

How satisfied are public health workers? A national perspective on workforce morale

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Overview

- Describe job satisfaction of state health agency employees
- Examine correlates of job satisfaction

Background

- Public health is challenged to recruit and retain a robust workforce
 - Since 2008, 91% of all state health agencies have experienced job losses due to attrition (ASTHO)
- Difficult to attract new graduates to the field
 - 21% of state health agency (SHA) employees are planning to leave their current position next year (Sellers et al)
- Negative consequences of workforce turnover
 - Time and resources to recruit, onboard, train, relocate
 - Institutional knowledge

Background

- Why do some employees leave their positions and others stay?
 - Job satisfaction
 - Workers that are satisfied with their jobs:
 - Stay at their organizations longer, have less absenteeism
 - Are more productive and engaged
 - What determines job satisfaction?
 - Organizational factors
 - Work relationships (supervisor)
 - Autonomy
 - Salary
 - Demographic characteristics
 - Workplace learning/training

Purpose

- Characterize the current level of job satisfaction among a nationally representative sample of state health agency (SHA) employees
- Identify factors that are correlated with high and low levels of satisfaction
- Prioritize factors to assist practitioners in identifying high impact areas

Methods

- **Workplace environment**
 - United States Office of Personnel Management Annual Survey / Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey
 - 20 items, measured on a Likert scale (strongly agree – strongly disagree)
 - “my supervisor/team leader treats me with respect”
- **Job satisfaction**
 - Bowling Green State University Job in General Scale
 - >27 satisfied, <22 dissatisfied, 22-27 neutral
- **Agency/job characteristics**
 - Agency size, tenure, supervisory status, salary
- **Demographic characteristics**
 - Age, race, gender

Methods

- Factor analysis of workplace environment items (20)
 - 3 groups
 - Supervisory support
 - Organizational support
 - Worker engagement
- Compared differences in JIG Score
 - Level of agreement with supervisory/organizational support items
 - Demographics
 - Job/organizational characteristics
- Multivariate linear regression
 - JIG score: dependent variable
 - Supervisory/Organizational support: primary independent variable

Mean JIG Score Comparisons by Demographic, Job, and Organizational Characteristics

	Mean	CI (95%)			Mean	CI (95%)	
SUPERVISORY STATUS*				SALARY*			
Non-supervisor	36.4	35.9	36.9				
Team leader	36.6	35.6	37.6	\$35,000.01 - \$55,000	36.7	36.1	37.2
Supervisor	38.5	37.9	39.2	\$55,000.01 - \$75,000	37.4	36.8	38.0
Manager	38.2	37.3	39.1	\$75,000.01 - \$95,000	37.4	36.5	38.3
Executive	41.7	40.2	43.2	95,000.01 or higher	40.1	39.3	40.9
ORGANIZATIONAL SIZE*							
Small	38.4	37.5	39.2	REGION*			
Medium	36.8	36.3	37.3	New England & Atlantic	37.4	36.6	38.3
Large	37.0	36.4	37.6	Mid-Atlantic & Great Lakes	37.5	37.1	37.8
				South	36.8	36.0	37.6
AGE*				Mountain/Midwest	38.4	37.4	39.4
25 or below	40.5	38.9	42.0	West	36.7	35.4	38.0
26 to 30	38.1	36.5	39.7				
31 to 35	37.0	35.8	38.1	TENURE IN AGENCY*			
36 to 40	38.0	37.1	38.8	0-5 years	37.9	37.2	38.7
41 to 45	37.0	35.6	38.4	6-10 years	36.6	35.9	37.2
46 to 50	36.9	35.9	38.0	11-15 years	36.7	35.9	37.5
51 to 55	37.1	36.1	38.1	16-20 years	36.8	35.7	37.9
56 to 60	36.3	35.3	37.4	21 or above	37.1	36.3	37.9
61 to 65	37.7	36.8	38.5				
66 or above	38.1	36.0	40.3	RACE*			
				Non-White	36.5	36.0	37.1
				White	37.5	37.1	37.9

*Represents significant differences within groups <0.01

Proportion and mean JIG Score of items related to supervisory support

	Percent	JIGSCORE
MY SUPERVISOR/TEAM LEADER TREATS ME WITH RESPECT*		
Strongly disagree	3%	17.63
Disagree	5%	21.94
Neither agree nor disagree	10%	28.36
Agree	38%	36.76
Strongly agree	44%	42.07
MY SUPERVISOR/TEAM LEADER PROVIDES ME WITH OPPURTUNITIES TO DEMONSTRATE MY LEADERSHIP SKILLS*		
Strongly disagree	5%	18.28
Disagree	10%	26.3
Neither agree nor disagree	19%	33.97
Agree	41%	39.44
Strongly agree	25%	43.32
SUPERVISORS/TEAM LEADERS IN MY WORK UNIT SUPPORT EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT*		
Strongly disagree	4%	18.43
Disagree	8%	24.79
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	31.79
Agree	45%	39.2
Strongly agree	25%	43.74
SUPERVISORS/TEAM LEADERS WORK WELL WITH EMPLOYEES OF DIFFERENT BACKGROUNDS*		
Strongly disagree	3%	18.53
Disagree	7%	23.92
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	32.33
Agree	48%	39.3
Strongly agree	23%	43.01

*Represents significant differences within groups <0.05

Proportion and mean JIG Score of items related to organizational support

	Percent	JIGSCORE
MY TRAINING NEEDS ARE ASSESSED		
Strongly disagree	6%	22.67
Disagree	21%	31.68
Neither agree nor disagree	28%	37.07
Agree	35%	40.83
Strongly agree	10%	44.58
COMMUNICATION BETWEEN SENIOR LEADERSHIP AND EMPLOYEES IS GOOD IN MY ORGANIZATION*		
Strongly disagree	12%	24.28
Disagree	22%	32.76
Neither agree nor disagree	23%	37.63
Agree	32%	42.13
Strongly agree	11%	44.82
CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION ARE REWARDED*		
Strongly disagree	9%	21.73
Disagree	20%	31.09
Neither agree nor disagree	32%	37.64
Agree	29%	42.39
Strongly agree	10%	45.38
I RECOMMEND MY ORGANIZATION AS A GOOD PLACE TO WORK*		
Strongly disagree	5%	16.38
Disagree	9%	21.85
Neither agree nor disagree	23%	32.01
Agree	43%	41.25
Strongly agree	20%	45.40

*Represents significant differences within groups <0.05

Results of multivariate linear regression on the correlates of job satisfaction (JIG score)

Independent Variables	β	p-value	CI (95%)	
Supervisory Support	4.33	<0.001	3.95	4.71
Organizational Support	6.66	<0.001	6.14	7.19
Supervisory Status				
Non-Supervisor (Ref)				
Team leader	0.40	0.36	-0.48	1.29
Supervisor	0.99	0.002	0.40	1.58
Manager	1.08	0.01	0.24	1.92
Executive	1.35	0.04	0.04	2.66
Race				
Non-White (Ref)				
White	0.69	0.002	0.27	1.10
Tenure in Agency				
0-5 years (Ref)				
6-10 years	0.61	0.20	-0.33	1.54
11-15 years	1.04	0.02	0.18	1.90
16-20 years	1.00	0.03	0.11	1.90
21 or above	1.12	0.03	0.09	2.15
Degree Earned				
Associates (Ref)				
Bachelors	0.52	0.20	-0.29	1.32
Graduate	0.79	0.03	0.10	1.48
Agency Size				
Small (Ref)				
Medium	-0.91	0.08	-1.91	0.10
Large	-1.22	0.02	-2.22	-0.22

Discussion

- Overall, SHA employees are satisfied with their jobs
- To increase satisfaction focus on
 - Supervisory support
 - Provide opportunities to demonstrate leadership skills, support employee development, work well with employees of different backgrounds
 - Provide management and diversity training
 - Informal learning experiences and mentorship opportunities
 - Find ways for employees to take the lead on a project
 - Organizational support
 - Meet the training needs of the workforce, reward creativity and innovation
 - Regularly identify and meet training needs
 - Support a culture of continuous learning
 - Examine policies and procedures that restrict creativity and innovation

Limitations and Conclusions

- Cross sectional study
- Survey bias
- Other factors that influence job satisfaction
 - Individual personalities
 - Marital status
 - Health status
- Providing employees with organizational and supervisory support is likely to improve job satisfaction
 - Assess training needs, meet those needs
 - Build strong relationships among peers and supervisors



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Questions?

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