ELEMENTS AMONG MEDICAL DOCTORS IN SELECTED

GENERAL HOSPITALS.

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between the level of motivation and job satisfaction for groups of medical doctors in general hospitals. To ensure motivation, it was operationalised by using nine elements which were the feeling of helplessness, feeling of alienation, organizational politics, personnel policies, communication, supervision, working condition, nature of work and organizational commitment. A questionnaire was designed based on past questionnaires and human resource books. The questionnaires were administered to a sample of housemen, medical doctors, consultants and specialists (N=83). Past study (Cheah, 1995) showed that there were inverse relationships between the feeling of helplessness, feeling of alienation and organizational politics with job satisfaction. The results of this study showed there were negative relationships between feeling of alienation and organizational politics with job satisfaction. Elements of communication and working condition show the highest correlation with job satisfaction. Beside that element personnel policies also shows positive correlation with job satisfaction. Elements such as supervision, nature of work and working commitment shows negative relationships with job satisfaction. From the demographic data, results that the Chinese and Indian doctors shows more job satisfaction. Beside that married and higher qualified doctors shows more job satisfaction. Finally the results shows that higher the job designation, the higher the job satisfaction.

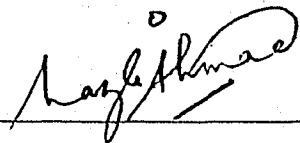# APPROVAL PAGE

TITLE OF PROJECT PAPER: A STUDY ON JOB SATISFACTION

AND   ELEMENTS   OF

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GENERAL HOSPITALS.

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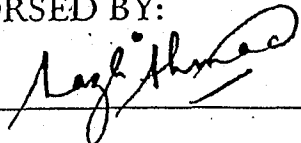
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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this project paper is the results of my own investigation, except where otherwise stated. Other sources are acknowledged by reference and a bibliography appended.

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INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF RESEARCH

The relationship between motivation and job satisfaction has been one of the more important concerns in industrial and organizational psychology. Motivation is a fascinating topic. The topic of motivation and job satisfaction is intertwined. Work performance in response to motivational appeals may be satisfying and the possibility of need satisfaction itself constitutes a motivational appeal. Therefore, besides utilizing labor efficiently, another goal of management is job satisfaction for members of the organisation. If motivation is to be successful, it must lead to work that is simultaneously productive and satisfying.

The importance and the relationship between motivation and job satisfaction have been documented by a number of studies. However the studies have been limited to a general investigation of motivation and job satisfaction without focusing on a specific profession or industry. The few studies in Malaysia that have selected specific professions have focused on teachers and engineers. Though the medical

profession is an extremely important profession, the views of doctors and other medical employees on job satisfaction have been largely ignored.

The crucial question to pose is therefore, how motivated and satisfied are the medical doctors in general hospitals? This will be the focus of the present study. Many will agree that medical doctors really play a crucial role in providing healthcare service to the public. So if the medical doctors, particularly in general hospitals are not satisfied with their work, they would probably render a poor service which will directly affect the health of Malaysian patients.

Before the discussion on the background of the research is expanded further, it is important to understand the duties and objectives of doctors as prescribed by the Malaysian Medical Association (MMA). According to the MMA, the duties of doctors are:-

. To defend and preserve at all times, the Constitution of the Malaysia Medical Association in the execution of the legitimate rights, interests and privileges of membership of the members.

. To uphold the image and credibility of the medical profession and to ensure that the members provide the highest standard of health care to the people of Malaysia.

. To treat all members with honesty, sincerity and equality, and respect their honor and dignity.

. To ensure that the Officers and Staff of the Association will serve the members without self-interest and without prejudice.

. To ensure that the legitimate professional interests of all members are safeguarded, and that the Ethical Code of the Association and other related Professional Code are upheld in all dealings of the Association.

. To uphold the bona fide interests of all members in all dealings with government and it's related agencies, other professional medical and non-medical and, non-governmental organizations.

. To safeguard and, when necessary, further enhance, the personal interests and benefits of the members, in all matters of investments, endowments, insurance and other financial undertakings.

. To provide accessibility for members to all relevant notices and publications of the Association, and opportunities for their Continuing Medical Education (Malaysian online of Members Medical Association, 1998).

The purpose of motivation is found in the purpose of the organisation. Leaders of business organizations, or other organizations for that matter, seek to maximize productivity. This requires maximization of output (revenues) in terms of input (costs). In many business firms, effective utilization of labor is the key to improving productivity. Highly motivated employees can make the difference between a marginal firm and a firm that sets sales and profit records. Effective labor utilization, in turn, depends upon the motivation of personnel. Managers must be reasonably effective motivators if an organisation is to reach its productive potential (Cheah, 1996).

In the early fifties, the level for productivity appeared laudable and the concern about job satisfaction seemed to be visionary and unnecessary (Taylor, 1947). Social changes, during the last few decades, however, have forced the issue of job satisfaction to the surface. Today's managers find it hard to ignore the issue of job satisfaction at a time when the demands of meaningful work are increasing.

There are at least two good reasons why managers are concerned about job satisfaction. First, they believe that they have a moral responsibility to do what they can to provide their employees with a satisfying work environment. Second, they believe that the behavior of satisfied workers will make positive contribution to the organisation and decrease employee turnover. Studies have shown that job satisfaction has a direct effect on employee turnover (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975;

Fishbein, 1980; Farrell and Rusbult, 1981). Therefore orientation of professional managers must be towards both productivity and morale. The viable organisation must achieve a minimum level of productivity and also provide a minimum level of job satisfaction to its members.

1.2   SCOPE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

According to the human resource literature, one alternative to increase job satisfaction is through the increase in the level of motivation, which would lead to a simultaneous increase in productivity (Gordon & Denisi, 1995). They subscribe to the principle that poorly motivated employees are potentially low producers; highly motivated employees are potentially high producers. With the increase in job satisfaction this would also bring about a lower attrition rate and therefore recruitment and training of new employees need not be so intensive.

Facing such a dilemma are the general hospitals in Malaysia and their members of staff which includes housemen, medical officers (MO's), specialists, nurses and hospital assistants. Due to the nature of their service, automation in hospitals is not practical. Thus, it is better and more economical to increase the quality of medical services through improving the motivational factors of the medical doctors that leads to job satisfaction.

Highly motivated doctors will render a higher quality healthcare service to the society. If doctors in general hospitals are not satisfied with their work, consultation provided will be poor and the victims will be the members of the public. So it is important for the hospital management, particularly in general hospitals, to increase the level of motivation among medical doctors and this will directly increase the job satisfaction of the doctors.

1.21 Purpose of the study

Using the principle proposed by Dessler, 1997 this study of the level of motivation of medical doctors and its relationship with job satisfaction is done to see how the management of hospitals can increase motivation and job satisfaction so as to increase the employees quality of service and lower the attrition rate.

The present study has two purposes. The primary purpose is to investigate the relationship between the level of motivation of medical doctors and their level of job satisfaction. The present study also aims to gain a deeper insight into different elements of motivation. Therefore the secondary purpose of the research is to examine how these different elements of motivation relate to job satisfaction.

1.2.2 Theoretical framework

Although motivation is a broad and complex concept, the literature reveals that there exists a consensus on its basic characteristics (Blau, 1993). Motivation can be defined as the set of processes that arouse, direct, and maintain human behavior towards some goal (Greenberg & Baron, 1997, pp.142), see Figure 1.

FIGURE 1.O : DEFINITION OF MOTIVATION

| Arousal | Direction | Maintenance | Goal |

Desire to make a good impression → Compliment work → Persist

Work extra hard → Persist

Do special favors → Persist

Good impression made
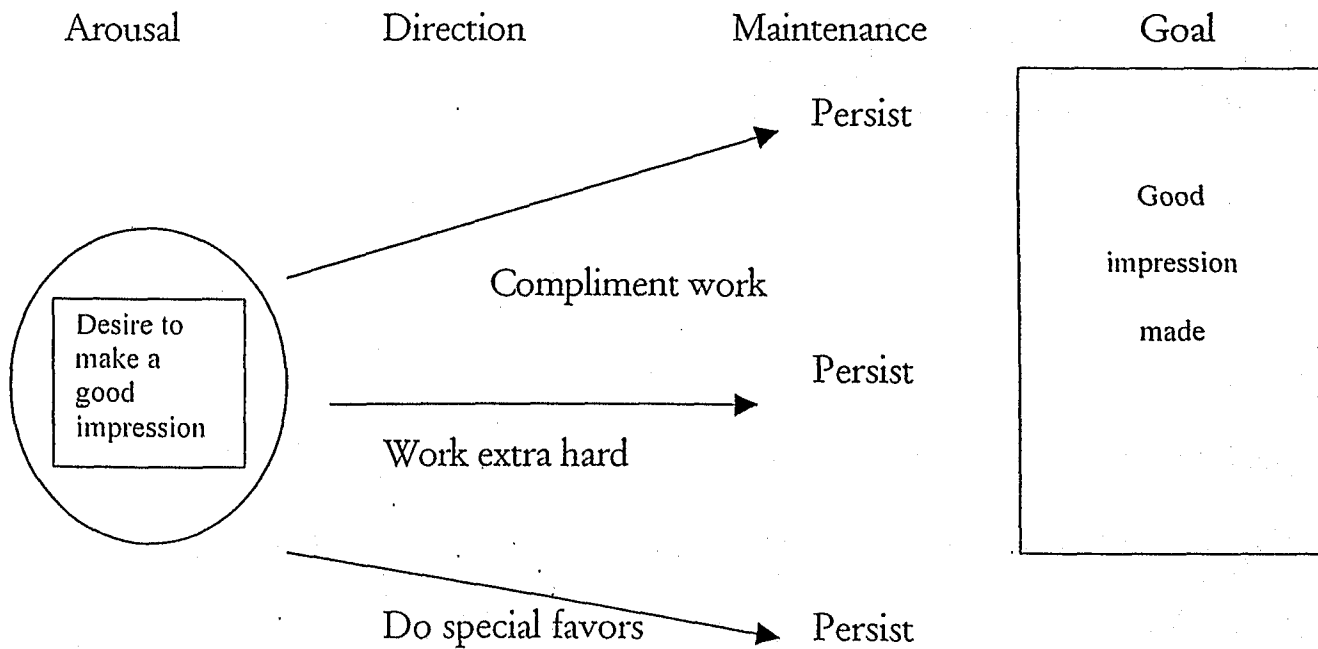
('Greenberg & Baron, 1997 pp. 142))

According to Greenberg and Baron in their book "Behavior in Organization", the first part of motivation definition deals with *arousal*. This has to do with the drive, or energy behind individuals' actions. For example, people may be guided by their interest in making a good impression on others, doing interesting work, being

successful at what they do, and so on. Their interest in fulfilling these motives stimulates them to engage in behaviors designed to fulfill them. A study done by Cheah in 1995, found that the energy behind actions of engineers and supervisors in a manufacturing company are the elements of helplessness, alienation, working conditions, personnel policies, communications, nature of the work, relationships with superiors and organizational commitment.

But, what will people do to satisfy their motives? Motivation is also concerned with choices people make and the *direction* their behavior takes. For example, employees interested in cultivating a favorable impression on their supervisors may do many different things: compliment them on their good work and so on. These options may be recognized as a path towards meeting the person's goal.

The final part of the definition deals with *maintaining* behavior. How long do people persist at attempting to meet their goals? To give up in advance of goal attainment means not to satisfy the need that stimulated behavior in the first place.

To summarize, motivation requires all three components: the arousal, direction, and maintenance of goal-directed behavior. The present study however will only focus on the elements that arouse the direction towards achieving job satisfaction among doctors in general hospitals of Malaysia.

Figure 1.1 below is the theoretical framework for this study in which job satisfaction has been isolated as a dependent factor of motivation. As this is a correlational study, it is the dependent variable to the elements of motivation. To measure the correlation between elements of motivation and job satisfaction, nine (9) elements of motivation have been studied and they are as follows :-

FIGURE 1.1

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

ELEMENTS OF MOTIVATION
a) Helplessness
b) Alienation
c) Organizational Politics
d) Personnel Policies
e) Communication
f) Supervision
g) Working Conditions
h) Nature of Work
i) Organizational Commitment

⟶ JOB SATISFACTION
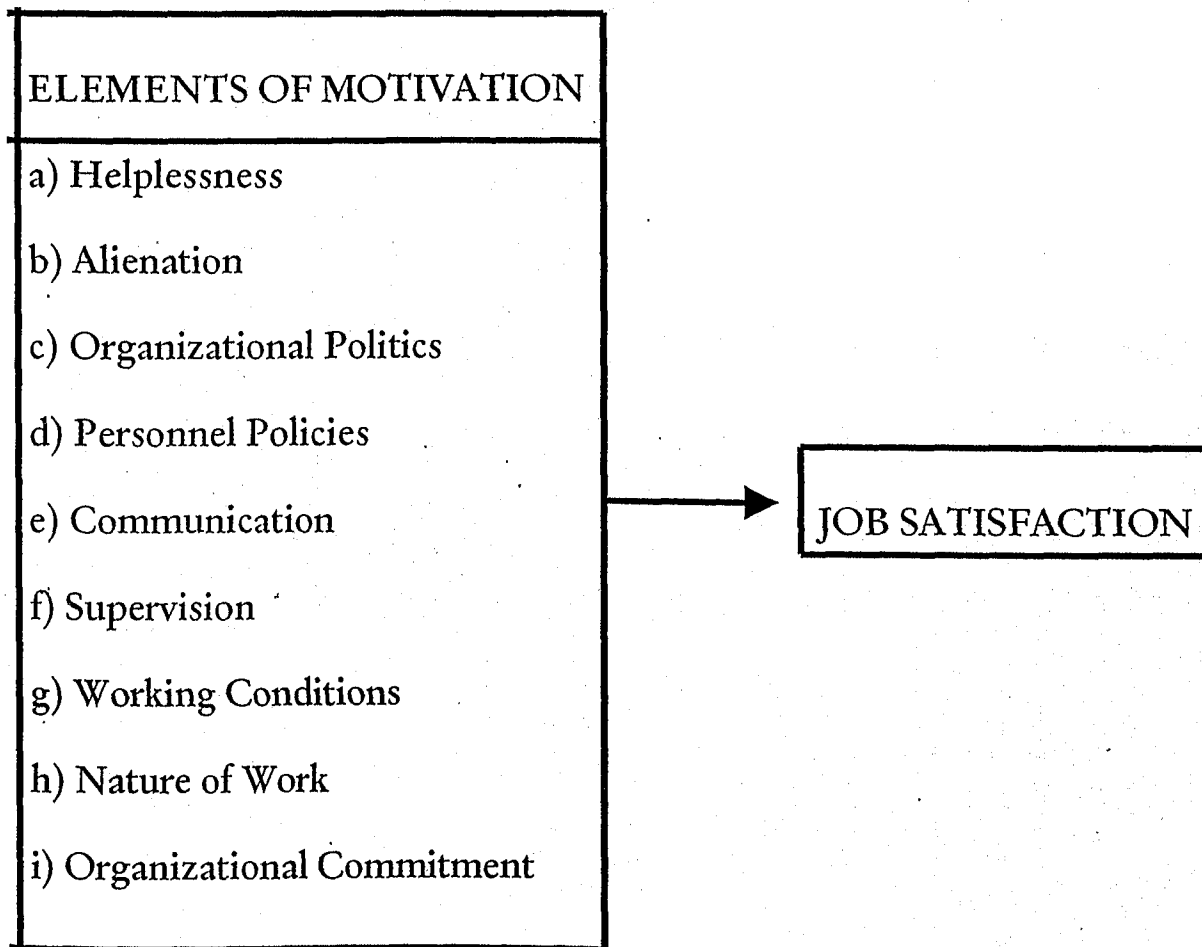
Source : (Cheah , 1995 pp 5)

1.2.2.1 Helplessness

Seeman (1972, pp.271) defines helplessness as a feeling of "low expectancy that one's own behavior or action can control the occurrence of personal and social rewards." In an organizational context this would mean that the employee has no control over the environment, his/her job position and opportunities. If a person has a high feeling of helplessness, then the level of motivation of that person will be low.

1.2.2.2 Alienation

"Alienation is a generalized cognition (or belief), a state of psychological separation from work, in so far as our work is perceived to lack potentiality for achieving our salient needs and expectations" (Kanungo, 1979, pp 119). In other words, the worker as a human being, has a vital need to share thoughts and feelings with others, to exercise control and power over persons and his environment; to show self determination, individuality, independence, acquisition, and when he/she fails to meet any of these satisfactorily, he/she becomes frustrated and alienated. Blauner's (1964) notion of alienation as a general syndrome made up of a number of different objective conditions and subjective feeling-states which emerge from certain relationships between workers and the sociotechnical settings of the organisation has formed the core for measuring alienation in this study. If the feeling of alienation exist in an employee's mind,

then the level of motivation of that worker will be low and this leads to job dissatisfaction.

1.2.2.3 Organizational Politics

Organizational politics has been denoted as part of the overall work environment, which is described as organizational "atmosphere", or "culture" (Allen & Mayes, 1977). To put in simple terms it is the way that things are done in a particular organisation. There are rules to be followed and also guidelines and norms, which are not in black and white but implied. Almost all organizations are engaged in internal political struggles, power struggles and in - fighting. These are operationalised in terms of pressure strategies, exchange tactics and cliques formations. Allen and Mayes (1977, pp.675) viewed politics as "the management of influence to achieve ends which are non sanctioned". Organizational politics are normally related with negative behaviors and it is technically illegitimate in both its means and ends and, not surprisingly, typically a source of conflict (Greenberg & Baron, 1997). If organizational politics are high in an organization, then the level of motivation among the employees will be low.

1.2.2.4 Personnel Policies

Personnel policies include career development, promotion, appraisal and also the reward system. Personnel policies are necessary as they ensure parity and justice. According to Maslow (1954), the basic needs of a person will be taken care of if he/she is adequately paid. If personnel policies which meet employees' needs are found in an organization, then the employees will be highly motivated and satisfied with their job.

1.2.2.5 Communication

In recent studies, communication has become important as an element of motivation as there is a positive correlation between the ability to communicate freely and the level of motivation (Fulk, 1993 ; Fenn, 1995). Accordingly, the present study will also examine the freedom of communication between the employee and his supervisor, peers and the organization as one element of motivation which may affect the level of job satisfaction. The absence of such a freedom may cause employees to suppress their otherwise useful ideas.

1.2.2.6 Supervision

Supervision is defined as the way an employee perceives his/her supervisor and also the kind of relationship, which exists between both the employee and the supervisor. There is enough evidence to suggest that supervisory style plays a significant role in creating varying levels of motivation. Participatory supervisors as against authoritarian supervisors have been found to generate greater motivation. It has been found that the perception of a supervisor's facilitation and support for the employees in pursuit of a better job outcome would have a direct effect on motivation (House, 1971).

1.2.2.7 Working Conditions

Another category of variables affecting work motivation involves the environment of the work (Elton, 1933). Elton Mayo and other proponents of human relations movement were concerned with task performance, but they realized that it was greatly influenced by the social conditions which existed in organizations – the way employees were treated by management and relationships they had with each other. Many aspects of work situations appear significant such as the relationship with other members of the work group or organisation which, depending on the circumstances, may stimulate or retard performance. If the working conditions are suitable with the employees then the motivational level of the employees will also be high.