



HRM ISSUES AND CHALLENGES IN HOSPITALS

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ABSTRACT Human Resource is the most decisive resources of the organization among other resources, one that makes a difference in an organization's performance. If the management wants their employees to work with dedication and commitment, then they have to an effective Human Resource Management system in practice. The best HR practice is vital for retaining effective professionals in Hospitals. Health care is now an upcoming field, and is very competitive, where experienced professional are rare to be hired. Given the recruitment and retention reality of health workers in the twenty-first century, the role of HR in hospitals should not be underestimated. Nowadays modern hospitals, which are providing latest medical facilities, are employing hundreds of employees, including medical, paramedical and support staff. The success of the hospital depends upon the how many specialist doctors are there. Managing this vast human resource working in these hospitals is not a major challenge, but sustaining them is the focus, which requires a vision of the management. Here the HR Management comes into the role, where it has to function by adopting some unique characteristics. The core is to provide efficient and effective medical services and to achieve patient satisfaction. This is the success mantra, through which hospital can survive; otherwise, in this cutthroat competition in the service sector, it will be difficult to reap the profits for long.

KEYWORDS : Human Resources Management, Health Care Sector, Strategic Planning, Medical Tourism,

INTRODUCTION:

Most of authors and researchers have discussed the importance of Human Resource in an organization. The HR is far too vital, when we are dealing in healthcare services, as employees i.e. medical, paramedical, and support staff is dealing with patients (Yu, 2007; Michael, 2009; Patrick, 2011). It has been found that the incentive plans provide motivation to workers, if there is proper system of bonus followed, which is competency based will definitely improve the performance of employees working in hospitals (McKinnies, 2011) and can make a significant difference between health organization with good performance and health organization underperformers or below average (Edgar and Geare, 2005). Human Resource Management (HRM) is an important part of managing any organization, particularly in the field of healthcare and other service sectors, where the customers are facing challenges because of staff's poor performance (Howard et al., 2006). Only the best human resource that is hired plays an active role in the success of the health sector, and it also saves lives. HRM of the hospital is concerned with the development of both employee and the organization in which they operate. The scope of HRM is not limited or cannot be bounded in an area. The scope is much larger where Human Resource Management secures and develops the talents of workers i.e. medical, paramedical, and support staff. It also implements programs that augment communication and cooperation between employees and departments in order to nurture hospital development.

The responsibility of the HR Manager includes recruitment, training, job analysis and staffing, organizing and utilizing of work force in an optimum manner, timely appraisal of work force, implementation of reward systems, development of wage / salary administration, settlement of industrial disputes, etc. At present, there is lack of studies on HR issues in healthcare sectors, and sometimes the management does not give heed to HRM, this could affect the development strategy in the healthcare sector. Without proper studies, it may lead to weakening of the overall performance of hospitals. Therefore, this study will attempt to analyze the role of HRM in the health sector and attempt to find the solutions to develop healthcare sector concerning to HRM. As in other service industries, here in healthcare sector the interaction between patients and doctors is an integral part of the process (Conway & Willcocks 1997, Benbassat & Taragin 1998). Those organizations, who are dealing in the healthcare should take into consideration, that patient's satisfaction and quality healthcare services, is the only method through which one can achieve high quality (White 1999). One has to prove to patient's needs and expectations. Another issue that is likely to challenge the hospital management is the central role played by employees in achievement of service quality. White (1995) in his research reported that HR Managers and employees should increase cooperation in order to provide quality care. In quest of this, management might seek to execute progressive HRM practices that encourage service oriented behavior and show concern for employee's organizational and personal needs.

Rather than being restricted to the traditional approach, in recent times, the HR is practiced and is being used as a tool for meeting the

objectives of the organization (Negi 2013). HRM is the process of bringing employees and institution together so that the mutual goals of each are met (Rao 2005). According to Niles (2013) the important role that human resource management play in the operations of a healthcare organization. Throughout the world, it has been accepted and proved that HR is the backbone in any organization. The success and the failure of any organization depend upon the HR, regardless of the industry. The role of HRM in hospitals is different, as compared to other industries or sectors, as functions in the health care include legal and ethical issues of the treatment, health, and safety of patients. Strategic planning includes HR budget due to increased diversity of the patients and employees, use of latest technologies, medical tourism, and the increased focus on accountability in the delivery of services, which ultimately will improve patient care.

Salah Mahmoud Diab (2012) in his study found an increase rate to quit job among doctors and nurses working in hospitals, and the low degree of satisfaction and low desire among the staff to continue working in the hospital, and this giving impact to the low quality of health services provided to patients. The significant recommendations in the study are to improve the conditions of employees working in the hospital, to generate their desire to work. Provide adequate trainings, as it will keep them update. These are some of the dimensions to uplift the quality of service, and will help to deepen the relations between the staff and the management of hospital to achieve the quality at the best degree. Al Kudhat Mohammed (2004), in his study found that existence of a positive relationship between the personality traits and technology employed in the hospital. The study exposed the existence of the impact of high technology in the analysis and design work and job classification and the nature of the work. Ozcan and Hornby (2005) found that one of the reasons for poor performance of employees in government hospitals in Turkey was mainly due to lack of interest by the HR Managers and higher authorities to provide better conditions to hospital's staff and develop incentive system. The study strongly recommended adopting incentive based system for staff and nurses who perform good work. In addition to this, each month a group of employees / team should be selected as a role model for other employees working in the hospital and pay them special bonuses to encourage other staff who have not been selected. The study emphasized that by adopting this system will improve the performance of employees in the hospital dramatically. Valverde and Ryan (2006) in their research work emphasized that HRM is not having the sole responsibility, but also of other agents inside and outside the organization, such as top and line managers, and external service providers. The paper highlighted how organizations nowadays distribute HRM activities and responsibilities among external service providers. The finding of this study shows that the model of HR function adopted by an organization may not be contextually determined, but instead it is a matter of corporate choice.

Training is the basis for human resource development, several problems have emerged in the area of training over the past few years. Basic medical education has a heavy focus on urban curative care and

is provided in tertiary care settings. There is hardly any system of induction training for medical officers of the primary health centers when they join the government health system. Furthermore, the medical officers do not have any management training even though they are supposed to manage the staff under them. Training for interpersonal communication, doctor-patient and doctor-staff interactions, and counseling is also not provided to the health workers. If such training programmes are provided then it will help to bridge the gap between the doctor and the patient. The Independent Commission on Health in India observed that the standard of teaching in training schools for auxiliary nurse-midwives was very low and that "the main reasons for substandard patient and community care are: substandard training, especially in the staff-nurse, midwife, and auxiliary nurse-midwife training courses, the lack of a proper system of training; and absence of regular reorientation courses."

In order to improve the HR issues and challenges faced by HR and the Hospitals, there are some suggestions, through which one can improve the results. Identification and programming of the human resource includes identification, data collection, and analysis. After the determination of the overall human resource is done, then the availability, composition, structure, and distribution of human resources is taken care of. Comparison with a particular pattern or standard to identify gaps and needs which can be determined using the best available methods, based on the characteristics of the health services system and the possibility of obtaining information. Preparation of a plan to procure the most appropriate human resources to meet the identified needs. Staffing ensures that the health system obtains a sufficient supply of human resources in all the necessary occupational categories to meet its objectives, as budgetary resources permit. Through the application of performance management, one can optimize the productivity and quality of human resource in the health services. To reap the best results, HR should give importance to labor relations and priority to personnel administration. This will ensure proper management of work contracts, remuneration, incentive systems. It will enable staff participation in key decisions / enhance participative management that affect the performance, which will result to benefit to the population / patients.

Timely development and training will make sure that all human resources that are involved in healthcare system are properly qualified, updated, and motivated. Respective employees will increase their competencies, instructional design, etc. in most effective manner. If the HR and the hospital management work on the above points, they will get an assurance of safety, and the work environment. This will bring proper environment / conditions, to counteract the potentially negative impact of the nature of health of the staff. This will help to reduce the risks and will create preventive interventions that emphasize occupational safety and health promotion for the employer and employee alike.

Conclusion: In the healthcare system, there are no concrete rewards system being followed in terms of productivity, except promotions and salary increments. In the government hospitals all promotions and increments are linked to seniority in the system. For many posts, promotions are the method through which it is filled. Tenure of service is the criteria and not the merit. The current system of annual confidential reports does not reflect performance. Postings and transfers are also not based on performance but on "government's wish", for which there is a lot of scope for political and administrative contacts to be used. The staffs that stay at their place of posting and provide 24-hour service get the same salary as the staff that is absent / available for only three to four hours a day. The study encounters the challenges in relation to HRM. These challenges are lack of staff satisfaction, lack of commitment and initiation, poor working condition, under staffing, and conflict among staff members are the main challenges faced by hospital. To bring the hospital and healthcare system in proper tracks and be efficient one has to take stringent actions and implement holistic development through proper HR policies as most of the literatures show the importance of HRM to achieve the goals of health organizations, and emphasize to develop the performance of hospital staff and nurses through periodic training. The proper practice of HRM is very important in healthcare sector; the senior management in hospitals should have a clear strategic direction and objectives in order to face challenges.

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