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RESEARCH ARTICLE

MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS AND TECHNIQUES AT THE WORKPLACE: PERSPECTIVES OF NURSES IN TWO MAJOR HOSPITALS IN TRINIDAD

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: To ascertain the perspectives of nurses in Trinidad about their experiences with motivational factors and techniques used in their hospitals. It also was to determine if their experiences are associated with their demographic characteristics.

Design: A cross-sectional survey was undertaken. All nurses who consented to respond to the researchers-developed questionnaire were engaged. 467 nurses responded from two major hospitals in Trinidad in an instrument used between September and October of 2014. Data were analysed using the SPSS programme and ANOVA tests of $P > 0.05$ was considered statistically significant.

Result: Nurses in Trinidad as well experience the general motivational factors and techniques. For Motivational factors, there are (a) feeling of "worth for the work done" (69.4%), and "working conditions" (28%); (b) among the motivational techniques, "remuneration" was the most highly rated as (87.5%) of the nurses agree or strongly agree that it is important; (c) the study also established that aspects of motivational factors are associated with working condition, gender, age, experiences of the nurses, marital status and the hospital that the nurses are practicing; and (d) aspects of motivational techniques are associated with experiences of the nurses, gender, marital status, and Departments that the nurses are working.

Discussion: The implication of the result was discussed in light of literature and considering the quest of the Governments of Trinidad and Tobago to address the shortage of the Islands' manpower especially in the Health Sector.

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INTRODUCTION

Motivation is the process that accounts for an individual's intensity, direction and perspective of efforts towards attaining a goal (Lambrou, Kontodimopoulos and Niakas, 2010). It is non behavioural inner driving force (Pathiratne, 2012). It follows then that it is an active ingredient to work attitudes. Robins (2001) posits that it stems from a need which must be fulfilled. Indeed, it breeds specific behaviours. Lambrou *et al.* (2010) opines that in the health care field, attaining the health objectives in a population depends to a large extent on the provision of, effective, efficient, accessible, viable and high-quality services. The health workforce, present in sufficient numbers and appropriately allocated across different geographical is arguably the most important input in a unique production process (Dussault and Dubois, 2003). On the one hand, motivation has been studied in its relationship with job

satisfaction. Singh and Tiwari (2011) inform that motivation is a function of job satisfaction among white collar employees of a company in India. In Pakistan, Chaudhry, Kalyar and Riaz (2011) indicated that salary, feedback, relationship with co-workers and work environment were the factors that the teachers of a high school identified as their extrinsic factors of motivation, while promotion and participation in decision making were the intrinsic motivational factors. In Cyprus, achievement was the most motivational factors for the nurses and doctors (Lambrou, Kontodimopoulos and Niakas (2010). In England, Lephala, Ehlers and Oosthuizen (2008) identified the intrinsic motivational factor associated with nurses in selected hospitals to include achievement, recognition, responsibility, the nature of work and advancement (promotion), while the extrinsic factors included working conditions, salary, organizational/administrative policies, supervision and interpersonal relations. In Trinidad and Tobago, the problem of high health staff shortage among nurses in public hospitals in Trinidad and Tobago has been published (Onuoha, Gross, Louis, Byron-Moreau, Powder, Sagar, and Sambrano, 2014). In December 29, 2014, Dr Anand Chattergoon, the Medical Director of one of the major

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hospitals in south Trinidad lamented on the continued shortage of nurses in the Island's hospital. It traced one of the factors attributing to this as absenteeism following dissatisfaction and lack of motivation. As a result, it has become important to ascertain from the nurses what their perspectives are with regard to their experiences of motivational factors at their workplaces, as well as their perceptions of the techniques employed by management to continue to motivate them in their workplaces.

Objectives

At the end of the study, the following objectives are expected to be realized:

1. To determine the nurses' perspectives with regard to their experiences of motivational factors practiced in their hospitals.
2. To determine the nurses' perspectives with regard to their experiences of the motivational techniques utilized in their hospitals
3. To determine if their experiences of motivational (a) factor and (b) techniques in their hospitals are associated with their bio-data

METHODS

Design

A cross-section descriptive survey was undertaken of the nurses in two major hospitals in Trinidad, namely San Fernando general hospitals in the south, and Eric William Medical Sciences Hospital in the North. Polit and Beck (2008) indicated that in a study in which data are collected at one point in time and sometimes used to infer change over time when data are collected from different age or developmental groups is of cross-sectional design. In this study all registered nurses who volunteer to take part in the study were targeted and their information would be used to infer about the motivational factors and techniques experienced by the nurses in the hospitals over time. Also, Zikmund (2000), Abramson and Abramson, (1999) and Gay and Airasian, (2003) concurred by describing a cross sectional study as one in which various segments of a population are sampled at a single point in time. In all an estimation of 860 nurses from both hospitals were targeted. However 467 nurses gave their consent representing 54.3% of the population.

Instrument

The instrument for the study was researchers'-developed questionnaire. It considered the Herzberg's theory of motivation, noting the extrinsic (hygiene) factors including the working conditions, remuneration, organizational policies, and interpersonal relationship, while the intrinsic factors included achievements, recognition, responsibility, nature of work and advancement of promotional opportunities (Lephalala, Ehlers and Oosthuizen, (2008). These factors were condensed into a 10-item each for motivational factors and motivational techniques. We also structured 3 groups of each (a) Motivational factors, namely: (i) Satisfactory working conditions, (ii) Type of employment and (iii) Ability to pursue further education; (b) Motivational techniques, namely: (i)

Time off given, (ii) Promotional opportunities and (iii) Flexible work schedule. Previously, Onuoha and Brieger (1992) had noted that these were ways of motivating health staff in remote places in a developing country (Nigeria). Thus, the instrument is made of three sections namely, the bio-data section with 7 items, the motivational factor section with 10 items and the motivational technique section with 10 items. The instrument contained no identifiers, 10 items each were identified for each of the major variables thus motivational factors, and the motivational techniques. In all the respondents responded to a 2-item instrument structured in simple agreement Likert-like statements. The responses range from "strongly agree to strongly disagree, and coded with numbers 5 to 1 respectively. Their mean responses to these items were cross matched with the respondents' bio-data (Table 1). Our Institutional Ethics Committee approved the research protocol. The instrument was self-administered between September 1 and October 30th, 2014.

Table 1. Motivational factors and techniques as used in the study

Motivational Factors	Motivational Techniques
a. Satisfactory Working Conditions (5 items)	a. Time off given (3 items)
b. Permanent versus Temporary Employment (2 items)	b. Effective Promotional Opportunities (4 items)
c. Ability to pursue further education (3 items)	c. Flexible Work Schedules (3 items)
Total =10	Total = 10

Statistics

The statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used for the statistical analysis. The mean responses on the dependent variables, (Motivational factors and motivational techniques) were analysed using a one-way ANOVA test. The data were presented as absolute numbers and percentages. As in Ezenwaka, Onuoha, Sandy and Israel-Richardson (2014), a p-value less than 0.05 were considered statistically significant.

RESULTS

Demographic Variables

Table 2 shows the demographic characteristics of the participants. Regarding age, most (48.0%) of the participants were within the age 26-35 years with the least (9.9%) age group being those 18-25. Their religions were varied but most were of Christian religion (56.1%) followed by Muslims (16.7%) and Hindu (13.1%). They were mostly female (88.0%), married (51.8%) and from Eric Williams Medical Sciences Complex Hospital (55.7%).

Motivational Factors

On their responses to Motivational Techniques, it should be noted that 70% or more of the participants agreed or strongly agreed to the 10 identified motivational techniques as ways to motivate the nurses (Table 3). However, the nurses did not appear as enthusiastic with regard to their responses on whether they agreed or disagreed to be receiving the 10 motivational factors. Their agreements were highest in "feeling as though the work has worth" (69.4%), and lowest (27%) for "satisfying working conditions" (Table 4).

Table 2. Demographic Characteristics of Nurses in Trinidad (N=467)

Demographic data	Frequency	Percent %
Age		
18-25	46	9.9
26-35	224	48.0
36-45	128	27.4
46 years and over	69	14.8
Religion		
Christian	262	56.1
Muslim	78	16.7
Hindu	61	13.1
Other	66	14.1
Gender		
Male	56	12.0
Female	411	88.0
Marital Status		
Single	144	30.8
Married	242	51.8
Divorced	26	5.6
Common Law	28	6.0
Separated	16	3.4
Widowed	11	2.4
Working experience		
Less than a year	15	3.2
1-5 years	156	33.4
6-10 years	150	32.1
10 years plus	146	31.3
Place of work		
San Fernando General Hospital	207	44.3
Eric Williams Medical Sciences Complex	260	55.7
Department in which you work		
Medical	116	24.8
Surgical	191	40.9
Specialty	160	34.3

Indeed as high as 54.6% disagreed or strongly disagreed that they were receiving "satisfactory working conditions". Table 5 shows the association between the respondents' responses on aspects of motivational factors and their demographic characteristic. Satisfactory working condition was associated with gender ($p < 0.04$), and place of work ($p < 0.002$), type of employment was associated with age ($p < 0.05$), marital status ($p < 0.003$), and the experience of the nurses ($p < 0.048$). Also the ability to pursue further education was associated with age ($p < 0.029$), religion ($p < 0.002$), gender ($p < 0.000$), marital status ($p < 0.000$) and Department of work ($p < 0.006$). Also regarding motivational techniques, Time off given was associated with experience ($p < 0.024$); and Department ($p < 0.011$). Effective promotional opportunities were associated with gender, marital status, and Department of work ($P < 0.05$). Similarly, flexible work schedule was associated with age, gender, experience and department (< 0.05).

DISCUSSION

The main findings of this study were:

1. Nurses in Trinidad accept the generally used motivational factors and techniques (Intrinsic and extrinsic) as shown in Tables 2 and 4)
2. Feeling of worth for the work done was the highest rated among the motivational factors (69.4%), while working conditions was the least factors experienced by the nurses-28% (Table 3).
3. Among the motivational techniques, remuneration was the most highly rated as ((87.5%)) of the nurses agree or strongly agree that it is important (Table 4).

Table 3. Motivational Factors expressed by nurses in Trinidad

Motivational Factors	S/Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		S/disagree	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Present Incentives	56	12.0	119	25.5	110	23.6	91	19.5	91	19.5
Satisfactory working conditions	31	6.6	100	21.4	81	17.3	132	28.3	123	26.3
Recognized for work done	38	8.1	109	23.3	106	22.7	133	28.5	81	17.3
Permanently employed Versus temporarily employed	110	23.6	171	36.6	106	22.7	133	28.5	81	17.3
Being independent in performing duties	97	20.8	209	44.8	105	22.5	42	9.0	14	3.0
Advancement in career, e.g. Head Nurse	76	16.3	144	30.8	161	34.5	70	15.0	16	3.4
Ability to pursue Further education, e.g. BSc Nsg	122	26.1	151	32.3	109	23.3	58	12.4	27	5.8
Involvement in decision making	77	16.5	169	36.2	119	25.5	71	15.2	31	6.6
Compensation/Recognition for work done	116	24.8	158	33.8	54	11.6	66	14.1	73	15.6
Feeling as though the work done has worth	140	30.0	184	39.4	75	16.1	39	8.4	29	6.2

Table 4. Motivational Techniques expressed by Nurses in Trinidad (N=467)

Motivational Techniques	S/Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		S/disagree	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Reasonable periodic increase in salary	274	58.7	116	28.8	28	6.0	9	1.9	40	8.6
Chances to be able to pursue post basic education.	215	46	154	33.0	56	12.0	8	1.7	34	7.3
Time off given	223	47.8	167	35.8	30	6.4	13	2.8	34	7.3
Effective performance appraisal system	238	51.0	127	27.2	54	11.6	16	3.4	32	6.9
Effective promotional opportunities	228	48.8	119	25.5	51	10.9	45	9.6	24	5.1
Organization recognizes and acknowledges your work	176	37.7	153	32.8	153	32.8	57	12.2	39	8.4
Organizational policies motivates for achieving its aims and objectives.	181	38.8	165	35.3	50	10.7	46	9.9	25	5.4
Given opportunities to attend institutional educational classes	212	45.4	138	29.6	49	10.5	36	7.7	32	6.9
Flexible work schedule to support personal situations	212	45.4	122	26.1	68	14.6	30	6.4	35	7.5
Verbal recognition from Senior officers e.g head Nurse, nurse manager etc.	191	40.9	140	30.0	44	9.4	44	9.4	48	10.3

Table 5. ANOVA showing Motivational factors related to Nurses' Demographic Characteristics (N=547)

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA	MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS														
	SATISFACTORY WORKING CONDITIONS					PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT VS TEMPORARY					ABILITY TO PURSUE FURTHER EDUCATION				
	SS	DF	MS	F	SIG	SS	DF	MS	F	SIG	SS	DF	MS	F	SIG
AGE	2.016	4	.504	.676	.609	7.541	4	1.885	2.571	.037*	7.996	4	1.999	2.729	.029*
RELIGION	4.064	4	1.016	.820	.513	6.584	4	1.646	1.334	.256	20.652	4	5.163	4.289	.002*
GENDER	1.023	4	.256	2.449	.046*	.875	4	.219	2.088	.081	2.924	4	.731	7.284	.000**
MARITAL STATUS	11.547	4	2.887	2.266	.061	20.410	4	5.103	4.067	.003*	47.380	4	11.845	9.901	.000**
RN WORKING EXPERIENCE	2.987	4	.747	.970	.424	7.364	4	1.841	2.422	.048*	6.703	4	1.676	2.200	.068
WHERE DO YOU WORK	4.056	4	1.014	4.213	.002*	3.146	4	.787	.993	.411	1.527	4	.382	1.551	.186
DEPARTMENT	1.430	4	.357	.611	.655	3.146	4	.787	1.352	.250	8.274	4	2.069	3.626	.006*

* $P \leq 0.05$ ** $P \leq 0.001$

Table 6. ANOVA showing the Relationship between Motivational techniques expressed by nurses and the Nurses' demographic Characteristics

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA	MOTIVATIONAL TECHNIQUES														
	TIME OFF GIVEN					EFFECTIVE PROMOTIONAL OPPORTUNITIES					FLEXIBLE WORK SCHEDULE				
	SS	DF	MS	F	SIG	SS	DF	MS	F	SIG	SS	DF	MS	F	SIG
AGE	3.630	4	.907	1.223	.300	6.527	4	1.632	2.218	.066	18.881	4	4.720	6.59	.000**
RELIGION	11.525	4	2.881	2.355	.053	1.786	4	.447	.359	.838					
GENDER	.782	4	.196	1.863	.116	1.211	4	.303	2.910	.021*	1.478	4	.370	3.572	.007*
MARITAL STATUS	5.172	4	1.293	1.004	.405	15.999	4	4.000	3.164	.014*	12.111	4	3.028	2.379	.051
RN WORKING EXPERIENCE	8.590	4	2.147	2.259	.024*	6.658	4	1.665	2.185	.070	11.408	4	2.852	3.79	.005**
WHERE DO YOU WORK	2.211	4	.553	2.259	.062	1.902	4	.475	1.938	.103	1.048	4	.262	1.060	.376
DEPARTMENT	7.509	4	1.877	3.3281	.011*	24.686	4	6.172	11.536	.000**	17.801	4	4.450	8.093	.000**

* $P \leq 0.05$ ** $P \leq 0.001$

- The study also established that aspects of motivational factors are associated with working condition, gender, age, marital status, experiences of the nurses, and the hospital the nurses are practicing (Table 5).
- Similarly, aspects of motivational techniques are associated with experiences of the nurses, gender, marital status, and Departments that the nurses are working (Table 6).

In Trinidad, shortage of nurses is a major issue in the health care delivery system. The shortage is a combination of factors including migration, retirement and change of career (Trinidad Express, Dec 29, 2014; Ezenwaka *et al.*, 2014; Onuoha *et al.*, 2014). One expects therefore that the nurses who remain, should be encouraged to remain in service through motivational means as is explored in this study. This study exposed that the nurses from Trinidad expressed that remuneration is a major component of their acceptable extrinsic (hygiene) motivational factor. This was expressed in their strong affirmative response to "present incentives and compensations for work done". This finding concurs with literature on the contribution of extrinsic factors to motivation of workers (Lephalala *et al.*, 2008, Lambrou *et al.*, 2010, and Byrne (2006). Equally, the nurses expressed the desire to be recognized for what they do. Thus "feeling as though work done has worth", "recognized for work done" "advance in career", and "ability to pursue further education" were all intrinsic factors that the nurses indicated could help with their motivation. Trinidad is a high income economy (Ezenwaka *et al.*, 2014), and advancement through higher education has

become what professionals use to climb the ladder of their professions. It is not surprising therefore that nurses in Trinidad and Tobago are expecting assistance through these aspects of motivations for their chosen profession. What is surprising however is the fact that the Governments through their policies over time have not capitalized on this with a view to motivating their nurses to remain their workplaces to boost the health manpower resource? It therefore envisaged that this study would provide the impetus to address personnel shortage, albeit small, one of the recurring problems of manpower resource in the Caribbean.

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