



Faculty of Cognitive Science and Human Development

**IN THE NURSES' CHAIR: AN ANALYSIS OF
FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THE JOB
PERFORMANCE OF NURSES**

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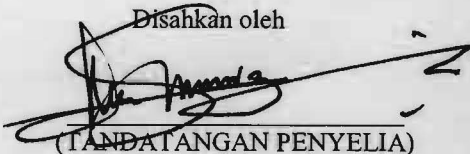
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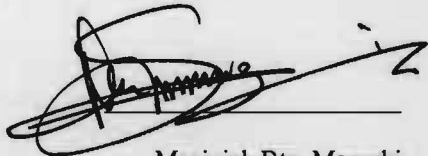
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ABSTRACT

IN THE NURSES' CHAIR: AN ANALYSIS OF FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THE JOB PERFORMANCE OF NURSES

Aldawin Tandang Anak Rubat @ Robert

This research aims at finding out the influence of the five selected factors on the job performance of nurses. The respondents in this research consist of one hundred nurses from Miri General Hospital. They are selected using simple random sampling from 295 nurses of different level with different job specifications. There are five hypotheses in this research. They are analyzed using Pearson Correlation Efficient to determine the relationship between the variables. The independent variables in this research are; good workplace relationship, job rotation, reward / recognition, training and involvement in decision making while the dependent variable is job performance. The findings of this research revealed that there are 62 high performers, 37 moderate performers and only one low performer among the respondents. Besides that, good workplace relationship, $r = 0.539$, was identified as the dominant element in influencing the nurses' job performance in this research. Meanwhile, all the other elements in this research have a positive significant relationship with the dependent variable (involvement in decision making, $r = 0.492$, job rotation, $r = 0.347$, reward / recognition, $r = 0.355$ and training, $r = 0.322$). In the nut shell, this particular research is important for the organization to understand the significant relationship between the selected factors and job performance. It helps the organization to solve job performance problems.

ABSTRAK

DARI PERSPEKTIF JURURAWAT: SATU ANALISA FAKTOR-FAKTOR YANG MEMPENGARUHI PRESTASI KERJA JURURAWAT

Aldawin Tandang Anak Rubat @ Robert

Kajian ini dijalankan untuk mengkaji hubungan di antara lima faktor yang terpilih dan hubungannya dengan prestasi kerja jururawat. Responden-responden dalam kajian ini terdiri daripada satu ratus orang jururawat dari Hospital Umum Miri. Mereka dipilih menggunakan kaedah persampelan rawak mudah daripada keseluruhan populasi jururawat, 295 orang jururawat, yang mempunyai spesifikasi tugas yang berbeza. Terdapat lima hipotesis yang akan diuji di dalam kajian ini dan setiap satunya akan diuji dengan ujian Korelasi Pearson untuk menentukan hubungan di antara kedua-dua pembolehubah. Pembolehubah tidak bersandar terdiri daripada; hubungan yang baik di tempat kerja, pusingan kerja, anugerah / ganjaran, latihan dan penglibatan dalam pembuatan keputusan dan pembolehubah bersandar pula ialah prestasi kerja. Daripada keputusan kajian ini, didapati 62 jururawat menunjukkan prestasi kerja yang baik, 37 menunjukkan prestasi kerja yang sederhana dan seorang jururawat menunjukkan prestasi kerja yang lemah. Hubungan baik di tempat kerja, $r = 0.539$, merupakan faktor yang paling dominan dalam kajian ini. Manakala semua faktor-faktor lain yang dikaji menunjukkan adanya hubungan signifikan yang positif dengan prestasi kerja jururawat (Penglibatan dalam pembuatan keputusan, $r = 0.492$, pusingan kerja, $r = 0.347$, anugerah / ganjaran, $r = 0.355$ dan latihan, $r = 0.322$). Sebagai kesimpulan, kajian ini adalah penting kepada organisasi untuk memahami hubungan signifikan yang wujud diantara faktor terpilih dengan prestasi kerja jururawat. Kajian ini juga dapat membantu menyelesaikan masalah yang wujud dengan prestasi kerja.

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Job performance is always an organizational concern. It is the accumulated end results of an organization's work process and activities. It is complex but important concept, and managers need to understand the factors that contribute to high job performance. They want their organizations, work units, or work groups to achieve high levels of performance, no matter what mission, strategies, or goals are being pursued.

This research intends to investigate the relationship of the potential selected factors in contributing to the success of job performance level in Miri General Hospital. It also explores the moderating effects of the factors on the nurses' job performance in such a setting compare to the hospital in western region.

The nature of nursing work involves a great deal of administrative repetition, technology is ever increasing and changes to the working lives of nurses are frequent. Staff in the hospital can be diverse in age, culture and experience and sometimes a broad range of expectations from their employment. For those nurses who are ambitious, rigid organization structures have resulted in fewer opportunities for promotion within the same organization and limited possibilities for them to further their careers in other sectors of the profession (Dalton *et al.*, 1999). It is crystal clear, in this type of climate, great demands are made from the managers to keep their staff motivated (Green *et al.*, 2000). It is important for the hospital authority to identify if members of staff are de-motivated in any way and to address the factors that are contributing to the situation. The effective nursing sister needs to recognize that different motivators are appropriate for different staff and that different staff will demonstrate differing inherent levels of job performance. Thus, there exist the needs of the management to combine their diverse needs with the needs of their employees in order to keep them performing well.

In this paper the researcher consider ways in which having well-performing staff is dependent on management practices that encourage good workplace relationships, involvement in decision making, job rotation, recognition and reward and staff training. These issues are interrelated and it is important to see motivation as a combination of factors and not solely achievable from one particular action.

1.2 Background of the Research

A considerable amount of research has been done on job performance within workplace. Most of these research recognizes the complexity of the interactions between external motivators such as environment and financial rewards (Taylor, 1947), and internal processes such as psychological contracts (Schein, 1980), individual values and expectations (Vroom, 1964) and self-actualization processes (Maslow, 1970). It has also been suggested that

motivation is continual process that needs to be sustained and developed as individual and organizational factors change over time (Schein,1980). It has been prove by researchers that less motivated staff will be lacked of enthusiasm when performing their daily task, no room for complacency, can't figure out their career path, low performance and less committed to their work.

There has been little effort from the management to really sit with the staff and discuss openly the importance of these motivators in contributing to the level of nurses' job performance. Hence, the nurses are not very clear and maybe some of them are dissatisfy with the current system. This kind of understanding might contribute to the increasing number of turnover rate among the nurses in the government sector or even early retirement and not to forget the depleting job performance level.

We are in the midst of a great watershed change in which we are moving from an industrial to a knowledge-economy. This change will completely alter the society's structure, social and economic dynamics, social clusters and social problems (Jac Fitz-enz,1993). It is fair to suggest that the combination of these selected factors and other factors which can boost up the job performance among the nurses in Miri General Hospital.

1.3 Problem Statement

It is a commonly held belief that having a well-performing staff is significant factor in providing an effective service. According to Cole (1996), "*Motivation is a term to describe those processes, both instinctive and rational, by which people seek to satisfy their basic drives, perceived needs and personal goals, which trigger human behavior*". However, the task of ensuring a high level performance requires from the authority a range of managerial, sociological and psychological skills for which they have had little or no training at all.

Nurse, is one of those occupations that spend most of their time attending both, the out patients and the patients that are admitted into the wards. These patients are the customers to the hospitals. Thus, it is important for them to maintain a certain quality of service they provide through effective communication with staff, the encouragement of good work place relationship, the involvement of staff in decision making process, helping staff to come to terms with change, promoting job rotation, recognizing and rewarding initiative and providing relevant training for staff (Green *et al.*,2000) .

Occasionally, we heard complaints from the customers that the service the nurses provide are quite poor and very dissatisfying and sometimes it is sad that the matter has become the headlines of some tabloids or newspapers. The worst part is the nurses are not interested to work in that hospital anymore and they move to private clinics. What caused these to happen? The researcher has selected a few factors that might contribute to the level of nurses' job performance. This research attempt to provide answer to the question; "In what way do these selected factors contribute to the nurses' job performance?"

1.4 Objectives of Research

The objectives of this research are divided into two categories. They are, the general objectives and specific objectives. Both are as mention below:

1.4.1. General Objective

The focus of this research is to investigate whether the selected factors, from the nurses' point of view, will increase the job performance among the nurses in Miri General Hospital.

1.4.2. Specific Objectives

- i) To find out whether good workplace relationship contribute to the level of job performance among the nurses.
- ii) To find out whether organization's activities like job rotation, recognition and rewards, training and involvement in decision making contribute to the level of job performance among the nurses.

1.5 Conceptual Framework

The research conceptualizes that the nurses need a number of factors to keep up their job performance in their daily tasks at their work place. Variety of factor needs to be clarified within the organization itself. The conceptual framework of the research is shown in figure 1 below:

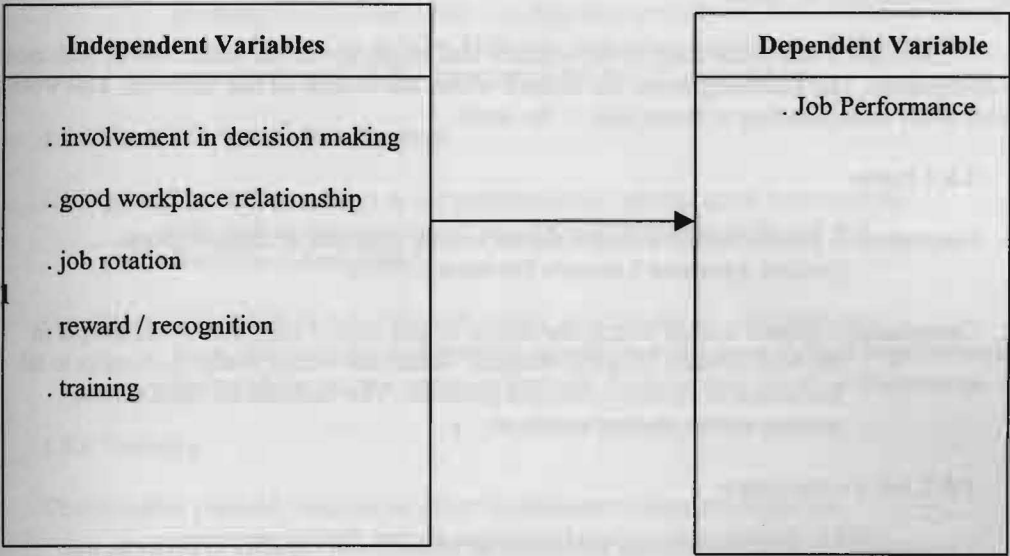


Figure 1 : Research Conceptual Framework

1.6 Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses (Ho) are formulated:

- Ho1 : There is no significant relationship between involvement in decision making and job performance.
- Ho2 :There is no significant relationship between good work place relationship and job performance.
- Ho3 :There is no significant relationship between job rotation and job performance.
- Ho4: There is no significant relationship between reward / recognition and job performance.

Ho5: There is no significant relationship between training and job performance.

1.7 Significance of the Research

Firstly, the paper is expected to help the hospital management in recognizing a few selected factors that might contribute to the level of job performance among their nurses. Discussion on why the selected factors are preferred or not preferred will also be discussed.

Secondly, the research will serve as a guide for nurses to identify their own strengths and weaknesses in delivering their daily routine to the patients. It will also act as an information for the management on how they can help their nurses to perform better and giving the best quality of service.

Last but not least, the hospital authority can adopt and adapt the preferred factors and planned interventions to establish a more harmony and productive atmosphere in their workplace.

1.8 Definitions of Terms

There are a few terms used in the research that might not be the same context with most of dictionaries. The following terms are defined within the context of this research. This would foster better understanding of terms used in the study.

1.8.1 Nurse

Conceptual-A person trained to help a doctor to look after sick or injured people.
(Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 1995).

Operational-A person trained to help the doctor to take care of sick, hurt or old people in the Miri General Hospital. In the case of this research, it refers to all the nurses of various levels and positions. This includes the staff nurses, nursing sisters, student nurses etc.

1.8.2 Job Performance

Conceptual-Job performance may be viewed as a function of capacity to perform, the opportunity to perform and the willingness to perform. (Ivancevich & Matterson, 1993). According to Johns (1992), job performance is the degree to which the members of the organization contribute to reach the organizational objectives.

Operational-Job performance is the obtaining level of the individual nurses in carrying out their daily tasks from the aspect of physical and attitude. The physical measurement of job performance includes opportunity of being assigned responsibility, working attendance, managing responsibilities and job efficiency. Measurement of attitude consists of obeying to the order, on time, willingness to work overtime and initiative in doing the best.

1.8.3 Job Rotation

Conceptual-A training method that involves moving employees from one job to another to broaden their experience. (Mondy *et.al.*, 1996).

Operational-A structure for moving or rotate nurses among several different jobs. In this research, it is address as changing shifts among nurses and the wards of where they have to work in that particular week or day according to the timetable assigned to them.

1.8.4 Reward and Recognition

Conceptual-Consists of its formal or informal mechanisms for defining the kind of behavior desired, evaluating performance, and rewarding good performance. Most reward, offer pay, benefits and promotion when behavior meet or exceeds performance standard.(Wright,P.M,1995).

Operational-A sign of appreciation when the nurses are able to meet or exceeds performance standard. In this research, reward or recognition is a formal method designed to pay-back the nurses' work, effort and contribution to the hospital in term of monetary or non-monetary. Monetary rewards are pay or payment for overtime while non-monetary rewards are such as free air tickets to any destination in West Malaysia, promotion opportunity, further study opportunity and "Best Employee of the month" recognition.

1.8.5 Good Workplace Relationship

Conceptual-The ability to adapt to the organization's cultures, good interpersonal skill such as communication and conflict resolution skills and self discipline.(Green,2000).

Operational-The ability to get along with others, specifically as a member of a team. Here it refers to the ability or attitude of the nurse to work together with their colleagues on a same assignments, projects, unit, wards or department.

1.8.6 Training

Conceptual-A planned, continuous effort by manager to improve employee competency levels and organizational performance.(Mondy, 1996).

Operational-A set of activities planned to increase nurse's involvement in the Organization. Trainings will improve communication between the nurses and their colleagues, facilitate change and be part of an appraisal scheme. Operationally in this research, it refers to the talks holds by the Hospital such as talks on work motivation and seminars such as Quality Control Circle. Most of the training are done within the Hospital and local hotels or resorts.

1.8.7 Involvement in decision making

Conceptual- Involvement in decision making means that each individual must take the initiative and not rely on someone else. In order for this to be achieved, the organization needs a culture, which encourages this behavior. Everyone must understand that they contribute equally to quality and can only succeed through co-operation and support.(Rowley, J, 1996).

Operational-Operationally in this research, involvement in decision making means that each nurses, with the initiative, take part in the decision making process for the Hospital in general and for their group assignments specifically, and are actively involved and not just accept what someone else says. Through this participation, the nurse will understand more and know that they contribute equally to quality of their service as an individual and to the wards as general.

1.9 Limitations of the Research

In carrying out this research, the researcher has encountered a few limitations:

- i) The results of the research might be varying from other hospitals. Supposedly, the results valid for Miri General Hospital nurses only and for certain time frame.
- ii) Samples are chosen randomly among office hour's nurse and expected to represent the others. Thus, the result might be different if the research is to be conducted for the second time with different respondents. Hence, it might not be so representative to all hospital's staff.
- iii) There might be other factors, besides the selected one, that will help the nurses to perform in their work. This study only focuses on the selected factors.
- iv) Most of the data are collected by using questionnaires. There could be a misconception on the way the researcher interprets the data comparing to what the respondent really meant.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

In this research, the problem arises is; whether there is a relationship between the selected factors with the level of job performance of the nurses.

Every researcher has different perceptions towards the relationship between the factors and staff performance. Researchers have come out with a variety of theories, opinions and models through the outcome of their different types of research. However, all these perceptions, outcomes, theories and models suggested by the researchers are not necessary applicable in the Malaysian context. This is because of the different background, culture and value of different countries. Malaysia itself is consisted of more than 10 ethnics.

As a result, this research is conducted to explain in detail about the relationship between the selected factors (good workplace relationship, job rotation, recognition/reward, training and involvement in decision making) and the level of the nurses' job performance.

2.2 Theories and Models

Theories and models introduced by researchers through their previous researches and studies are very important. By understanding the theories and models, a particular concept can be applied in different situation with a little modification.

2.2.1 Herzberg's Theory

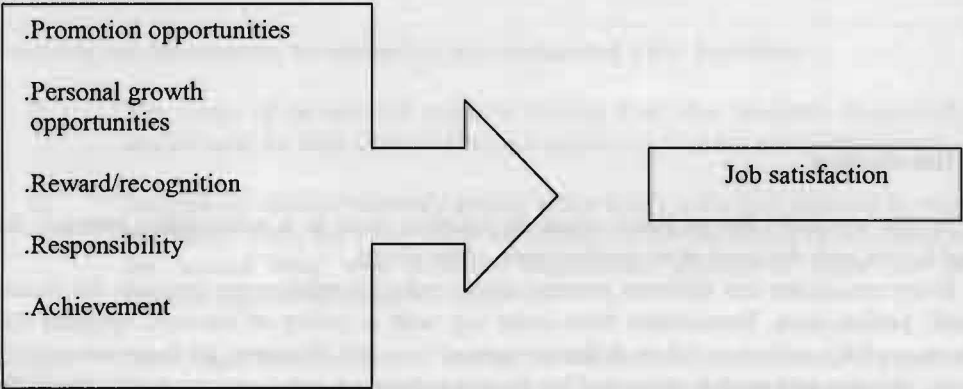
According to Greenberg and Baron (1995), Herzberg's two-factor-theory has identified two different sets of factors in causing job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction. This means that the sources of job satisfaction are different from the source of job dissatisfaction. Factors that contribute to job satisfaction are known as motivators or job content, while factors that cause job dissatisfaction are referred as hygiene or maintenance or job context. (Muchinsky, 1993).

Hygiene factors include quality of supervision, pay, company policies, physical working conditions, relations with others and job security. These factors are not considered as intrinsic part of job (Hersey & Blanchard, 1988). Studies found that the presence of these factors does not contribute to job satisfaction and high output capacity. But if these factors are not dealt with carefully, employees will feel unhappy or dissatisfied and their job performance tends to decline.

Alternatively, promotion opportunities, opportunities for personal growth, recognition, responsibility and achievement are considered as motivators. Motivators also known as a set of intrinsic conditions or satisfiers according to Ivancerich and Matteson (1993).

This theory has been selected as part of the discussion for this research since the components of motivators and hygiene factors are closely related to the variables studied. Recognition / reward is indirectly related to pay, training and job rotation relate to the personal growth and good workplace relationship and involvement in decision making relate to relation with others and company policies.

Motivators / Job Content



Hygiene Factors / Job Context

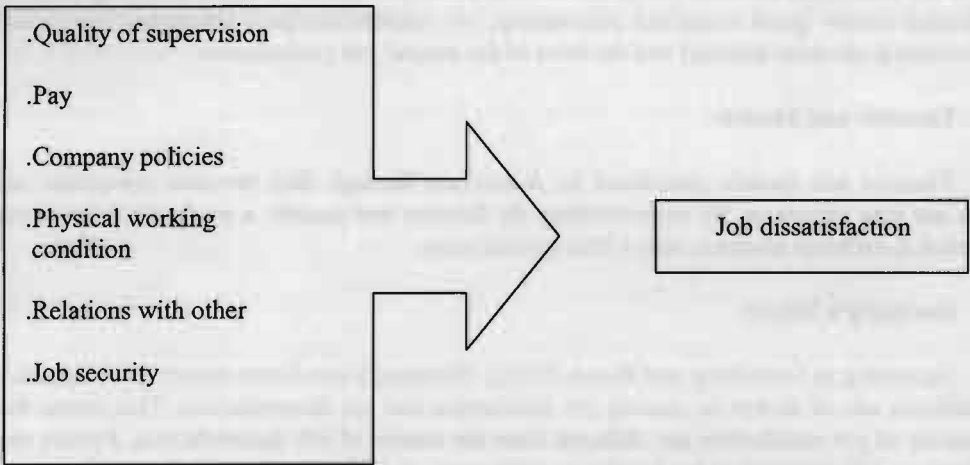


Figure 2 : Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

Source: Adapted from Greenberg,J. & Baron, R.A(1998). *Behaviour in Organisation: Undersatnding and managing the Human side of work*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall,Pg.174.

2.2.2 Maslow's Theory

According to Maslow (1970), the source of motivation is certain needs. Needs are biological or instinctive, they characterize humans in general and have a genetic base. They often influence behavior unconsciously. What causes people to behave as they do is the process of satisfying their needs. Once a need is satisfied, it no longer dominates behavior and another need arise to take its place. Need fulfillment is never ending.

There are five levels of satisfaction presented in the form of pyramid starting from most basic needs, needs of the lowest level to the most sophisticated one at the top, namely physiological, safety, social, esteem and self-actualization.

The needs at the lower level have priority, the higher levels are unimportant if the lower levels are not met, and when the lower levels are met the higher levels become important. Thus, there is no point in considering, as an example, self-actualization for worker who is adequately fed, housed and domestically supported esteem and self-actualization become critical.

In this research, the researcher tries to insert the selected independents variables into the pyramid levels. It is shown in the figure 3 below;

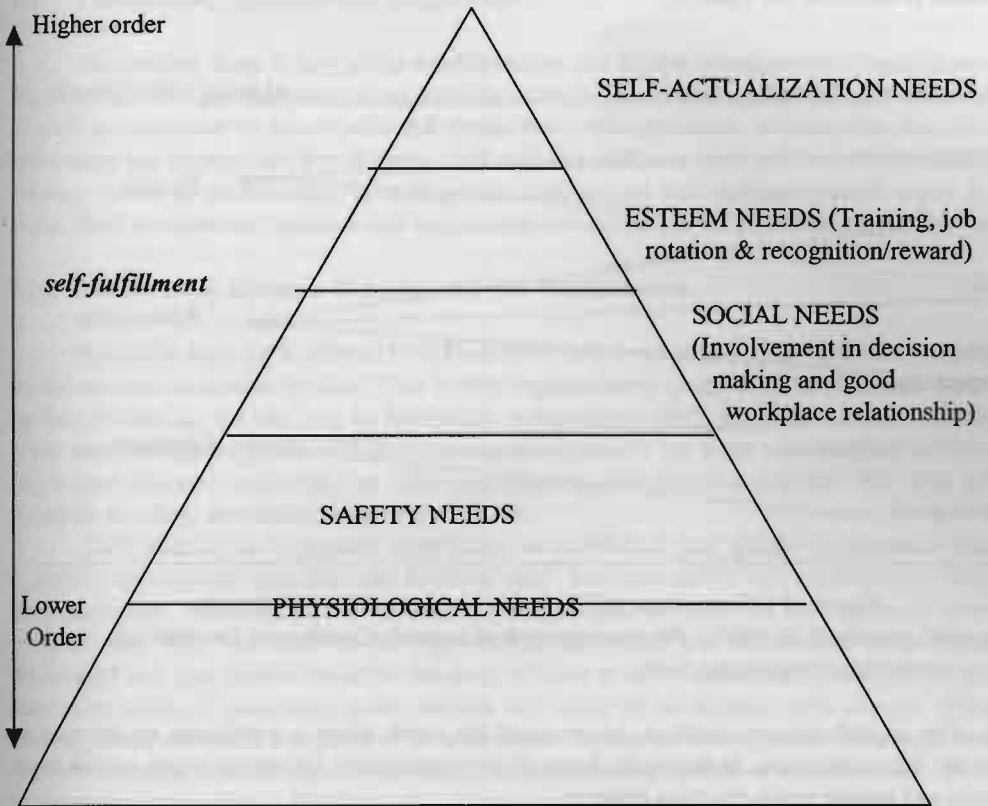


Figure 3 : Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Source: Adapted from Muchinsky, P.M. (1993). *Psychology Applied to Work*. California: Brooks/Cole publishing company.

2.2.3 ERG Theory

ERG theory was proposed by Alderfer (1972). It is in response to the shortcomings of Maslow's theory. Its name ERG, which stands for three types of needs: *existence, relatedness* and *growth*.(Muchinsky,P.M,1993). Alderfer defined them as follows:

Existence needs-These are material and are satisfied by environmental factors, such as food, water, pay, fringe benefits and working conditions.

Relatedness needs-These involve relationship with 'significant others', such as co-workers, superiors, subordinates, family and friends.

Growth needs-These involve the desire for unique personal development. They are met by developing whatever abilities and capabilities are important to the individual.

In his theory Alderfer, has made a few changes to improve Maslow's theory. Firstly, Alderfer proposed three need categories in contrast to Maslow's five. How they differ from each other is shown in the figure 4.

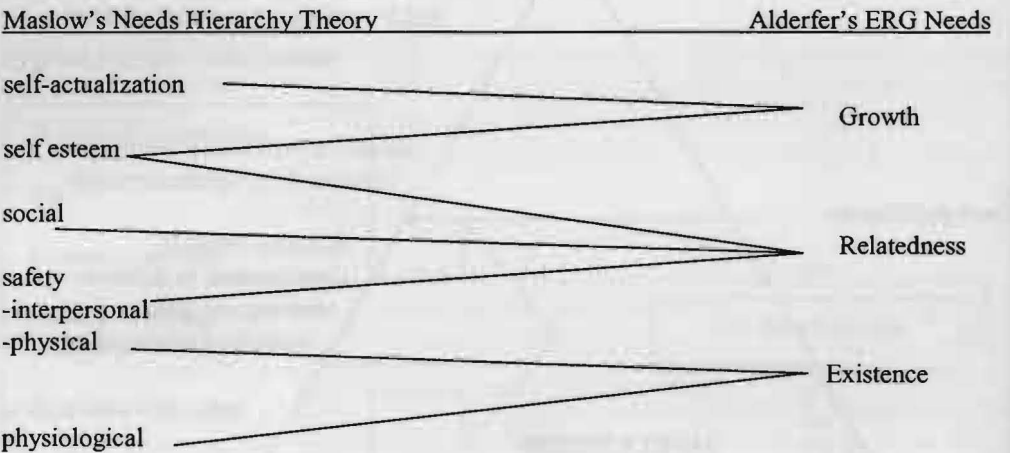


Figure 4 : Comparison of Maslow's Needs to Alderfer's Needs.
Source: Muchinsky,P.M.(1993). *Phsycology applied to work*. Carlifornia: Brooks/Cole publishing company,pg.330.

The second changes made is, he arranged his needs along a continuum as opposed to hierarchy. The continuum, as shown in figure 5, is concreteness. Existence needs are the most concrete and growth needs the most abstract.

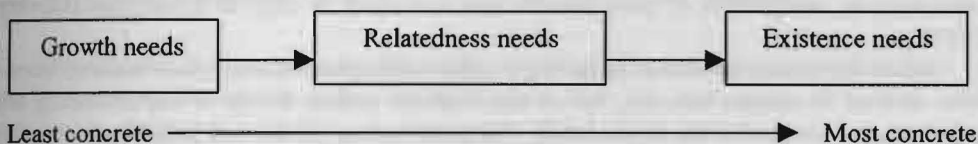


Figure 5 : Alderfer's Continuum of ERG Needs

The final and most important changes Alderfer's had made is, according to Maslow's, a person only moves up the needs hierarchy (fulfillment progression). Where else, Alderfer's allowed for movement back and forth on the continuum. Moving toward fulfillment of the growth and relatedness needs was also called *fulfillment progression* by Alderfer. However, he referred to moving backward the fulfillment of the most concrete needs as *frustration regression*. Alderfer meant that if a person became frustrated in satisfying higher needs, he or she would regress toward fulfilling lower needs. Wanous and Zwany (1977) concluded that there was some hope for using Alderfer theory in management.

2.3 Perceptions, Opinions and Suggestions

Motivation, then, is key in the establishment and further development of quality service. There are a lot of perceptions and suggestions towards the factors and how they affect the level of staff performance by the experts and researchers. Manager needs to recognize that different motivators are appropriate for different staff and that different staff will demonstrate differing inherent levels of performance in setting their own targets and striving towards them. In this paper, their perceptions, opinions and suggestions are divided in the below manner:

2.3.1 Relationship Between Training and Job Performance.

Research done by Robbins (1996) has come into a conclusion that competent employees do not remain competent forever. That is why organizations spend billions of dollars each year on formal training. He was joined by Maimunah Aminuddin (1993) who stated, "smart employees know that training programs help in recruiting employees as the more sophisticated and educated employees choose companies that offer opportunities for personal growth." She also added, trainings also help in retaining employees.

Staff training is an important contributor to individual and group performance (Green, J., 2000). Appropriate training can increase staff involvement in the organization, improve communication between peers, facilitate change and be part of an appraisal scheme. Professionals who had little or no opportunity for promotion within their own institution discovered that they lacked the skills required to move to other sectors. Such individuals felt that they were stuck in particular posts without any hope of developing their careers. Effective training could minimize this level of de-motivation. However, management of the staff training and development process requires a balance between the aspirations of individual and the needs of the organization (Odini, 1996).

To be competent in the fast growing industry, there is a need for the staff to have varieties of skills. Skills varieties describe to which a job requires the exercise of a number of different skills, abilities or talents. Such activities must not merely be different, but they must be distinct enough to require different skills. Continuous improvement must be seen as the responsibility of everyone in the organization. To develop this, a focus on training, education,

project because they are the one who will be working on it later. What seemed like the perfect solution-by those in charge-was not always the best for the staff.

For those employees who are working as a team, the team serves as an important source for satisfying the individual members' social needs. Further, the desire to maintain those social relations, and not alienated by the other team members cause team members to adhere rigidly to team norm (Ratzburg W.H, 2001). Jennifer Rowley (1996), Dean of Management and Social Science school in Edge Hill University suggest that, employees' involvement means that each individual must take the initiative and not rely on someone else. In order for this to be achieved the organization needs a culture that encourages this behavior. Everyone must understand that they contribute equally to quality and can only succeed through co-operation and support.

Therefore, managers should motivate their staff by involving their staff in the decision making process through group consultations and discussion (Green, J.*et.al*, 2000). As a result, the staff feels that they have been kept informed of developments in their work and have had an opportunity to express their views. Also, being personally involved in strategic planning fosters long-term commitment. This self-direction can encourage a sense of belonging and mutual respect within cohesive staff group.

As with all research, in one Birmingham further education college (2001), involvement in decision making is considered essential. Regular meetings are held allowing for the constructive criticism of roles and suggestions for improvements. Involvement in decision making is an important factor in motivating the staff, and communication is at the root of its success. There are four key ingredients for involvements in decision making to succeed. They are; top management must agree to support the program, program inauguration warrants fanfare, rewards must be offered for ideas generated and accepted and the final one is, training is essential for team leaders, program coordinators and evaluation members (Kirwan,1995).

Chapter 3 Methodology

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter there will be a discussion and explanation on how to carry out the research. It is divided into a few section; location of research, population and samples, instruments, data collection and data analysis.

3.2 Location of Research

Surrounded by the coconuts and vegetables mini plantations, Miri General Hospital is located 5 kilometers from the heart of Miri town. It can be reach by using most of the land transports or even a helicopter for those patients who are from the out skirt of Miri.

3.3 Research Design

This research is a correlational research. Correlational research is used to study the relationships between two or more variables. In this research, the independent variables are the selected factors and dependent variable is the level of the nurses' performance.

Correlational research is suitable for this research because it explain the degree of relationships between the two variables studied and also enables the researcher to make prediction. Besides that, the researcher does not manipulate any of the variables involved.

In this research it involves asking questions at a sample of individuals who are representative of a group being studied. Survey is the technique used. It typically use two general procedures for data collection: questionnaire and interview (Clifford, J. Drew *et. al.*,1996).

3.4 Population and Samples

Respondents will be chose randomly among 295 nurses in Miri General Hospital. The total amount of nurses is 295 and the minimum sample needed for this research is 54 nurses. This amount can be obtained by the formula below:

$$S = \frac{So}{1+ So / N}$$

$$So = \frac{Z^2 \times (p) (q)}{e^2}$$