



Educational needs assessment of managers working in teaching and private hospitals

VAHID KESHTKAR^{1*}, NAHID HATAM², EHSANOLAH NIIKAEIN²

¹Community medicine department, Shiraz University of Medical Sciences, Shiraz-Iran; ²School of Management and Information Sciences, Shiraz University of Medical Sciences, Shiraz-Iran

Abstract

Introduction: Hospital managers, as one of the most important health care workers, are the subject of continuous education. In some countries around the world, health management education is an important part of health reforms. The aim of present research is to perform evidence-based studies based on assessing hospital managers' needs. Therefore, it should be considered that educational need assessment regarding hospital managers is essential in today's health care management.

Methods: A total of 26 hospital managers were surveyed using a data gathering form (questionnaire) including 59 open questions designed in order to obtain data in 3 different areas. These included managers' insight towards job duties and the capabilities required to fulfill their duty along with educational needs determined by managers. The next step involved presenting standard description of job duties to hospitals managers and asking them to document their educational needs regarding capabilities required to fulfill their duties. The standard description of job duties originated from ISO 9001 certified hospitals. For each manager, a score ranging from 0 to 19 was attained. For each correct matched statement, a positive point was considered and in the case of unmatched statements, managers received no points.

Results: Out of 26 participating managers, only 20 did state the educational needs of hospitals managers. In describing job duties of hospital managers, the mean scores regarding hospital managers of public sector was 10.27 while it was 8 with private hospital managers.

Conclusion: The findings of our study indicate that hospital managers as the leaders of the most sophisticated health care facilities delivering expensive complicated services need proper training regarding job competency. Therefore, it seems that continuous need assessment in this area should be carried out.

Keywords: Health care, Hospital, Manager, Need assessment

Corresponding author:
Vahid keshtkar
Address: Community medicine department, Medical School, Zand Ave., Shiraz-Iran
Email: keshtkarv@sums.ac.ir
Tel: +98-711-2305886

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Introduction

It is imperative for almost all of the health care workers to maintain a proper state of practice knowledge along with competency (1). Although such goals could be achieved through continuous staff education, performing needs assessment of the staff in order to provide them with proper educational material is a challenge. Assessing the needs of learners is advantageous because it helps to identify the gaps between knowledge and educational needs. In addition, incorporating changes of practice and policy is achievable through continuous needs assessment (2).

Hospital managers, as one of the most important

health care workers, are the subject of continuous education. Moreover, hospitals, as one of the most complicated health care facilities, are faced with numerous challenges regarding alterations in health economy, introduction of new technologies. The challenge of providing new costly equipment in saving patients' lives remains to be dealt mostly by hospital managers. It seems that hospital managers should have adequate managerial skills in improving management structures. In some countries around the world, health management education is an important part of health reforms. The aim of the present research is to perform evidence-based studies based on assessing hospital

manager needs. Therefore, it should be considered that educational needs assessment regarding hospital managers is essential in today's health care management (3).

Implementation of educational needs assessment may serve as a potential factor in reducing costs and managing resources. Moreover, in a study of analyzing cost-utility conducted by Ross, cost-utility of educational needs assessment has been approved (4).

In another study aiming at designing an on-job training model for hospital managers, Raesi et al explored the view of 31 hospital managers towards structure of the model and its components affecting hospital managers' performance. Raesi declared that educational needs of hospital managers can go beyond their classic education. In addition, they concluded that a multidimensional approach considering knowledge, ability, managerial skills and personality is required in order to design an educational course for hospital managers (5).

The present study was, therefore, designed with the aim of assessing educational needs of Shiraz private and teaching hospital managers in order to reduce the existing gap between the managers' knowledge and skills required to fulfill their duties.

Methods

This study was designed as a cross-sectional descriptive study performed on managers of both private and teaching hospitals. The surveyed teaching hospitals were affiliated to Shiraz University of Medical Sciences. Job-analysis method was used in order to obtain data.

A data gathering form (questionnaire) including 59 open questions was designed in order to obtain data in 3 different areas. These included managers' insight towards job duties and capabilities required to fulfill their duty along with educational needs determined by managers. The questionnaire used in this study was a revised version of previously designed needs assessment data gathering forms, designed by the Ministry of Health in Iran. The questionnaire's validity was confirmed separately by the experts.

The next step involved presenting standard description of job duties to hospitals managers and asking them to document their educational needs regarding capabilities required to fulfill their duties.

The standard description of job duties originated from ISO 9001 certified hospitals.

The completed questionnaires were compared to standard descriptions of managers' job duties which included 19 items. For each manager, a score ranging from 0 to 19 was attained. For each correct matched statement, a positive point was considered and in case of unmatched statements, the managers received no points.

Results

Of the 26 surveyed hospitals, fifteen were in teaching sector while the remaining 11 were private hospitals. %92.3 of the hospital managers were men and %7.7 of them were women (Table1).

The age of hospital managers ranged from 30 to 70 with a mean of 43.53. Years of work experience ranged from 3 to 30 years regarding hospital managers with the mean of 16.53. The majority (%61.6) of Shiraz hospital managers had BSc Degree. Table 2 represents the type of educational degree of hospital managers.

Out of 26 participating managers, only 20 did state the educational needs of hospitals managers (Table 3).

In describing job duties of hospital managers, the mean scores regarding hospitals managers of teaching sector was 10.27 while it was 8 with private hospital managers (Figure 1). The mean score for all managers was 9.73. Our data showed that supervision of the quality of care was the maximum stated duties and coordination of hospital wards and coordination of staff towards external evaluation were the minimum stated duties (Figure1).

Discussion

The results of our study indicated that there is a considerable need regarding education of hospital managers as they are in charge of leading the most sophisticated health care facilities. It is perceived that managers' education should focus on skills required to satisfy job-duties. In this study, it was found that only %20 of the hospital managers mentioned the duties around coordination of hospital wards and Coordination of staff towards external evaluation programs. In addition, over %65 of the managers did not mention duties regarding budgeting, staff evaluation, and confirmation of executive procedures, Reporting chief executive hospital dean and Staff

Table 1. Distribution of hospital managers regarding gender and type of hospital

Hospital type	Teaching hospital		Private hospital		Sum	
	frequency	percent	frequency	percent	frequency	percent
Gender						
Men	14	93	10	91	24	92.3
Women	1	7	1	9	2	7.7

Table 2. Distribution of hospital managers regarding the majority of managers in teaching and private hospitals of Shiraz

Hospital type	Teaching		Private		Sum	
	percent	frequency	percent	frequency	percent	frequency
Majority						
Health management services	4	26.7	0	0	4	15.5
Management (other subspecialty)	1	6.6	4	36.4	5	19.2
^a Other majority	10	66.7	7	63.6	17	65.3
Sum	15	100	11	100	26	100

^aThe other majority consists of medicine, public health, anesthesiology, nursing, accounting, human sciences, and medical records.

education. These results are in agreement with those of Yarmohammadian's study which indicated that hospital managers did not have adequate knowledge of professional hospital management (6). Moreover, they concluded that managers' insight towards hospital management had mostly originated from their work experience. This finding further supports the idea that hospital managers in Iran need to have adequate education on their professional duties.

In another study conducted by Aminalroaya, it was declared that executive managers of Iranian universities

of medical sciences were in need of education regarding their responsibilities. Considering the findings of their experience, the priorities for educating managers included evaluation techniques and acquisition of new management techniques (7).

With regards to Figure 1, in describing managers' duties, approximately %70 of hospital managers did not mention staff evaluation. Such results agree with the findings of Aminalroaya's study, which emphasized educating managers about staff evaluation. Although in this study only %26.7 of hospital managers had a

Table 3. Description of job duties, capability and educational needs of teaching and private hospital managers in Shiraz

Job description	Required capabilities	Necessary educational titles
Budgeting	Method of budgeting	Performance budgeting
Establishment of hospital standards	Adjustment of programs with standards	Awareness and implementation of hospital standards
Supervision of quality of care	Assessment and improvement of quality of care	Instruction of total quality management
Meetings on health problems & problem solving	Formal conference meetings	Time management in meetings
Organization and drawing resources	Resource management	Optimum resource utilization
Establishment of quality management	Meetings on quality management	Quality control and management
Supervision on hospital expenditure	Financial management	Finance management
Supplying of hospital equipment and resources	Supply and Maintenance of equipment	Instruction regarding equipment supply and maintenance
Staff evaluating and personnel welfare	Skills regarding staff evaluation	Managing welfare
Supervision on CSR and nutrition department	Planning and supervision on CSR and nutrition	Management of supportive services
Managerial performance review	Organizational change	Organizational improvement
Meeting customer demands	Assessing customer preference	Instructions on customer need assessment
Auditory and internal evaluation	Skills regarding auditory and internal evaluation	Instructions on auditory and internal evaluation
Qualified staffing	Management of human resources	Methods of attraction and maintenance of human resources
Confirmation of executive procedures	Operational planning	Instruction of planning
Reporting chief executive hospital dean	Reporting	Reporting methods
Coordination of hospital wards	Coordination skills	Types of coordination
Staff education	Educational need assessment	Instruction assessment analysis
Coordination of staff towards external evaluation	Awareness of principles of external evaluation	Instructions on external evaluation

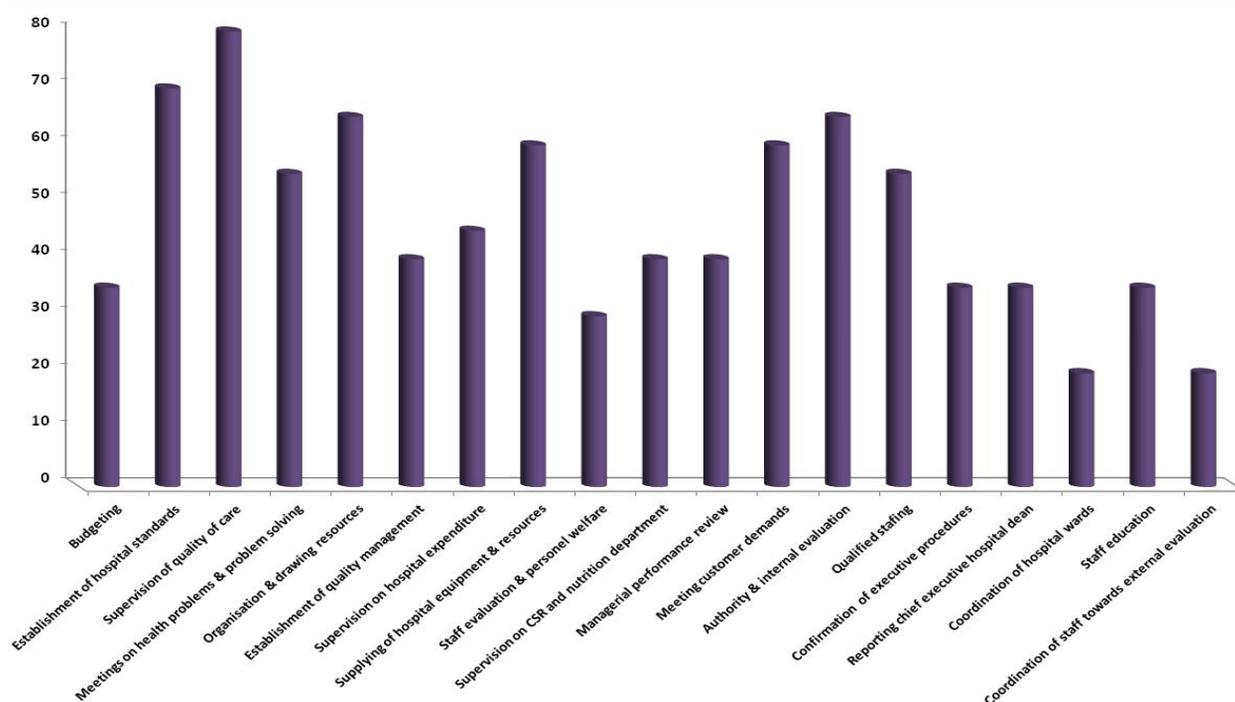


Figure1. The percentage of job duties according to the hospitals managers in Shiraz

degree in health care management, they did have adequate statements on technical duties of managers. Similar results were reported in a study conducted by Raeissi in which 31 managers of social security hospitals were surveyed. Raeissi showed that hospital managers had adequate knowledge about managerial skills. However, %74 of the surveyed managers in his study had an MS degree in health care management (5).

It is important to mention that all of the managers participating in our study pointed to their educational needs in the area of required managerial skills. Similarly, in a study of hospital managers in South Africa conducted by Pillay, %95 of the managers of governmental hospitals along with %80 of those in private sector agreed on having further training in order to develop their technical skills (8). Moreover, our results reveal that managers in teaching sector had higher knowledge in terms of managerial duties, compared to managers of private sector. On the contrary, Pillay reported that private hospital managers, as compared to those in public sector, had more knowledge in terms of managerial duties.

Conclusion

The findings of our study indicate that hospital managers, as the leaders of the most sophisticated health care facilities delivering expensive complicated services, need proper training regarding job competency. Therefore, it seems that continuous needs assessment in this area should be carried out.

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