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WORKING CONDITIONS AS A DETERMINANT OF EXTRINSIC JOB SATISFACTION AMONG NURSES AND MEDICAL TECHNICIANS

***Milena Zlatanović*[1], *Marko Slavković*[2], *Milena Despotović*[3], *Mile Despotović*[1], *Christos Alexopoulos*[1], *Marko Bojić*[4], *Ljubiša Kucurski*[5]**

[1]The Academy of Applied Preschool Teaching and Health Studies, Department of Medical Studies, St. Lole Ribara, Cuprija, Republic of Serbia
[2]Faculty of Economics, University of Kragujevac, Liceja Knezevine Srbije 3, Kragujevac, Republic of Serbia
[3] Special Hospital for Addiction Diseases, Belgrade, Republic of Serbia
[4] Higher school of economic vocational studies, Belgrade, Republic of Serbia
[5]PI College of Health Sciences Prijedor, Nikole Pašića 4a, Republic of Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Abstract. *In contemporary working conditions, the quality of the work environment represents one of the key factors influencing the job satisfaction of nurses and medical technicians employed in healthcare institutions. Extrinsic job satisfaction includes satisfaction with salary, working conditions, work organization, interpersonal relationships, and supervisor support, and plays an important role in maintaining the stability of the healthcare system and the quality of healthcare services provided. The aim of this study was to examine the impact of working conditions on the extrinsic job satisfaction of nurses and medical technicians employed in healthcare institutions in Republic of Serbia. The research was conducted in healthcare institutions in Central Republic of Serbia on a sample of 362 respondents. Women predominated in the sample structure (83%), while the largest number of respondents were between 31 and 40 years of age (35%). According to years of service, employees with more than 20 years of work experience were the most represented (35%), while the highest percentage of respondents had completed secondary school education (71%). Data were collected using a standardized questionnaire, while statistical analysis was performed using IBM SPSS Statistics software, applying descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, correlation and regression analysis, as well as the ANOVA test. The research results demonstrated a high level of reliability of the measurement scales, with Cronbach's alpha for extrinsic job satisfaction amounting to $\alpha=0.872$. A positive and statistically significant relationship was identified between working conditions and employees' extrinsic job satisfaction. Simple regression analysis showed that working conditions had a positive and statistically significant effect on extrinsic job satisfaction ($R^2=0.295$; $\beta=0.543$; $t=12.266$; $p<0.01$). The results of multiple regression analysis indicated that social ($\beta=0.486$; $p<0.001$) and contextual job characteristics ($\beta=0.310$; $p<0.001$) had a significant positive effect on extrinsic job satisfaction, while motivational job characteristics did not show a statistically significant effect ($\beta=0.004$; $p=0.936$). The findings indicate the need for continuous improvement of working conditions through adequate work organization, support from managerial structures, and strengthening professional cooperation among healthcare workers, in order to increase employee satisfaction, contribute to workforce stability, and improve the quality of healthcare services.*

Keywords: *extrinsic job satisfaction, nurses, medical technicians, working conditions, job characteristics, primary healthcare institutions.*

Introduction

Job satisfaction among nurses and medical technicians represents an important aspect of their professional experience and the way they perceive their work environment. The level of satisfaction may be influenced by various material and non-material factors, among which job characteristics and the work environment hold a particularly important place. In healthcare institutions, where professional tasks are carried out through daily collaboration and within defined organizational conditions, the importance of these factors becomes especially pronounced. Examining the external aspects of work therefore provides an important basis for understanding the extrinsic job satisfaction of nurses and medical technicians [1-3].

Extrinsic satisfaction represents a distinct dimension of job satisfaction focused on the external aspects of work experience [4,5]. It refers to how employees evaluate various elements of the work environment, such as salary, job security, relationships with colleagues, leadership and relationships with supervisors, as well as the conditions under which work is performed [4-6]. The importance of these factors is reflected in their direct association with the organizational and social environment in which employees carry out their professional activities on a daily basis [7].

Within these external aspects of work, extrinsic satisfaction is substantially shaped by the social and organizational environment in which nurses and medical technicians perform their work. Professional relationships among colleagues, the quality of teamwork, and support within the work group may contribute to a more favorable perception of the workplace [8,9]. At the same time, the organization of work, the allocation of activities and human resources, and the practices of management structures represent important elements of the work environment that may be associated with employee satisfaction [9-11].

In addition to the social and organizational characteristics of the work environment, material working conditions also play an important role. Salary level, organizational policies, and the availability of resources may be important in how employees assess their position and the conditions under which they perform professional tasks [6,12,13]. Furthermore, the availability of adequate equipment, necessary supplies, and other resources represents an important aspect of the work environment in healthcare institutions and may be associated with employee satisfaction [13-15].

Considering the aforementioned aspects of the work environment, examining the conditions under which nurses and medical technicians carry out their professional activities is important for understanding their extrinsic satisfaction. Particular attention should be directed toward the social and organizational characteristics of the work environment, the availability of necessary resources, and other external aspects of work that may shape employee satisfaction [1,9]. Examining these relationships may contribute to a better understanding of work-environment factors that are important to employees in healthcare institutions. The aim of this study was to examine the influence of working conditions on the extrinsic job satisfaction of

nurses and medical technicians employed in healthcare institutions in Republic of Serbia.

Methodology

The study was conducted in healthcare institutions in Central Republic of Serbia on a sample of 362 nurses and medical technicians. Data were collected using a structured instrument covering working conditions, job satisfaction, and the participants' basic sociodemographic characteristics.

Working conditions were examined through three groups of job characteristics: motivational, social, and contextual characteristics, in accordance with the work design theoretical framework of Morgeson and Campion and the Work Design Questionnaire (WDQ) developed by Morgeson and Humphrey [16,17]. Participants expressed their views on the defined statements using a five-point scale. Job satisfaction was assessed using an instrument developed on the basis of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) [18]. For the purposes of this study, items referring to external aspects of job satisfaction were analyzed, including satisfaction with salary level, collegiality, job security, supervisors' leadership and competence, the opportunity to perform other tasks, and working conditions. Sociodemographic data included sex, age, length of work experience, and level of education. Statistical analysis was performed using IBM SPSS Statistics, version 23. Descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, tests of distribution normality, correlation and regression analyses, and analysis of variance (ANOVA) were applied. The internal consistency of the measurement scales was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient.

Results

The study sample comprised 362 nurses and medical technicians. According to sex distribution, 301 participants were female (83.15%) and 61 were male (16.85%). The largest proportion of participants belonged to the 31-40-year age group (35.08%), whereas participants older than 61 years were the least represented (7.46%). Regarding length of work experience, the largest group consisted of participants with more than 21 years of work experience (35.08%), while participants with less than five years of work experience were the least represented (11.33%). In terms of educational structure, participants with completed secondary school education predominated (71.55%), while 5.80% of participants had a university education.

Before analyzing the relationships between the variables examined, the internal consistency of the scales used was assessed. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.860 for working conditions and 0.872 for extrinsic satisfaction, indicating a high level of internal consistency for both scales.

Table 1. Cronbach's alpha coefficient values

Variables	*Cronbach's alpha coefficient value*
Working conditions	0.860
Extrinsic satisfaction	0.872

In the next step, the normality of the data distribution was examined. The results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests showed statistically significant deviations from the normal distribution for all seven extrinsic satisfaction items (ZZ9-ZZ15; $p<0.001$). In view of the results of the normality tests, the relationships between the study variables were examined using Spearman's correlation coefficient. Correlation analysis showed a positive and statistically significant association between working conditions and extrinsic satisfaction ($r_s=0.564$; $p<0.01$). When individual categories of job characteristics were considered, the highest correlation coefficient with extrinsic satisfaction was found for social job characteristics ($r_s=0.711$; $p<0.01$), followed by contextual ($r_s=0.652$; $p<0.01$) and motivational job characteristics ($r_s=0.473$; $p<0.01$). All identified associations were positive and statistically significant.

Table 2. Correlation matrix (Spearman's correlation coefficient)

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Working conditions	1.000	0.564**	0.836**	0.772**	0.775**
2. Extrinsic job satisfaction	0.564**	1,000	0.473**	0.711**	0.652**
3. Motivational job characteristics	0.836**	0.473**	1,000	0.587**	0.588**
4. Social job characteristics	0.772**	0.711**	0.587**	1,000	0.686**
5. Contextual job characteristics	0.775**	0.652**	0.588**	0.686**	1,000

** All correlation coefficients are statistically significant at $p<0.01$.

Following the correlation analysis, simple regression analysis was conducted to examine the influence of working conditions on extrinsic satisfaction. The regression model was statistically significant ($F=150.448$; $p<0.01$), while the coefficient of determination was $R^2=0.295$. Based on this value, 29.5% of the variability in extrinsic satisfaction was explained by working conditions. The standardized regression coefficient was positive and statistically significant ($\beta=0.543$; $t=12.266$; $p<0.01$), indicating that a more favorable assessment of working conditions was associated with a higher level of extrinsic satisfaction.

Table 3. Results of simple regression analysis (dependent variable: extrinsic satisfaction)

Dependent variable	**R^2**	**F**	**β**	**t**
Extrinsic satisfaction	0.295	150.448***	0.543	12.266***

*** The value is significant at $p < 0.01$.

To examine in greater detail the contribution of individual categories of job characteristics to extrinsic satisfaction, multiple regression analysis was conducted. The regression model was statistically significant ($F=135.541$; $p<0.01$) and explained 53.0% of the variability in extrinsic satisfaction ($R^2=0.530$). VIF values were below 5, indicating that multicollinearity was not a problem in the regression model.
The results of multiple regression analysis showed that social job characteristics made the largest positive and statistically significant contribution to extrinsic satisfaction ($\beta=0.486$; $t=9.784$; $p<0.001$). A statistically significant positive contribution was also found for contextual job characteristics ($\beta=0.310$; $t=6.115$; $p<0.001$). In contrast, motivational job characteristics did not make a statistically significant contribution to extrinsic satisfaction ($\beta=0.004$; $t=0.080$; $p=0.936$).

Table 4. Results of multiple regression analysis (dependent variable: extrinsic satisfaction)

Independent variables	**β**	**t**	**sig.**
Motivational job characteristics	0.004	0.080	0.936
Social job characteristics	0.486	9.784	0.000***
Contextual job characteristics	0.310	6.115	0.000***

*** The value is significant at $p < 0.01$.

The obtained results show that individual categories of job characteristics do not contribute equally to extrinsic satisfaction. Social job characteristics emerged as the strongest statistically significant predictor, while contextual characteristics also made a significant positive contribution. After all three categories were simultaneously included in the regression model, motivational job characteristics did not show a statistically significant independent contribution to extrinsic satisfaction.

Following the regression analyses, differences in individual aspects of extrinsic satisfaction among participants from different age groups were examined. Analysis of variance showed statistically significant differences in satisfaction with salary level (ZZ9: $F=3.340$; $p=0.011$), collegiality (ZZ10: $F=2.702$; $p=0.030$), job stability (ZZ11: $F=4.510$; $p=0.001$), and working conditions (ZZ15: $F=2.657$; $p=0.033$). No statistically significant differences were found for satisfaction with the supervisor's way of managing people (ZZ12: $F=1.797$; $p=0.129$), assessment of the supervisor's competence in decision-making (ZZ13: $F=1.928$; $p=0.105$), or the opportunity to occasionally perform other tasks (ZZ14: $F=1.099$; $p=0.357$). These findings indicate that differences between age groups are present in certain aspects of extrinsic satisfaction, whereas in the other analyzed aspects they did not reach the level of statistical significance.

Table 5. ANOVA test results (extrinsic satisfaction)

Statements	**F**	**Sig**
ZZ 9 I am satisfied with the salary for the work I perform.	3.340	0.011**
ZZ 10 I am satisfied with collegiality.	2.702	0.030**

ZZ 11 My job provides stable employment.	4.510	0.001***
ZZ 12 I am satisfied with how my supervisor manages people.	1.797	0.129
ZZ 13 My supervisor is competent in decision-making.	1.928	0.105
ZZ 14 I occasionally have the opportunity to perform other tasks as well.	1.099	0.357
ZZ 15 I am satisfied with the working conditions.	2.657	0.033**

*** The value is significant at $p < 0.01$.
** The value is significant at $p < 0.05$.

Discussion

The results of this study showed that more favorable working conditions were associated with higher levels of extrinsic satisfaction among nurses and medical technicians, indicating the importance of the work environment in shaping employee satisfaction. This finding is consistent with recent studies indicating that characteristics of the work and organizational environment are important factors in nurses' job satisfaction [1]. Similar conclusions were reported by Yasin et al., who, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, highlighted the importance of various work-environment factors for nurses' job satisfaction [14]. Among the job characteristics examined, social characteristics showed the strongest association with extrinsic satisfaction and emerged as its most important predictor. This result is consistent with the findings of Orgambídez et al., according to whom support from supervisors and colleagues is associated with greater job satisfaction [19]. The importance of the social aspect of the work environment is also supported by the integrative review by Dijkshoorn-Albrecht et al., in which coworker support was considered in relation to job satisfaction, stress, and intention to stay [8]. These findings indicate that the quality of professional relationships, collegiality, and support in the work environment may represent important factors in the satisfaction of nurses and medical technicians. Contextual job characteristics were also found to be important for extrinsic satisfaction. Tomaszewska et al. reported an association between different areas of professional life and nurses' job satisfaction [7]. The importance of the work environment is also supported by Ditlopo et al., whose findings indicate the role of professional support and workload in the relationship between work-environment characteristics and nurses' professional outcomes [20]. These findings are consistent with the results of our study and indicate that organizational and contextual conditions constitute an important part of the overall workplace experience. Unlike social and contextual characteristics, motivational characteristics did not show a significant independent contribution to extrinsic satisfaction, although their individual association with this dimension of satisfaction was positive. This finding does not indicate that motivational characteristics are unimportant; rather, it shows that they did not make a statistically significant independent contribution when social and contextual job characteristics were considered simultaneously. Such an interpretation is consistent with the nature of extrinsic satisfaction, which focuses on the external aspects of work experience. In

the systematic review by Hudays et al., interpersonal relationships and working conditions were among the most frequently identified factors associated with nurses' job satisfaction, alongside other extrinsic and intrinsic factors [6]. Taken as a whole, the results of this study identify social and contextual job characteristics as particularly important for the extrinsic satisfaction of nurses and medical technicians. The importance of these social and contextual aspects of the work environment has also been recognized in contemporary research emphasizing the role of work-environment quality, professional support, and organizational conditions in employee satisfaction [1,20]. The obtained results indicate the need to improve professional collaboration, support from management structures, and the conditions under which employees perform their daily professional activities.

Conclusion

The results of this study indicate that working conditions play a significant role in the extrinsic satisfaction of nurses and medical technicians. Among the job characteristics examined, social and contextual characteristics were particularly prominent, whereas motivational characteristics did not show a significant independent contribution when the other aspects of the work environment were considered simultaneously. The findings confirm that the quality of professional relationships, support in the work environment, and the conditions under which employees carry out their daily activities represent important factors in their extrinsic satisfaction.

Improving professional collaboration, support from management structures, work organization, and the conditions for carrying out professional activities may contribute to greater satisfaction among nurses and medical technicians. Focusing attention on these aspects of the work environment is important not only for employee satisfaction but also for maintaining the stability of the healthcare workforce and improving the functioning of healthcare institutions.

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USLOVI RADA KAO DETERMINANTA EKSTRINZIČNOG ZADOVOLJSTVA MEDICINSKIH SESTARA I TEHNIČARA

***Milena Zlatanović*[1], Marko Slavković[2], Milena Despotović[3], Mile Despotović[1], Christos Alexopoulos[1], Marko Bojić[4], Ljubiša Kucurski[5]**

[1]Akademija vaspitačko-medicinskih strukovnih studija, Odsek medicinskih studija Ćuprija, ul. Lole Ribara, Ćuprija, Republika Srbija
[2]Ekonomski fakultet, Univerzitet u Kragujevcu, Liceja Kneževine Srbije 3, Kragujevac, Republika Srbija
[3] Specijalna bolnica za bolesti zavisnosti, Beograd, Republika Srbija
[4] Visoka ekonomska škola strukovnih studija, Beograd, Republika Srbija
[5]JU Visoka medicinska škola Prijedor, Nikole Pašića 4a, Republika Srpska, Bosna i Hercegovina

Sažetak. *U savremenim uslovima rada, kvalitet radnog okruženja predstavlja jedan od ključnih faktora zadovoljstva medicinskih sestara i tehničara zaposlenih u zdravstvenim ustanovama. Ekstrinzično zadovoljstvo obuhvata zadovoljstvo platom, uslovima rada, organizacijom posla, međuljudskim odnosima i podrškom nadređenih, te ima značajnu ulogu u očuvanju stabilnosti zdravstvenog sistema i kvaliteta pružene zdravstvene zaštite. Cilj rada bio je da se ispita uticaj uslova rada na ekstrinzično zadovoljstvo medicinskih sestara i tehničara zaposlenih u zdravstvenim ustanovama u Srbiji. Istraživanje je sprovedeno u zdravstvenim ustanovama na teritoriji Centralne Srbije, na uzorku od 362 ispitanika. U strukturi uzorka dominirale su žene (83%), dok je najveći broj ispitanika bio starosti od 31 do 40 godina (35%). Prema dužini radnog staža, najzastupljeniji su bili zaposleni sa više od 20 godina radnog iskustva (35%), dok je najveći procenat ispitanika imao završenu srednju školu (71%). Za prikupljanje podataka korišćen je standardizovani upitnik, a statistička obrada izvršena je primenom IBM SPSS Statistics softvera, uz korišćenje deskriptivne statistike, analize pouzdanosti, korelacione i regresione analize, kao i ANOVA testa. Rezultati istraživanja pokazali su visok nivo pouzdanosti mernih skala, pri čemu je Cronbach's alpha za ekstrinzično zadovoljstvo iznosio $\alpha=0,872$. Utvrđena je pozitivna i statistički značajna povezanost između uslova rada i ekstrinzičnog zadovoljstva zaposlenih. Prosta regresiona analiza pokazala je da uslovi rada ostvaruju pozitivan i statistički značajan uticaj na ekstrinzično zadovoljstvo ($R^2=0,295$; $\beta=0,543$; $t=12,266$; $p<0,01$). Rezultati višestruke regresione analize ukazali su da socijalne ($\beta=0,486$; $p<0,001$) i kontekstualne karakteristike posla ($\beta=0,310$; $p<0,001$) imaju značajan pozitivan uticaj na ekstrinzično zadovoljstvo, dok motivacione karakteristike posla nisu pokazale statistički značajan efekat ($\beta=0,004$; $p=0,936$). Nalazi ukazuju na potrebu kontinuiranog unapređenja uslova rada kroz adekvatnu organizaciju posla, podršku rukovodećih struktura i jačanje profesionalne saradnje među zdravstvenim radnicima, kako bi se povećalo zadovoljstvo zaposlenih, doprinelo stabilnosti kadra i unapredio kvalitet zdravstvene zaštite.*

Ključne reči: *ekstrinzično zadovoljstvo, medicinske sestre, medicinski tehničari, uslovi rada, karakteristike posla, domovi zdravlja.*