

HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS AND THEIR LEADERSHIP IN HEALTH INSTITUTIONS IN KOSOVO

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the research is to assess the opinions of healthcare professionals on the role of the leader in the effective human resource management, and application of necessary skills at the institution where working and operating. The overall goal is to know, analyze and identify the role of the leader on effective human resources management. The research was conducted in the period May – November 2014, in: Prishtina, Mitrovica, Gjilan, Peja, Prizren and Ferizaj during which were interviewed a total of 263 employees (204 females and 59 males), in three levels of the healthcare in Kosovo. In the Healthcare Institutions in Kosovo the main problems do generate from the lack of law enforcement. The cooperation among the employees and leadership is not in the desired level, where 71% of the employees have reported that they are not informed about the activities. 50.9% of employees report that they are not satisfied with their working environment and the managerial organization at their institutions. Management staff is not given proper role, in so far as employees suggest that managers should collaborate and be committed to change, based on duties / responsibilities aiming at achieving results. Kosovo Healthcare needs essential changes in human resource management in three areas: academic-university, public and organizational policies. The implementation of these provisions would have a positive impact on strengthening human resources, enhancing cooperation and facilitating decision-making for change.

Keywords: Employees, leadership, healthcare professionals, healthcare Institutions.

INTRODUCTION

A variety of programs aiming the professional advancement and leadership development were organized and carried out in the Healthcare Institutions in Kosovo. The ideas and experiences presented in this research are based in the opinions of the healthcare professionals about their leadership. Leadership development, based on the models that focus on individual characteristics, often helps in personal development and useful actions in the institution. Independent researches, discussion of the issues in different point of views, their analysis, problem identification, communication and dialogue were the aim of the group work to understand closely the leadership and management role. Significant advancement is done in the area of capacity and human resource enhancement, however despite the implementation of a significant number of training programs on leadership and management, the abilities and skills during implementation are not in the appropriate level. Leadership is an issue that requires a broad discussion and debate, in theoretical as well as practical aspect, and for different individuals and circumstances takes different understandings. There is no precise definition on leadership, or a certain group of personal competencies and skills that characterize a leader. In stead, most approaches towards leadership are based on the models of personal competencies and are focused on the individual.

Based on the data at all levels of the healthcare system all health professionals must have management training, in order to be able to identify the role of leadership in the effective management of human resources and practice the necessary skills for the implementation of

any change in the institutions where they work and operate. It is worth mentioning other activities such as the rehabilitation of healthcare facilities and premises, implementation of new management methods, professional education and strengthening the cooperation among colleagues. Factors that may contribute to this situation are leaders themselves - managers of institutions and all health professionals. In reviewing the effectiveness in leadership, it is important to evaluate the characteristics that we possess and consider how relevant they are to our role within the health services.

Modern concepts of human resources management imply the managing competencies, customer satisfaction for the service offered and employee responsiveness. Human resource executives are increasingly aware that without the attraction, development and retention of the best, the institution can not provide customer satisfaction, thus provide a continuous development. In developed Western countries, human resource management has become a sustainable complex specialty, integrated with specific procedures in accordance with the most recent models of the market. Different countries apply different models for human resource management, such as the British model of "Investors in People" or the American model of "Capability Maturity Model – People (CMM-P). Others have promulgated laws that regulate and reflect the development of these concepts. In France, we can mention several laws dealing with human resources as the law on vocational training, the law on the entirety of responsibilities and the law on the right to individual training. In Albania, the human resources function has often been limited to some specific activities such as employee salaries, vacations, their absences, etc. These activities are known to the function of the office of "Personnel".

In this regard in Kosovo, we can notice that the main problems do generate from the legal framework. In order to overcome a range of problems identified in this special process, there is a need to enhance the central units, by: setting standards in the laws, adopt the new system on classification of job positions (with standards and guidelines) which would lead the process in the intervention of the system of wages. These interventions are crucial for the future of Kosovo.

A study conducted by University of Rome "Vergata Tor" (Ultrainen et al.), supports the hypothesis that the welfare of the professionals is closely related to the level of cooperation within the team. The perception of the organizational effectiveness, isolation, routine work, integrity and the team work related to the satisfactory indicators to senior management, can help in identifying the points of action and promoting a healthy work environment. The Management should focus in the organization policies that promote welfare, culture and work, providing this way possibilities for health checks, fulfilling the health needs of the individual and organization. Investing in education, culture and health means a reduction of costs, people hear and expand through business approaches, the individual is less "sick", suffer less amount of stress and are more motivated to work (Bettenard et al. 2008). A crucial thing in this context is the reason that the management of the old culture should not be responsible only to the normal rules, but should be responsible for those organizational, specifying the role of the professional as a social value in itself, because it tends to satisfy the essential needs: health.

This study aimed to assess the opinions of health professionals on the role of leader in the effective management of human resources and skills needed to practice in the institution where he works and operates. The overall objective of this study is to recognize, analyze and identify the role of leader in the effective management of human resources in health

institutions in Kosovo, and the description of the process of change and the factors that affect the way that people react to change, maximize their effectiveness as leaders, and the application of several techniques and communication skills to influence others and to involve them in the implementation of change.

METHODOLOGY

The study reflects a data collection, analysis and real examination on the circumstances in which operate the healthcare professionals. The descriptive statistics (percentages, averages, etc) are used to describe the actual situation, by describing the concepts and identifications as basis for quantitative research. The study (researchH) involves a total of 263 participants, representing the primary, secondary and tertiary healthcare in seven regions: Pristina, Mitrovica, Gjilani, Peja, Prizren, Gjakova and Ferizaj. The research was conducted in the period May – November 2014. The research has used a multicasting sample involving managers (directors, Head of department, head nurse) and healthcare professionals.

Data collection and analysis

The data collection procedure is actual, relevant and accurate through the measurement of the numerical description of variables to reflect the quantity and difference. The data collection is carried out through anonymous questionnaires based on three measurement instruments.

Instrument 1 – Personal data (5 questions), Instrument 2 - the questionnaire prior to workshops/assessment meetings related to proper dissemination of the information from managers to healthcare personnel (6 questions); and Instrument 3 – written assessment (25 questions). Data processing and analysis is carried out through computer software: Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Word and SPSS. All the collected data were analyzed as a whole, while maintaining absolute reliability and always based on ethical principles.

RESULTS

Instrument 1 – reflects the data on age, sex, region, title, place of work. Representatives of the three levels of the healthcare in 7 workshops/assessment meetings were: Primary healthcare 46.4% participants, Secondary Healthcare with 43.7% participants and Tertiary Healthcare with 9.9% participants. The study/research involved a total of 263 professionals (78% females and 22% males). The average age group of the participants was 17 – 26 year olds (20.7%); 27 – 36 year olds (21.2%); 37 – 46 year olds (40.6%); 47 – 56 year olds (16.1%); and 57 – 66 year olds (1.4%).

Instrument 2 – the questionnaire to be filled prior to the workshop/meeting with the aim to understand the level of information the participants have from their managers regarding the workshop/assessment meeting, which showed that 71% of participants were not informed.

Instrument 3 – mirrors the level of satisfaction among healthcare professionals associated with their leadership, working environment and conditions in which they work and operate.

Table 1: *The Level of Contentment of Healthcare Professionals Regarding to their Leadership, Working Environment and Conditions*

<i>Are you satisfied with:</i>	<i>Not at all satisfied</i>		<i>Slightly satisfied</i>		<i>Satisfied</i>		<i>Very satisfied</i>	
	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
External environment of the Institution where you work.	68	25.9	73	27.7	94	35.8	28	10.6
The internal environment of the Institution where you work.	64	24.3	79	30.0	85	32.3	35	13.4
Receiving information on time by your Management staff.	67	25.4	68	25.9	93	35.3	35	13.4
Relation between you and management staff.	48	18.3	78	29.7	109	41.4	28	10.6
Meetings organized by management staff.	53	20.2	81	30.8	100	38	29	11
Productivity of the team meetings.	56	21.3	68	25.9	103	39.1	36	13.7
Active participation on decision making.	100	38	91	34.6	53	20.2	19	7.2
The ability of the Manager to facilitate the work for the others	57	21.7	81	30.8	112	42.6	13	4.9
The ability of the Manager to delegate tasks	59	22.5	68	25.7	120	45.7	16	6.1
The ability of the Manager to organize and control.	47	17.9	79	30	108	41.1	29	11
The ability of the Manager on planning.	67	25.5	74	28.1	84	31.9	38	14.5
The ability of the Manager to communicate with others	37	14.1	71	27	102	38.8	53	20.1
The ability of the Manager to motivate the others	38	14.5	72	27.4	99	37.6	54	20.5
The ability of the Manager to strengthen and develop individuals.	55	20.9	69	26.2	104	39.4	35	13.3

Reference: f – frequency; % - percentage

An analysis of the observed values provides the significant difference ($X^2 = 44.13, p < .01$) With regard to the relation and dissemination of information on time by management (table. Nr.1), 49.6% of participants have stated that they are not satisfied at all, while regarding the productivity of the team meetings, 47% of the participants stated that they are not at all satisfied or slightly satisfied. The results obtained represent an unpleasant situation, considering that 51% of healthcare professionals are not satisfied or slightly satisfied with their leadership, environment or working conditions. An analysis of the observed values provides the significant difference ($X^2 = 44.13, p < .01$)

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Currently the managerial healthcare system and the healthcare system in Kosovo are not at the right level, considering that the contentment related to Management and institutional working environment depends on many factors, such as the financial, health and work insurance, work culture, health education, education, respect the ethical code, etc. The health care responsible in Kosovo should consider the role of managers, increase capacities and

include professional staff in the institutional strategic planning because delegate and approve competencies can actually work in this case and the benefits can be visible. Kosovo healthcare needs necessary changes that will bring direct positivity in the management of human resources in three areas:

1. Academic and University - to increase the number of programs providing possibilities to study, undergraduate and graduate specializations in the field of human resources as well as increasing the number and training of the personnel, considering that there is a lack of such personnel in Kosovo.
2. Public policies – to modernize the Labor Laws with the aim to promote the organizations in applying modern techniques such as the balance of competencies, training or other particular laws on human resource development.
3. Organizational – the development and improvement of a “reference” model on human resources based on a system of recruitment, integration, training, performance evaluation, promotion and career development.

The implementation of these provisions would have a positive impact on strengthening human resources, enhancing cooperation and facilitating decision-making for change.

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