

FACTORS IMPACTING ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE: A CASE STUDY OF THE ROYAL SWAZILAND POLICE SERVICE

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Abstract

The principal challenge for most organisations is to ensure that the performance of employees will result in the effectiveness and success of any organisation. The Royal Swaziland Police Service (RSPS), in order to differentiate itself from other organisations and ensure survival effectiveness and competitiveness, must render services of high quality. The key findings of the RSPS study suggest that the most positive factors of job satisfaction are receiving respect from the community and relations with colleagues, while the negative aspects are that salaries are not equal to effort put into the job and fear of victimization after voicing a personal opinion.

Keywords: Job Satisfaction, Policing, Performance

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1 Introduction

It is often overlooked that, for the RSPS to have continuing relevance and effectiveness, it is important that there is commitment to duty, and job satisfaction of personnel. Policing functions and roles have assumed rather radical approaches. It has been observed that the services performed by the police are linked with various aspects of development that cannot be easily ignored (Tamuno 1993:116). This viewpoint shows the vital role of the police performing policing duties that contribute toward development within different nations.

Job satisfaction does not occur in a vacuum, but in a workplace where both employers and employees have expectations that need to be achieved in a manner that befits the situation. Employees describe satisfying experiences as factors that are intrinsic to the content of the job itself (Steers 1979:392). Gibson, Ivancevich, and Donnelly (2000:134) stated that good attitude or happy feelings (satisfaction) within a worker (intrinsic) pertain to the job content as their absence doesn't prove highly dissatisfying yet their presence build strong levels of motivation that ends in good job performance. Hollyforde and Whiddett (2005:105) stated that these are called motivators and include achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility, and advancement (promotion).

Globally, police officers are tasked with the responsibility of maintaining peace and order in the society. The Swaziland Government has given the Royal Swaziland Police Service (RSPS) performance targets of reducing crime in the country by twelve

percent (12%). The RSPS is struggling to meet its performance targets. The research purpose of the research was to identify and describe the factors with job satisfaction within the RSPS.

2 Background

The year 2014 marked 107 years for the police service existence and there were celebrations in this regard. Nevertheless, ever since the organization's inception, the crime rate is increasing despite more police officers being recruited and trained every year and more police stations being built. Many policing strategies have been attempted to fight crime. These strategies include the incident driven policing (reactive policing) and pro-active policing (crime prevention, partnership/community policing). An organization cannot compete successfully without a satisfied workforce.

According to Steers, Porter and Bigley, (1996:2), people must be attracted not only to join the organization, but also to remain in it; people must perform tasks for which they have been hired for and must do so in a dependable manner; and people must go beyond this dependable role performance and engage in some form of creative spontaneous, and innovative behavior at work. People are interested to join the RSPS because of job security and scarcity of jobs but they are not willing remain in it due to factors impacting on employee performance as the police work is not creative but it is routine and rigid (no innovative behavior at work).

3 Factors influencing job satisfaction

According to Arnold and Feldman (1996:86), there are a variety of factors that make people feel positive and negative about their job. For several decades, numerous studies have attempted to classify and determine factors influencing job satisfaction.

3.1 Working conditions/living conditions

Moomaw and Pearson (2005:38) indicated that working conditions are more related to satisfaction, than background variables such as sex, age, or years of experience. Luthans (1998:146) stated that, if working conditions are good, for example, clean and attractive surroundings – employees will find it easier to carry out their jobs. The absence of such working conditions, amongst other things, can impact poorly on the workers mental and physical well-being (Baron and Greenberg 2003:159-160).

In police camps (police houses), the serious shortage of accommodation has reached a stage where even sitting rooms are now converted to bedrooms. The current situation is that three police constables living with or without their families are to share a two-bedroom house normally designed for one police officer and his or her family members. The sharing setup is that Police Constable A uses the master bedroom to keep his/her bed and all valuable goods such as wardrobe, refrigerator, television set, chairs and pots; Police Constable B uses the second bedroom to keep all his/her belongings and Police Constable C uses the sitting room as his/her bedroom. All police constables live on this sharing basis. The accommodation problem has escalated up to the rank of sergeants, who, since the year 2011, were forced to share a house with police constables (their subordinates). Currently, this scenario has not affected the senior ranks (from Inspector to Commissioner of police).

In an article in the Times of Swaziland (16 July 2012:4), the Commissioner of Police was quoted as saying “*the police are packed like sardines in the government houses they live in; we have a huge accommodation problem in the Police Service*”. It is clear that, from the Commissioner of Police above statement, the living conditions of police officers in the RSPS, as one of the factors that influence job satisfaction, need urgent attention.

According to Hulis-Turner (1999:271), an environment conducive to work should meet the following criteria: it should be physically acceptable; it should be safe; and it should satisfy social needs. Failure to provide these facilities makes it impossible for employees to carry out their jobs effectively, thereby promoting dissatisfaction. It is absolutely crucial that a conducive environment be established (Botha 2000:211).

3.2 Interpersonal relationships at work

Robbins (2001:443) states that the relationship between the organisation and its staff is governed by what motivates them to work, and the fulfilment they derive from it. The RSPS advocates that police officers maintain a good work relationship amongst themselves. This is instilled during the police basic recruit training. Further, employees usually have certain expectations concerning the attitude of their seniors, and their satisfaction is influenced by whether the attitude of the seniors conforms to their expectations or not (Gruneberg 1979:109). The RSPS is a disciplined organisation and the behaviour of subordinates toward their superiors is closely monitored for acts of ill-discipline. Not much emphasis is placed on a top-down approach, meaning that senior officers are not closely monitored regarding their attitude to junior officers with respect to working relationships.

3.3 Leadership

According to Morrison (1993:271), leadership is the process whereby an individual influences other group members toward the attainment of a defined group or organisational goals. Sheehan and Cordner (1989:122) point out that good leadership is a critical element in police organisations because the organisation’s best chance for achieving desired behaviour is through employee commitment to well-established professional values and goals and it is through leadership that police executives must seek that commitment. Gibson, Ivancevich, Donnelly and Konopaske (2003:402) suggest that a leader could make a difference in terms of end-result factors like performance, goal attainment, individual growth and development.

3.4 Salary and benefits

Nel, Gerber, Van Dyk, Haasbroek, Schultz, Sono, and Werner (2003:59) mention that people perceive their remuneration as an indication of what they are worth to the organisation. Gibson, Ivancevich and Donnelly (1994:106) state that the amount of pay received by an employee may be perceived by an employee as fair or unfair. Chung (1977:23) warned that, if salaries are not market related, this can lead to dissatisfaction and discontent. Employees, in general, show their unhappiness by voicing out their grievances resulting in protest action. Some reflect their unhappiness by leaving the organisation for well paying jobs.

Interestingly, most organisations reward employees for membership (for belonging to the organisation) rather than performance (Armstrong 1990:78). This is visible in the RSPS, as police officers are paid a basic monthly salary. They are not paid according to work performance or meeting job targets as there is no effective performance

management system in place. Luthans (2002:231) agrees that pay and benefits play a meaningful role in the attainment of high levels of needs satisfaction, but stresses that money is more persuasive than fringe benefits as it encourages employees to perform better, in recognition of services rendered.

3.5 Recognition

According to Gerber, Nel, and Van Dyk (1998:42), recognition refers to the respect an employee enjoys among colleagues in the organisation, which is the result of the status value of the job. Tappen (1995:67) states that recognition promotes self-confidence and raises the self-esteem of employees by which productivity is increased. Long serving police officers, who have studied at various colleges and universities in their spare time, for instance, through distance learning, receive less recognition from the RSPS than graduates who are recruited in the RSPS fresh from the university, i.e., University of Swaziland.

3.6 Advancement and promotion

Performance, if it can be accurately assessed, is often given significant weight in promotion and reward allocations. According to Chelladurai (2006:270), it is the frequency of promotions, the importance of promotions and the desirability of promotions that influence an employee's satisfaction level. Like most employees, police officers in the RSPS face challenges such that, in order to witness a significant increase in their salaries, there has to be a promotion.

3.7 Achievement

Newstrom and Davis (1997:567) see achievement as a drive to overcome challenges and obstacles in pursuit of goals. Achievement is present when employees have feelings of personal accomplishment or the need to accomplish. Police work is challenging in that every reported crime presents new challenges and new ways of solving it, despite the fact that the same crime has been committed once again. In order for the police officer or an individual to experience achievement, he or she must be able to succeed, have abilities to solve job related problems, and perform effectively.

3.8 The job itself

Hollyforde and Whiddett (2002:101) state that the work itself should include elements of the job such as creativity, challenge, variety, and an opportunity to do the job from beginning to end. Nel, Gerber, Van Dyk, Haasbroek, Schultz, Sono and Werner (2001:587) explain that, when the work itself is interesting with challenging tasks, it enables individuals to become what they are capable of becoming, getting a sense of recognition and feeling of self-fulfilment. Nel, Van Dyk, Haasbroek, Schultz, Sono, and Werner

(2004:552-553) indicate that people would prefer a job that is interesting, challenging and would create opportunities for self-actualisation and recognition. Robbins (2005:7) also supports the view that employees tend to prefer jobs that give them opportunities to use their skills and abilities and which offer a variety of tasks, while providing feedback on how well they are performing.

3.9 Responsibility

Marriner-Tomey (1996:69) is of the view that responsibility refers to what must be done to complete a task and the obligations created by it. Muller (1993:163) states that the manager must ensure that responsibilities are standardized for each job level and that each employee has a copy of his or her job description. If employees have the required skills and they know what to do, they tend to work hard and they become motivated in what they do (Muller 2001:144).

3.10 Job security

The importance of job security stems from the fact that it is critical for influencing work-related outcomes (Yousef 1998:36). The shortage of adequate police officers appears to be a worldwide challenge. Police officers are not likely to be retrenched as new and complex crimes occur due to many factors which include unemployment, lack of recreational facilities and poverty, thereby continuously creating a need for a growing police force. Ivancevich and Matteson (2002:122) state that employees, whose jobs are guaranteed, have a positive influence on job satisfaction.

4 Research methods

The study used a quantitative and qualitative research approaches. This study adopted a purposive sampling technique as it was possible to identify in advance the targeted population. The study was confined to the two most densely populated and busiest of the four regions of Swaziland, namely, Hhohho, Manzini, Lubombo and Shiselweni region. Hhohho region and Manzini region have the highest crime rates and highest number of police officers per region. The Hhohho region consists of the capital city, of the country known as Mbabane, Piggs Peak and Lobamba areas. The Manzini region, known as the hub of the country, consists of Manzini city and the rural areas of Mafutseni, Malkerns, Matsapha, Bhunya, Mankayane and Mliba. The Manzini region has nine hundred and seventy four (974) police officers and Hhohho region has a total of seven hundred and fifty one (751) police officers covering all ranks. The target population was thus one thousand seven hundred and twenty five police officers which was the total of police officers in the two regions targeted by the study. This allowed each of these stratum a sample proportional to the size

of the strata, denoted by N_h , where the weight for each stratum is given as $W_h = N_h/N$. Hence, for Manzini region $W_{mz} = 974/1725 = 0.6$ while for Hhohho region $W_{oo} = 751/1725 = 0.4$.

Using conservative procedures to determine the percentage or the probability of the target population falling within a sample size, which is a representative of the total targeted population, the researcher assumed that the estimate can fall between 10 to 20 percent of the target population. So, taking 20 percent as the probability, the researcher choose 345 police officers to be in the sample; and further using the weights for the two regions, Manzini was represented by 207 police officers, whereas Hhohho was represented by 138 police officers. All police stations and police posts found within the two regions were visited and police officers at different levels were administered questionnaires. Questionnaires were handed to 345 police officers (respondents) using a personal approach as part of the quantitative research. Based on the literature review of job satisfaction research, the researcher developed a questionnaire including 13 questions on the impact of job satisfaction on performance as well as several demographic questions. Demographic questions included age, gender, years of service, highest academic standard, post level and geographical regions.

Interviews were conducted with the most senior officers of the rank of superintendent and senior superintendent of the two police regions. The qualitative research involved conducting recorded semi-structured interviews with 10 senior police officers, which included serving and retired officers. A

focus group discussion was conducted with 9 junior police officers as a form of control in the qualitative research.

5 Data analysis

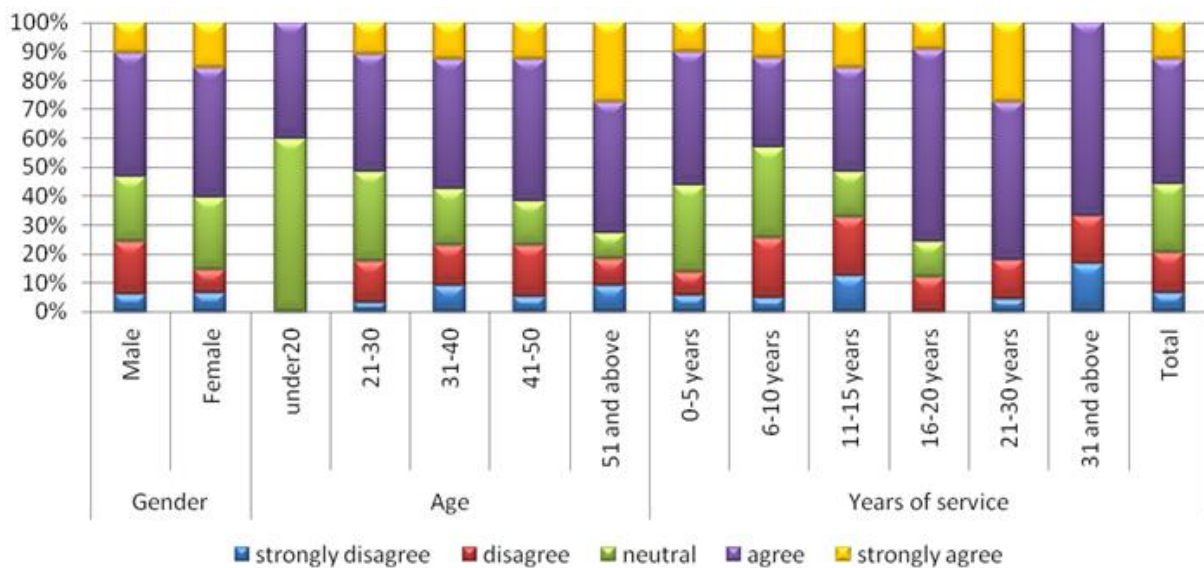
The data was scientifically analyzed using the Scientific Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 12 and the Micro Soft (MS) Excel for graphical presentations. It enabled the researcher to describe and compare variables numerically. The response rate was one hundred percent. The number of respondents was 345. There were 209 and 136 female respondents. The results reflected that the males represented 61% of the sample size and the females represent 39%. It must be noted that the RSPS is a male-dominated institution. The Manzini region had a higher number of respondents of 60% and Hhohho had 40%. This is proportionate to the number of police officers posted in the two regions.

5.1 Quantitative analysis

5.1.1 Working conditions

The results in Figure 1 show that, in Swaziland, most police officers are comfortable with their work environment. 56 percent agreed that their work environment is comfortable against 21 percent who found that the work environment was not comfortable. Only 24 percent were neither comfortable nor uncomfortable. This result supports a statement by Luthans (1998:146) that if working conditions are good, for example, clean and attractive surroundings – employees will find it easier to carry out their jobs.

Figure 1. Respondents' perception with their work environment



5.1.2 Work relationships

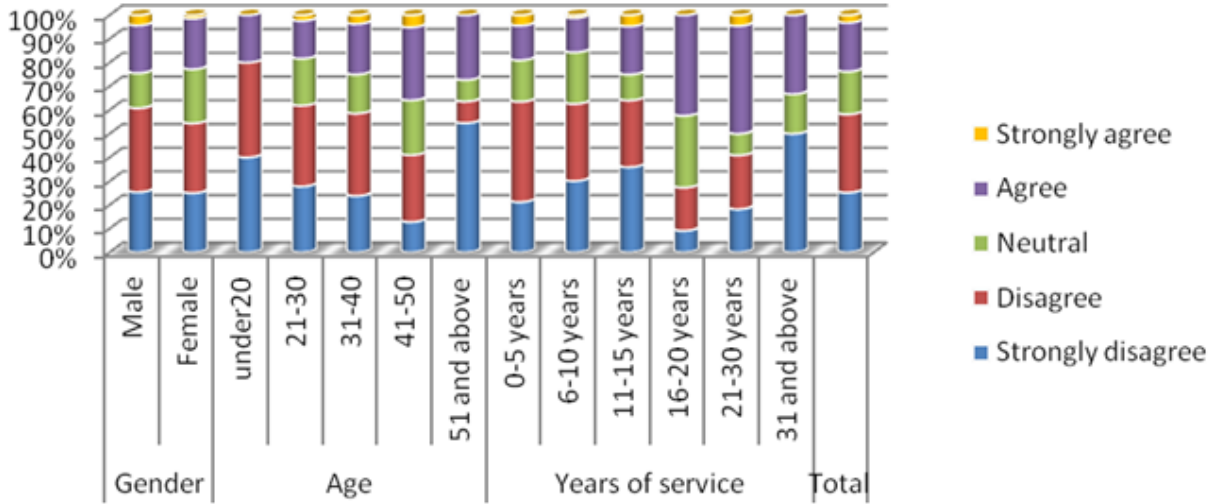
The results in Figure 2 show that most police officers in Swaziland do not have the opportunity to voice

their opinions without fear of victimisation. 58 percent disagreed that they have an opportunity to voice their opinions without fear of victimisation against 24 percent who have the opportunity to voice their

opinions without fear of victimisation. Only 18 percent were neutral. Bragg (2002:18) emphasised that affording employees with the opportunity to voice

their concerns, play a vital role in ensuring interactional justice.

Figure 2. Respondents' views on the opportunity to voice their opinion without fear of victimisation

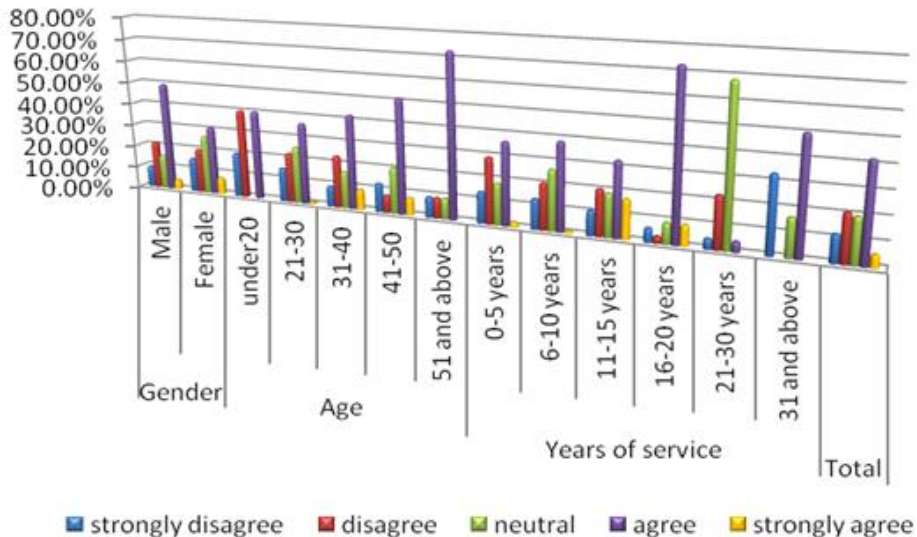


5.1.3 Leadership

Figure 3 shows that 47 percent of the respondents are given delegated authority at work. 33 percent disagreed that they are not given delegated authority in their work. Only 20 percent were neither given nor not given delegated authority in their work. This

finding supports the statement by Tomal (2007:24) that common to good leaders is the notion that they have belief in their people. It is worth mentioning that some supervisors, in the RSPS still view that delegating work means being incompetent on their part as supervisors yet it has to do with grooming future supervisors.

Figure 3. Respondents' views on being given delegated authority in their work

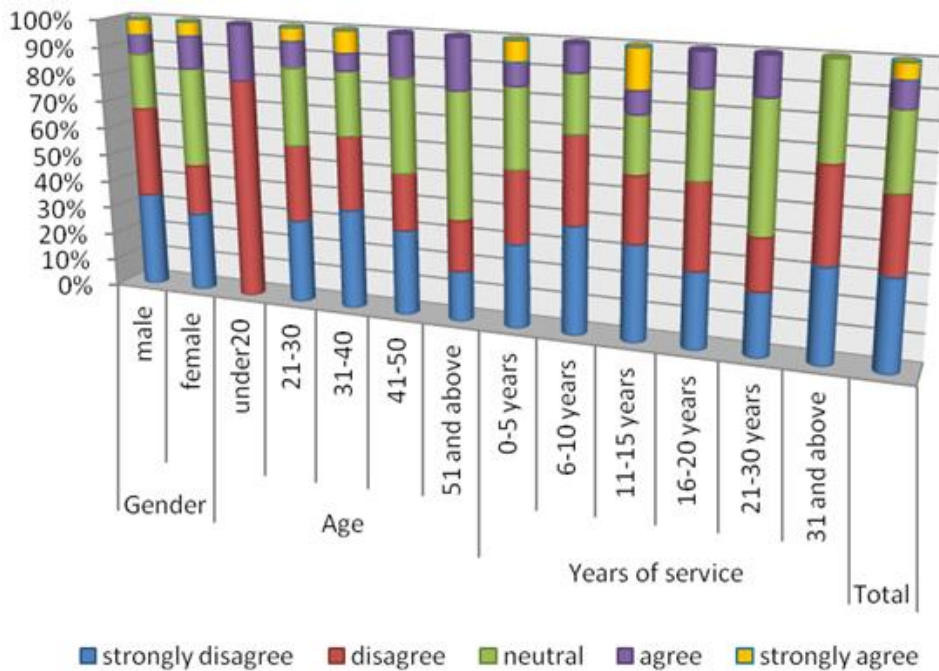


5.1.4 Salary benefits

Figure 4 shows that most police officers' salary in Swaziland is not equal to the effort they put into the job. 59 percent disagreed that their salaries are equal to the effort they put into their jobs against 15 percent who are of the view that that their salary is equal to the effort they put in the job. Only 26 percent felt that

their salary was neither equal nor not equal to the effort they put in job. Strong evidence exists that individuals who perform better like their jobs better because of the rewards often associated with good performance (Spector 1997:56). This finding supports a statement by Nel *et al.* (2003:59) that people perceive their remuneration as an indication of what they are worth to the organisation.

Figure 4. Respondents' views on their salary equality to the effort they put on the job

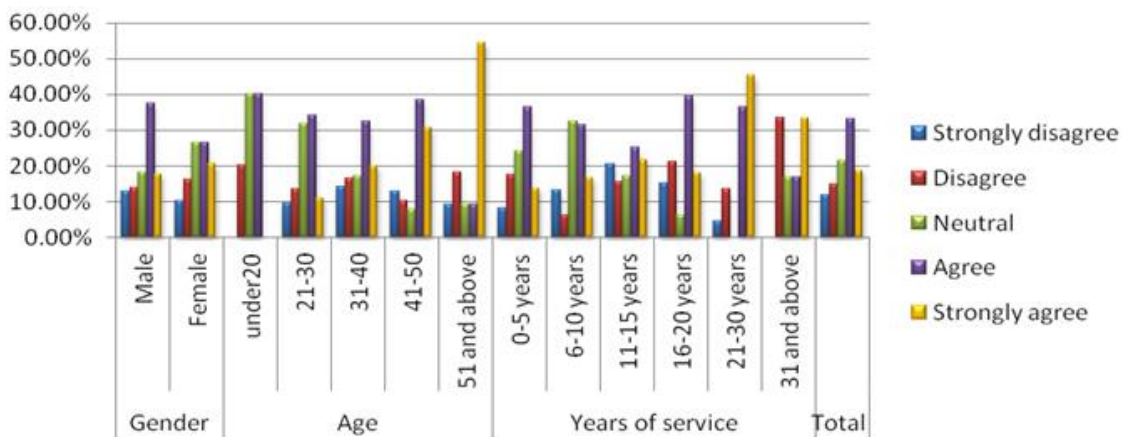


5.1.5 Recognition

The results on Figure 5 reflect that most police officers in Swaziland receive recognition from their supervisors for a job well done. A total of 52 percent of the respondents agreed that they receive recognition from their supervisors for a job well done against 27 percent who disagreed. Only 21 percent neither

received recognition nor not from their supervisors for a job well done. This finding supports Kamstra (2005:48) that acknowledgement can be given through praise, encouragement, promotion or rise in payment. Recognition includes praise for a job well done and directs feedback on the results of one's work from customers and from the work itself (Hollyforde and Whiddett 2005:105).

Figure 5. Respondents' views on receiving recognition from their supervisors for a job well done

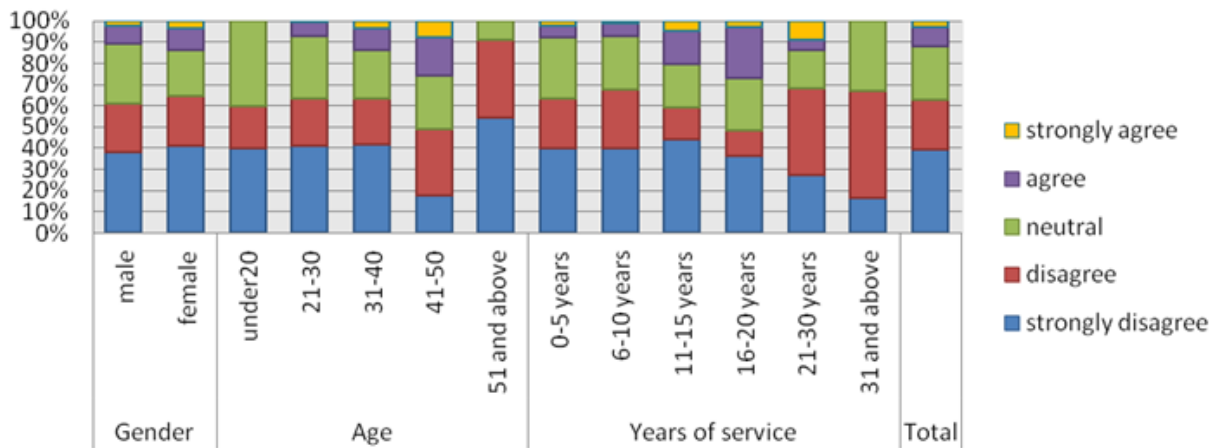


5.1.6 Advancement / Promotions

The results in Figure 6 present that the RSPS promotions are not based on ability. 63 percent disagreed that promotions are based on ability against 12 percent that agreed that promotions are based on

ability. Only 25 percent neither agreed nor disagreed. This is reinforced by statement by Cummings and Worley (2001:216) that employees must be able to see the connection between good performance and promotion.

Figure 6. Respondents' perceptions on promotions being based on ability

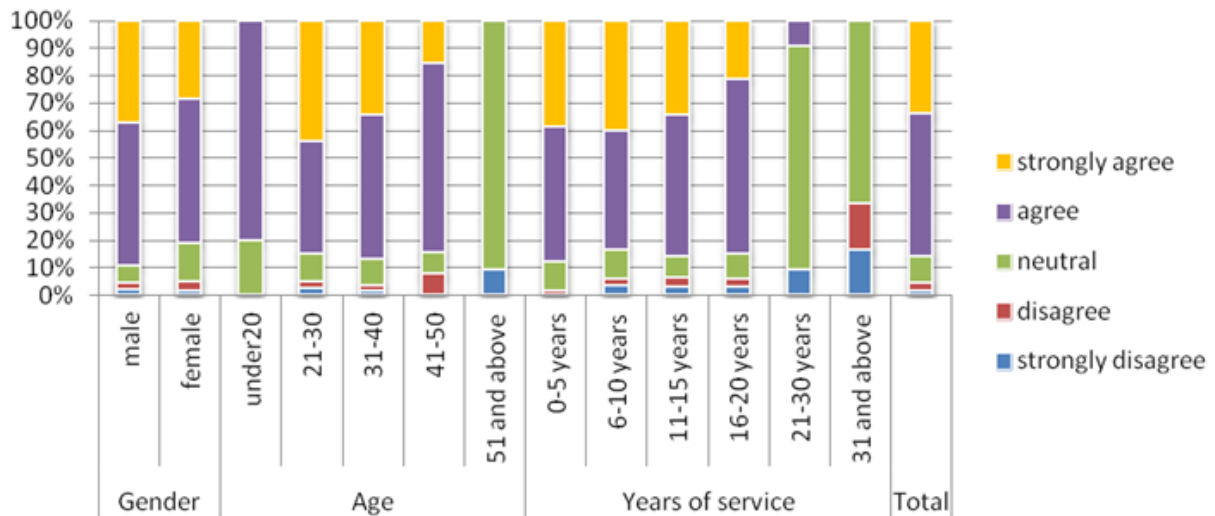


5.1.7 Achievement

The results in Figure 7 reflect that, in Swaziland, most police officers are respected in their communities. 86 percent agreed that they are respected as police officers in their communities against 4 percent who disagreed that they are respected as police officers in

their community. Only 10 percent were neither respected nor disrespected as police officers in their communities. This finding is in support of Martins and Von der Ohe (2003:46) that respect for each other should prevail at the workplace since respect results in peace and harmony that affects the police officers' job satisfaction positively.

Figure 7. Respondents' perceptions on being respected by the community as a police officer



5.1.8 The job

The results in Figure 8 reflect that, in Swaziland, most police officers have inadequate safety and security measures in place to protect them. 54 percent disagreed that there are adequate safety and security measures in place to protect them against 26 percent who are of the view that there are adequate safety and security measures in place to protect them. Only 20 percent felt that measures were neither adequate nor inadequate. This finding is in support of Tomal (2007:31) that the feeling of security/insecurity is rooted in the basic level of safety and security, as defined by Maslow, in his model of hierarchy of needs.

5.1.9 Responsibility

The results in Figure 9 show that, in Swaziland, most police officers are responsible for planning their work. 53 percent agreed that they are responsible for planning their work against 34 percent who disagree that they are responsible for planning their work. Only 13 percent were neither responsible nor not responsible for planning their work. This is reinforced by Martins and Von der Ohe (2003:47) that responsibility is the feeling of being one's own boss and not having to have one's decisions double checked and this enhances one's job satisfaction.

Figure 8. Respondents' perceptions on adequate safety and security measures in place to protect them

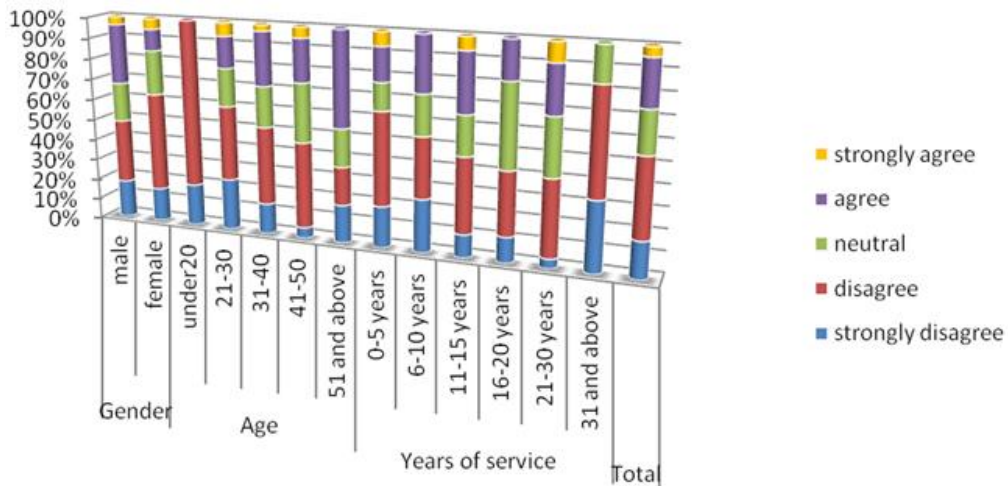


Figure 9. Respondents' views on being responsible for planning their work

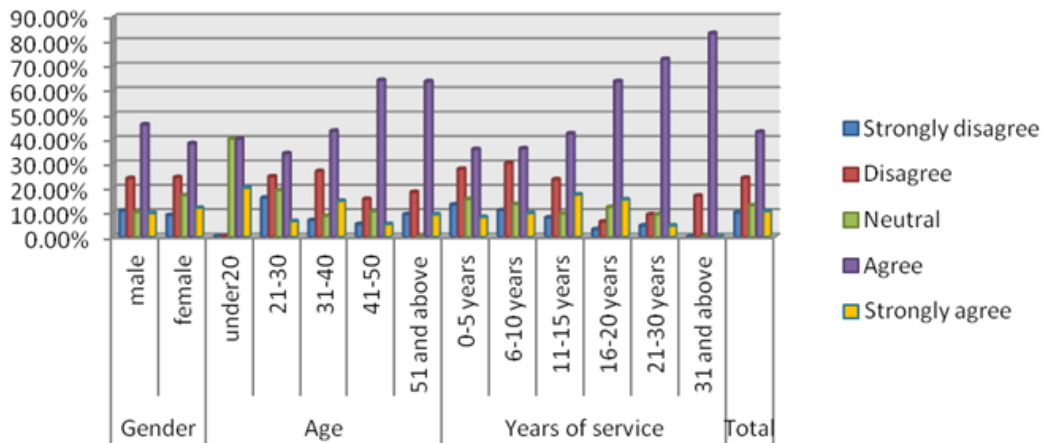
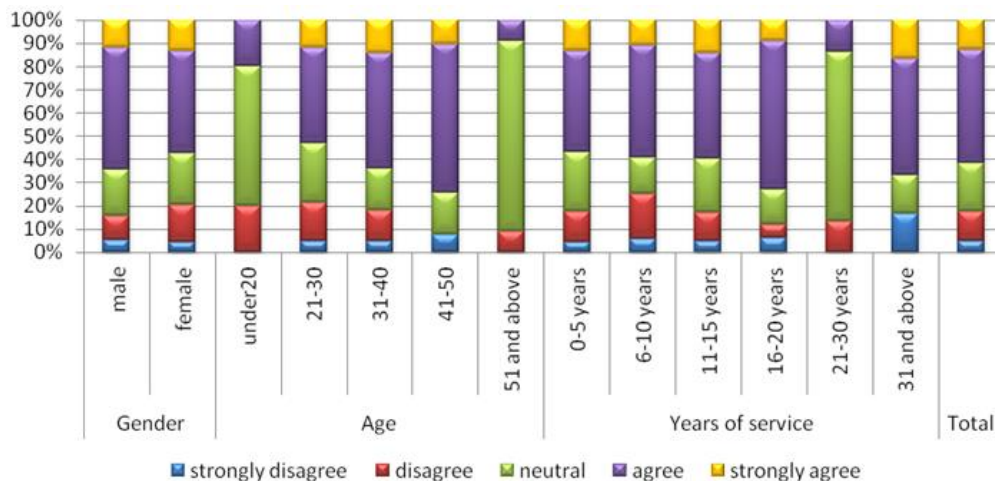


Figure 10. Respondents' perceptions on the secure future the job provides



5.1.10 Job security

The results on Figure 10 shows that, in Swaziland, the police profession have a secure future. 61 percent agreed that their job provides for a secure future against 18 percent who disagreed that their job provides for a secure future. Only 21 percent neither

agreed nor disagreed. This is reinforced by De Bruyn, Letsholo, Marota, Van de Linde and Roothman, (2007:306) that employees, including police officers, cannot render their best performance unless they feel secure.

5.2 Qualitative Analysis

5.2.1 Working conditions

This was taken from the focus group quotes;

“The physical working conditions are not good we are exposed to danger and we live on a sharing basis regardless of having a long service but as long as you occupy a junior rank you will share until you reach retirement at the age of 60 years”;

The senior officers interviewed as they are not sharing accommodation expressed that working conditions *“are fine except that there are some structures which are old but the working conditions are fine we receive free water and only pay electricity bills.”* A retired senior officer had this to say about working conditions *“It was good. Only to understand the culture of the organisation”;* and

In conclusion, the focus group was in agreement that the physical working conditions are good and there is room for improvement. They concluded that police officers are better taken care off as compared to other government departments.

5.2.2 Work relationship

Regarding interpersonal relationship at work, most respondents alluded to fact that the RSPS is a disciplined organisation where respect is not negotiable and they ensured that they maintain good interpersonal relationship at work. The focus group stated that although communication channels are slightly improving in the RSPS but there is still fear of victimization for voicing a personal opinion. In conclusion, a majority of the police officers maintain good interpersonal relationship and they do not have the opportunity to voice their opinions without fear of victimization.

5.2.3 Leadership

The respondents stated that they are not given delegated authority in their work and their supervisors lack good leadership skills. In conclusion, most police officers stated that they are given delegated authority in their work after their abilities are taken into consideration.

5.2.4 Salary benefits

A retired senior officer summed up the issue of salary and allowances by saying that *“It was good as long as you climbed the ladder or ranks”*. In conclusion, the respondents stated that salaries are not equal to the effort they put into the job and the allowances are very low.

5.2.5 Recognition

It is indeed beyond doubt that police officers in Swaziland receive recognition from supervisors for a job well done. The police officers in Swaziland are not adequately recognised for their services.

5.2.6 Advancement

However, the focus group agreed that *“despite the wide hierarchy in the RSPS there is a growing trend in the RSPS of recruiting university graduates who then receive instant promotions in favour of long serving and dedicated officers who possess the same qualifications with them and there is no clear promotion policy”*. They respondents felt that promotions are not based on ability. The focus group mentioned that there is no clear promotion policy in the RSPS.

5.2.7 Achievement

The respondents felt that they are given respect by their colleagues and by the community since they became police officers. They are proud being in the RSPS as the focus group clarified that being a police officer is a calling and a pride to protect the nation.

5.2.8 The job

The respondents all agreed that the demands of the police job are too much such that they do not have enough rest or sleep and they also work during public holidays. The job has clear achievable goals and standards. They agreed that there is clear description of what is expected from them. They are concerned about lack of adequate safety and security measures to protect them.

5.2.9 Responsibility

The respondents agreed that there is monitoring of their responsibilities to ensure that they do their work very well. The interviewees stated that appraisals *“are rare as are done once a year not unless you are on the wrong side of the law that’s when you are called”*. Police responsibilities are closely monitored. The respondents agreed that each employee is responsible for planning his or her work.

5.2.10 Job security

Most of the respondents agreed that the police profession has job security as it is permanent and pensionable. There are no chances of retrenchments as more police officers are needed to reduce the crime rate in Swaziland.

6 Conclusion

The study has met its primary objectives in examining the factors that influence job satisfaction in the RSPS. In terms of the results, it is clear that the RSPS needs to prioritize or enhance these factors at the workplace so that employees can be satisfied. What organizations and managers can do is provide the environment, support and resources that impact on the motivation of individuals (Hollyforde and Whiddett 2005:7). This can be in the form of providing the rewards, working conditions, systems and processes, learning opportunities, encouragement, and so on, that maximize the chances that employees will be satisfied and give their best to the organization. This statement is supported by the finding that 91 percent of the respondents are willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond what is normally expected in order to make the RSPS successful. Being a police officer is a calling more than being a profession as despite the current challenges faced by many police officers in RSPS but they are still willing to put more effort to make the RSPS successful other than to change camps or jobs.

The study achieved was able to unearth the factors that affect job satisfaction in the RSPS. The factors are: poor allowances and salaries, sharing of accommodation, lack of prompt feedback, fear of victimization after voicing a personal opinion, lack of a promotion policy or biasness in promotions, inadequate safety and security measures and unfair treatment. The RSPS should consider to urgently address these factors as they have an impact in the performance of police officers. This will ensure that the RSPS is on the right path towards being a successful partner in achieving the nation's vision of 'first world status' by year 2022. The RSPS needs a paradigm shift that will make sure that they begin to meet the set government performance targets regarding crime reduction. Much attention must be paid on the results of the study to resolve the under – performance and dissatisfaction of police officers in the RSPS.

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