

ABSTRACT

Introduction

The medical profession is a noble profession and it is a stressful job as well. Doctors experience extreme physical or mental tiredness due to their extended working hours, night shifts, increased workload, on-call duty, and less flexibility at work which eventually has a significant impact on their Work Life Balance (WLB) and Job Satisfaction (JS). Prevalence and relationship study about WLB and JS among medical officers has not been undertaken in the Sri Lankan context.

Objectives

To determine the levels of WLB and JS, its association and impact of WLB on JS among government medical officers working at hospitals in Ampara district.

Methods

Descriptive cross sectional study was performed among 424 government medical officers working in hospitals using stratified random sampling technique. The study instrument was a pre-tested and structured self-administered questionnaire. Data were analyzed using SPSS. Pearson's correlation coefficient, linear regression and chi-square tests were deployed to examine the relationship between WLB and JS. One-way ANOVA and independent sample t test were used to compare the mean values of selected demographic variables. The levels of WLB and JS was assessed by using a rating scale and a composite score.

Results

Out of 366 respondents, (response rate was 85.1%), 66.1% of government medical officers had moderate level of WLB while 17.8% had high level of WLB. Similarly, 60.7% had moderate level of JS whereas 23.5% had high level of JS. WLB showed significant association with JS and had significant impact on JS. Higher WLB was found in Government medical officers who were 43-51 of age group, males, married, Christianity, 16-20 years of work experience, an average of 6-8 working hours per day and distance of 1-10Km between home and working station. Statistically significant difference was found in sex, work experience and working hours in relation to WLB.

Similarly, higher JS was found in government medical officers who were 25-33 of age group, females, unmarried, Hinduism, 1-5 years of work experience, an average of 6-8 working hours per day and distance of 1-10Km. Further statistically significant difference was found in age categories and sex.

Conclusions and recommendations

This study provided good understanding regarding the prevalence of the WLB and JS, association between WLB and JS and impact of WLB on JS among government medical officers working at hospitals in Ampara district, Sri Lanka. Good WLB and JS are important for medical officers to enhance the quality of life and quality of care.

Management should conduct training programs on time management and effective work load management to increase WLB of employees. In order to enhance WLB, management should focus on the Crèche facility/child care program and fitness /recreation/ sport centers at secondary and tertiary care hospitals. Similarly, employee wellness program, along with conducive work environment and provision of attractive welfare facilities could improve JS.

Key words: Work life balance, Job satisfaction, Government medical officers, Hospitals, Ampara district.