

The Sociological Reality of Continuous Training in Algerian Hospital Institutions: A Field Study

Khemis BOUKHEDIR

Mohamed Cherif Messaadia University, Souk Ahras, Algeria

Email: kboukhedir@yahoo.fr

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Abstract

The objective of this study is to empirically investigate the transformative effects of continuous training on para-medical professionals in Algerian hospital institutions. This research identifies that continuous training significantly enhances the scientific knowledge of these professionals within their specific fields. It also promotes the adoption of various technological tools, encourages the application of diverse methodologies in their practice, and nurtures social interactions with different stakeholders within the institutional framework. This multifaceted development leads to heightened disciplinary standards.

Keywords: Sociological Reality, Continuous Training, Hospital Institution.

Introduction

In contemporary times, nations globally, both developed and developing, have revisited their workforce management policies across different organizational and institutional sectors, emphasizing the strategic value of the workforce as a cornerstone of competitive advantage. These policy shifts have fundamentally reshaped the capabilities of individuals within economic, service, and social sectors. Such transformations are facilitated by continuous training, which enables individuals to acquire and refine skills, knowledge, and behaviors essential for optimal performance.

Continuous training occupies a pivotal role in both traditional and modern human resource management paradigms. Recognizing its criticality, managers of diverse organizations and social institutions have prioritized continuous training as a strategic tool to tackle various challenges, particularly those related to human resource development. Investments in continuous training are demonstrated to yield significant increases in productivity.

On a personal level, the importance of continuous training extends to the enhancement of professional knowledge and skills, which consequently elevates motivation and the capacity to perform effectively. Moreover, continuous training serves as a mechanism to bolster the

current and future competencies of employees, aligning them with the demands of specific job performances and facilitating ongoing development and technological adaptability. Therefore, this research is structured according to the following plan:

Introduction

1. Research Problem
2. Study Importance
3. Study Objectives
4. Research Areas
5. Data Collection Tools
6. Study Sample
7. Research Methodology
8. Statistical Methods for Data Analysis
9. Research Results
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1. Research Problem

The sweeping technological advancements that have marked the global landscape have catalyzed progress in some societies while compelling others to reassess their human resource strategies, both pre and post-employment, across all sectors. This recalibration underscores the pivotal role of human resources as a critical competitive factor on both domestic and international stages. Consequently, societies, through their institutions, have pursued the development of human resources, a goal that is attainable only through an all-encompassing and indispensable process—continuous training.

In alignment with global trends, Algerian society also mandates continuous training for human resources across various institutions to keep pace with worldwide developments. Since gaining independence, Algeria has endeavored to bolster its human resource capabilities by establishing schools, training centers, and universities, often with support from Arab nations like Egypt and Iraq, and allies such as Russia.

Despite these extensive efforts, the objectives of these initiatives remained partially unfulfilled until the 1990s. Since then, the approach to continuous training has evolved, now aligning with the demands of a market-driven economy and globalization, aiming to enhance the competencies of individuals within institutions. However, invariably, such initiatives are

accompanied by challenges, including shortcomings and adverse practices stemming from the misalignment of continuous training processes with employment structures.

These challenges have manifested in several institutional problems, such as the inability to meet the diverse human resource needs across all sectors, unequal skill distribution, and consequently, a weakening of societal frameworks through diminished economic and social returns from Algerian institutions, decreased productivity, and deteriorated services. This reality has made it imperative for these institutions to adopt a robust policy of continuous training.

Ibn Rochd Hospital in Annaba exemplifies the application of continuous training within Algerian institutions. Among those subjected to ongoing training processes are the para-medical professionals at this hospital. This research aims to uncover the sociological impacts of continuous training on these professionals, specifically in terms of enhancing their scientific knowledge, developing social relationships, increasing institutional discipline, and reducing absenteeism, accidents, and turnover rates.

Consequently, the central research question emerges: **What is the sociological reality of the continuous training experienced by the para-medical professionals at this Algerian hospital institution?**

This inquiry leads to several sub-questions:

- Does the continuous training undergone by para-medical professionals lead to the development of their scientific knowledge within their fields of specialization?
- Does continuous training foster social relationships among para-medical professionals with various actors within the hospital environment?
- Does continuous training contribute to increasing discipline and reducing rates of absenteeism, accidents, and labor turnover among para-medical professionals?

2. Research Importance

The significance of this study emerges from several scientific and practical data points, which can be summarized as follows:

- Continuous training represents a fertile sociological knowledge space from which most analyses, interpretations, and theoretical approaches begin and conclude.
- The scientific study of continuous training is a descriptive research field par excellence due to its utmost importance, necessitating scientific spotlighting to unveil it from an epistemological perspective.
- This research offers some theoretical data to various institutions, organizations, and particularly researchers in this knowledge field.

3. Research Objectives

The overall aim of this field study is to determine the following objectives:

- To explore the changes that occur to para-medical professionals in their scientific acquisitions within their area of specialization.
- To develop the social relationships of para-medical professionals with various social actors within their work environment.
- To enhance discipline within the hospital institution after para-medical professionals undergo continuous training.
- To understand the continuous training process undergone by para-medical professionals.

4. Research Areas

4.1 Temporal Scope

The temporal scope refers to the period taken by the researcher to collect data for the field study, which lasted approximately two months, from July 2024 to August 2024.

The temporal scope of this research can be divided into several stages from the beginning of its design in August 2016 to its final form in early August 2018, as follows:

- **First Stage:** Developing a conceptual plan for the research topic beginning July 2024.
- **Second Stage:** Writing the theoretical aspect of the research from the beginning to mid-July 2024.
- **Third Stage:** Initiated by a reconnaissance visit to Ibn Rochd University Hospital in Annaba, meeting para-medical professionals of both genders in the second half of July 2024.
- **Fourth Stage:** Began with the distribution of the research questionnaire to the sample and its collection by the end of July 2024.
- **Fifth Stage:** Involved data entry, statistical processing, formulating general results, and finalizing the research by the first half of August 2024.

4.2 Spatial Scope

The spatial scope of this study is the Ibn Rochd Hospital, part of the Annaba Hospital Center, established under decree 86/300 in December 1986 and later canceled by decree 97 – 467 dated 22/12/1997, which set the laws for the establishment and organization of the hospital.

The hospital is located in Annaba, a city that spans 249 km², bordered by the Mediterranean Sea to the north, the municipality of El Bouni to the east and south, and Seraidi municipality to the west, with a population of 464,740 (2017 Census).

4.3 Human Scope

- The human scope comprises the statistical community of 535 individuals who work at Ibn Rochd Hospital in Annaba as para-medical professionals.

5. Data Collection Tools

This research adopts a descriptive approach, aimed at delineating and scrutinizing the characteristics of a specific phenomenon (Al-Kassas, p. 56). To this end, the researcher is tasked with accurately selecting empirical methods for data collection (Badr, 2011, p. 36), which constitute the fundamental tools of the study.

Typically, research methodologies encompass various data collection tools such as observation, surveys, interviews, and content analysis (Lotfi, 2010, p. 163). In this investigation, the researcher has utilized two primary tools for data collection:

5.1 Observation:

Observation serves as a cornerstone method in sociological research, indispensable for gathering data directly from the field. It offers crucial insights into the behaviors and interactions relevant to the studied phenomenon. Observation methods vary, including simple and structured approaches.

For this study, the researcher employed simple observation, capitalizing on visits to the hospital institution to monitor interactions between para-medical professionals and other social actors within the institutional context.

5.2 Survey Questionnaire:

The survey questionnaire stands as the primary data collection instrument in this study, crafted to align with the research objectives. Defined as "a series of preformulated questions dispatched via mail or distributed directly to selected respondents for recording their responses, which are subsequently returned" (Chafik, 2001, p. 115), this tool is chosen for its efficacy in capturing the experiences and perspectives of respondents concerning specific subjects. The design of the questionnaire encompasses five main axes, delineated as follows:

- **First Axis:** Captures basic data about the study sample, including gender, age, marital status, practiced specialty, and professional experience.
- **Second Axis:** Focuses on continuous training measures, comprising seven questions (from 6 to 12).
- **Third Axis:** Titled "Scientific Acquisitions from the Training Process," this section includes seven questions (from 13 to 19) and gathers data relevant to the first research question.

- **Fourth Axis:** Pertains to the second research question, titled "Social Relationships with Social Actors within the Hospital Institution," and contains six questions (from 20 to 25).
- **Fifth Axis:** Concerns the third research question, titled "Discipline within the Hospital Institution," and incorporates twelve questions (from 26 to 30).

The development of the questionnaire progressed through several stages, beginning with its design in early July 2024 and culminating in the collection of responses at the month's end, followed by the processing of the gathered data.

6. Research Sample:

The research sample represents a pivotal tool for data collection, prized for its efficiency in terms of speed, cost-effectiveness, and the depth of meticulous analysis it permits (Chafik, 2001, p. 115). It is defined as "a segment of the clan or community consistently observed in studies and research" (Wasfi, 2003, p. 141) and further conceptualized as "a subset of elements from a specific research community."

The sampling methods, described as "a series of operations that enable the selection of a subset from a research community to form a sample" (Angers, 2006, p. 301), involve several critical steps:

1. Define the sample unit: Para-medical professionals working at Ibn Rochd Hospital in Annaba.
2. Define the frame from which the sample is drawn, which is the category of para-medicals.
3. Determine the size of the sample, which in this study consists of 107 individuals, divided equally into 53 males and 54 females.
4. Determine the method of selecting the sample.

The target sample in this study comprises para-medical professionals at Ibn Rochd Hospital, selected for their continuous and direct interactions with various social actors and because they constitute the largest human resource pool across hospital institutions in Annaba Province.

Given the impracticality of encompassing the entire statistical community of 535 individuals in the study, the researcher employed a random sampling technique, selecting approximately 20% of the statistical community. This approach adheres to the established rule:

$$n = N * \frac{20}{100}$$

$$n = 535 * \frac{20}{100} = 107$$

The selected sample is characterized by certain social features, which include:

6.1 Gender Distribution of the Sample

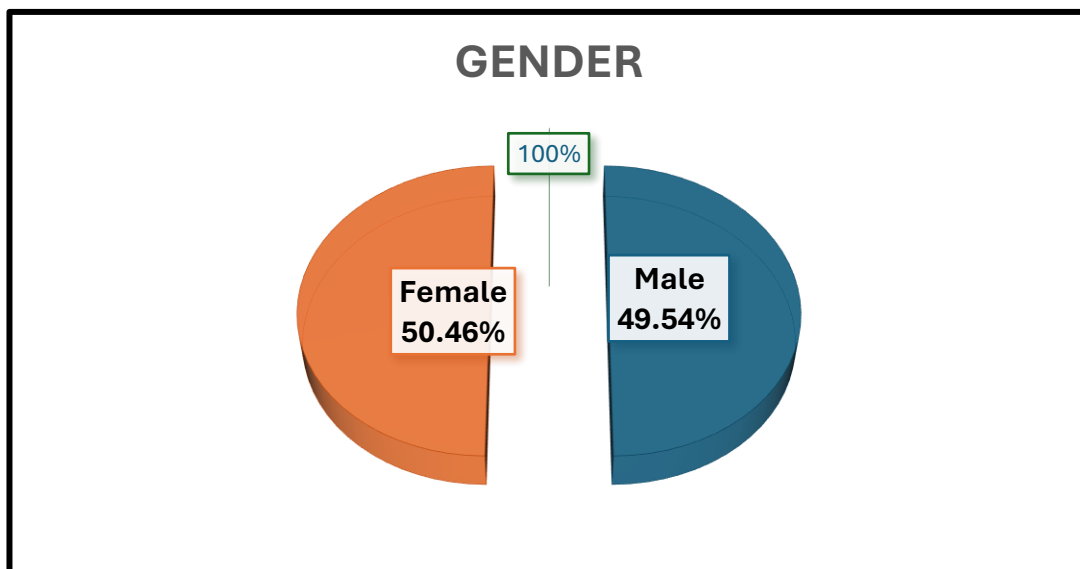
The following table illustrates the gender distribution of the researched sample:

Table No. (01) - Distribution of Sample Members by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	53	49.54
Female	54	50.46
Total	107	100.00

The statistical results in the above table indicate that the sample is nearly evenly distributed between males at 49.54% and females at 50.46%. The slight majority of females reflects the prevalence of females in the para-medical profession, which has increasingly attracted women in recent years due to the profession providing a more direct route into the workforce following satisfactory results in their baccalaureate exams, the primary qualification for training in these specialties.

Figure No. (01) - Illustration of Sample Gender Distribution



6.2 Age Distribution of the Sample

The following table provides the age distribution of the sample:

Table No. (02) - Distribution of Sample Members by Age

Age Range	Frequency	Percentage (%)
20 to under 30 years	22	20.56
30 to under 40 years	27	25.23
40 to under 50 years	40	37.38
50 to under 60 years	18	16.82
Total	107	100.00

The statistical data presented in Table (02) delineates the age distribution of the sample under study. The age range from 40 to less than 50 years is the most represented, with a frequency of 40 occurrences, constituting 37.38% of the sample.

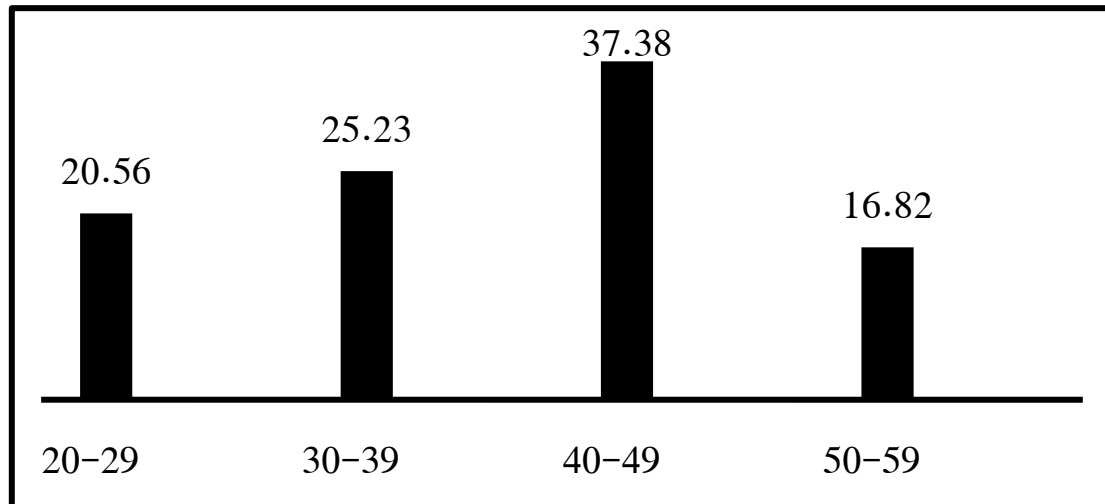
This life stage marks a transition from post-youth to manhood, a period characterized by increased maturity and stability. Researchers find that participants in this age bracket tend to provide more reliable and nuanced insights relevant to the study topics due to their matured perspectives.

The subsequent age group, ranging from 30 to less than 40 years, is noted 27 times, accounting for 25.23% of the sample. This phase is significant as individuals achieve greater emotional, financial, and spiritual stability. It is a period marked by key life events such as marriage, which often encourages a shift away from impulsive behaviors towards more stable, committed life choices. This maturity frequently translates into increased workplace commitment and institutional stability.

The third-ranking age group, from 20 to less than 30 years, appears 22 times, making up 20.56% of the sample. Individuals in this category are typically entering the workforce, seeking financial and emotional grounding, and starting to develop a sense of organizational loyalty, though to a lesser extent compared to older age groups.

Finally, the age group from 50 to less than 60 years is represented by 18 instances, comprising 16.82% of the sample. Many of these older employees are nearing retirement, influenced by a recent retirement law that allows retention in hospital institutions until the age of 60, provided they have completed 32 years of actual service.

Figure No. (02) - Illustration of Sample Age Distribution



6.3 Marital Status of the Sample

Regarding marital status, the subsequent table clarifies the marital status of the sample.

Table No. (03) - Distribution of Sample Members by Marital Status

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Single	37	34.57
Married	45	42.05
Divorced	20	18.69
Widowed	5	4.67
Total	107	100.00

The statistical data in Table (03) suggest that the marital situation of the study sample is relatively stable, with the number of married individuals standing at 45, representing the largest fraction at 42.05%. Meanwhile, the number of single individuals is 37, accounting for 34.57%, whereas the count of divorced members does not exceed 20, at 18.69%. Widows and widowers rank fourth with only 5 individuals, making up 4.67%.

6.4 Practiced Professions

As for the practiced profession: the following table elucidates the professions engaged by the study sample.

Table No. (04) - Distribution of Sample Members by Practiced Profession

Practiced Profession	Frequency	Percentage (%)
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Nursing	28	26.16
Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)	24	22.42
Biological Bacteriology Laboratory	18	16.82
Anesthesiology	22	20.56
Obstetrics	15	14.01
Total	107	100.0

Statistical indicators in Table (04) show that the members of the researched sample are distributed with varying frequencies and percentages by practiced profession. The number of instances in the nursing profession within this hospital institution is 28, representing 26.16%, while those practicing in magnetic resonance imaging are 24, making up 22.42%.

The frequency of individuals practicing anesthesiology is 22, accounting for 20.56%, and biological germ laboratory practitioners number 18, representing 16.82%. In the last rank, with 15 instances and 14.01%, are those practicing in obstetrics, which reflects the necessity of sampling individuals from various strata without discrimination or bias to represent the community adequately.

6.5 Professional Experience

The following table outlines the professional experience of the studied sample.

Table No. (05) - Distribution of Sample Members by Professional Experience

Professional Experience	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Less than 5 years	8	7.47
5 to under 10 years	14	13.08
10 to under 15 years	22	20.56
15 to under 20 years	28	26.16
20 years and more	35	32.71
Total	107	100.0

The data outlined in Table No. (05) reveals that the majority of the sample members, amounting to 35 individuals or 32.71% of the total, possess professional experience extending 20 years or more.

Subsequently, those with 15 to under 20 years of experience constitute 26.16% of the sample, making them the second-largest group. Individuals with a tenure of 10 to under 15 years represent the third largest group, accounting for 20.56% of the sample. Those accumulating 5 to under 10 years of experience comprise 13.08%, while the group with the least experience, having less than 5 years, makes up only 7.47% of the sample.

7. Research Methodology

The term 'methodology' refers to the comprehensive framework, procedures, and steps that a researcher employs to examine a specific research problem (Gharbi, 2009, p.73). It is eloquently defined as "the art of organizing a series of ideas properly, either to uncover the truth when we are ignorant of it, or to demonstrate it to others when it is known" (Al-Duailij, 2010, p.70).

Scientific research encompasses various methodological designs, each chosen based on its suitability to the research problem, its significance, and the intended objectives. Given the sociological focus of this study, particularly concerning the outcomes of training that educators undergo at an Algerian educational institution, the descriptive methodology is deemed most appropriate.

Widely employed in humanities and social science research, particularly in studies aiming to establish general norms among a group, the descriptive methodology is instrumental for its capacity to provide a precise, qualitative, or quantitative depiction of the phenomenon under investigation.

Ali Gharbi, in his seminal work "Fundamentals of Methodology in Writing University Dissertations," describes it as "a style of analysis reliant on adequate and exact information about a specific phenomenon or topic over a known period, aimed at deriving scientific results and interpreting them objectively in a manner that correlates with the actual data of the phenomenon" (Gharbi, 2009, p.83).

8. Statistical Methods for Data Analysis

Data acquired via the questionnaire were meticulously processed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. This tool facilitated the tabulation, sorting, and comprehensive analysis of the data. The statistical techniques employed include:

8.1 Frequencies and Percentages: This method was utilized to delineate the characteristics and opinions of the study community regarding various variables.

8.2 Chi-square (χ^2) Test: This statistical test was applied to determine the significance of the relationships between different variables within the study.

9. Research Results

The analysis of the statistical data gathered from the field, incorporating quantitative, qualitative, and structural techniques within the context of the theoretical heritage, yielded the following key findings:

9.1 Personal Data of the Sample:

The demographic breakdown of the sample is nearly evenly divided between genders, with 49.54% males and 50.46% females, predominantly aged 40 to under 50 years. In terms of family status, 42.05% are married. From a professional standpoint, the majority are nurses, most of whom have accrued over 20 years of experience.

9.2 Continuous Training Metrics:

Participants received their training at a specialized institute for paramedical training and benefited from ongoing training during the academic season. The overall value of this training was rated as moderately acceptable, with its practical application effectiveness assessed at 80.33%. A significant portion of the sample, 44.50%, identified the primary objective of the training as facilitating future promotions to higher positions.

9.3 Scientific Acquisitions from Continuous Training:

A consistent 35.48% of the sample expressed a continuous need for further scientific knowledge within their specializations, suggesting that ongoing training nurtures this demand. A substantial 89.71% have mastered modern techniques through their training, with usage increasing across all categories and specialties, underscoring the pervasive impact of continuous education.

Language proficiency studies reveal that 87.96% of the sample receives instruction in French, reflecting the predominant language of instruction in Algerian semi-medical institutes, with a few subjects taught in English and Arabic.

Notably, mastery of English has improved, with non-proficiency rates decreasing from 25.77% to 15.52%, indicating that continuous training contributes significantly to language skill enhancement. Proficiency in English, reported by 79.39% of the sample, is primarily motivated by the necessity to keep pace with globalization. A robust 88.13% of respondents attribute their ability to stay current in their field to ongoing training.

9.4 Social Relations with Social Actors within the Hospital Institution

The relationships fostered by the sample with various stakeholders within the hospital reflect the impact of continuous training. The interaction with patients is marked by compassion and tenderness, a sentiment echoed by 95.81% of the sample in their dealings with colleagues, where respect and cooperation prevail. This high level of interpersonal dynamics is attributed to the continuous training received by the para-medical professionals.

Further, 84.85% of the sample describe their relationship with the hospital institution's management as professional, underscoring the role of continuous training in enhancing these

professional interactions. The relationship with department heads is deemed acceptable by 67.24% of the sample. Issues with patients and their companions occur at a rate of 55.73%, but are managed flexibly, a skill developed through the continuous training that aims to reduce conflict and enhance problem-solving capabilities.

Initiative taking is another significant outcome of continuous training, with 87.77% of the sample engaging proactively in essential hospital operations when necessary, demonstrating the training's effectiveness in encouraging proactive behavior. Additionally, 73.86% of the sample is involved in union activities, advocating for their professional interests, further indicating the depth of professional engagement fostered by continuous training.

9.5 Discipline within the Hospital Institution

Discipline within the hospital context is another area where continuous training has a measurable impact. While 98.98% of the sample occasionally misses teaching sessions, the actual absence in the past six months is minimal, reported at 87.22%, with the majority experiencing fewer than six absences. This indicates that continuous training effectively minimizes absences, fostering a commitment not to disrupt the work environment or patient care.

The adherence to internal seminars is remarkably high, with a participation rate of 98.97%. The sample follows department heads' instructions with a strong sense of responsibility, reported at 87.17%, a behavior directly linked to the principles instilled through continuous training. Compliance with the hospital management's directives is observed at 58.88%, reflecting a commitment to professional responsibilities fostered by training.

Participation in meetings and the ability to propose suitable solutions to arising challenges are reported at 66.33%, showcasing the effectiveness of continuous training in equipping staff with the necessary skills for active engagement and problem-solving within their professional environment.

Finally, overall discipline is maintained at a high level, with 95.38% of the sample consistently demonstrating disciplined behavior, rated on average at 92.56%. This consistent discipline across the board is a direct result of the continuous training provided to the semi-medical staff.

10. Discussion of Research Results

The researcher's presentation, titled "The Sociological Reality of Continuous Training in the Algerian Hospital Institution - A Field Study," concludes that:

- Continuous training is instrumental in fostering the development of scientific knowledge among semi-medical staff within their fields of specialization.
- Continuous training significantly bolsters social relationships with various social actors within the hospital setting (Tawfik, 2007, p. 198).

- Continuous training plays a crucial role in enhancing discipline and reducing rates of absenteeism, accidents, and staff turnover (Jad al-Rab, 2009, p. 338).

Through research and fact-finding in studying this sociological phenomenon, which consists of continuous training within the hospital institution, the researcher has gained several insights that should be considered by those managing such institutions in Algeria and recommends the following for future sociological research and studies related to this topic:

- Promote semi-medical staff to higher levels within their workplace, making continuous training a motivation for them and others.
- Employment of semi-medical staff should be based on essential criteria such as competence and ethics, and not on nepotism or favoritism, to avoid professional mistakes and potential assaults by patrons of the hospital institution.
- Semi-medical staff should begin their training at an appropriate time (Al-Amiri, 2008, p. 97).
- Trainers should be dedicated to training to achieve the desired objectives of continuous training, ensuring seriousness in continuous training rather than training for the sake of training.
- Consider the proposals of the trainees and implement them immediately.
- Provide incentives in continuous training, such that its methods are practical and not merely lecture-based, which could lead to trainee boredom and subsequent absenteeism, thus failing to achieve the desired objectives of continuous training.
- Newly appointed semi-medical staff should be placed under the supervision of their experienced colleagues for technical guidance through close association.
- Involve experienced semi-medical staff in developing continuous training programs according to the set and desired objectives of the training process.
- Exempt semi-medical staff from work in their final year before retirement, allowing them to dedicate their time to guiding and training new colleagues within their hospital institution.

Conclusion:

Ultimately, the practical presentation of the research titled "The Sociological Reality of Continuous Training in Algerian Hospital Institutions: A Field Study" has led the researcher to a definitive conclusion: continuous training for semi-medical staff is profoundly impactful. This training significantly bolsters their scientific knowledge within their specialized fields, enhances their grasp of scientific concepts, and facilitates the adoption of modern technology in their professional practices.

Moreover, continuous training nurtures and enhances social relationships within the hospital environment, spanning interactions with patrons, colleagues, department heads, administrative officials, and administrative staff. It cultivates a culture of initiative, encouraging participation in community activities and union involvement, thereby enriching the workplace environment.

Furthermore, continuous training is instrumental in improving overall discipline among semi-medical staff. It effectively reduces absenteeism and job turnover, increases adherence to supervisors' instructions, and promotes proactive engagement within the workplace. Additionally, it encourages meaningful participation in various councils, contributing to a more cohesive and responsive organizational structure.

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