

ABSTRACT

The relationship of the performance of the Public Health Midwife (PHM) with that of her personality characteristics and a number of selected variables in her work environment was studied with a view understanding the factors that would influence her work performance.

The study was conducted in one district of Sri Lanka namely Gampaha where the whole population of PHMs in the health division was selected for the study.

There is very little available literature on this subject relating to the health organizations but many studies of this nature have been undertaken on industrial organizations.

The study concentrated on the maternal and child health activities conducted by the PHM. The performance of the PHM was taken as the dependent variable while the personality characteristics and work environment variables formed the independent variables. A performance index was developed, that was used as the index for measurement of the dependent variable. The indicators namely the percentage of births registered by PHM and the percentage of infants immunized with the 3rd dose of DPT and Polio were selected for the development of the performance index.

A model of Public Health Midwife system was developed to identify the independent variables that were relevant to the issue under study.

The data on PHMs performance under the selected indicators was collected by establishing a continuous monitoring system of work performance by each PHM in the district under study during the period of one year.

Primary data on independent variables were collected by a questionnaire administered to 240 PHMs and by a second questionnaire administered to 27 supervising officers of the 9 MOH areas of the health division. Secondary data on performance was collected through the monitoring mechanism that was established for the purpose. The analysis was carried out by using four different but interrelated methods namely scattergrams, two way tables with ANOVA, multiple regression model and log linear model. The analysis proceeded to identify the significant independent variables that influenced the MCH performance of the PHM.

The significant independent variables that were found to influence performance of PHMs are age of PHM, ownership of house, number of school going children, distance to the office from the house, the population served, the mode of transport and job satisfaction of the PHMs. Service period in the present area, number of supervisory visits by the Supervising Public Health

Midwife and the husbands' income had a significant linear relationship with the performance. The motivational characteristics of the PHM as assessed by their supervising officers, did not correlate well with the performance of the PHMs.

The factors that have been identified in this study can be made use of in selection, training and deployment of this category of worker. The monitoring mechanism that was developed at PHM level would form a simple management information flow that would help in the enhancement of work performance of this category of worker by improving supervision and on the job training of individual PHMs.