Reviewer’s report

Title: Positive practice environments influence job satisfaction of primary health care clinic nursing managers in two South African provinces

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Reviewer: Dingie Janse HC van Rensburg

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Review by Prof HCJ van Rensburg for HRH

Title: Positive practice environments influence job satisfaction of primary health care clinic nursing managers in two South African provinces
Journal: Human Resources for Health
Type of article: Research

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The title of the article is satisfactorily to the point, although ... (However, see later comment under Discretionary Revisions).

The abstract indeed accurately summarises the essence of the research process and its findings of the research.

General comments

The topic of the research and the resultant article are without doubt highly appropriate in addressing an acute issue in health care, especially in the South African context. The research question is well defined; it focuses on an important staff section of the health care system in the country. The theme is thus well suited for generating novel knowledge on and insights in the broader theme of job satisfaction, in this case specifically focused on clinic managers in PHC facilities. In general, sound data on the phenomenon and related issues are generated in an appropriately controlled manner. The research indeed identifies key issues and challenges in the field – predominantly negative – and also “ranks” them according to importance. In addition, the findings of the research hold a rich potential for informing policy and management at various levels of the health system, and with a view to improve policy and management measures at different levels – albeit the national, provincial, district and facility levels of management.

The chosen research methods and techniques used for data collection and
analysis are well described and motivated, and the application of these is sound.

For purposes of this article, the collected information/data are adequately analysed, interpreted and presented. However, note that the corpus of the entire set of data surely lends itself for further interpretation and diversification. Moreover, for purposes of interpretation and in light of recent reforms in the health sector, it might be significant or important to state the time when the research was conducted.

However, I do find the citations from interviews not systematically presented – rather these are haphazardly and superficially used, and indeed somewhat superfluous – and dominated by Gauteng citations.

Note however – and as the authors are indeed well aware of these – there are limitations in the research presented, amongst others, the data only apply to South Africa, and more specifically, only to clinic managers in two “better off” provinces of the country, thus excluding those provinces encompassing deep rural areas where clinic management and job satisfaction might in all probability be less satisfactory due to several related negatives that prevail.

Both the discussion of the findings and the conclusions are presented in a well-balanced manner and adequately reflects the core findings of the research. The different dimensions of issues at stake are well articulated, and the specific findings on the spectrum of issues are reported in sufficient detail. Moreover, the discussion appropriately links the current research to other related and relevant studies that either support or enrich the current findings.

Though the manuscript generally adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition, the use of language and the writing style – especially the punctuation – need attention. In many instances, editorial aspects and the language of the article thus need to be corrected and upgraded.

In conclusion and in my judgment,

Major Compulsory Revisions are required regarding the References, i.e. the References need to be brought in line with the guidelines of HRH – these gravely lack consistency, uniformity and completeness.

Minor Essential Revisions are in my opinion required for the entire manuscript, and especially the correction and upgrading of poor language use and other editorial aspects of the manuscript.

Discretionary Revisions are in my opinion required for the following:
- Revisiting and perhaps a reformulating of the title of the article to render it more riveting
- Reconsideration and clearer articulation of the limitations of the research
- Clearer and more comprehensive articulation of the implications of the research (and forth-flowing findings) for policy and for management practice at various levels of the health system - including the national, provincial, district and facility
levels – and as these apply to managers and other personnel staffing PHC institutions.

**Level of interest:** An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

My responses are “No” for all the items below. Thus, 'I declare that I have no competing interests'