Reviewer's report

Title: Motivation and job satisfaction among medical and nursing staff in a Cyprus public general hospital

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Reviewer: Anastas Philalithis

Reviewer's report:

General comments
• The paper addresses an interesting issue on which there has been very little research in the context of the southern European countries.
• The instrument has been validated in Greek in a previous published study and the methodology is sound.
• The questionnaire is not presented (e.g. in an appendix) but this is a question for the editors of the journal, i.e. whether they consider this necessary.
• The results are, in general, well-presented.
• However, the discussion section requires major revisions.
  1. in several places there is a repetition of points presented in the result, that is redundant;
  2. there is very little comparison with the results of similar studies in other countries and contexts, using either the same or other instruments;
  3. the results obtained are used to draw conclusions that are very general and relate to the health care system and their proposed reform in Cyprus, rather than being related to the issues (correctly) presented in the introduction, that focus on specific human resource management issues within the hospital – therefore, the discussion section requires a major revision in order to address this point and avoid being “one step removed” from the results reported in this study.

Other comments
• the conclusion section is more focused and appropriate;
• the title is appropriate;
• the abstract is well written and is more focused on the issues researched (motivation and satisfaction) than the discussion (see above and below);
• the paper is well written, with a only few editing changes required;
• the tables are clear and well presented.

It would be useful to have the terms job attributes, remuneration, co-workers, achievements and satisfaction in italics throughout the text whenever they refer to the specific attributes that are the topic of the paper.
Specific points:

• Editing: Abstract: “remuneration” not “remuneration”

• Comment: The conclusion section in the abstract should be used as a framework for the discussion and conclusion sections in the main paper.

• p.4: The first paragraph is interesting and informative, but could be shortened to be more focused on issues related to the position of hospitals within the health system, their management and reported cost and outcomes.

• p.4 (and elsewhere): The proposes new system is designated in Cypriot Law and literature as the General Health System, not the National Health Insurance System, nor the National Health System.

• p.4: editing: "Consequently, hospital management is..." not "Consequently, the hospitals’ management is..."

• p.5: The first sentence in the first paragraph “The purpose of this study was to determine the motivational drive of socio-demographic and job related factors in terms of improving performance of doctors and nurses in the Nicosia General Hospital” sets a very clear purpose that is not answered in the discussion, although the data reported is relevant to this question;

• p.5: The last sentence in the first paragraph is not related to the results reported and cannot be answered by the data collected.

• Several (interesting) points presented in the results are not commented on in the discussion section, e.g. in p.9, the last sentence in the first paragraph: Well-established professional relationships motivated nurses in managerial positions and those aged >55 years old.

• p.11: The only comparisons with previously published papers on this issue are essentially confined to the last sentence in the first paragraph, and do not go into specifics: The same ranking...

• p.11: editing: "are in line with", not "are line with"

• p.11, second paragraph: It is not clear how the sentence “an alternative suggestion could be to offer personal salary scales to professionals with additional professional/academic qualifications” is based on the findings of the reported research.

• p.11, third paragraph: The sentence “The medical staff presented statistically significant lower ratings in job satisfaction compared to the nursing staff...” is not reported in the results but only in the discussion.

• p.12: The sentence “The terms job satisfaction and motivation are often used interchangeably” requires clarification (by whom? where?) since the paper puts forward the (sound) approach that motivation is a specific factor, based on analysis of (also) specific variables, while satisfaction is also a specific factor, measured by a single item variable.

• p.12: editing: "however there is a clear distinction between them" not "however there is a borderline"

• p.12: The link between the motivational factors presented in this paper and
specific levels of Maslow’s theories requires further substantiation in the relevant literature (that may be there, but has not been quoted). Otherwise, it remains tentative, at best.

• p.13: last paragraph before the conclusion: It is not clear how carrying similar surveys in all the main hospitals and formulating an integrated strategy (of what? – of personnel management?) will “have a positive impact on the quality of the services provided” since quality was not an object of this study.

• It is also not clear why the introduction of the new National Health Insurance System will create intense competition, and how a strategy based on these surveys will prepare the public hospitals to confront the intense competition. It is such generalisations that should be avoided in the discussion, while a specific discussion of this issue would be more relevant.

• p.13: in the conclusion: How was appreciation by the community measured? It seems to be a new point that is not mentioned elsewhere.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests