

AN INTEGRATED APPROACH OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES MOTIVATION AND THE QUALITY OF HEALTH SERVICES

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Abstract

This research has aimed an in-depth analysis of the correlation between the motivation of the medical human resources from a few representative hospitals and their professional performances in the process of achieving and providing the medical services. The main specific objectives were: (1) to know the motivation degree of the human resources; (2) to identify the main specific motivational factors; (3) to discover the type of correlation between motivation, satisfaction and human resources performance. The research was performed on a randomly chosen sample in a few representative hospitals from Bucharest. Data collection and processing methods were: questionnaire, structured interviews and Microsoft Excel. Based on the research results, we have proposed an integrated managerial approach of the human resources motivation and the quality of health services.

Keywords: health services, human resources, motivation, quality.

1. INTRODUCTION

The personnel performing medical services represent a special category, both due to the complex training required by the medical services, and due to the complexity of the activities in which they are involved. The motivation of the medical personnel is a subject of major importance and very complex due to the particularities of this field. The problem of motivating the medical staff is and will remain a key element for improving the quality of the medical services, because the human factor influences the quality of the services, along with other situational factors.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

At the global level, major discrepancies continue to exist between the level of demand for medical services and the providers' offer, both in terms of basic services and their quality (Yakymova & Kuz, 2019; Chistobaev et al. 2018). Thus, the increase of the medical benefits quality is not only limited to the increase of the wages and the number of personnel in this field, but it must first of all take into account the increase of the labor productivity and the quality of the services (Fatoki, 2019). Specialists' researches (Winter et al., 2019; Pacáková & Kopecká, 2018) show that a concomitant increase in the productivity and quality of services is essential for consumers of medical services (Gružauskas & Grmanová, 2018; Pachura, 2019). Thus, several major directions that the successful medical institutions have developed have been identified for attaining the performance objectives: focusing on the value delivered to patients, increasing the professionals' autonomy, redesigning activities and processes, relying on results, measurement and feedback, motivating and managing the personnel career (Enderstein, 2017; Indartono et al. 2019).

Motivating staff involves a set of methods and processes that determine, maintain and stimulate a specific behavior aimed at achieving goals. In medical organizations, staff motivation becomes problematic, because we discuss about quite different categories of staff in terms of roles, involvement and professional training. The specificity of the medical services represents a determining factor for the complexity of the staff motivation process, too (Gino et al. 2018). Performing in good conditions the medical services requires a strong involvement of the staff and a special relationship between the intrinsic and the extrinsic type of motivation for each of the employees (Androniceanu, 2017). In the medical field, the models regarding the motivation of the personnel will find their application in a certain frame, each model requiring an adaptation corresponding to the context. The process of motivating the human resources can be analyzed by means of the step-up presented in Figure 1:

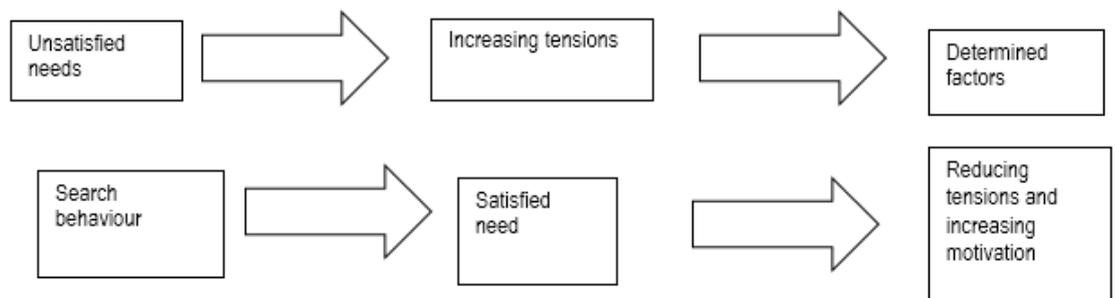


FIGURE 1 - THE MAIN SEQUENCES OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES MOTIVATION PROCESS FROM THE MEDICAL SECTOR
(ADAPTED FROM ROBBINS P. STEPHEN, P.73)

In the case of medical services, studies have shown that the motivational mechanism may differ according to the type of personnel and depending on the socio-cultural environment (Mustafin et al., 2019; Reinhold et al., 2019). The motivation may be influenced by the size of the medical institution referred to. A particular importance will have a number of factors grouped in the form of the influence exerted by the local community (Nica et al. 2017; Raišienė et al. 2019). Thus, the process of motivating the medical staff will be influenced not only by the specific tools of human resources management, but also by the feedback received from the patients. Another element that determines the particularization of the motivational processes of the medical personnel refers to its heterogeneity from the perspective of the different medical specializations and also from the perspective of the functions performed by these different categories of personnel (Popescu G.H. et al., 2017; Fitriyah, 2019). Various specialists have conducted research that reveals their complexity (Lorincová et al., 2019; Sasongko et al., 2019). Thus, the conclusions of a research carried out on a sample of 67 doctors and 219 nurses from the General Hospital of Nicosia showed that the factors grouped in the category "performances" were classified as being first in relation to the 4 categories of measured factors, followed of salaries, work colleagues and tasks in the structure of the job. From the perspective of Herzberg's theory, remuneration and co-workers are part of the hygienic factors category. These factors are not considered motivational, but they contribute substantially to the job satisfaction, if properly managed (Marinescu et al., 2019; Nguyen & Luu, 2019). The factors related to the job attributes and performance are motivational because they influence the job satisfaction by meeting human resources needs (Sabie, 2019).

If the hygiene factors are satisfied, the motivational ones will contribute to the job satisfaction and will encourage the medical personnel to obtain performances (Belas et al., 2019).

A first relevant motivational theory belongs to Abraham Maslow. This is the basis of our research (Flessa & Meissner, 2019). According to Maslow's theory, human beings have five sets of needs, which must be gradually satisfied. The needs are divided as follows: physiological, security, belonging to the group and to the organization, appreciation and esteem and self-realization.

The second theory of motivation belongs to McClelland. It analyzes three categories of needs: affiliation, power, professional and personal achievement. It seems that the most important need is the achievement one. Thus, the people who express the need for achievement prefer the execution of tasks and objectives with moderate difficulty and the personal responsibility for the performance is based on one's own abilities and efforts and follows the feedback on the results (Tvaronavičienė, 2019).

The third content theory is Clayton Alderfer's ERG Theory who grouped the needs of individuals into three fundamental categories starting from Maslow's five categories of needs, but unlike Maslow, he did not

order them hierarchically. The three categories are: basic needs, the need to interact with others and the need for personal development.

Another relevant motivational theory is Herzberg's bifactorial theory. It analyzes two categories of factors that are present in the workplace: motivating and demotivating or hygienic factors. Herzberg called motivating factors those characteristics of the content of the job that produced satisfaction, because they satisfy the individual's need for professional self-fulfillment.

Motivation makes the individual act in a certain way and modify his/her decisions and behavioral choices (Stacho et al., 2019; Vydrová & Bejtkovský, 2018). In the research process that is the basis of this paper we aimed to identify the main factors and to analyze the correlation between the human resources' degree of motivation of several hospitals in Bucharest and their professional performance. Based on the results obtained, a series of recommendations have been formulated for a new model of integrated approach to the management of human resources in hospitals.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The main specific objectives of our research were: (1) to identify the degree of motivation of the human resources; (2) to discover the main specific motivational factors; (3) to find out a few recommendations for increasing the motivation of human resources from health services.

The research basis includes the neonatology and surgery sections of two emergency hospitals in Bucharest. The total number of medical staff in the two departments is 151 medical professionals, and following the application of the sampling formula (Androniceanu, 2017), we obtained a sample of 108 subjects, with a margin of error of 0.5%. The research method used for data collection is the questionnaire, and the tool used for processing and systematizing the data is Microsoft Excel.

4. RESEARSCH RESULTS ANALYSIS

In order to measure the degree of motivation and satisfaction of the medical staff, we included in the questionnaire several questions regarding the motivation and the quality of the medical services. Some of the relevant aspects of the research have been selected and are presented below. Regarding the number of the medical staff's tasks, we discovered that the medical staff from the two hospitals is overloaded with tasks. This aspect has a negative influence on the motivation of human resources. As it can be seen in Figure 2., 57% of the subjects consider that they have many tasks to perform in their workplace, while only 3% consider that they have few tasks to perform. 15% of the respondents consider

that they have very many tasks to perform, and 7% consider that they have few and very few tasks, 21% being between the two variants, considering that they have a reasonable number of tasks to perform.

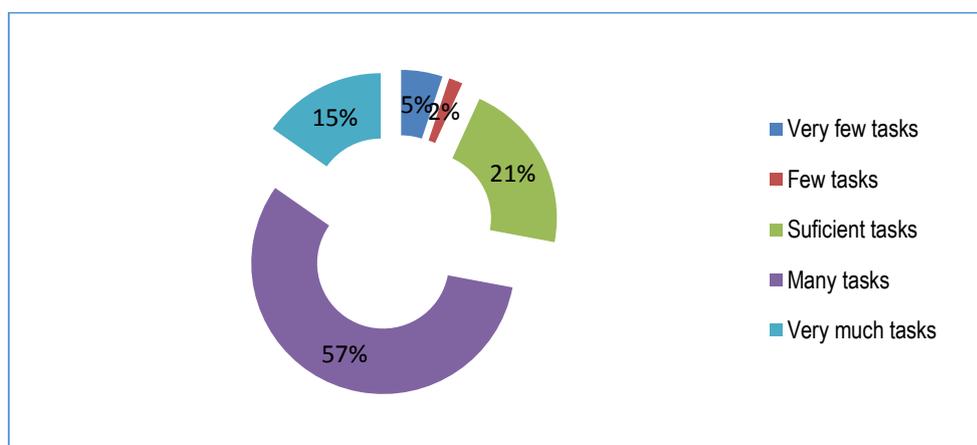


FIGURE 2 - RESPONDENTS' OPINIONS REGARDING THE DEGREE OF LOADING WITH TASKS

Another aspect investigated is communication with colleagues. The opinions of the respondents are shown in Figure 3. Communication between colleagues is very important, through it being solved most of the problems that appear in the activity of the medical staff of the target group.

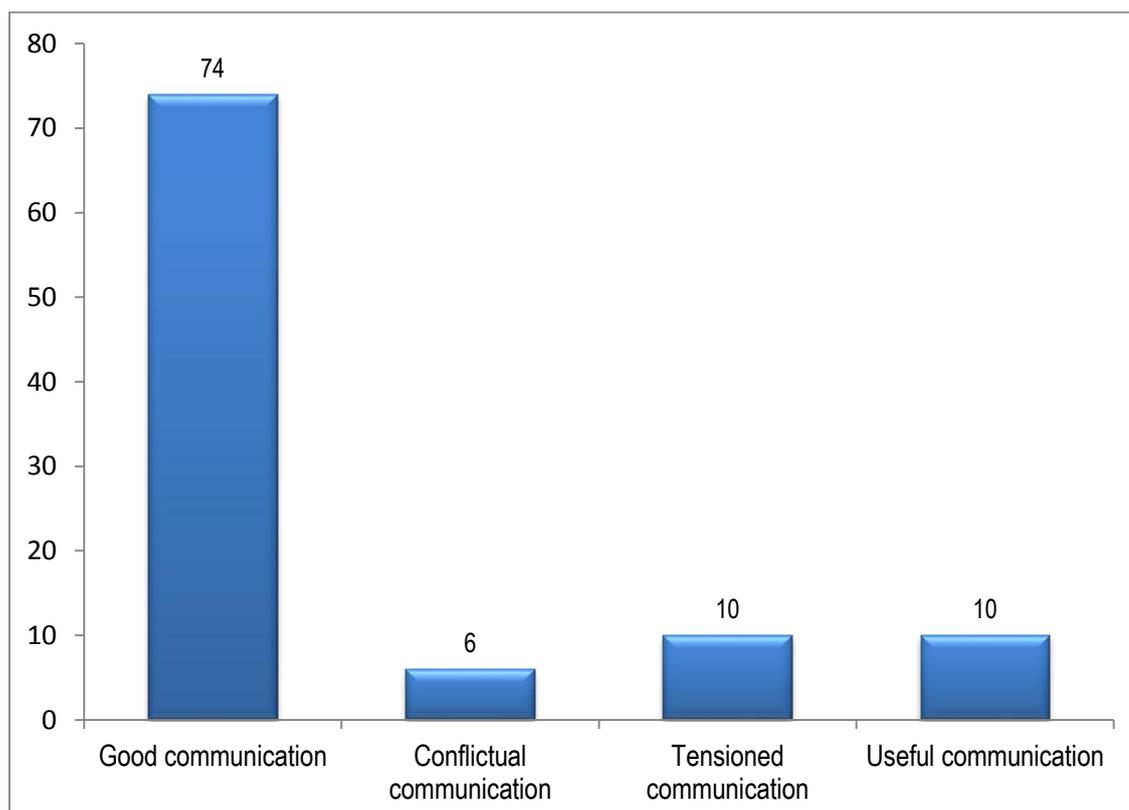


FIGURE 3 - COMMUNICATION WITH COLLEAGUES

As it can be seen in the graph above, communication within the two hospitals is good. Most of the respondents, 74% have stated that they are positively motivated by the way they communicate in the process of carrying out tasks. Only 16% said that sometimes tensions and conflicts still occur, but they are solved successfully. Another motivational aspect investigated relates to the cooperation within the medical teams. The main results are shown in Figure 4.

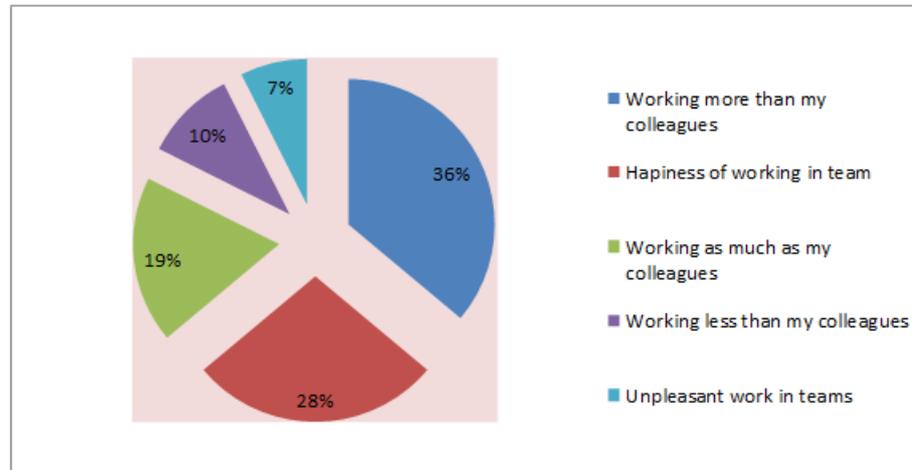


FIGURE 4 - THE DEGREE OF MOTIVATION BASED ON WORKING IN TEAMS

Regarding teamwork, the majority of respondents (36%) consider that they work more than their colleagues, while 19% consider that they work as much as the others. On the other hand, only 10% consider that they work less, because their tasks are easier compared to their colleagues, and 7% think that the work they do is unpleasant compared to that of their colleagues. We note that 28% of the respondents cooperate in teams and work with other colleagues with pleasure.

Regarding the degree of job satisfaction, the respondents had to give grades from 1-10, where 1 means not at all satisfied and 10 very satisfied. The main results are shown in Figure 5:

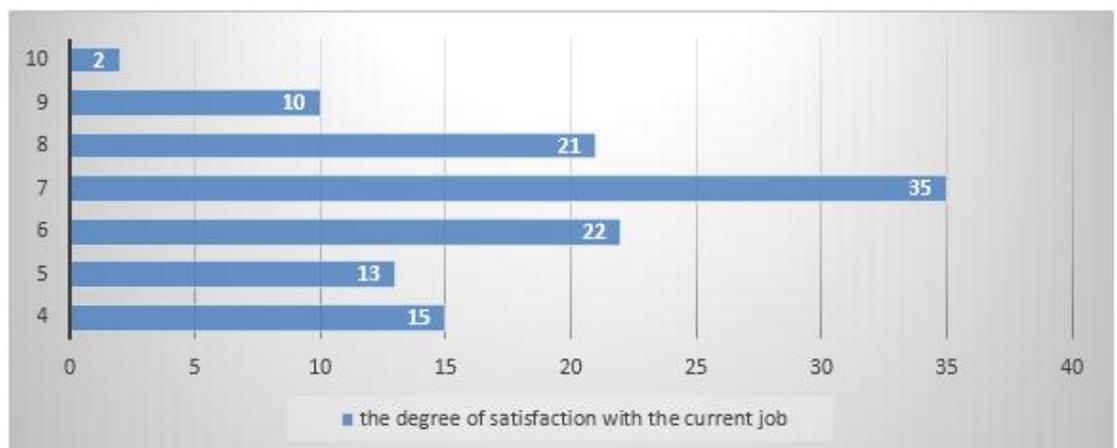


FIGURE 5 - THE DEGREE OF JOB SATISFACTION

Of the total number of respondents, only 2 were very satisfied. 22 respondents gave grade 6, and 21 respondents gave grade 8. Most responses (35) were rated with grade 7, and no answer was recorded under grade 4. This means that all respondents have at least a minimum level of job satisfaction. Another researched aspect relates to the working conditions. The main results are shown in Figure 6.

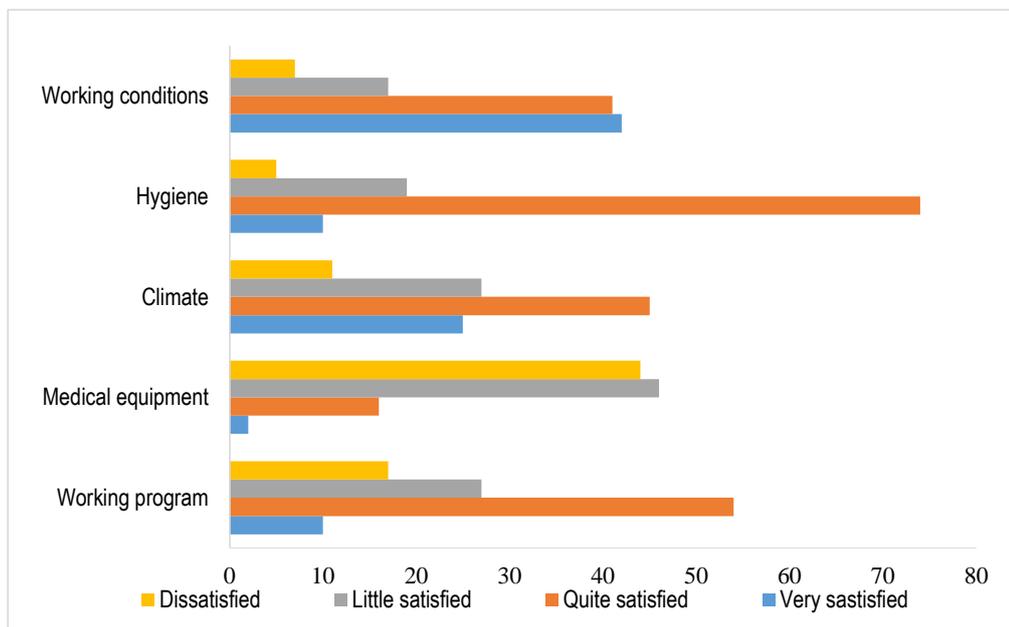


FIGURE 6 - THE DEGREE OF JOB SATISFACTION AT THE WORKING PLACE

As it can be seen in the graph above, the medical staff is very satisfied with the working conditions and the organizational climate and dissatisfied with the medical equipment and the work schedule (Zeb et al., 2019). Regarding the correlation between the degree of motivation and the salary, some results are presented in Figure 7.

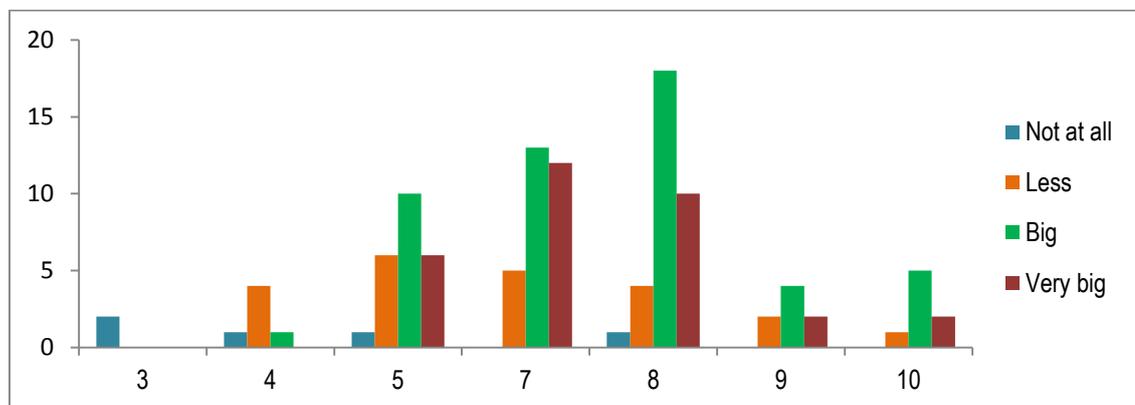


Figure 7 - The correlation between motivation and salary

Figure 7 reflects the correlation between the degree of motivation of the employees in performing the tasks in general and the extent to which the salary is a motivating factor for the majority. To the question regarding the degree of motivation, the respondents gave grades from 1-10, where 1 means not at all motivated and 10 very motivated, and to the question regarding the salary they had to choose the degree of motivation, respectively: not at all, to a small extent, to a great extent, to a very great extent. The results show that 70% of the respondents consider that there are benefits that they do not receive at the current job. 51 respondents consider themselves appreciated by the organization when thinking about the salary they receive. On the other hand, other 47 respondents feel less satisfied regarding their salary.

From the analysis of the correlation between tasks and motivation, some interesting conclusions were presented in Figure 8. Most of the respondents (72%) are motivated to perform the work tasks. Most of the respondents said that the salary represents a very motivating factor and a very high motivating factor for carrying out the tasks.

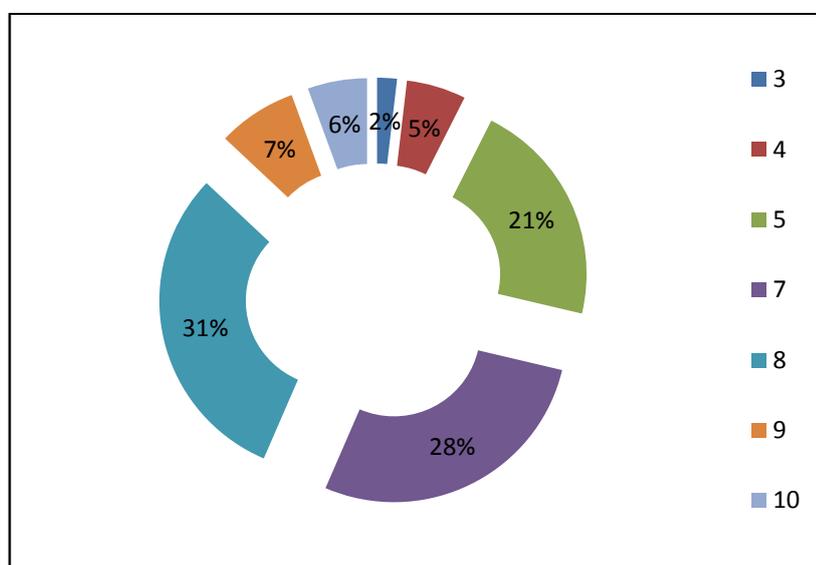


FIGURE 8 - THE DEGREE OF MOTIVATION FOR CARRYING OUT THE TASKS

There are some dissatisfactions regarding the number of tasks and the increased workload due to the shortage of staff, but overall, the medical staff considers themselves motivated by the work they do.

The relationships between colleagues influence the motivation that the medical staff feels towards the work they do. As we can see from Figure 9, the medical staff who gave grades over 5, are more motivated and appreciate that there is good communication between them and their colleagues.

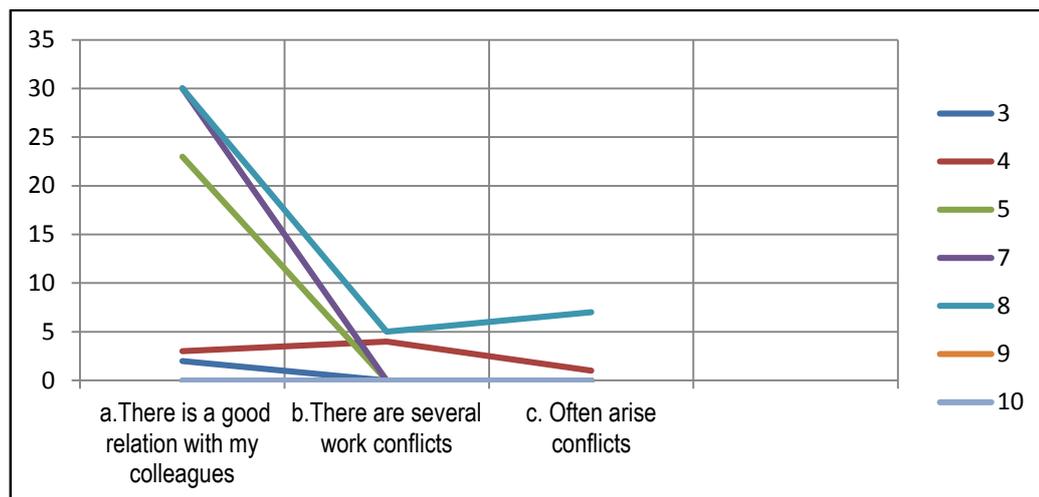


FIGURE 9 - THE DEGREE OF MOTIVATION BASED ON WORKING RELATIONS

60% of the respondents are motivated by the relationships with the others, which determines us to observe that these relationships are also a relevant motivational factor.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A NEW MANAGERIAL APPROACH OF MOTIVATION WITHIN THE HEALTH SERVICES ORGANIZATIONS

To use the maximum potential of employees, modern institutions and managers have changed their approach from "giving orders and controlling" to "consulting and supporting", as effective ways to motivate employees. This change of attitude started when managers have understood that recognizing achievements or good performance is more effective than punishing for poor performance. At the workplace, each employee is motivated by different factors, but the manager's goal is to influence the employees' behavior in order to correlate their motivation with the needs of the public authority. Starting from the results obtained in this research process, we formulate the following recommendations, which, in our opinion, would contribute to the development of changes in the approach of the human resources management in the medical services organizations in Romania:

- Efficient communication by practicing a management style based on assertive communication;
- Motivation based on professional and managerial performance;
- Implementation of a salary system based on professional and managerial merits;
- Extension of the delegation of tasks, competences and responsibilities.
- Encouraging and supporting employees in their work.
- Constructive feedback provided on a regular basis;

- Efficient communication;
- Objective evaluation;
- Continuous and systematic training;
- Improvement of the technical equipments of the hospitals;
- Continuous improvement of working conditions in which medical services are performed.

Limits and future research

One of the main limitations of this research is represented by the small number of hospital units and respondents. Our team intends to extend this research in order to have a national representation.

5. CONCLUSIONS

As it turned out from our research, the most important motivating factor for the medical staff is still the salary, because most of the respondents who consider themselves motivated to perform the tasks that they have to perform in the workplace, have stated that the salary is a very motivating and very highly motivating factor for delivering patient care quality. Another important conclusion concerns the working conditions and the medical equipment that motivate the personnel to perform the tasks. The research offers some coordinates necessary for the development of a new model of human resources management from the public organizations that perform health services. The results presented and analyzed are useful for hospital managers in Romania but also for adapting health policies and strategies. These results can also be a reference for this paper authors' future research as well as for other researchers.

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