

“Job satisfaction in the royal Swaziland police service. A case study of Manzini and Hhohho regions”

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ARTICLE INFO	Ndiphethe Olive Mabila, Nirmala Dorasamy and Malcolm Wallis (2014). Job satisfaction in the royal Swaziland police service. A case study of Manzini and Hhohho regions. <i>Problems and Perspectives in Management</i> , 12(3)
RELEASED ON	Thursday, 18 September 2014
JOURNAL	"Problems and Perspectives in Management"
FOUNDER	LLC "Consulting Publishing Company "Business Perspectives"



NUMBER OF REFERENCES

0



NUMBER OF FIGURES

0



NUMBER OF TABLES

0

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Job satisfaction in the royal Swaziland police service. A case study of Manzini and Hhohho regions

Abstract

There is no study that has examined factors associated with job satisfaction in the Royal Swaziland Police Service (RSPS). Concerns about poor working conditions, inadequate training opportunities, poor remuneration, poor standards of living, high workloads and lack of transparent promotion criteria form the crux of the problems faced by most police officers in the country. All the aforementioned factors have impacted on police performance as the crime level is still high, despite the recruitment and training of new police officers every year and the application of several crime prevention strategies. The study aims to investigate job satisfaction in the RSPS. The research has the following objectives: to examine the factors that influence job satisfaction within the RSPS; to explore the impact of job satisfaction on performance; and to make recommendations to police management on how job satisfaction in the RSPS can be enhanced.

The key finding of the study is that police officers perform effectively when given necessary resources. The findings also showed that police officers work for long hours and their efforts are not adequately rewarded, they are not treated fairly and there are insufficient structures to help police officers who experience burnout.

Keywords: job satisfaction, policing, performance.

JEL Classification: J00, R23.

Introduction

The role of the public sector is to provide quality services to the public. The Ministry of Public Service in Swaziland aims to promote a culture of commitment to public duty by ensuring an effective public service. If the major initiatives of government are to succeed in Swaziland it requires an efficient, responsive and effective public service. The Royal Swaziland Police Service (RSPS) is a major institution within the public sector which provides maintenance of law and order services to the public. The RSPS developed plans and strategies to deliver quality services to the public. The Royal Swaziland Police Service Strategic Development Plan (Royal Swaziland Police Service, 2000, p. 1) aims to improve the operational and administrative efficiency and effectiveness of the RSPS in an attempt to provide the best possible service at least cost.

The Constitution of Swaziland, Act Number 1 of 2005, Section 189, states that the RSPS shall be responsible for preserving the peace, for prevention and detection of crime and the apprehension of offenders (Constitution of Swaziland, 2005, p. 113). The mission statement of the RSPS states that the RSPS is responsible for upholding the rule of law fairly and firmly, and ensuring the safety of all communities in partnership with all stakeholders; through prevention of crime, protection of life and property, preservation of public peace and order; detection of crime and bringing offenders to justice

(RSPS Annual Report, 2010, p. 1). The RSPS has developed a Service Charter that contains high standards which aim to improve the delivery of policing services to the public. According to the Service Charter (Royal Swaziland Police Service, 2000, pp. 6-7), the RSPS shall strive for and be guided by the following standards in service delivery to the public:

- ◆ When visiting a police station (seeking help or making a report), the police will promptly, politely and courteously attend to a member or members of the public at least between one and five minutes of their arrival at the police station.
- ◆ A safe environment and privacy to discuss personal matters will be provided.
- ◆ When a report of crime, traffic accident and other incidents are received, the police will arrive at the scene of emergency between ten and twenty minutes in urban areas and within an average of thirty minutes in rural areas.
- ◆ Feedback to customers shall be made within seven days on reported cases and, thereafter, at reasonable intervals as circumstances permit.
- ◆ Response to all telephone calls shall be promptly and courteously conducted within one to three rings.

While every endeavor is made to fulfil the Service Charter obligations, the RSPS is faced with the challenge of reducing crime by twelve percent every year, as mandated by the Swaziland Government. The RSPS has failed to meet the target for the past eight years, despite the recruitment of new officers,

the application of several crime prevention strategies and building of new police stations. The study intends to investigate the challenges faced by police officers, which impact on job satisfaction and present recommendations to police management on how job satisfaction in the RSPS can be enhanced.

1. Background

Public sector reform has featured strongly within most western democracies over the past two decades (Bonald and Fowler, 2000, p. 417). The aim of many reforms has been to achieve increased efficiency and effectiveness. This trend has affected a number of African states as well, including Swaziland. Where the government has initiated strategies of making an economic turnaround as millions of emalangeni, the Swazi currency, are lost through the commission of crimes, such as corruption, robberies and fraud (E1= South African 1R or US 10 cents).

The government has placed its trust in the RSPS to curb this monster by ensuring that crime is reduced by twelve percent each year. However, this is a great challenge to the RSPS, as in the past years, it has failed to meet such targets. It can be argued that this failure can be mainly attributed to dissatisfied employees. Job satisfaction has been found to significantly influence job performance, absenteeism, turnover and psychological distress (Chen, Yang, Shiau and Wang, 2006, p. 486).

The RSPS, like all other organizations, needs to address problems in Swaziland pertaining to police job satisfaction to improve productivity, reduce staff turnover and enhance creativity and commitment. Managers must recognize that employees have an increasing interest in meaningful work and commitment to the organization is an important component of job satisfaction (Yousef, 2000, p. 567). Hart (1999, p. 580) concluded that job satisfaction contributes to overall life satisfaction.

2. Literature

2.1. Public management and policing in Swaziland. The mission of the Government of the Kingdom of Swaziland is to provide a climate and infrastructure that will progressively maximize the quality and security of life of the people of Swaziland and make the best use of the country's natural and human resources (Swaziland Government, 2013, p. 3). The Swaziland Government launched the Public Sector Management Program (PSMP). The overall goals are to contribute toward enhancing the capacity of the public service to perform at consistently high levels, to meet the expectations of government and people

in matters pertaining to economic growth, social development and good governance (Swaziland Government, 1999, p. 4). The New Public Management (NPM) is a response to improving public sector performance by adopting an outcome-based and citizen-oriented approach, focusing on empowering leadership, while holding government accountable (Peete, 2001, p. 14).

Economic efficiency requires performance and cost-oriented thinking: performance should be reached at minimum costs. In other words, expenditure should result in maximum performance (Hood, 1991, p. 503). In keeping with the NPM rationale of considering citizens as customers and the role of government in steering and providing services to its customers thus police officers serve society and it changed from being a mere police force into a Royal Swaziland Police Service. Improved accountability, strong leadership, continual professional development of police, training, proper resource management, cooperation, integrity, quality of service and delivery, performance and procedures are all partnering variables in promoting police professionalism.

Growing costs of public sector policing and ongoing concerns about growing crime and fear of crime, have, in turn, led to concerns about the efficiency and effectiveness of public police agencies across different countries (Palmer, 1997, p. 666). Job satisfaction offers many positive benefits to both the police employee as well as the police organization (Carlan, 2007, p. 75). Therefore, the motto "value for money" unites the demands for high performance (Terpstra and Trommel, 2009, pp. 129-130). The police should be accountable for their performance targets (Terpstra and Van der Vijver, 2006, p. 94).

2.2. Impact of job satisfaction and performance. In 2007, some police officers took Government to the High Court to compel it to register a Police Union which aimed to ensure and improve the living conditions, rate of pay, social security, and general welfare of all police officers. The Court of Appeal did not approve the main plea of the police officers of having a recognized Police Union, but the court was of the opinion that there are job satisfaction issues, which the organization needs to attend to (Mhlanga and Swaziland Police Union v. Commissioner of Police, 2008). Job satisfaction is an attitude that embodies a deeper personal feeling of attainment, which can be either quantitative or qualitative, or is essential for reaching an increased level of motivation and performance (Mullins, 2002, p. 646). Mockler (2002, p. 251) argues that

employee satisfaction seeks to address an organization's bottom line through factors such as innovative thought; good customer care; quality production and profitability; and lower absenteeism together with higher turnover. Taking into account the various perspectives, job satisfaction, therefore, has a direct impact on the level of absenteeism, commitment, performance and productivity (Khan, Ahmad, Aleem and Hamed, 2011, p. 2).

Job satisfaction is especially crucial to police work. Werner (2007, p. 335) states that only satisfied employees seem more likely to display positive behavior that contributes to the overall functioning of the organization. Sheley and Nock (1979, p. 53) emphasize that knowing the factors that affect or contribute to job satisfaction for police officers can make the difference in the retention of professional, veteran police officers or an ever changing group of new recruits. Dantzer (1994, p. 32) states that police organizations should have an interest in job satisfaction for their officers, as it would be beneficial to both the police organization and administrators to be knowledgeable of factors that characterize a satisfied work force.

Mathis and Jackson (2009, p. 324) state that performance is associated with quantity of output, quality of output, timeliness of output, presence/attendance on the job, efficiency of the work completed and effectiveness of work completed. The principal challenge for most organizations is to ensure that the performance of employees will result in the effectiveness and success of any organization. However, organizations generally fail to assess the contributions their employees make to overall effectiveness, that is, the employees' job performance (Suliman, 2001, p. 1049). Performance cannot be left in anticipation that it will develop naturally, despite the employee's natural desire to perform and be rewarded for it. This desire needs to be accommodated, facilitated and cultivated (Amos, Ristow and Ristow, 2004, p. 43).

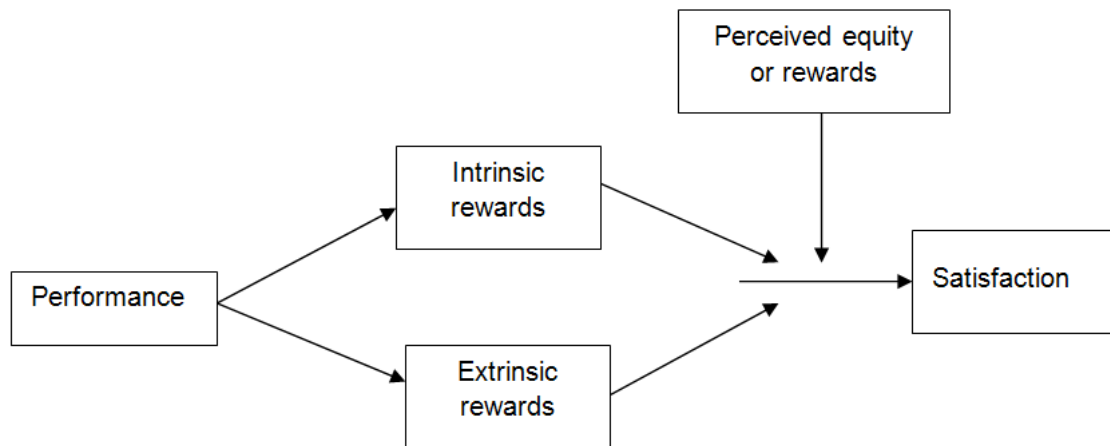
Job satisfaction and performance can be summarized as when the "*productivity of a happy worker is higher*" (Robbins, 1998, p. 199). Performance and job satisfaction are related since job satisfaction is considered an important and desirable goal for organizations because satisfied workers perform at higher levels than those who are not satisfied (Eckman, 2004, p. 367). An employee, who has a positive attitude toward his or her job, will have job

satisfaction and be willing to commit to his or her organization, thereby increasing organizational performance (Rayton, 2006, p. 140).

It was found that better performance of the workforce is the result of high levels of job satisfaction (Sousa-Poza and Sousa-Poza, 2000, p. 518). Organizations, in general, prefer work satisfied employees because it makes for a better work environment, which has a positive effect on production and performance (Heymans, 2002, p. 30). Moore (1999, p. 81) states that people, who have positive attitudes about their jobs, will inherently perform better in the workplace. Awards have a significant role in showing that job satisfaction is the result of job performance. Internal awards are because of job results (i.e., feeling of success) and external rewards arise from the gratitude of the job (income and salary). These awards will satisfy employees, specifically workers (Gholipour, 2001, p. 76). Awards not only promote the performance but also have an effect on job satisfaction. Robbins (1998, p. 297) views that "*productivity of a happy worker is higher*".

Herzberg, Mausner and Sherwitz (1959, p. 113) state that any improvements in motivators should lead to an improvement in performance, other things being equal. Neyroud (2003, p. 578) argues that performance management in the police service is a complex matter, and the publishing of league tables of detection and crime levels does not exemplify what really concerns the public. He asserts that performance is not about the setting of targets for goal achievement, but about monitoring police practice against professional and ethical standards, "*making the right judgements and doing the right actions for the right reasons*" (Neyroud, cited in Newburn 2003, p. 589). Dixon (2005, p. 484) also argues persuasively that good policing should not be "*police business*", which entails not only figure chasing, but rather a new mode of governance that provides effective, just and accountable policing (Newburn, 2005, p. 501).

Cockcroft and Beattie (2009, p. 537) emphasize that, more importantly, prescribed targets can result in de-skilling police officers if set inappropriately. Job performance is a product of three factors: the capacity to perform, opportunity to perform, and the willingness or motivation to perform (Ivancevich and Matteson, 1999, p. 146). Figure 1 highlights how performance leads to satisfaction and how rewards play a pivotal role in this relationship.



Source: Adapted from Lawler and Porter (1967, p. 96).

Fig. 1. Performance leads to satisfaction

The above illustration indicates that an employee will expect to be rewarded according to his or her input and equitably recognized for his or her outstanding efforts and performance, both intrinsically and extrinsically. If he or she is not justifiably rewarded; this will leave the employee dissatisfied. An example of this is when a police officer was promised that a special increase in salary will be added for performance above expected standards. If the police officer has met all set targets or standards and is not given the perceived reward, this could lead him or her to be dissatisfied.

Buzawa, Austin and Bannon (1994, p. 52) state that enhancing job satisfaction might help the officer alleviate the inevitable stresses of the police workplace, thereby mediating the more harmful effects of stress, including absenteeism, burnout, substance abuse and tendencies towards suicide. Robbins (2003, p. 78) emphasizes the importance of employee job satisfaction as a factor influencing, amongst others, employee work performance.

3. Research methods

The research was based on a case study of two administrative regions (Manzini and Hhohho), using a quantitative and qualitative research approaches. This study adopted a purposive sampling technique as it was possible to identify in advance the targeted population. The Manzini region has 974 police officers while the Hhohho region has 751 police officers. This allowed each of these stratum a sample proportional to the size of the strata.

Using conservative procedures to determine the percentage or the probability of the target population falling within a sample size, which is a representative of the total targeted population, the researcher assumed that the estimate can fall between 10 to 20 percent of the target population. So, taking 20 percent as the probability, the researcher chose 345 police

officers to be in the sample; and further using the weights for the two regions, Manzini was represented by 207 police officers, whereas Hhohho was represented by 138 police officers.

Questionnaires were handed to 345 police officers (respondents) using a personal approach. Based on the literature review of job satisfaction research, the researcher developed a questionnaire including 13 questions on the impact of job satisfaction on performance as well as several demographic questions. Demographic questions included age, gender, years of service, highest academic standard, post level and geographical regions. The qualitative research involved conducting recorded semi-structured interviews with 10 senior police officers, which included serving and retired officers. A focus group discussion was conducted with 9 junior police officers as a form of control in the qualitative research. The members of the focus group discussion were selected using the weights of the two regions, Manzini was represented by 5 police officers, whereas Hhohho was represented by 4 police officers who were recruited using a personal approach.

4. Data analysis

Data was scientifically analyzed using the Scientific Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 12 and the Microsoft (MS) Excel for graphical presentations. It enabled the researcher to describe and compare variables numerically. The response rate was one hundred percent. The number of respondents was 345. There were 209 and 136 female respondents. The results reflected that the males represented 61% of the sample size and the females represented 39%. It must be noted that the RSPS is a male-dominated institution. The Manzini region had a higher number of respondents of 60% and Hhohho had 40%. This is proportionate to the number of police officers posted in the two regions.

5. Quantitative analysis

5.1. Exploring the impact of job satisfaction on performance. The results in Figure 2 highlight that, in Swaziland, most police officers believe they perform effectively when given necessary resources. 94 percent agreed that they perform effectively when given necessary resources against 3 percent who disagreed. Only 3 percent neither performed effectively nor ineffectively when given necessary

resources. Greenberg and Baron (2003, p. 416) warn that organizations never have unlimited resources (such as space, money, equipment, or personnel). It is inevitable that conflicts will arise over distribution of those resources.

Sageer, Rafat and Agarwal (2012, p. 38) state that employers should give their employees the very best tools to deliver the very best performance for the company, customers and the marketplace.

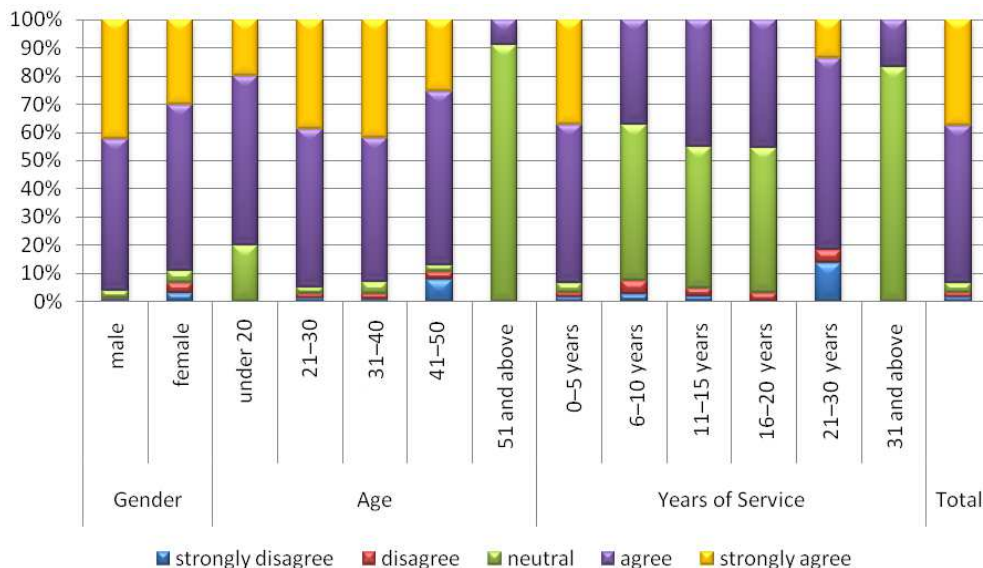


Fig. 2. Respondents' perceptions on performing effectively when given necessary resources

5.2. Working for long hours. The results in Figure 3 reflect that most police officers in Swaziland work long hours. 74 percent agreed that they work for long hours against 9 percent who said they do not work long hours. Only 17 percent neither agreed nor disagreed. This result supports a

study of South African police officers by Kadebe (2010, p. 55) that some police officials work very long hours without extra pay or other incentives as policing is monotonous, tedious and difficult and sometimes even beyond the strength of a human being.

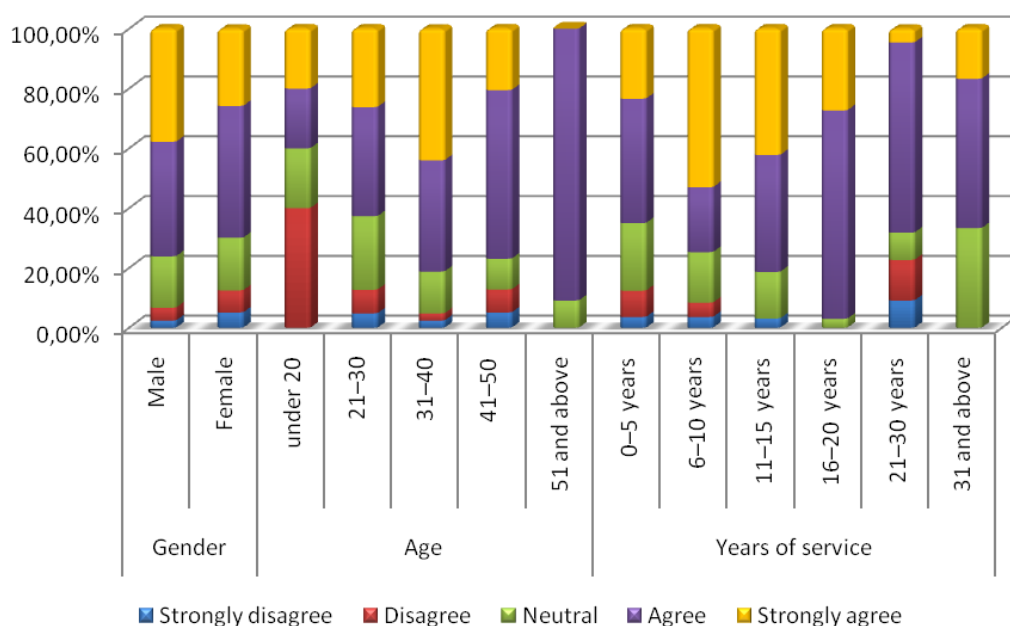


Fig. 3. Respondents' perceptions on working long hours

5.3. Feeling that efforts are not adequately rewarded. The results in Figure 4 show that, most police officers do not feel that their efforts are adequately rewarded. 63 percent felt that their efforts are not adequately rewarded against 11 percent who feel that their efforts are adequately rewarded. Only 26

percent neither felt that they were not adequately rewarded nor they were adequately rewarded. The respondents are in support of Kolb, Rubin and Osland (1991, p. 104) that good performers should see that they get more desired rewards than do poor performers, and others in a system should also see that.

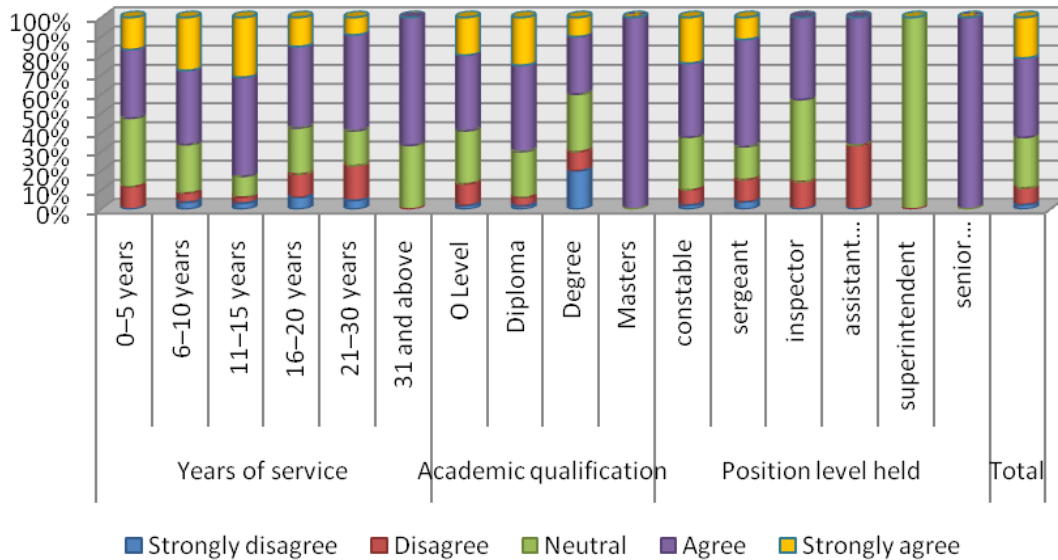


Fig. 4. Respondents' perceptions on feeling that efforts are rewarded

5.4. Everyone is treated fairly. Figure 5 shows that, police officers believe they are not treated fairly. 73 percent felt that they were not treated fairly against 10 percent who said they were treated fairly. Only 17 percent neither agreed nor disagreed that they were

treated fairly. Carrell, Elbert, Hatfield, Grobler, Marx and van der Schyf (1999, p. 561) support that "*job satisfaction is considerably improved when supervisors are perceived to be fair, helpful, competent and effective.*"

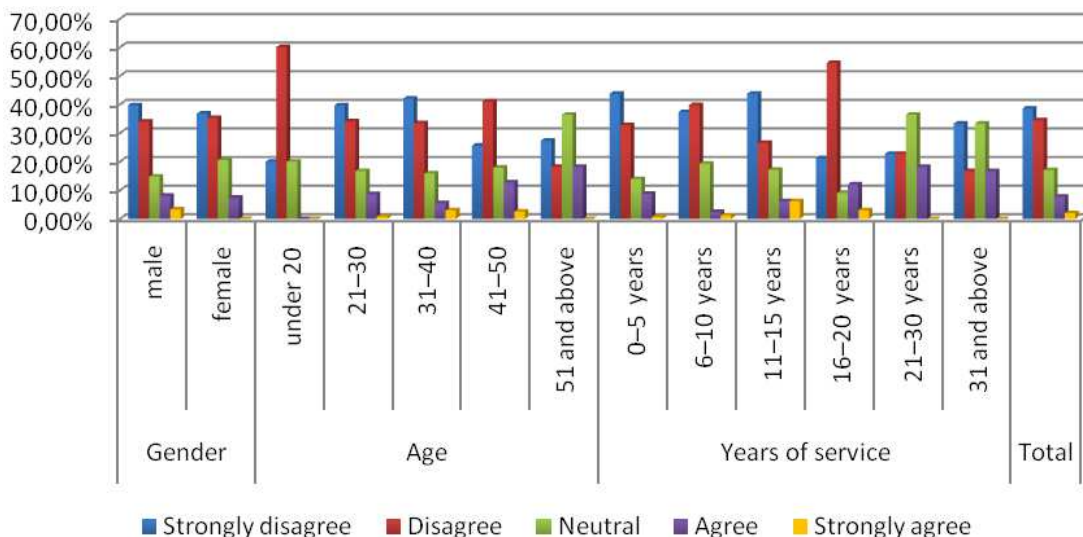


Fig. 5. Respondents' perceptions on everyone being treated fairly

5.5. There are sufficient structures to help police officers who experience burnout. The results in Figure 6 reflect that, in Swaziland, there are insufficient structures to help police officers who experience burnout. 65 percent stated that there are insufficient structures to help police officers who experience burnout, against 13 percent who said that there were sufficient structures to help police

officers who experience burnout. Only 22 percent neither agreed nor disagreed. The findings support Drake and Edward (2002, p. 176) that high levels of job-related stress may lead to burnout, unless individuals successfully develop and use coping mechanisms to combat it. The RSPS has insufficient structures to help police officers who experience burnout.

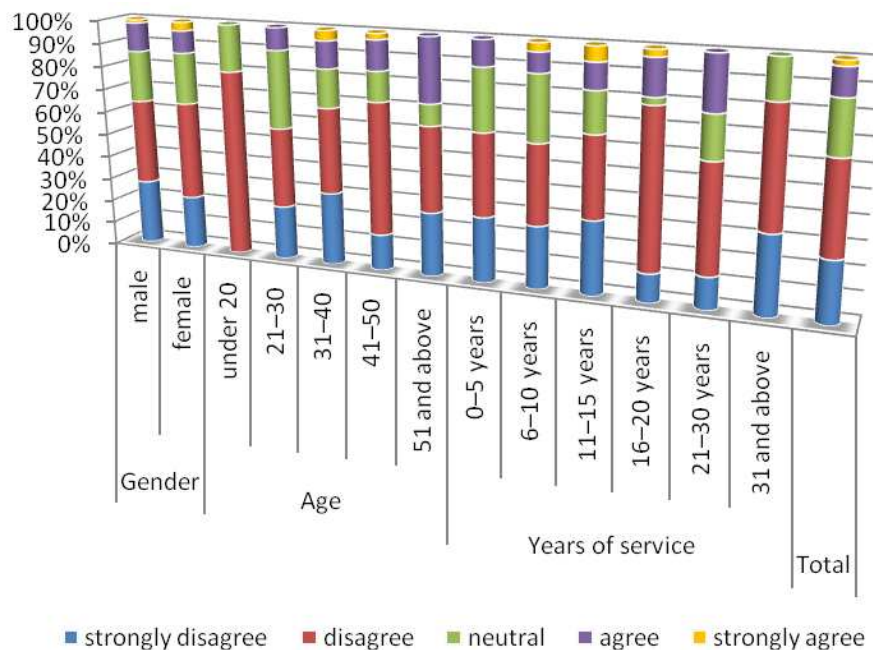


Fig. 6. Respondents' perceptions on having sufficient structures to help police officers who experience burnout

5.6. Possessing skills and competencies to perform the job. The results in Figure 7 reflect that most police officers in Swaziland have the skills and competency to perform the job. 76 percent have the skills and competencies to perform their job against 12 who said they do not have the skills and

competency to perform the job. Only 12 percent neither agreed nor disagreed. These results are in line with a statement by Greenberg and Baron (2003, p. 209) that it is not a secret that some people are better suited to performing their jobs than by virtue of their unique characteristics and special skills and abilities.

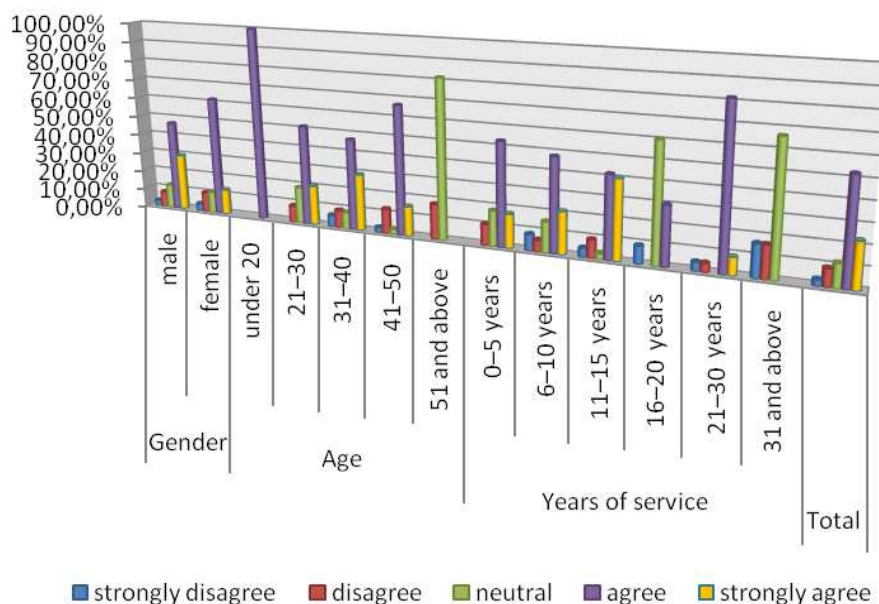


Fig.7. Respondents' perceptions on having the skills and competencies to perform their job

5.7. Willingness to put a great deal of effort beyond what is normally expected in order to make the RSPS successful. The results in Figure 8 present that most police officers in Swaziland are willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond what is normally expected in order to make the RSPS successful. 91 percent are willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond what is normally expected in order to make the RSPS successful against 4

percent who are not willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond what is normally expected in order to make the RSPS successful. Only 5 percent neither agreed nor disagreed. This result supports a statement by Chiu (2000, p. 177) that job satisfaction is correlated to enhanced job performance, positive work values, high levels of employee motivation, and lower rates of absenteeism, turnover and burnout.

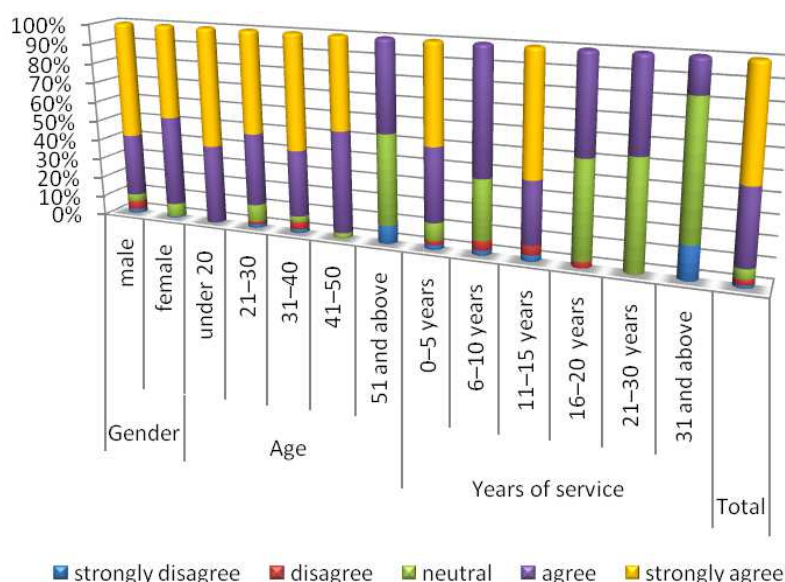


Fig. 8. Respondents' perceptions on willingness to put a great deal of effort beyond what is normally expected of them in order to make the RSPS successful

6. Qualitative analysis

The responses from the respondents interviewed reflect that there is support and appraisal for work well done in the RSPS, which is mandatorily done once a year on a form and random verbal appraisals are depended on each supervisor. *"It depended on the supervisor on the daily bases but annually it's a must. In my work there are various forms of appraising officers for a job well done of which there is daily feedback and yearly there is, officers are appraised through a form RSPS 45"*.

The respondents all agreed that feedback from their supervisors to them always happened when they have broken the law or neglected duty. *"It is rare as it is done once a year not unless you are on the wrong side of the law that's when you are called"*; and *"It is done once in a year in the organization and that is when you get to hear of appraisal"*. In conclusion, a majority of police officers stated that there is a performance management system in the RSPS.

However, the focus group agreed that *"despite the wide hierarchy in the RSPS there is a growing trend in the RSPS of recruiting university graduates who then receive instant promotions in favour of us long serving and dedicated officers who possess the same qualifications with them and there is no clear promotion policy"*. In conclusion, police are not treated fairly. The respondents all agreed that the demands of the police job are too much such that they do not have enough rest or sleep and they also work during public holidays. In conclusion, police work long hours.

The respondents are of the view that their efforts are not adequately rewarded and that salary increases are inadequate to meet the increasing cost of living

and poor salaries can encourage police officers to leave their jobs. Their salary is not equal to the effort they put on the job. They voiced an outcry that their job offers inadequate allowances and thus they are not satisfied with the allowances they receive in the police organization. The focus group hinted that it was better when they used to claim overtime which was eventually replaced with a police allowance.

Conclusion

Organizations need to provide the environment, support and resources that impact favorably on the motivation of individuals. This can be in the form of providing the rewards, working conditions, systems and processes, learning opportunities, encouragement, and so on, that maximize the chances that employees will be satisfied with and give their best to the organization.

The research indicated that there is a significant relationship between job satisfaction and performance. A happy employee is usually productive. Employee commitment correlates positively with employee motivation, job satisfaction and performance (Khumalo, 2012, p. 211). This study was able to unveil the relationship between job satisfaction and performance, as satisfied employees will strive to increase work performance. Arnold and Feldman (1996, pp. 93-94) state that there exists a relationship between job satisfaction and job performance and there is sufficient evidence to indicate that job performance results in job satisfaction.

The key finding of the study is that police officers are more likely to perform effectively when given necessary resources. The findings also showed that police officers work for long hours and their efforts

are not adequately rewarded, they are not treated fairly and there are insufficient structures to help police officers who experience burnout. In exploring the impact of job satisfaction on performance, the study established that job satisfaction and work performance cannot be separated.

Since there are no studies previously conducted in this sector, neither changes nor trends could be

identified, it is recommended that similar studies be repeated in the future to allow for comparative analysis. Further, the study should be done on the whole police service to include all regions to determine job satisfaction levels. This would provide management with good, usable information on what to focus on in order to improve overall job satisfaction in the RSPS.

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