

The Relationship between Lifeguards' Needs and Their Job Satisfaction Based on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

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Abstract

Introduction: Many studies have been conducted regarding employees' motivation, their job satisfaction and organizational success. The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between lifeguards' needs and their job satisfaction based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

Methods: This field study was a correlational research in which the study sample included all lifeguards who worked in Tehran swimming pools. Based on Krejcie and Morgan table, 306 participants entered the study. Of all distributed questionnaires, 238 questionnaires were returned. In order to collect data, Needs Evaluation Questionnaire (NEQ) and Job Descriptive Index (JDI) were used. For data analysis, Pearson correlation coefficient used ($p \leq 0.05$).

Results: Findings revealed significant relationship between elementary level needs accommodation and job satisfaction of Lifeguard. It also showed that female lifesaving job satisfaction was in a higher level than male lifesaving job satisfaction. ($p \leq 0.05$).

Conclusion: It can be concluded that, increasing staff satisfaction in all private organizations in order to achieve efficiency and sport promotion is necessary. Managers of organizations have to try to find the ways to increase lifeguards job satisfaction in order to gain more efficiency.

Keywords: Motivation, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Job Satisfaction, Lifeguards

Introduction

Staff of organizations can be considered as the most important and largest investment in every organization (1). The primary task of managers is to motivate staff so that they reach the highest possible level of performance. This means that the manager has to make sure that the staff members work regularly and have a positive contribution in organization's vision. If staff members are motivated, they will be satisfied with their job and do their duty as well as possible. Job satisfaction is very important to retain and attract effective

employees (2). Many studies have been conducted regarding employees' motivation, their job satisfaction and organizational success (3, 4). In the years 1920-1930, some researches were done about human relations in organizations by Elton Mayo that were typical examples in the field of neoclassical theory. These researches gained certain popularity among industrial, governmental, and executive managers due to their benefits to human. Neoclassical theories, with emphasis on human relations and use of people as a resource that are different from a machine,

changed the behavior of managers regarding employees. Among theories regarding human behavior, motivational theories especially Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory is of utmost importance. Maslow used the terms physiological, safety, belongingness and love, esteem, and self-actualization to describe the pattern that human motivations generally move through. Based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs, the most fundamental levels of needs are called deficiency needs (esteem, friendship and love, security and physical needs). Maslow's theory suggests that the most basic level of needs must be met before the individual will strongly desire the secondary or higher level needs (5). On the other hand, experts believe that job satisfaction can be regarded as a person's general attitude towards his/her job. A person with a high level of job satisfaction will have a positive attitude regarding his/her job. Employees usually prefer jobs which they can enhance their skills and abilities, take advantage of the available opportunities and also they love jobs where the expertise exists. In the perspective of human resource management, job satisfaction is known as an indicator of quality of life. There is no doubt that people who are satisfied with their jobs feel that they have achieved success. However, among the various professions, lifesaving in aquatic environments is a profession that has been regarded as one of the most challenging works in the world. Most of aquatic lifeguards, due to the existence of some gases such as CL that is used for water purification, suffer from lung disease and others catch neurological disorders. Taking into account these harsh conditions many pool owners do not pay attention to these issues and do not care about their needs. Thus, lifeguards do their jobs without motivation, and perhaps lack of motivation in the pool can cause many problems. It can be said that if the needs of lifeguards are satisfied, they will do their job with enthusiasm. Some studies have been done in this regard. So the aim of this study is to investigate the relationship between lifeguards'

needs and their job satisfaction based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Amir Kaveh (6) in a study entitled "review of factors affecting job motivation of teachers and school staff in Najaf Abad" stated that according to the staff and teachers, safety needs had the greatest impact on job motivation. Based on the sex of staff and teachers, the effect of job safety factors in motivating men was more than women and the effect of physiological and safety factors also in men teachers was more than women. There were not any significant differences between the needs of teachers and staff according to their education. Arshi et al (7) investigated different levels of Maslow's hierarchy of needs and job satisfaction in staff of Ardabil University of Medical Sciences. The results showed that, staff satisfaction of service delivery system management was low. In addition, top managers had more dissatisfaction. Results of this study also found that esteem needs and self-actualization needs had priority over other needs among staff. In another study conducted in 2007, Mirzamohammadi and Zahedi (8) investigated the relationship between Maslow's hierarchy of needs and job satisfaction among educational managers. The findings showed that there was a positive relationship between providing needs and job satisfaction. It was concluded that the more needs are satisfied, the higher job satisfaction is in educational managers. Furthermore, sex had a negative significant relationship with managers' job satisfaction. In fact, findings showed that men had less job satisfaction than women. In another research Abedini examined the relationship between job satisfaction of South Khorasan sport coaches with their needs based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs (6). The results showed that there was a significant relationship between job satisfaction and psychological needs, safety needs and esteem needs. Findings also indicated that participants considered physiological needs as the least important needs placing it in the fifth priority but this was in opposition with Maslow's

framework in which physiological needs are the first. Other results of this research showed that social needs were the most important for coaches. Additionally, sex had a relationship with social needs and education had a relationship with self-actualization needs. Finally results showed that coaches' satisfaction of their jobs was more than middle level. Abolghasemi and Kordi also investigated the relationship between Maslow's hierarchy of needs and improvement orientation in wrestlers participated in the second Iranian sport tournament (9). They concluded that accommodation of needs make more levels of improvement orientation based on task in athletes. They also stated that needs satisfaction can increase relaxation of athletes and consequently helps wrestlers to do the best performance. Finally it can be concluded that, Maslow's theory can be used to recognize the behavior and improve sport performance and make an appropriate relation between coaches and athletes. Brayfield and crockett reviewed the literature regarding the relation between job satisfaction and performance and they concluded that there was a slight relationship between these two. (5) These researchers proved that job satisfaction was the result of society motivation process. Wanda Roos (10) also concluded that, if staffs are motivated appropriately, they will be happy with their job, do their job accordingly and this can have an impact on employees' organizational culture. Tella (5) investigated the relationship between motivational needs and organizational commitment. Results showed that there was a positive, significant relationship between needs satisfaction and organizational commitment. It was also concluded that organizational commitment can reach its highest level with regard to employees self-actualization needs. Tella also showed that there was a relationship between motivation and job satisfaction. Ayub did a research to investigate the relationship between work motivation and job satisfaction (1). Results indicated a significant correlation between

work motivation and job satisfaction. She concluded that in order to increase efficiency, staff members have to be motivated appropriately. But the motivation should not be more than normal level because it can cause job loss. Regarding declair information above the purpose of the present study was to investigation of the relationship between Lifeguards needs and their job satisfaction based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

Methods

This field study was a correlational research in which the study sample included all lifeguards who worked in the swimming pools of Tehran. Based on Krejcie and Morgan table, the sample size was 306. Of all distributed questionnaires, 238 questionnaires were completed and returned to researchers. In order to collect data, Needs Evaluation Questionnaire (NEQ) which contains 60 two-option questions was used. In addition, Job Descriptive Index (JDI) questionnaire which was standardized by Viski and Croom in 1991 was used. The questionnaire was translated and used by Abedini (2007) for a thesis in Iran. To achieve a standardized instrument, the questionnaire was distributed among 10% of samples (6). The validity of questionnaires was also confirmed by 12 sports management experts. Reliability of instruments was also examined by Cronbach's alpha. In order to analyse data, Kolmogorov-Sminor test was used to investigate the natural distribution of the data. After determining the natural distribution of the data, Pearson correlation coefficient test was used to investigate the relationship between the variables of the research. Also for analyzing information Spss 19 software has been used.

Results

Results showed that esteem needs, self-actualization needs, social needs, safety and physiological needs were the most important in the perspective of women respectively. The information also showed that physiological

and Safety needs were important for women, but Social, Esteem and Self-actualization were important for men. As can be seen from Table 1, singles regarded social needs as the first priority and physiological needs at the last priority. Conversely, married participants considered physiological needs as the most important. Findings according to table 1, reveal that the most physiological needs existed in participants over 30 years of age and the least was related to the age group of 20-25 years old. Regarding safety needs, participants over 30 had a great zest but it was the least in the age group of 25-30. It also shows that higher level of needs are related to 20-25, 25-30 and over 30 years old respectively and the lower needs all exist in over 30 years old. The findings of Table 2 are highlighted as follows: 1. Women lifeguards had more job satisfaction in comparison to male lifeguards, 2. Singles had higher level of job satisfaction in comparison to married participants, 3. Participants in the age range of over 30 had higher level of job satisfaction in comparison to the age group of 25-30. Additionally, participants in the age range of 20-25 years old had the lowest level of job satisfaction. As it can be seen in table 3, Regarding job satisfaction, 9 participants (20.9%) had low job satisfaction. Most of the participants (48.8%) had moderate satisfaction. More information can be found from table 3. Table 4 shows normal distribution and parametric tests have to be done.

Discussion

Present study showed that There was a significant relationship between lifeguards' job satisfaction and their physiological needs. This finding is aligned with Abedini' study (6). The study found a significant relationship between the satisfaction of physiological needs and job satisfaction. The results of Deljoo' study also showed that physiological needs had a positive effect on employees' job satisfaction (7). Also in present study there was a significant relationship between satisfaction of safety

needs and lifeguards' job satisfaction. This is consistent with the results of Mohebzadegan (2002) and Abedini's study (2007). Mohebzadegan stated that there was a significant relationship between all Maslow's hierarchy of needs and job satisfaction (6). The results showed that there was also a relationship between satisfaction of social needs and lifeguards' job satisfaction. This is consistent with the results of Abedini's study. He stated that there was a relationship between the satisfaction of social needs and lifeguards' job satisfaction (6). The results indicated that there was no relationship between esteem needs and lifeguards' job satisfaction. This finding is in line with the results of Mohebzadegan (2002) and Abedidni's study (2007). And the results showed that there was no relationship between the satisfaction of self-actualization needs and lifeguards' job satisfaction. Craiga (2002) showed that there was a significant relationship between staff motivation and job satisfaction (14). It seems that apart from personal factors such as providing needs and their relationship with job satisfaction some organizational and social elements can be effective in relation with job satisfaction. Research shows that some factors such as organizational agility, organizational justice, organizational efficiency and organizational climate can have a positive relationship with job satisfaction apart from personal factors. Regarding job satisfaction, findings showed that women job satisfaction was more than men job satisfaction. The findings of Deljoo's study (1995) showed that females are happier with their job in comparison to males. This is in line with the results of the present study. Craiga (2002) also concluded that female teachers are more satisfied with their job than male teacher (14). There is also a consistency with previous researches in relation with sex and job satisfaction. Herrera et al. (2003) stated that job satisfaction of men coaches is more than women coaches (15).

Table 1. Mean of needs according to demographic information

| Variable | | Physiological needs | Safety needs | Social needs | Esteem needs | Self-actualization needs |
|------------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------------------|
| Sex | Female | 50.95 | 56.95 | 58.85 | 67.52 | 65.66 |
| | male | 64.50 | 59.59 | 62.40 | 58.68 | 54.09 |
| Marriage | Single | 52.45 | 60.66 | 62.75 | 61.83 | 62.25 |
| | Married | 64.73 | 55.31 | 58.05 | 64.47 | 56.57 |
| Age | 20-25 years old | 51.66 | 55.88 | 63.55 | 62.88 | 66 |
| | 25-30 years old | 59.26 | 54.15 | 61.57 | 65.89 | 58.21 |
| | Over 30 | 59.86 | 65 | 57.80 | 59.40 | 57.93 |
| Education | High school diploma | 57.25 | 56.87 | 55.50 | 61.87 | 68.50 |
| | Associate degree | 50.23 | 59.92 | 62.07 | 65.23 | 62.53 |
| | BA | 62.11 | 59 | 62.94 | 61.11 | 54.77 |
| | MS.c | 65 | 52.75 | 56.25 | 66.50 | 55.50 |
| Population | | 57.88 | 58.30 | 60.67 | 63 | 59.74 |

Table 2. Job satisfaction mean according to demographic information

| Variable | | Work | Supervisor | Co-worker | Promotion | Salary | Job satisfaction |
|------------|---------------------|------|------------|-----------|-----------|--------|------------------|
| Sex | Female | 3.29 | 3.26 | 3.32 | 2.72 | 2.35 | 2.95 |
| | Male | 2.88 | 2.69 | 3.47 | 2.19 | 2.26 | 2.66 |
| Marriage | Single | 3.06 | 2.94 | 3.20 | 2.32 | 2.22 | 2.92 |
| | Married | 3.10 | 3.01 | 3.64 | 2.61 | 2.42 | 2.71 |
| Age | 20-25 years old | 2.76 | 2.81 | 3.13 | 2.73 | 1.84 | 2.62 |
| | 25-30 years old | 3.16 | 2.98 | 3.84 | 2.18 | 2.45 | 2.80 |
| | Over 30 | 3.17 | 3.06 | 3.58 | 2.62 | 2.40 | 2.92 |
| Education | High school diploma | 3.45 | 3.56 | 3.83 | 2.71 | 3.02 | 3.28 |
| | Associate degree | 2.84 | 2.63 | 3.15 | 2.50 | 2.05 | 2.58 |
| | BA | 2.96 | 2.80 | 3.33 | 2.31 | 2.12 | 2.68 |
| | MS.c | 3.70 | 3.67 | 3.60 | 2.40 | 2.57 | 3.12 |
| Population | | 3.08 | 2.97 | 3.40 | 2.45 | 2.31 | 2.98 |

Table 3. The range of job satisfaction in research subjects

| Variable based on frequency and percentage | Non satisfaction | Low satisfaction | Moderate satisfaction | High satisfaction | Very high job satisfaction | Population job satisfaction mean |
|--|------------------|------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Frequency | 0 | 9 | 21 | 10 | 3 | 2.98 |
| Percentage | 0 | 20.9% | 48.8% | 23.3% | 7% | 100% |

Table4. Results of normal distribution of data by K S test

| | Physiological needs | Safety needs | Social needs | Esteem needs | Self-actualization needs | Job satisfaction |
|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z | 0.75 | 0.61 | 0.49 | 0.76 | 0.63 | 0.86 |
| Asymp.sig. (2-tailed) | 0.61 | 0.84 | 0.96 | 0.59 | 0.81 | 0.44 |

Table 5. Results of Pearson Correlation test

| Pearson correlation | Physiological needs | Safety needs | Social needs | Esteem needs | Self-actualization needs |
|---------------------|---------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------------------|
| Job Satisfaction | 0.194 | 0.119 | 0.137 | 0.041 | 0.53 |

It can be concluded that, increasing employees' satisfaction in all organizations in order to achieve efficiency and improvement in sports is necessary. Wu and Norman (2006) stated that high level of job satisfaction can lead the staff to reach a high level of organizational commitment. They also concluded that high levels of job satisfaction can reduce the role of conflict and ambiguity (3). Huey- Ming (2002) results showed that the more job satisfaction, the less leave from a profession. Top managers of organization have to find appropriate ways to satisfy employees. If employees' satisfaction is obtained, they will work for the goals of the organization (16). All emotions, logical and behavior tendencies of an individual towards job cause him/her to develop a positive or

negative attitude towards his/her job. Individuals spend approximately 70% of their daily life and 2/3 of their life time in work life; so they are expected to have a high level of job satisfaction. Feeling satisfied at work helps an individual to develop positive attitudes towards his/her job. Efficient use of human power can only be possible by working in a satisfying job according to their abilities and individual characteristics. Job satisfaction has a significant role in the lives of employees. An employee who has enough satisfaction from his/her job enjoys life, shows more positive behaviors, has a healthy psychological condition and can increasingly succeed in work life and private life. (17).

Conclusion

Rescue in aquatic environments is one of the most challenging and harmful occupations in the world. Regardless of its extraordinary importance in all countries, unfortunately, these employees are not being cared about in our country. Protecting and safeguarding the lives of people in an environment where a person can die without even the slightest wounds needs comprehensive support. Job satisfaction and life satisfaction are strongly related to several desirable outcomes both in life and at work. For example, whereas job satisfaction has been associated with higher job performance, organizational citizenship behavior and life satisfaction and lower absenteeism and turnover intentions, life satisfaction has been associated with higher career satisfaction, organizational commitment and job satisfaction. Our results show a key mechanism which companies and employers of such places may use if they wish to have happier and more engaged and productive workers: organizations should help employees to satisfy their psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Further, companies should accommodate first needs of their lifeguards, help workers to feel that their behavior is volitional and meaningful; that they are effective and efficient in their behavior and feel connected, appreciated and understood by important others.

Ethical issues

All organizations such as IRSF and Iran Lifesaving Federation were informed about doing this research. Before the distribution of the questionnaires Lifeguards also were informed about the purpose of the study. Questionnaires were completed anonymously and confidentiality of the data was maintained.

Authors' contributions

All authors equally contributed to the writing and revision of this paper.

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