

The Influence of Psychological Factors on Health Workers Performance in Some Selected Government Hospitals in Yobe State, Nigeria

^aHassan Alhaji Kyari, ^bAli Garba Kolo, ^cSani Musa Tilde & ^dZara Musa

^a*Department of Social Development, Mai Idris Aloomo Polytechnic Geidam, Yobe State*

^{b,&d}*Department of Sociology, Yobe State University, Damaturu*

^c*Department of Sociology, Bauchi State University, Gadau*

Abstract

This study investigates the influence of psychological factors (incentive and attitude) on health workers performance in some selected government hospitals in Yobe State, Nigeria. It is believed that health workers performance is necessary and paramount issue in healthcare delivery system of any developed nation in the world, but it is been affected by many psychological factors which result in reducing the workers performance in discharging their duties which affect people lives negatively. Quantitative approach was used as the design of the study. The data was collected from General Hospital Geidam, General Hospital Potiskum and General Hospital Nguru. 263 respondents had been serve as the sample of the study. Descriptive statistics was used in the data analysis with the use of frequency, percentage and pie-chart to present the results. The findings revealed that there is positive relation between government incentive to workers and health workers performance, positive relationship between health workers attitude to work and workers performance and on the variable that predict health workers performance incentive (51.78%) appeared to be the factor predicting workers performance. Therefore, based on the findings of this research it is recommended that the government and non governmental organizations should continue improving the welfare of the health workers, the management of the hospital should improve the frequency of refresher training on issue of displaying a positive attitude towards patients and all other staff in the health institutions

Keywords: Incentives, Attitude, Workers Performance, Hospital

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I. Introduction

It is common knowledge that acquisition of proper, well trained, articulated and motivated manpower backed by necessary attention on deserved welfare and incentives arrangement is an imperative requirement for effectiveness and efficiency of both profit and non-profit organizations (Bernstein 2011). For that, government funded healthcare institution cannot be an exception. However, failure of government to overcome poor working condition in public owned institutions including healthcare institutions in developing countries compelled workers in such public organizations to operate under heavy constraints as it lacks the necessary prerequisites on the issue of improving employees' performance using incentive (Brown 2007; Marcoullier and Robertson, 2007). Though, Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) encourage various tiers of governments in Nigeria to increase the budgetary allocation of the health sector for the attainment of Health-For-All goal of the MDGs, still various World Development Indicators Database show evidence that Nigeria would not have the capacity to achieve the target goals for Health-For-All by this year 2020. Previous studies revealed that a lot of psychological factors affecting healthcare workers performance. That was why Mohammed (2012) traced the causes of the said assumption to low performance of the health personnel which may not be unconnected with poor government incentives and attitude of workers. For this, it becomes necessary to carry out this study in order to find out if incentive can improve performance of health professionals of the public funded health institutions or the workers have positive attitudes towards their work? Because the issue of low incentive and unfairness by management of public owned Hospitals in Nigeria to its employees and workers attitude to work have been the topic of discussion among the researchers, medical expert and public analysts. It is against this background that the study achieved the following objective.

Objective of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine the influence of psychological factors (incentive and attitude) on health workers performance in some selected government Hospitals in Yobe State, Nigeria. But the specific objectives are;

- i. To identify the levels of workers performance in some Funded government Hospital in Yobe State Nigeria.
- ii. To determine the relationship between government incentive to workers and health workers performance.
- iii. To determine the relationship between workers attitude to work and health workers performance.
- iv. To examine which of the psychological factors can predict health workers performance in government Funded Hospital in Yobe State.

II. Literature Review

The study reviewed previous works of other people that are relevant to the focus of this study. Since the study is centered on the relationship between psychological factors and workers performance. The literatures reflected motivational theories. This is for the fact that incentives and motivation can be used to connote the same as shown by several scholars such as Franco et al. (2000) and Aminu (2001). These scholars outline that incentive or motivation is factor affecting productivity, and it can be used as a shock-absorber to improve the condition of job in order to reduce the worker dislike for it. They explain that positive incentive i.e., monetary aspect, can be used as a form of motivation to motivate employees for likely changes of increase in the workers' productivity.

Behaviorists and cognitivists in their various theories of motivation emphasize the way in which stimuli in the environment attract our attention and act as incentives for our behavior (Bindra, 1974; Dickinson and Balleine, 2003). For instance, when a worker receives high or reasonable positive incentive, she is expected to put more efforts to her work in order to avoid being drop-out of the job. She may also maintain her dedication i.e., hardworking behavior as input to the job, to enable her maintain her expected incentive gain as out benefits. Generally, the literatures to be reviewed in this proposed study will be under the following sub headings:

- The concept of motivation
- Content theories of motivation
- Process theories of motivation
- Related empirical studies

Let me give some brief account of the each of the sub headings in the above to serve as background for proper understanding of the research focus and goals.

The Concept of Motivation

As I pointed earlier, incentive is a form of motivation that serves as a key factor which determines the attraction of employees into an organization. It also assists in shaping the behavior of the workers which in turn determine the productivity of the workers. Therefore, knowing strategic ways of organizing incentives for the workers has always been the concern for scholars, managers etc.

The earliest theorists known as classical economists such as Adam Smith, Charles Babbage, Fredrick Taylor, Morris Cooke, Henry Gatt, Henry Fayol and others saw man as rational economic being who is only motivated by financial incentives or reward and will increase his performance once pay is increased. They stated that the workers behaviors could therefore, be coordinated and controlled by setting strict standard and offering financial incentives for improved performance.

The view of the aforementioned scholars is captured in Cole's (1997) model which is drawn its inferences from Stimulus and Response SR theory as follows:

1. Stimulus \longrightarrow Appropriate Behavior \longrightarrow Goal/Desired Outcome

Source: Cole (1997: 45), Personnel Management, Theory and Practice

The above model postulates that learning about motivation is synonymous to know about the concept of people's behaviors which has to involve the study of stimulators of human actions and their expectations when they acted in a required form, for satisfaction of their need and desires.

The stimulators in public organization like public funded healthcare institutions can be in form of positive incentives which include aspects such as bonuses, pay arise, promotion etc. these stimulators affects employees behaviors based on their economic needs, thereby inducing them to perform an appropriate behaviors as putting more efforts, hard work, loyalty and improved performance. These behaviors can then lead to attaining organizational goal such as higher output and achievement of the objective for realization of the organizational mission.

Content Theories of Motivation

These are also forms of S-R theories that focus on stimulus which specifically indicates what causes motivation. Proponents of these theories among scholars that make a remarkable contribution in this area include A. H. Maslow, Herzberg and McGregor etc. These scholars and many others try to show that behaviors

are based on a nature of perceived stimulus and also a particular chosen behavior is usually a response to stimulus. These forms of theories try to show how effect a chosen behavior can be when related to stimulus. Let us review the assumptions of content theories of motivation for the sake of providing adequate background to the reader. Bailey (2002:13) that works on based on Maslow's theory of motivation sees motivation as "any direct or indirect positive or negative inducement, influence, suggestion or other stimuli that can mobilize and direct the attitude and behavior of an individual or group towards the accomplishment or abandonment of some specific goals, objectives or conditions"

He argues along Maslow's view on motivation that defined motivation as an act of stimulation in that he dubs people as "wanting animals" with five basic levels of needs which are hierarchically organized in form of pyramid. These needs are physiological, safety, social, esteem and self-actualization as illustrated in figure (2) below:



Figure 1: Source: Bailey (2002)

The figure (1) postulates that human needs are arranged from low to high hierarchically i.e., from physiological needs to self-actualization needs. As soon as lower level needs are reasonably satisfied, needs at the next higher level become important. Unsatisfied needs influence behavior while satisfied need do not. This means that when an individual manage to acquire the basic necessities of life, he then cease to be prompted by a need to get more. However, his safety needs then become paramount and soon through to the need for self-actualization.

Under this framework, the physiological needs are survival needs. These include air, water, food, clothing, shelter, sex among others. The organization can satisfy these needs by improving pays, benefits and working conditions.

The safety needs cover protection against danger, freedom from fear and security of individual. The organization in this case can satisfy these needs by introducing policy such as health insurance, sustainable pension and retirement schemes, job plans, job security, safety and healthy working environment, competent, consistent and good leadership.

The social needs include things that will create love, belongingness, affection and acceptance of individual by people, which organization can meet up by allowing employees to form friendly associations, organize employees' activities such as games, year ending parties and lunch break for healthy and peaceful human interaction.

The esteem needs is a desire for achievement, recognition and status. It is also includes desire for stable and firmly base, high evaluation of individual self for self-respect and esteem. An organization is expected to satisfy these needs by giving an individual titles and responsibility of job, praise and recognition for work done, promotions, competent management, pay as related to status and prestigious facilities etc. These will help in ensuring employee feeling of self-confidence, worth, strength, capability and adequacy of being useful.

Self-actualization needs are person's desire for self-fulfillment, the tendency for one to become actualized in what one is potentially known. It might be the desire to become more and more of what one is, and to become everything that one is capable of becoming. An organization can satisfy these needs by giving an individual challenging work, allowing creativity as opportunity for personal growth and advancement.

Expectancy Value Theory of Attitude

Expectancy value theory of attitude Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) argued that an individual attitude toward any particular object or objects are the totality of the expected value of the attributes of that particular object or objects as perceived by the individual or individuals. In other words, each beliefs of an individual is associating a particular objects with a certain characteristics, and a person's overall attitude toward an object is determined by the subjective values of that object attributes in interaction with the strength of the associations as perceived by individual (Ajzen and Fishbein, 2000). That means, Attitudes are functions of peoples beliefs towards any person, idea, object or place. That is why not surprised for Fishbein & Ajzen (1975) to state that, all attitudes are based on functional beliefs of people towards object and all attitudes are form through the summation of subjective probabilities and values.

Expectancy is defined as the estimated of the probability that the object has a given attributes, and the value of an attitude is simply one's evaluation of that object or objects as good or bad, and if its good an individual hold it and consequently it can influence his/her behavior with regard to that particular object (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). According to Ajzen, (2000) attitude represent a summary evaluation of a psychological object or objects viewed in such quality dimensions as good or bad, harmful or beneficial, pleasant or unpleasant, and likable or dislikable by individuals.

Moreover, for every attitude to be evaluated as positive or negative the three components of attitude are important because attitude is a psychological concept that comprised affective, behavior and cognitive components which are popularly known as (ABC Model) (Eagly and Chaiken, 1993). Affective component is an emotional based attitude i.e. how one feel about a particular stimulus or object while behavioral component has to do with an individual action towards a particular object or event. Cognitive is knowledge based attitude i.e. the idea a person has about a stimulus or object (Eagly and Chaiken, 1993). These components are very vital in predicting an individual feelings, behavior and emotion towards a particular things or person because human behavior and actions are influenced by attitude, whereby attitudes are seen as cause and behavior as the effect (Oskamp, 1991; Mushoriwa, 1998; Holland et al; 2002; Chepchieng, 2004).

Related empirical studies on Psychological Factors

There are empirical studies conducted by various individuals. Some are directly on issues relate to workers' productivity while others on individual performance. Hongoro and Normand's (2006) examined 'Health worker: Building and motivating workforce' with focus on African countries claim that a health worker will accept a job if the benefits of doing so outweigh the opportunity cost. They further added that improving recruitment and retention requires either offering higher rewards that make alternative employment less attractive or making qualifications less "portable" that is, less likely to be recognized in other countries.

The development of new health professions in many countries according them is a way of reducing the portability of qualifications, thereby reducing the opportunity cost of jobs at home. Their research findings revealed a positive correlation between incentives and workers performance. Franco et al. (2002) in article titled 'Health sector reform and public sector health worker motivation: a conceptual framework' argue that motivation in the work context can be regarded as an individual's degree of willingness to exert and maintain an effort towards organizational goals.

They state that health sector performance is critically dependent on worker motivation, with service quality, efficiency, and equity, all directly mediated by workers' willingness to apply themselves to their tasks. Resource availability and worker competence are also essential but not sufficient to ensure desired worker performance. Their paper observe that while financial incentives may be important determinants of worker motivation, they alone cannot and have not resolved all worker motivation problems. In this regard, they conclude that worker motivation is a complex process and crosses many disciplinary boundaries, including economics, psychology, organizational development, human resource management, sociology and medical professions

In view of the above assertion, a step further in research on incentives and attitude issues in public funded hospitals in Nigeria would pave not only a way towards reaching more worthy insights into how incentives and positive attitude of workers increase productivity but offer the issues of public funded healthcare service providers to be viewed from a more multidisciplinary approach. To investigate such from Nigeria's perspective, a country with over 200 million people, from such a broader paradigm, is liable to yield a fruitful result.

Theoretical Framework

Functionalist Theory

In this study, functionalist theory will be used as theoretical framework which is one of the major theoretical perspectives in sociology. The structural functionalism approach owes much to Auguste Comte and it

has its origins in the work of Emile Durkheim. Thus, functionalism was first associated with Emile Durkheim and Herbert Spencer. Most of its basic concept were developed by Talcott Persons and Robert K. Merton. It is a framework for building theory that sees society as a complex system whose part work together to promote solidarity and stability. As such it is a theory that focuses on the macro-level of everyday life. Functionalist perceive society as a system of interconnected parts that work together in harmony to maintain a state of social balance for the whole. Functionalist believe that society works in meritocratic system; that people work for what they deserve, according to their own merit and effort. Thus, they work hard achieved success in lives and many more. The theory will serve as a guide in which psychological factors can be explain in relation to workers performance because motivation and attitude are part and parcel of individual performance as low or high. That is to say the higher the incentives the more performannce by the workers vice viser

III. Methodology

Survey method was used as the design of the research in order to study the role of incentive and attitude as a tool for improving workers performance in some government funded healthcare providers in Yobe State, Nigeria. Survey method is preferred because it will allows the use of questionnaire for gathering data in which the questionnaire can be administered to the respondents individually. Population of the study were medical doctors and nursing officers of General Hospital Geidam (Zone ‘A’), General Hospital Nguru (Zone ‘C’) and General Hospital Potiskum (Zone ‘B’) which were 263. The three general hospitals were selected to be the study area because each of them is from the different senatorial district of the State. The sample size was calculated based on Cochran, (1977) sample size formula

$$n_1 = \frac{n_0}{1 + \frac{n_0}{N}}$$

n = Sample size

Where $n_o = \frac{(ci)^2(p)^2}{(d)^2}$

$c_i = 95\%$ confidence interval

$p = 50\% = 0.5$ assumed proportions

$d = 0.05$ α level

N = total population

$$n_0 = \frac{(1.96)^2(0.5)^2}{(0.05)^2}$$

$$= \frac{3.8416 \times 0.25}{0.0025}$$

$$n_0 = 384$$

$$n_1 = \frac{384}{1 + \frac{384}{263}}$$

$$1 + \frac{384}{263} = 1.460$$

$$\frac{384}{1.460}$$

$$= 263 \text{ respondents}$$

Furthermore, in this study, non-probability sampling techniques was used such as purposive sampling procedure because it help a researcher to choose the sample based on who he/she thinks would be appropriate for the study (Medical doctors and Nursing staff). The main goal of purposive sampling is to arrive as at a sample that can adequately answer the research objectives (Henry, 1990) and the knowledge and experience of the researcher making the selection is a key aspect of the success of any study (Micheal, 2011). However, the instrument used was validated to ensure standardization. This was done by consulting experts on the field of this researcher to go through the evaluating statement contained in the instrument for guidance and refined it to ensure validity and reliability in both gathering and dealing with the reliable data. This is in line with the view of Kimberlin and Winterstein (2008) who stated that validity is the degree to which a test measures what its purports to measure. Also Copper and Schindler (2003) explained that that the general criteria for acceptable research instrument are their validity and reliability. Questionnaire was used as the major instrument for data collection in this research. Respondents’ response to the questions or statement as contained in the questionnaire. An indication of agreed or disagreed with each of the question or statement were used as to measure the yardstick to determine respondents’ opinion. According to Dillman (2000) the unshakable methods of data collection within the context of social science is questionnaire. Finally, the collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage and Pie chart to demonstrate the respondents’ opinions.

IV. Results And Discussions

Table 4.1 Background of the Respondents (n=263)

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	97	36.88
Female	166	63.12
Age		
20-29	103	39.16
30-39	97	36.88
40-49	38	14.45
50 & above	25	9.51
Status		
Medical Doctors	36	13.69
Nursing officers	227	86.31
Place of Work		
General Hospital Geidam	41	15.59
General Hospita Potiskum	125	47.53
General Hospita Nguru	97	36.88
Total	263	100%

A general profiles of the respondents' individual characteristics consisting of age, gender and status were presented in Table 4.1, which is described as follows. The results displayed that majority (63.12%) of the respondents were female and (36.88%) were male. In the present study female appeared to be two quarter of the respondents and this is due to the level of enrolment of female students in to medical institutions in Nigerian where many parents prepared to enroll their children in to health institutions because they believed that its a professional course that anyone can be independent even without government jobs. The respondents were between the age of 22 to 53 years old. The data shows that (39.16%) respondents were in the age category of 20-29 years old followed by respondents between 30-39 years old (36.88%), age catagory 40-49 respondents with (14.45%) and lastly, (9.51%) of the respondents were in the age category of 50 years and above. However, on the place of work of the respondents, the findings reveals that majority (47.53%) of the respondents were from general hospital Potiskum, general hospital Nguru (36.88%) and (15.59%) of the respondents were from general hospital Geidam.

Section B: Is on Testing the Objectives of the Study

Table 4.2 how can you describe your level of Performance?

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
High	70	26.62
Moderate	132	50.19
Law	61	23.19
Total	263	100%

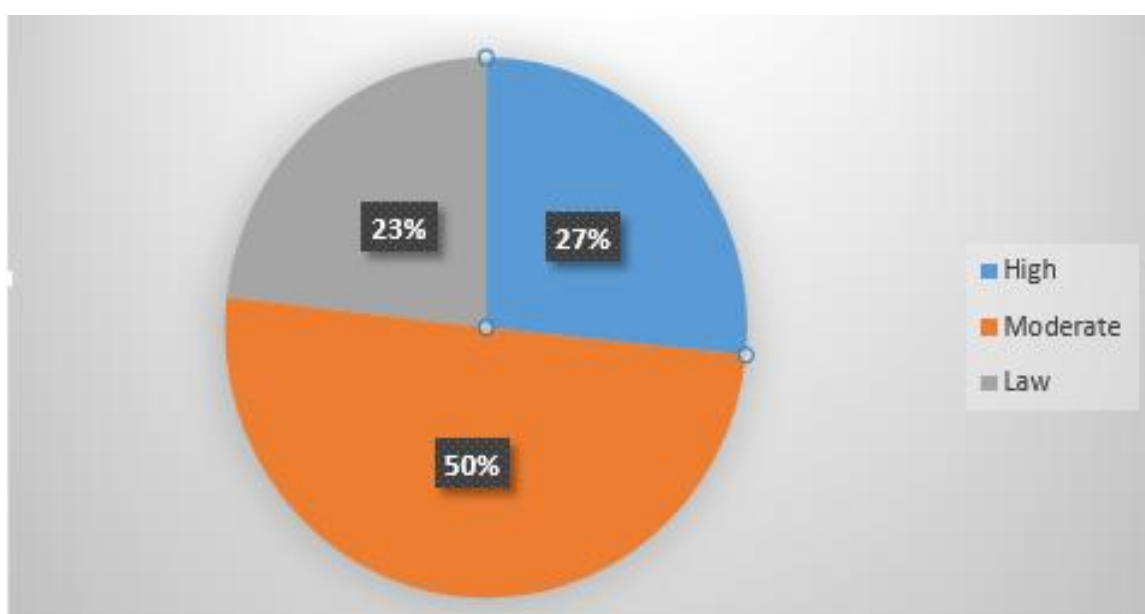


Figure 4.1 Pie Chart showing the Health Workers Performance of some Government General Hospital in Yobe State, Nigeria.

The above Figure 4.1 shows that the level of workers performance in various hospital were analyzed. Majority of the respondents (50.19%) were on moderate category, (26.62%) within high category and lastly, (23.19%) with low performance. When those on moderate and low category were asked how was it that their performance in duties were not high and they replied by “saying that they are just managing because their promotion is not done on time and at the same time their allowance and incentives are not given and even if they were given is not much”.

Table 4.3 Do you agree that incentives by Government can Improve Health Workers Performance?

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Agreed	239	90.88%
Disagreed	20	7.60%
Un-decided	04	1.52%
Total	263	100%

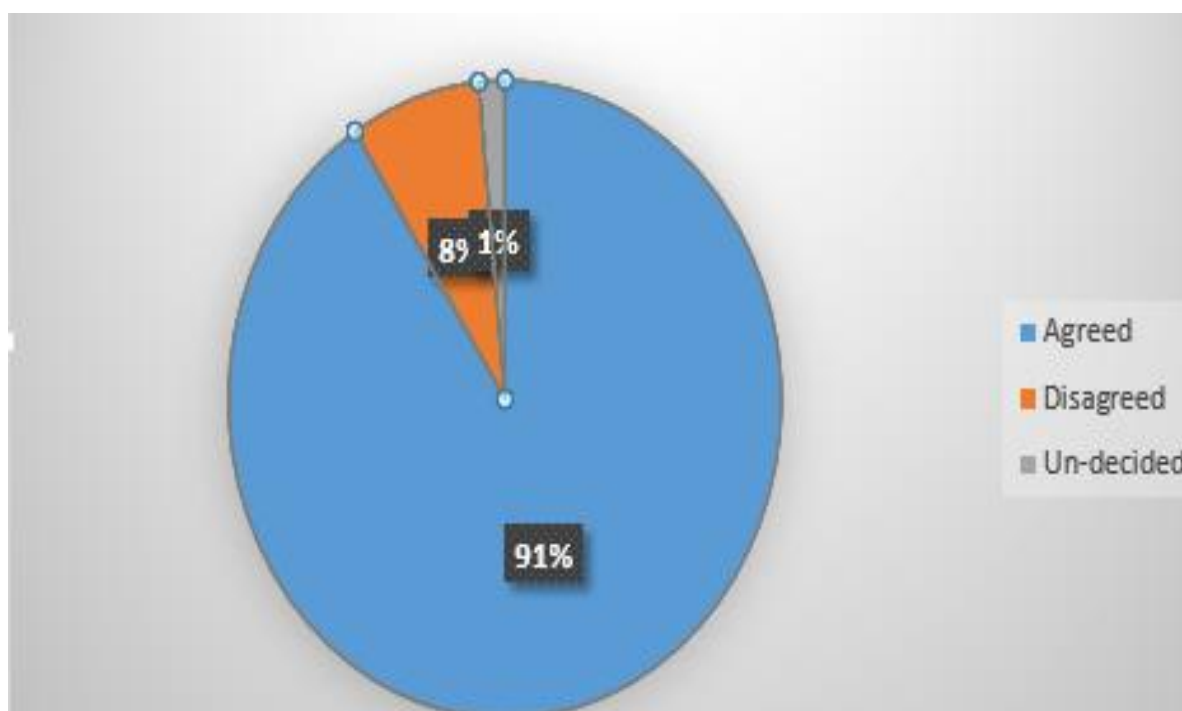
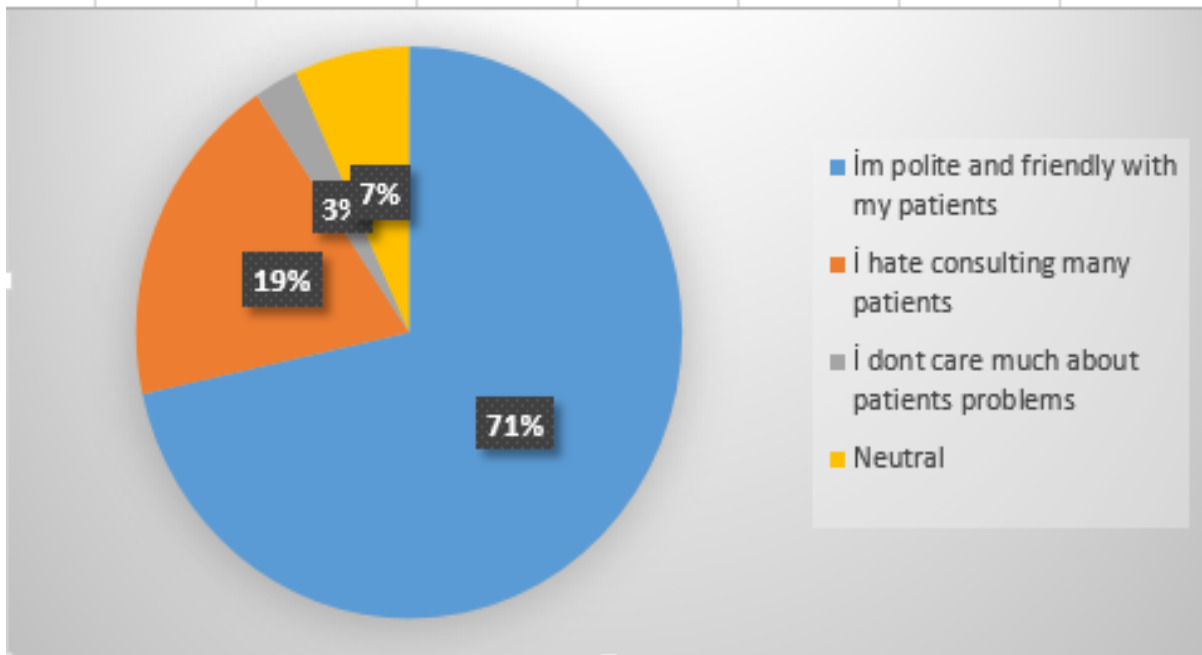


Figure 4.2 showing the relationship between government incentives to workers and health workers performance

The above Figure 4.2 indicates that majority of the respondents (90.88%) agreed that there is a relationship between government incentive to workers and health workers performance because most of the respondents believed that if government can be given incentives to them would go a long way in improving their performance and they would continue given out their best to the system without minding they are tired or fully engaged in their various places of work and this findings is similar to the findings of Franco et al, (2002) and Hongoro & Normand’s (2006) examined ‘Health worker: Building and motivating workforce’ with focus on African countries claim that a health worker will accept a job if the benefits of doing so outweigh the opportunity cost. They further added that improving recruitment and retention requires either offering higher rewards that make alternative employment less attractive or making qualifications less "portable" that is, less likely to be recognized in other countries. (7.60%) are on contrary opinion that incentives would not change their performance because according to them once you accepted an government offered, you are abided by all the conditions of service stipulated in the appointment given to any person earlier and only (1.52%) were undecided on the question presented to them.

Table 4.4 is there any relationship between Workers Attitude to Work and Health Workers Performance?

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
I'm polite and friendly with my patients	188	71.48%
I hate consulting many patients	50	19.02%
I don't care much about patients problems	07	2.66%
Neutral	18	6.84%
Total	263	100%



The above **Figure 4.3** revealed that majority of the respondents have a kind of positive attitude to work with (71.48%) this is as a result of health workers are very friendly and polite to both patients and their relatives when it comes to a real business that is discussion between health workers and their clients and this result is in line with Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) who argued that an individual attitude toward any particular object or objects are the totality of the expected value of the attributes of that particular object or objects as perceived by the individual or individuals. In other words, each beliefs of an individual is associating a particular objects with a certain characteristics, and a person's overall attitude toward an object is determined by the subjective values of that object attributes in interaction with the strength of the associations as perceived by individual. Only (19.02%)

Of the respondents are having a kind of unfriendly attitude towards their patients in the hospital and is very dangerous to the health institution and society at large. Furthermore, (2.66%) of the respondents are having a kind of I don't care attitude and only (6.84%) are neutral.

Which of the psychological factors can predict health workers performance in the Hospitals in Yobe State?

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Government incentives to workers	136	51.71%
Health workers attitude to work	120	45.63%
Undecided	07	2.66%
Total	263	100%

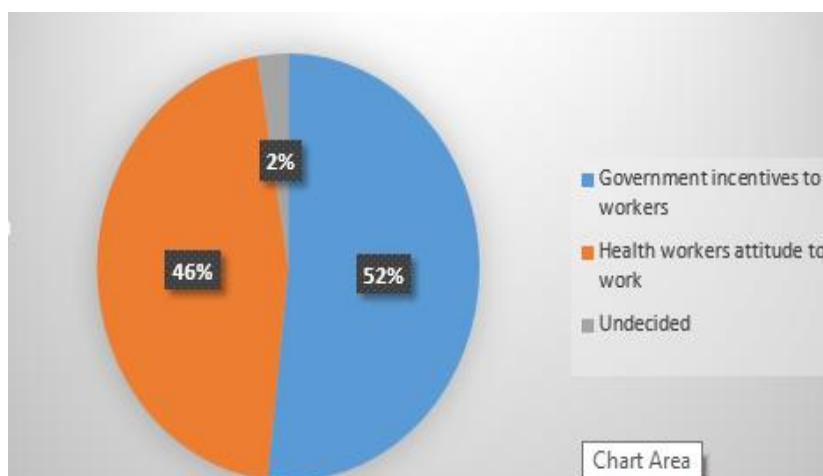


Figure 4.4 showing the Variables that Predict Health Workers Performance in Government Hospitals, Yobe State, Nigeria

The **Figure 4.4** above indicates that majority of the respondents (51.71%) agreed that government incentives to workers can undoubtedly improve workers performance because naturally human beings need motivation in whatever kind of activities they are doing and this is in line with theory process of motivation which focuses on principle of individual behavior in the working place. The theory states that observed behavior would be motivated using the result of preferences among possible outcome and expectations concerning the consequences of action. The main driving goal of the principle is based on 'objective observation'. However, (45.63%) of the respondents said attitude and only (2.66%) are undecided.

V. Conclusion And Recommendations

This study was conducted to examine the influence of psychological factors on health workers performance in some selected government hospitals in Yobe State, Nigeria. From the findings of this research, it can be concluded that the majority (63.12%) of the respondents were female and (36.88%) were male. This is due to the level of enrolment of female students in to medical institutions in Nigerian where many parents prepared to enroll their children in to health institutions because they believed that its a professional course that anyone can be independent even without government jobs. The respondents age ranged between 22 to 53 years old. It can also be concluded that majority of the respondents are within the age catagory of (39.16%). However, on the place of work of the respondents, the findings reveals that majority (47.53%) of the respondents were from general hospital Potiskum. Furthermore, it can also be concluded that, there is a relationship between government incentives to workers and workers performance, relationship between health workers attitude and workers performance. Meaning if the government and other agencies concerned would look in to health workers incentives, defintaly the government and entire society would be getting the best of health workers performance during discharging their duties. However, most respondents agreed that motivation (incentives) is the main variable (51.71%) that influence or predict workers performance in some government hospital in Yobe State. Therefore, based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that the government and non governmental organizations should continue improving the welfare of the health workers considering the fact that the contribute alot towards the development of society because without them the whole society will be sick and collapse totally. Secondaly, the management of the hospital should improves the frequency of refresher training on issue of displaying a positive attitude towards patients and all other staff in the health institutions. Thirdly, all health workers should receive periodic trainings objectively on universal health and safety precautions to enhance the safety of patients and health care providers. Forthly, Surveillance systems should be set up to detect any negative health workers attitude and welfare package from government side which will help the system to fuction effectively. Finally, there is also a need for the management and government to invest heavily into research on psychological factors that influence health workers performance because the present study examined only two factors in which we have countless of them that are closely related to health care workers performance.

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