Letters

Job satisfaction of pharmacists at a large medical center

Whether or not employees deem their work as being agreeable determines job satisfaction levels.[1] Intrinsic and extrinsic job characteristics are the two main factors that influence the level of job satisfaction. The presence of positive intrinsic factors leads to satisfaction, while the presence of positive extrinsic characteristics reduces dissatisfaction.[1] Few studies have evaluated health-system pharmacy job satisfaction.

The Texas Medical Center (TMC) is one of the world's largest medical and health centers. It has 42 nonprofit member institutions that welcome over 100,000 patients and visitors every day. We used a questionnaire to determine the level of job satisfaction among health-system pharmacists at TMC and paid particular attention to whether responses differed between men and women.

The survey included statements from two previously validated and reliable scales for measurement of intrinsic and extrinsic factors, as well as general pharmacist job satisfaction.[2-4] Each completed questionnaire was coded and analyzed using the SAS version 8.2 statistical software package to compare gender differences using t tests. Eighty-four completed surveys were received, for a response rate of 26%.

In general, pharmacists were somewhat satisfied with their jobs (table). Among all respondents, the mean overall score on each job satisfaction scale was greater than 3, where 3 indicated neither agreement nor disagreement with the scale's statements. Mean job satisfaction scores did not differ significantly ($p > 0.05$) between men and women. Although most women (62% and 68% in the two scales) indicated they were satisfied with their job, they expressed significantly less agreement than men that their pay was right for the kind of work they do and for their assigned responsibilities (mean ± S.D. agreement score, 3.9 ± 1.2 for women and 4.3 ± 0.9 for men). Women tended to indicate lower salary ranges than men, but women were also slightly younger than their male counterparts and had not spent as much time practicing pharmacy or working at their current institution.

Intrinsic factors such as challenge, performance, and autonomy were considered important by female pharmacists, as were extrinsic factors such as staffing, workload, relationship with coworkers, and job security. For employees currently satisfied with intrinsic factors, improvement of extrinsic factors by management would decrease dissatisfaction and increase job retention by reducing employee turnover.

The demographics of pharmacy are changing. More women than men are entering the profession. By 2020, around half of practicing pharmacists will be female, the second highest proportion of any health profession.[5] Future studies should examine the intrinsic and extrinsic factors considered important to female pharmacists that will be of value in enhancing job satisfaction.

1. Stewart JE. Hospital pharmacists' job satisfaction: a review of the data. *Top Hosp Pharm Manag.* 1983; 3:1-9.
2. Barnett CW, Kimberlin CL. Development and validation of an instrument to measure pharmacists' satisfaction with their jobs and careers. *Am J Pharm Educ.* 1986; 50:5-14.
3. Carjaval MJ, Hardigan PC. Pharmacists' sources of job satisfaction: inter-gender differences in response. *Am J Pharm Educ.* 2000; 64:420-5.
4. Gaither CA. Career commitment: a mediator of the effects of job stress on pharmacists' work-related attitudes. *J Am Pharm Assoc.* 1999; 39:353-61.
5. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Eighth report to the President and Congress on the status of health personnel in the United States. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1992; DHHS publication no. HRS-P-OD-92-1.

Caroline Ngo, Pharm.D., Pharmacy Practice Resident and Graduate Student

Sujit S. Sansgiry, Ph.D., Assistant Professor

College of Pharmacy
University of Houston
1441 Moursund Street
Houston, TX 77030
ssansgiry@uh.edu

The Letters *column is a forum for rapid exchange of ideas among readers of* AJHP. *Liberal criteria are applied in the review of submissions to encourage contributions to this column.*

The Letters *column includes the following types of contributions: (1) comments, addenda, and minor updates on previously published work, (2) alerts on potential problems in practice, (3) observations or comments on trends in drug use, (4) opinions on apparent trends or controversies in drug therapy or clinical research, (5) opinions on public health issues of interest to pharmacists in health systems, (6) comments on ASHP activities, and (7) human interest items about life as a pharmacist. Reports of adverse drug reactions must present a reasonably clear description of causality.*

Short papers on practice innovations and other original work are included in the Notes *section rather than in* Letters.

Letters should be submitted electronically through http://ajhp.msubmit.net. Authors without Internet access may mail one copy of their letter and a 3.5-inch high-density IBM-compatible disk containing the letter file to AJHP, 7272 Wisconsin Avenue, Bethesda, MD 20814-4836. The following conditions must be adhered to: (1) the body of the letter must be no longer than two typewritten pages, (2) the use of references and tables should be minimized, (3) the number of authors should be no more than three, and (4) the entire letter (including references, tables, and authors' names) must be typed double-spaced. After acceptance of a letter, the authors are required to sign an exclusive publication statement and a copyright transferal form. All letters are subject to revision by the editors.

Demographic Information and Survey Responses[a]

Variable	Men (n = 30)	Women (n = 54)
Mean ± S.D. age (yr)	40.4 ± 11.1	38.4 ± 9.0
Race (no. [%])		
White	16 (53)	23 (43)
African-American	3 (10)	7 (13)
Hispanic	0	3 (6)
Asian	11 (37)	18 (33)
Other	0	3 (5)
Marital status (no. [%])		
Single	10 (33)	17 (32)
Married	15 (50)	33 (62)
Divorced or separated	5 (17)	3 (6)
No. children in household (no. [%])		
0	15 (50)	25 (46)
1	8 (27)	19 (35)
2	7 (23)	9 (17)
3	0	1 (2)
Highest pharmacy degree (no. [%])		
B.S. or M.S.	18 (60)	34 (63)
Pharm.D.	12 (40)	20 (37)
Mean ± S.D. time licensed (yr)	14.1 ± 10.4	12.1 ± 9.1
No. (%) working full time	30 (100)	53 (98)
Job position		
Assistant director	1 (3)	4 (7)
Clinical supervisor	3 (10)	1 (2)
Nonclinical supervisor	0	2 (4)
Clinical staff	8 (27)	14 (26)
Nonclinical staff	17 (57)	30 (56)
Other	1 (3)	3 (5)
Mean ± S.D. time at current institution (yr)	8.7 ± 7.8	7.0 ± 5.8
Yearly salary ($; no. [%])		
40,000–50,000	0	3 (6)
51,000–60,000	0	4 (8)
61,000–70,000	5 (18)	8 (15)
71,000–80,000	13 (45)	24 (46)
81,000–90,000	9 (31)	9 (17)
>90,000	2 (6)	4 (8)
Mean ± S.D. score on JS 1 statements[b]	3.4 ± 0.8	3.3 ± 0.8
All things considered, I am satisfied with my current job	3.8 ± 1.0	3.6 ± 1.0
The idea of spending the remainder of my working life in my current job makes me happy	3.2 ± 1.2	2.9 ± 1.1
I often leave work with a feeling that I am doing something that I do *not* enjoy	3.5 ± 1.2	3.5 ± 1.2
I often get so wrapped up (interested) in my work that I lose track of time	3.2 ± 1.0	3.2 ± 1.0
Mean ± S.D. score on JS 2 statements[b]	3.6 ± 0.9	3.3 ± 0.8
I find real enjoyment in my job	3.6 ± 1.0	3.4 ± 0.9
I like my job better than the average worker	3.9 ± 0.9	3.6 ± 0.9
I would not consider taking another job	2.9 ± 1.2	2.9 ± 1.3
Most days I am enthusiastic about my job	3.7 ± 1.1	3.4 ± 0.9
I feel fairly well satisfied with my job	3.8 ± 1.0	3.4 ± 1.1

[a]Not all questions were answered by all respondents.

[b]JS = job satisfaction scale. Agreement with statements was indicated with a 5-point Likert scale, with 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree. Cronbach's alpha was 0.76 and 0.90 for JS 1 and JS 2, respectively.