respondents strongly agreed with the fact that job stress was low in drug retail outlets, and 54.5% of the pharmacy professionals claimed that the profession has a good future (strongly agree [N=30, 54.5%]). Of all the study participants, 50.9% responded “strongly agree” for the question related to overall satisfaction. The result of this study showed that 44.4% participants were not satisfied with the working environment (disagree=25.5%, strongly disagree 10.9%) (Table 2).

Normality of the distribution for age of the participants was checked through histograms, with mean age of 32.62 years and SD of 8.829 (Figure 1).

Statistical test (one-way analysis of variance) of the difference among categories of respondents was related to job satisfaction.

Significant difference in job satisfaction and job stress was observed between pharmacists working full-time and part-time, with *P*-value of 0.031 and 0.021, respectively (Table 3).

Discussion

Majority of the study participants (69.1%) were male and within the age of 20–30 years, which consists of 45.5%. The mean age of the participants was 32.62 years with SD of 8.829; this result was comparable with the result obtained from the study that assessed workforce of pharmacists in Ethiopia, which reported that the mean age of the pharmacists was 30.2

Table 1 Frequency of sociodemographic and other baseline information of participants, a cross-sectional study on assessment of job satisfaction among pharmacy professionals at Mekelle city, January 2016

Serial no	Variable	Categories	Frequency (N)	Frequency (%)
1	Age	20–30	25	45.5
		31–40	20	36.4
		41–50	7	12.7
		>50	3	5.4
2	Sex	Male	38	69.1
		Female	17	30.9
3	Level of education	Diploma	25	45.5
		Degree	28	50.9
		Master	2	3.6
4	Years of experience	<5	18	32.8
		5–10	25	45.5
		>10	12	21.7
5	Type of retail outlets	Private pharmacy	44	80
		Private drug store	10	18.2
		Public pharmacy	1	1.8
6	Type of employment	Full-time	47	85.5
		Part-time	8	14.5

Table 2 Response of the participants on the variables related with job satisfaction, a cross-sectional study on assessment of job satisfaction among pharmacy professionals at Mekelle city, January 2016

Serial no	Questions	Strongly agree N (%)	Agree N (%)	Neutral N (%)	Disagree N (%)	Strongly disagree N (%)
1	Low job stress	38 (69.1)	10 (18.2)	1 (1.8)	6 (10.9)	–
2	The job has good future	30 (54.5)	12 (21.8)	6 (10.9)	5 (9.1)	2 (3.6)
3	Good recognition from the society	27 (49.1)	9 (16.4)	6 (10.9)	11 (20)	2 (3.6)
4	Attractive salary	23 (41.8)	14 (25.5)	1 (1.8)	11 (20)	6 (10.9)
5	Feeling of accomplishment from the job	19 (34.5)	14 (25.5)	8 (14.5)	9 (16.4)	5 (9.1)
6	Freedom to choose own working method	23 (41.8)	11 (20)	4 (7.3)	11 (20)	6 (10.9)
7	Good working environment	22 (40)	12 (21.8)	4 (7.3)	11 (20)	6 (10.9)
8	Good working position	22 (40)	11 (20)	2 (3.6)	14 (25.5)	6 (10.9)
9	Opportunity to choose personal abilities	20 (36.4)	12 (21.8)	5 (9.1)	12 (21.8)	6 (10.9)
10	Good staff interaction	23 (41.8)	12 (21.8)	1 (1.8)	15 (27.3)	4 (7.3)
11	Chance of professional development	23 (41.8)	10 (18.2)	7 (12.7)	11 (20)	4 (7.3)
12	Adequate training	24 (43.6)	12 (21.8)	7 (12.7)	8 (14.5)	4 (7.3)
13	Benefit for the society	22 (40)	13 (23.6)	3 (5.5)	13 (23.6)	4 (7.3)
14	I am satisfied with my job	28 (50.9)	9 (16.4)	2 (3.6)	12 (21.8)	4 (7.3)

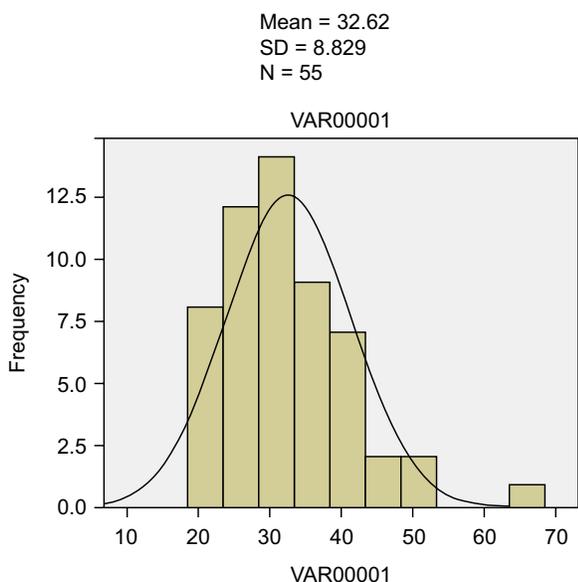


Figure 1 Age distribution of pharmacy professionals, a cross-sectional study on assessment of job satisfaction among pharmacy professionals in Mekelle city, January 2016. (VAR00001 = Age).

Abbreviation: SD, standard deviation.

Table 3 Association of sociodemographic characteristics with job satisfaction and stress among pharmacy professionals at Mekelle city, January 2016

Serial no	Variable	Groups	Association between groups P-value
1	I am satisfied with my job	Age	0.986
		Type of employment	0.021
2	Low job stress	Education level	0.373
		Type of employment	0.031

years (SD = 8.3, range: 21–63 years).¹⁰ The previous study was a nationwide study and the current study was also the reflection of the prior one. As a result of the study being conducted in the same country, the consistency of the result was not surprising.

From the participants, 67.3% were satisfied with their professional job (strongly agree = 50.9%, agree = 16.4%), which is higher than the result reported from northern Ireland that revealed that 57% of community pharmacists were satisfied with their current job ‘most of the time’.⁵ The difference may result from difference in sample size; the previous study comprises 766 respondents, which is far higher than the current study.⁵ Despite the earlier result, the finding of the current study is promising when we compared it with the results from the developed country of Ireland. The current study showed

no correlation between the different age and job satisfaction levels (P -value=0.986), which is consistent with the results of the study conducted in Saudi Arabia that showed no significant association between pharmacists’ job satisfaction and age, marital status, duration at present work, monthly salary, and experience.⁷ But this result is not consistent with the finding of the previous study in Ethiopia, which depicted more experienced pharmacists (>10 years of professional work experience) who scored a consistently higher mean on all work satisfaction items than less experienced pharmacists (both <5 and 5–10 years of professional work experience).¹⁰

Limitation of study

The study consisted of a small sample size, which makes generalization to all the professionals difficult.

Conclusion

From the current study, it can be concluded that there is promising satisfaction (two-thirds of the participants) status of pharmacy professionals in Mekelle city. Generally, job satisfaction and stress are closely associated with nature of employment and educational status.

Disclosure

The author reports no conflicts of interest in this work.

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