

Impact of Career Path Strategy on Healthcare Workers' Performance in Government Hospital

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Abstract

In the last ten years, the government of Indonesia aggressively built multiple hospitals in the underdeveloped, borders, and islands regions and regions with health problems to tackle the lack of healthcare service in those regions. These hospitals are run by three types of healthcare workers i.e., government employees, contract employees, and honorary employees. Regardless of their type of employment, all healthcare workers are required to adhere to the standard of care and are expected to perform their best at their jobs. However, the different career path among these three types of healthcare workers often impacts their job performance. This study aims to ascertain the impact of career path strategy on healthcare performance and explain the factors influencing their performance. This study is an analytic quantitative study with a cross-sectional design conducted at Palmatak Regional Hospital, Kepulauan Anambas Regency. The population of this study is all healthcare workers in Palmatak Regional Hospital, amounting to 140 healthcare workers, and all population included as sample (total sampling). The data in this study was collected using a questionnaire whose validity and reliability had been tested. This study finds that work hours, training, career development, and promotion significantly affected healthcare workers' performance ($p < 0.05$). Amongst them, career development (OR=35.51) and training (OR=55.37) are the most influential factors in healthcare workers' job performance. This study suggested that career path, especially the presence of training and career development, positively impact healthcare workers' performance. This study also encourages hospital management to regularly hold training and encourage their workers to develop themselves.

Keywords: Career path, healthcare workers, performance, hospital.

Introduction

Amongst the multitude of complaints of the public in Indonesia's healthcare systems, one of the most significant and severe complaints is unequal distribution of service across the board. This problem is seen clearly in the underdeveloped, borders, and the islands' healthcare service (Apriliani and Khoirunurrofik, 2020). Communities in these areas still experienced difficulty in accessing adequate healthcare services. For the last ten years, in an effort to solve this problem, the government of Indonesia aggressively built additional hospitals and revitalized and expanded the existing ones to provide better healthcare for everyone in Indonesia. In order to provide good healthcare service in the hospital, building, revitalizing, and expanding this hospital must be parallel with good performance by the healthcare workers in the hospital, since they are responsible for providing continuous optimal and high-quality care for the patients (Kachirskaia, Mate and Neuwirth, 2018; Alfiero, Brescia and Bert, 2021).

In the government-run hospital, the term of employment of the healthcare workers falls into three categories i.e., government employee, contract employee, and honorary employee. Regardless of their term of employment, all healthcare workers are required to adhere to the standard of care of the hospital. However, this is often not the case. Multiple factors are known to influence the employee's ability to adhere to the standard of care of the hospital, hence, their performance, such as individual, psychological, all the way to organizational factors (Oueida, Aloqaily and Ionescu, 2019). The change in the workers' performance is known to impact patients' satisfaction with the service provided, hence, the brand image of the hospital (Diekmann *et al.*, 2020).

One component of the organizational factors impacting the workers' performance is a career path or career ladder (Oueida, Aloqaily and Ionescu, 2019). This career path serves an important purpose in any organization i.e., helping individual worker achieve their best potential and in turn achieve organizations' goals, increase employees' welfare, and strengthen organizations' human resources (Utami and Wahidi, 2022). There are four factors influencing the movement along the career ladder i.e., working hours, training, career development, and promotion (Dan *et al.*, 2018). All these factors can be assessed either by the employees themselves (self-assessment) or by other people (by management based on the objective achieved, by psychologist, or by external assessors) (Rath and Solanki, 2020). Several studies in several local hospitals in Indonesia found that lack of career path or ladder opportunity responsible to high healthcare workers turnover rate (above 11% per annum) and low work performance, especially in government-run hospitals (Anggara, Suryawati and Agushyana, 2020; Muslim and Sutinah, 2020; Sudiadnyani *et al.*, 2022). Other study also found that clearer career path for healthcare workers increased their work satisfaction, loyalty, morale, prevent them from exiting the job, and in turn increased their work performance (Nurlina, Sekarwana and Somantri, 2021). Regardless, currently career path or ladder regulation in Indonesia only exist for nurses (both civil servant or non-civil servant), while for other healthcare workers, regulation

only exist for civil servant, which pose a significant problem for the majority of healthcare workers (Kementerian Kesehatan Republik Indonesia, 2017).

Method

This study is an analytic quantitative study with a cross-sectional design that aims to ascertain the impact of the career ladder on healthcare workers' performance and explain the factors influencing their performance. This study was conducted from September to October 2022 at Palmatak Regional Hospital, Kepulauan Anambas Regency. The population (N) of this study is all healthcare workers who are employed at Palmatak Regional Hospital, numbered 140 people. Since the size of the population was relatively small, all population members were included in this study as a sample (total sampling) (n=140).

Data used in this study consists of primary and secondary data. Primary data collection in this study was carried out using a valid and reliable questionnaire. The questionnaire consists of five parts: 1) demographic data; 2) work hours; 3) training history; 4) career development; and 5) promotion. All sample who agrees to participate in this study by signing the informed consent are required to fill out the questionnaire to the best of their knowledge. Secondary data in this study is the healthcare workers' performance report obtained through the hospitals' human resources department.

All data collected in this study are processed and then analyzed as a single variable (univariate), between two variables (bivariate), and among all variables (double logistic regression).

Results

This study found that the majority of healthcare workers in Palmatak Regional Hospital belong to the 36-45 years age group (50.0%), are female (57.9%), and with bachelor's degree as their last formal education (53.6%) (Table 1).

Table 1. Age, Sex, and Education Distribution Among Healthcare Workers in Palmatak Regional Hospital

Age (years)	f	%
< 35	15	10,7
36-45	70	50,0
> 45	55	39,3
Sex		
Male	59	42,1
Female	81	57,9
Last Formal Education		
D3 (Diploma)	30	21,4
S1 (Bachelor Degree)	75	53,6
S2 (Master Degree)	35	25,0
Total	140	100

Further data in this study also showed that in all aspects around half of the healthcare workers did not have a well-managed schedule (49.3%) promotion (52.9%) well-provided training (48.6%) or career development (55.7%) (Table 2.). Whilst more healthcare workers in Palmatak Regional Hospital were shown to have good work performance, it was only 51.5% of them, a slight majority, compared to 48.6% bad work performance (Table 2.).

Bivariate analysis of each independent variable (work hours, training, career development, and promotion) with the dependent variable (work performance) shows that all independent variable significantly impacts healthcare workers' work performance ($p < 0.001$). Further multivariate analysis using double logistic regression showed that among the four independent variables, only training (OR=55.37) and career development (OR=35.51) significantly impact work performance ($p < 0.05$) (Table 4.).

Table 2. Distribution of Work hours, Training, Career Development, Promotion, and Work Performance Among Healthcare Workers in Palmatak Regional Hospital

Work hours	f	%
Not well-managed	69	49,3
Well-managed	71	50,7
Training		
Not well-provided	68	48,6
Well-provided	72	51,4
Career Development		
Not well-provided	78	55.7
Well-provided	62	44.3
Promotion		
Not well-managed	74	52.9
Well-managed	66	47.1
Work Performance		
Bad	68	48,6
Good	72	51,4
Total	140	100

Table 3. Impact of Career Ladder on Work Performance Among Healthcare Workers in Palmatak Regional Hospital

	Work Performance			
	Bad		Good	
	f	%	f	%
Work hours				
Not well-managed	51	75	18	25
Well-managed	17	25	54	75
Total	68	100	72	100
Training				
Not well-provided	68	100	0	0
Well-provided	0	0	72	100
Total	68	100	72	100
Career Development				
Not well-provided	60	88.24	14	19.44
Well-provided	8	11.76	58	80.56
Total	68	100.00	72	100
Promotion				
Not well-managed	62	91.18	16	22.22
Well-managed	6	8.82	56	77.78
Total	68	100	72	100

Table 4. Double Logistic Regression Among All Variables Impacting Work Performance Among Healthcare Workers in Palmatak Regional Hospital

Variable	B	Sig.	Exp(B)/ OR	95%CI for Exp(B)
Work hours	19.710	0.797	0.300	0.023-2.722
Training	2.556	0.044	12.741	0.550-22.288
Career Development	4.372	0.014	19.229	0.250-33.477
Promotion	-0.395	0.065	0.674	0.046-7.822

Discussion

This study tries to ascertain the effect of career path strategy on healthcare workers' performance. There are four aspects studied concerning work performance in this study i.e., work schedule, training, career development, and promotion.

Working hours are defined as the duration a worker spends doing work in order to receive a wage. According to current Indonesian regulation, a full-time employee's work hour is either seven hours per day or 40 hours per week in a six-workday schedule or eight hours per day or 40 hours per week in a five-workday schedule (Pemerintah Republik Indonesia, 2022). The law also stated that the employer is required to compensate the employee in case of overtime which is limited to four hours per day or 18 hours per week. In Palmatak Regional Hospital, employees generally work either six or eight-hour shifts, depending on the shift the employee working on. However, 49.3% of the health workers in Palmatak Regional Hospital reportedly did not have well-managed work hours, in other words, have overtime. Long work hours, including overtime often happen in healthcare services (Ganesan *et al.*, 2019; Mohanty, Kabi and Mohanti, 2019; Lin *et al.*, 2021).

This study finds that 36.4% of the healthcare workers in Palmatak Regional Hospital did not have a well-managed work schedule and did not have good work performance, while 38.5% of all healthcare workers who had a well-managed work schedule did have good work performance. Well-managed work schedule mean adhering to the labor working hour regulation, which is seven hours per day or 40 hours per week in a six-workday schedule or eight hours per day or 40 hours per week in a five-workday schedule (Pemerintah Republik Indonesia, 2022). Regardless of whether the majority of the healthcare workers in Palmatak Regional Hospital had well-managed work schedules (50,7%), the number of healthcare workers with bad work schedules was problematic to an extent. Almost half (49,3%) of the healthcare workers had bad work schedules, which certainly shows the failure of management in managing the workers' work schedules. Overtime work or long work hours generally disturb healthcare workers' resting time. A study by Ganesan in 2018 shows that long work hours for healthcare workers (on the night shift) impaired healthcare workers' alertness and performance (Ganesan *et al.*, 2019). Other studies also found that burnout in healthcare workers occurred due to long work hours (Mohanty, Kabi and Mohanti, 2019; Yin *et al.*, 2023). Working hours exceeding 40 hours per week was also found to increase the risk of burnout 1,5 times (41-59

hours per week) or 1,9 times (≥ 60 hours per week) in healthcare workers compared to healthcare workers with total working hours of 40 hours or less per week, hence reduced the healthcare workers performance, in concordance to the findings in this study (Lin *et al.*, 2021). This reduced performance and alertness due to long working hours not only harms the healthcare workers but also puts the patient in danger or at least reduces the quality of care delivered to the patient (Jarrar *et al.*, 2023). These long working hours also significantly affected healthcare workers' job satisfaction, and in turn their retention (Yin *et al.*, 2023).

In this study, just like the work schedule, almost half of the healthcare workers did not receive additional training (48,6%) during their time working in Palmatak Regional Hospital, whereas studies have found that additional training on healthcare workers significantly affected their work performance (Ivelia, 2018; Gadalla and Mukhtad, 2021; Maulina and Nastiti, 2022; Mwansisya *et al.*, 2022; Dagnew Gebrehiwot and Elantheraiyan, 2023). Mwansisya *et al.* study on healthcare workers' training and their performance before and after reproductive health training shows that training improves all healthcare workers' performance in reproductive health regarding their intra-operative care, research skills, leadership skills, general reproductive maternal and neonatal health (RMNH) skills, comprehensive emergency obstetric and newborn care skills, family planning, gender in RMNH, and total performance in RMNH ($p < 0,05$) (Mwansisya *et al.*, 2022). This study's findings correspond to the findings in those studies. All healthcare workers who did not receive additional training ($f=68$) have bad performance (100%), while the rest who received additional training ($f=72$) have good performance (100%).

Career development which consists of personal development and professional development are significant part of improving employee job performance (Katharina and Kartika, 2020; Oktafien and Santoso, 2020; Caniago and Rustanto, 2022; Poernamasasi and Hapzi, 2023). This study finds that 55,7% of healthcare workers in Palmatak Regional Hospital did not have well-provided career development opportunities, and out of those, the majority have bad performance (88,2%). On the other side, the rest of the healthcare workers that had well-provided career development opportunities (44,3%) most of them have good performance (80,6%). Career development, whether on a personal or professional level, can improve healthcare workers' job performance (Katharina and Kartika, 2020). Career development opportunities are also one of the healthcare workers' motivations to give their best performance. The absence of opportunity for career development generally did not encourage healthcare workers to perform their work at their best. Besides, the absence of career development opportunities also limits the healthcare workers' personal and professional growth, hence limiting their performance.

Promotion is not only giving the employee a higher employment position; it also provides the employee with a higher salary. A study conducted in Dr. Soetomo General Hospital in 2022 found that promotion positively affected healthcare workers' job performance during the COVID-19

pandemic (Wahyuhadi, Hidayah and Aini, 2023). The same study also stated that promotion is a form of reward and recognition for good job performance, hence the opportunities for promotion motivate employees to have good performance (Wahyuhadi, Hidayah and Aini, 2023). In government-run hospitals like Palmatak Regional Hospital, there are several requirements for job promotion namely years of service, working experience, educational background, job performance, personal and professional achievement, and more importantly availability of post for promotion. When job promotion is given based on the competencies and requirements and not based on nepotism or bribery, employee job performance will improve (Achyar Mubarok, 2022). In this study, 52,9% of the healthcare workers in Palmatak Regional Hospital did not feel they were given opportunities for promotion by the management, and 91,2% of those had bad performance. These, however, can go both ways. It could be they have bad performance because the management did not give them the opportunities for promotion, or it could be the management did not give them the opportunities for promotion because of their bad job performance. But, in general, this study finds that there is a positive relationship between promotion and job performance in healthcare workers in Palmatak Regional Hospital. This finding is in line with the finding in a study in 2022 which found career development, motivation, and promotion significantly influenced employees' job performance, individually and collectively (Setyawati, Woelandari and Rianto, 2022). Other studies also support the findings in this study that job promotion improves job satisfaction and in turn, improves employees' job performance (Saharuddin and Sulaiman, 2016; Lestari *et al.*, 2023). All in all, this study found that career path strategies such as work schedules, training, career development, and promotion individually and collectively positively correlated with healthcare workers' job performance.

Conclusion

In corroboration with the finding of this study, it can be concluded that individually, work hours, training, career development, and promotion positively impact healthcare workers' work performance, and collectively, training and career development together impact healthcare workers' work performance the most. Providing healthcare workers, regardless of their employment term, with training and opportunities for career development is the best way to ensure their work performance individually, and in turn the overall performance of the hospital.

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Conflict of Interest:

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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