

The Performance of the Medical and Paramedical Employees in Lasam District Hospital, Cagayan, Philippines: It's Effect to Quality of Service Delivery

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Abstract

Original Research Article

Patients are valuable costumers, and improving the quality of patient care needs our attention. Some of the problems facing hospital administration today are its lack of funding, lack of in-house resources for existing staff, and more importantly, lack of commitment from administration and staff. Thus, this study generally the performance of the medical and paramedical employees in Lasam District Hospital. The research includes all of the hospital's medical and paramedical employees at LDH, contractual, casual, or permanent. The judgmental performance evaluation method using the 360-degree feedback that provides for multiple evaluations of employees from superiors, peers, and one 's self was used. The medical and paramedical employees were interviewed according to a structured questionnaire. Five in- patients were also interviewed using the same questionnaire. Results showed that the assessment of patients on the hospitals' medical, nursing, and ancillary services received an overall mean of 3.93 or Very Satisfactory while the employees assessed themselves outstanding with an overall mean of 4.27. This means that patients are not usually contented with the quality of care they experienced even if the employees rated themselves as outstanding in terms of commitment, knowledge, skill, and interpersonal relations. Further, it is revealed that there is a significant association of the level of educational attainment to the level of performance of employees' knowledge and skills. There is also a significant difference in the level of performance to the quality of performance as perceived by the patients. The researcher, therefore, concludes that how the medical and paramedical employees of Lasam District Hospital delivered their services to its clients is Very Satisfactory despite the limitations in resources.

Keywords: District Hospital; Knowledge; Quality; Service Delivery; Commitment.

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INTRODUCTION

Recently, the Provincial Government and Department of Health released funds for additional infrastructures and equipment with the overall aim of improving the quality of services they provided. While some improvements in quality care were attained through investment in technology and infrastructure, the most dramatic improvements are achieved through people [1]. Previous studies have concluded that unsatisfied health care employees negatively affect their performance, thus decreasing the quality of care, which could adversely affect patient satisfaction and loyalty to a hospital [2].

Employees` performance, especially the performances of the medical and paramedical employees of Lasam District Hospital needs assessment. In this present administration, there are many stickers posted "Tumbong mo kay Gob" with his direct cellphone number under it. Previously there have been many complaints regarding the performances of the district hospitals particularly the LDH. These complaints are channeled by the governor thru the provincial Health

Officer for verification and solution of the problem. Some complaints regarding hospital services were also posted in websites particularly in facebook applications. If a negative post comes out, more negative comments come out and only few positive reactions are posted. Most of these complaints are regarding patient-doctor and patient-nurse interactions. Misunderstandings and misconception happen when there is lack of trust on the part of the costumers because of hearsays either true or not.

Long way before and up to present, there have been problems in the district hospitals. To mention a few, these are lack of employees, lack of employees` trainings, fast turnover of employees and increasing number of demand and expectations. The number of employees is not matched with the increasing number of patients. Thus, the quality is sacrificed just to cater a large quantity of patients. Therefore, there is a greater chance of unpleasant interaction between the employee and the patients they serve. Nowadays, workers are disengaged from their workday. Distracted by smartphones, social media, personal emails and the demands of their personal lives, most employees find it hard to focus consistently and

produce the best work they can. Sometimes, employees are distracted by their personal and family problems at home. Most employees also make it a habit that when a violation is not caught, they repeat it unless there is a punishment for them, like coming to work on time and going home not earlier than the prescribed time.

Because of these, employees' commitment and behavior towards client needs to be evaluated. The importance of employee valuations to assess workers' skills is particularly significant in work force planning processes. There is a distinct connection between employee performance and patient satisfaction. Another reason for evaluating employee performance is to identify problems and try to resolve them before they affect patient care and treatment. Improving the quality of patient care in the hospitals is a critical and essential activity. The patients report that they are given much less individual attention than ever before. They also complain that doctors and nurses are too busy tending to the technical aspects of care to provide the much-needed attention to patients' personal needs. Assessing employee performance is not only important in terms of quality of patient care, but it is also a critical component in cultivating highly qualified health professionals.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The researcher made use of the quantitative design in this study. Specifically, it utilized the descriptive-correlation method. The descriptive part of the study revolved around the determination of medical and paramedical employees' performance of Lasam District Hospital (LDH). The correlation part revolved around the investigation of the relationship patients' assessment with that of the employees.

The study took place in Lasam District Hospital. The Lasam District Hospital is a 25-bed capacity hospital managed by the Provincial Government of Cagayan. It is situated at I.B. Jurado, a barangay adjacent to its Poblacion. It serves the whole town of Lasam, part of Gattaran, Allacapan, Sto Nino, Lallo, Cagayan and Flora, Apayao. The Chief of Hospital who is under supervision of the Provincial Health Officer heads it. It caters mostly poor and middle-income group.

In this study, the researcher used the judgmental performance evaluation method using the 360-degree

feedback that includes multiple evaluations of employees from superiors, peers, and one's self. This method used the feedback and comments of co-workers to measure performance. This measurement was chosen because LDH is composed of small departments or organizations where everyone knows and interacts with everyone else. All evaluators must know and understand their co-worker's overall role and function, daily work duties, professional credentials and communication skills.

Since interviews obtain substantially higher response rates that may lessen the worry about non-response bias, the questionnaire was administered to the patients with interviewer assistance. The medical and paramedical employees were interviewed according to a structured questionnaire. The patients were also interviewed using the same questionnaire.

The study includes all of the hospital's medical and paramedical employees at LDH, contractual, casual or permanent. Each hospital employee evaluated himself, his peers evaluated him, and his direct supervisor or supervisors evaluated him lastly. Supervisors with direct hands on and almost day-to-day observance to his subordinates were chosen to assess.

Five in-patients or outpatients were chosen to assess the quality of service of that employee they sought care at researchers convenience. Included were patients managed at LDH from April 1 to 30, 2017. It does not include transferred patients and deceased patients. If the patient is less than 18 years of age or is unconscious, incoherent and disoriented, the watcher was interviewed.

The questionnaire that was used in the study as made and structured to gather all the relevant data needed for the study. Various studies and researches were analyzed and used to construct the questionnaire best suited to assess the employees' performance. The instrument measured the employees' performance in three (3) dimensions, namely: commitment, job skills and knowledge, and interpersonal relations and customer service. The instrument used a 5-point Likert-type scale. The questionnaire was structured to assess the performance of the employees as precisely as possible. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze employee performances of the district hospital.

Table-1.5: Point Likert-type scale

Arbitrary Scale	Descriptive Value
1.0 - 1.79	Poor Employee Performance
1.8 - 2.59	Fair Employee Performance
2.6 - 3.39	Satisfactory Employee Performance
3.4 - 4.19	Very Satisfactory Employee Performance
4.2 - 5.0	Outstanding Employee Performance

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table-2.0: Mean and Descriptive Interpretation on Employees` Performance

Categories	Peer/Self/Supervisor		Patient	
	Mean	Description	Mean	Description
A. Commitment (30%)	4.27	Outstanding	3.94	Very Satisfactory
B. Knowledge and Skills (35%)	4.26	Outstanding	3.86	Very Satisfactory
C. Interpersonal Relations & Customer Service (35%)	4.30	Outstanding	4.01	Very Satisfactory
Overall Mean	4.27	Outstanding	3.93	Very Satisfactory

Generally, the assessment of respondents on the hospitals' medical, nursing and ancillary services received an overall mean of 3.93 or Very Satisfactory. The employees assessed themselves outstanding with an overall mean of 4.27. This means that patients are not usually contented with the quality of care they experienced even if the employees rated themselves as outstanding in terms of commitment, knowledge, skill and interpersonal relations.

Table 2.1 shows the evaluation of the employee by themselves, their peers and supervisor as well as their patient. As shown in the table, the employees only rated

themselves very satisfactory as to punctuality while in the other categories, they rated themselves as outstanding. This implies that they perceive it themselves that they do not arrive to their posts on time so there is a problem of tardiness among them. If they are willing to spend extra time to care for their patients' needs, they rated themselves as outstanding while the patients rated them very satisfactory. As to alertness on catering patients' needs, the employee rated as outstanding while the patients rated as very satisfactory. The overall mean for the commitment for employees as rated by the patients is very satisfactory while the employee rated himself or herself, by his peers and supervisors as outstanding.

Table-2.1: Mean and Descriptive Interpretation on the Employees` and Patients` Evaluation as to Commitment of their Work

A. Commitment (30%)	Peer/self/supervisor		Patient	
	Mean	Description	Mean	Description
1. Arrives work or duty on time	4.11	Very Satisfactory	3.92	Very Satisfactory
2. Alert on catering patients' needs	4.33	Outstanding	3.97	Very Satisfactory
3. Completes records of patients and logbooks, and submits promptly said documents	4.28	Outstanding	4.05	Very Satisfactory
4. Demonstrates sensitivity to patients' needs	4.29	Outstanding	3.78	Very Satisfactory
5. Willing to spend extra time to care for patients' needs	4.34	Outstanding	3.96	Very Satisfactory
Category Mean	4.27	Outstanding	3.94	Very Satisfactory

Table-2.2: Mean and Descriptive Interpretation on the Employees` and Patients` Evaluation as to Knowledge and Skills

B. Knowledge and Skills (35%)	Peer/self/supervisor		Patient	
	Mean	Descriptive Scale	Mean	Descriptive Scale
1. Exhibit knowledge and skills needed to perform the duties and requirements of the position	4.35	Outstanding	3.97	Very Satisfactory
2. Exhibit knowledge of the methods, practices and equipment needed to deliver health service	4.25	Outstanding	3.88	Very Satisfactory
3. Exhibits up-to-date knowledge and awareness on current trends regarding patient management	4.13	Very Satisfactory	3.85	Very Satisfactory
4. Demonstrates mastery of his work	4.26	Outstanding	3.85	Very Satisfactory
5. Able to explain well the condition of the patient and the procedures done to the patient	4.26	Outstanding	3.81	Very Satisfactory
6. Able to explain the relevance of the procedures to the treatment of the patients' condition	4.29	Outstanding	3.84	Very Satisfactory
Category Mean	4.26	Outstanding	3.86	Very Satisfactory

Most employees rated themselves as outstanding as to knowledge and skills, mastery of work, ability to explain procedures and treatments well and its relevance. As to up-to-date knowledge, they only rated themselves very satisfactory. The patients rated them very satisfactory on all aspects. This only implies that

the employees perceive themselves lacking. It is good that nowadays, renewal of professional licenses requires a certain number of Continuing Professional Education (CPE), or they call it Continuing Medical Education (CME) in the medical field.

Table-2.3: Mean and Descriptive Interpretation on the Employees` and Patients` Evaluation as to Interpersonal Relations and Customer Service

C. Interpersonal Relations & Customer Service (35%)	Peer/self/supervisor		Patient	
	Mean	Descriptive Scale	Mean	Descriptive Scale
1. Exhibit a good working relationship with most of his/her peers, subordinates, and supervisors	4.36	Outstanding	3.97	Very Satisfactory
2. Shows respect and courtesy to patients/customers	4.35	Outstanding	4.13	Very Satisfactory
3. Exhibits warm and positive attitude to patients/customers	4.29	Outstanding	4.01	Very Satisfactory
4. Responds appropriately to feedback on job performance	4.22	Outstanding	3.85	Very Satisfactory
5. Communicate and share complete and unbiased information with patients and families in ways that are affirming and useful	4.26	Outstanding	3.84	Very Satisfactory
6. Respect patient dignity, wishes, and beliefs	4.36	Outstanding	4.15	Very Satisfactory
7. Keeps sensitive information confidential at all times but know when to pass on information on a need-to-know basis only	4.28	Outstanding	4.09	Very Satisfactory
Category Mean	4.30	Outstanding	4.01	Very Satisfactory

As to interpersonal relations and customer service, the employees rated themselves as outstanding while the patients rated them as only very satisfactory. This is because the employees cannot please all patients especially when they are under time and work pressure. As they say, you do nine satisfactory jobs and do an

unsatisfactory one; they will only remember the last one. Years ago, all government employees were required to attend the Anti Red Tape Act (ARTA) seminar, included in the seminar are employees prescribed behavior in dealing with clients.

Table-3.0: Frequency and Rank of Problems of Respondents

Employees` Problems	Frequency	Rank	Department Concerned
Heavy workload	2	1 st	Medical & Nursing
Lack of Trainings and Conferences	1	2 nd	Nursing
Tardiness	1	2 nd	Nursing
Dishonesty	1	2 nd	Nursing
Patients` Problems			
Lack of courtesy and responsiveness of nurses	3	1 st	Nursing
Medicines not always available and lack of branded medicines	2	2 nd	Pharmacy
Lack of communication about disease and treatment plan of doctors	1	3 rd	Medical
Lack of Accessibility of doctors and nurses	1	3 rd	Medical & Nursing
Long waiting time to get X-ray result	1	3 rd	Radiology
Preparation necessary for a laboratory procedure not explained well	1	3 rd	Laboratory

Table 3.0 shows some cause and effect relationships. Employees complain of heavy workload which maybe the cause of their patients` complaints of lack of responsiveness of nurses, inadequate communication with doctors, inaccessibility of doctors and nurses and lack of communication with med techs. Tardiness can be a cause for long waiting time to get x-ray results, and lack of accessibility of doctors and nurses. Moreover, inadequate training may cause the lack of courtesy and lack of proper communication between patients and caregivers.

Delivery of quality health care services is the main core of every hospital. Generally, this study assessed the performance of medical and paramedical personnel in Lasam District Hospital as to commitment, knowledge, skill and behavior. It also assessed the patients` perception of the quality of service they experienced from the medical and paramedical personnel they sought care. The levels of satisfaction of patients on the delivery of basic services in Medical, Nursing and Ancillary services, of the LDH were

assessed as well as the problems they encountered in the delivery of services by the hospital staff.

For each of the problems presented, findings of the study revealed that most medical and paramedical employees of LDH are young, female, married and Roman Catholics. A large percentage is nurses. Most are permanent employees and served the institution for more than two years. Only a few finished masteral courses and more than half never experienced attending trainings and seminars.

The level of employee performance as to commitment, knowledge and skills, and interpersonal and customer service are outstanding according to the employees. However, the patients rated as very satisfactory. There is no significant difference between the level of employees' performance with that of their profiles except on one aspect, the direct relationship of the level of educational attainment to the level of knowledge and skills there is significant difference between employee's performance and quality of health service delivered. Employees assessed themselves as outstanding but the patients evaluated as very satisfactory.

The issues and concerns of employees are heavy workload, lack of training and conferences, tardiness and dishonesty. Patients concerns are employees' lack of responsiveness, lack of courtesy, lack of proper communication, inaccessibility of caregivers, and unavailability of medicines, inferior quality medicines and long waiting times to get radiologic results.

CONCLUSION

The researcher therefore determines that there is significant association of level of educational attainment to that of their level of performance in knowledge and skills. This only shows that attainment of knowledge should not end after finishing a bachelor's degree. There is also a significant difference in the level of performance to the quality of performance perceived by the patients. The researcher concludes that how the medical and paramedical employees of Lasam District Hospital delivered their services to its clients despite the limitations in resources is generally very satisfactory.

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