ARTICLE

THE COMMITMENT IN DIAGNOSTIC REPORTS DOCUMENTATION IN CASE OF PRIVATIZATION THE HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

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ABSTRACT

By taking into account that the employees are always involved in the privatization process, it seems that the approach and subsequent to it the behavior of the employees are key factors in this process' being a success or a failure. Therefore, this study aims to investigate employees' commitment in diagnostic reports documentation in case privatization the health information technology. This study was performed in affiliated hospitals of Semnan University of medical sciences in Semnan, Iran. In this study, a census method was used. The data collection tool was a researcher made questionnaire. 45.4% reported the privatization increases physicians' commitment to complete the patient's diagnostic reports. 39.4% believed the privatization process equips the health information technology department. 42.7% reported the privatization increases nursing staffs' commitment to complete the patient's reports. The results showed that employees had various approaches to the privatization of the health information technology. Some of them embrace this process and some believe that it cannot make the clients satisfied or improve the commitment in diagnostic reports.

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, privatization is a quite significant approach. It has been used by some organizations with the purpose of improving the quality of their services, reducing the costs and to increase the effectiveness of their services in general [1]. When privatization was first introduced, it meant when the employees choose outside sources for doing some of their activities in the organization. In fact, they are not involved with the process any longer. This privatization leads to the fulfillment of the activities. This is actually traditional outsourcing. On the contrary, in modern privatization the employees remain in their position and the organization gets use of the new service in a set of processes of that organization [2, 3]. There are numerous causes for privatization and downsizing the governmental sector. Low-quality services, necessity of improving the satisfaction of the clients to whom the services are offered, motivating employees and contractors work wise for the organization to have access to desirable and suitable sources, escalating desirable services and a higher level of satisfaction are some of the most important causes [4]. Studies have shown that management consideration, solving the problems associated with the employees, motivation for improving the performance of employees, strategic considerations, technological considerations, getting access to new technologies, learning the new technologies and achieving a better performance are factors which affect the privatization decisions of an organization [1, 2]. It is interesting to note that in the framework of the reformations of the health system, privatization is considered as a strategy which can be of help for promoting the efficiency of the health system. Privatization can be used in units where services are provided and where the payment method is reformed in a way that it would create competition in providing services, increasing efficiency and also making the customers satisfied [5, 6]. There are some units in any organization which have a special place when it comes to informational value. In the hospitals and health centers, the health information technology (HIT) unit has this special place [7]. The HIT unit is one of the most significant reference as for gaining information about the diseases of the patients, how to treat them and about the method of management as well as the performance of employees of the health care centers. This unit is effectively efficient when all of the professional standards are observed including structure, policies and instructions, equipment, human force, performance and services [8, 9]. The medial file is of great value when it comes to taking good care of the patient, preventing diseases and improving their health. A medical file dramatically depends on the quality of what the file contains recorded by the employees of this unit in terms information, researches, scientific information and statistical information [10, 11]. Mahjoob et al. also investigated the extent to which the selected forms in the medical files are filled out in the hospitals of the city Jahrom. They have concluded that the reviewed documents do not contain a sufficient amount of information especially when it comes to clinical information which plays a major role in the rest of the treatment of patients. It is necessary to note that the investigated documents were some of the basic and important documents in the medical files [12]. On the other hand, numerous studies have shown that there are some factors that can affect the escalation of the quality of effective documentation. Some of these factors are: Awareness, approach, training, instructions, standards and regulatory levers [13, 14]. Ferdosi et al. reviewed the privatization of the HIT in Isfahan's Ayatollah Hospital and deducted that quality has been improved in various aspects. 76.2% of this improvement has been seen in medical processes. The level of satisfaction of internal customers has rose for 59% and a reduction of 37.4% is seen in the elimination of the defects of medical files [15]. Tabibi et al. conducted a research called evaluation of the strategy for privatization support services in hospitals affiliated to the Ministry of Health Care and Medical Education. In this study,

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they concluded that privatization services triggers a rise in the efficiency of the hospital and in the level of satisfaction of the employees [16]. Only a handful of studies have been done on the privatization of the HIT unit and none of them have focused on investigating clients' satisfaction and commitment in documenting medical files in case the services of the HIT are outsourced [15, 17]. By taking into account that the employees are always involved in the privatization process, it seems that the approach and subsequent to it the behavior of the employees are key factors in this process' being a success or a failure especially when it comes to the information systems [18]. Therefore, this study aims to investigate employees' approach to clients' satisfaction and commitment in documenting medical files in case privatization the services of the HIT.

METHODS

Participants in this study were employees working in affiliated hospitals of Semnan University of Medical Sciences in Iran. Census sampling was used in this study. A total of 840 questionnaires were distributed; 604 were returned, which represented a response rate of 71.9%. Ethics approval was obtained from the Medical Ethics Committee of Semnan University of Medical Sciences. A covering letter was prepared for distribution with the survey document, which described the purposes of the study and explained that a response to the survey would indicate the consent of the participant to take part in the research. It also assured participants of the confidentiality of their responses. The data collection tool was a researcher made questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of 15 questions in 2 sections. The first part contained 5 questions related to demographic information including Job, gender, age, work experience and education; the second part included10 questions related to impact of privatization on customers. The participants' attitudes on each item were measured on a 3-point Likert type scale, where, disagree=1, neither disagree nor agree=2 and agree=3, respectively. The questionnaires have been distributed and returned to the researcher within 72 hours. Means and standard deviations, in dependent- samples T, and one way ANOVA were used to analyze the data.

RESULTS

The results indicated that 47.2% of the study subjects' job was allied health. 69.1% was female. 40.8% of the participants aged 20-30 years. 26.6% had less than 5 years work experiences, and 60.7% had bachelor degree. The results showed 41.8% of the employees believed that the privatization increases the consent of the patients or their relatives from medical record department. 33.4% believed that the privatization increases physicians' satisfaction from medical record department. 46.3% reported that the privatization increases managers' sensitivity towards medical record department.45.4% reported that the privatization increases physicians' commitment to complete the patient's diagnostic reports. 39.4% believed that the privatization process equips the medical record department. 42.7% reported that the privatization increases nursing staffs' commitment to complete the patient's diagnostic reports [Table 1].

Table 1: The study subjects' attitudes towards the impact of the outsourcing

Attitudes The impact of the privatization on	Agree N (%)	Neither disagree nor agree N (%)	Disagree N (%)	Mean ± SD
The increases of nursing staffs' commitment to complete the patient's diagnostic reports	253(42.7)	181(30.5)	159(26.8)	2.84±0.81
The increase of the consent of the patients or their relatives from HIT department	249(41.8)	204(34.2)	143(24)	2.82±0.79
The increase of the equipment of HIT department	233(39.4)	206(34.9)	152(25.7)	2.86±0.79
The increase of managers' satisfaction from medical record department	225(37.8)	207(34.8)	163(27.4)	2.90±0.80
The increases of physicians' commitment to complete the patient's diagnostic reports	269(45.5)	179(30.2)	145(24.5)	2.79±0.81
The increase of allied health staffs' satisfaction from HIT department	218(36.8)	204(34.5)	170(28.7)	2.92±0.80
The increase of managers' sensitivity towards HIT department	273(46.3)	199(33.7)	118(20)	2.74±0.77
The increase of medical students' cooperation with HIT department	219(37.6)	202(34.7)	161(27.7)	2.90±0.80
The increases of medical students' commitment to complete the patient's diagnostic reports	260(43.8)	197(33.2)	136(22.9)	2.79±0.79
The increase of physicians' satisfaction from HIT department	199(33.4)	237(39.8)	160(26.8)	2.93±0.77

There was not significant relationship between the study subjects' demographics characteristics and their attitudes [Table 2].

Table 2: Relationship between the participants' characteristics and their attitudes

Characteristics	Groups	Mean ± SD	P-value
Sex	Male	2.82±0.64	0.260

	Female	2.85±0.59	
Age (Year)	<20	3.43±0.23	0.335
	20-30	2.83±0.57	
	30-40	2.84±0.59	
	40-50	2.84±0.57	
	50<	2.94±0.56	
Job	Physician	2.87±0.52	0.791
	Nurse	2.83±0.57	
	Worker of HIT	2.94±0.55	
	Allied Health	2.86±0.61	
Work experiences (Year)	>5	2.82±0.56	0.575
	5-10	2.88±0.61	
	10-15	2.97±0.61	
	15-20	2.79±0.60	
	20<	2.82±0.61	
Education level	PhD	2.87±0.52	0.684
	Master degree	2.70±0.60	
	Bachelor degree	2.84±0.57	
	Diploma	2.83±0.54	

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study has been to investigate the employees' approach to clients' satisfaction and commitment in documenting medical files in case privatization the services of the HIT. The obtained results indicated that less than half of employees have stated that by privatization the HIT, managers become more sensitive to the performance of this unit. On the contrary, in the health centers it might be believed that privatization is the reason why managers can focus on more important issues in an organization and try to meet the goals of the organizations without any additional concerns. If this is the case, rise of efficacy is directly affected. This idea is basically seconded by Mohammad Karimi et al. in the research conducted by them. In this research, they have cited that the time of executive managers is freed of daily responsibilities if the services were to be outsourced. In their opinion, 80% of the time of executive managers is spent on managing affairs which are not that important in normal cases and only 20% of their time is spent on developing strategies. However, when the services are successfully outsourced, managers will have enough time for searching new areas for earning income, accelerate other projects and focus on the clients. All of these will ultimately improve efficacy [19]. In 2010, Kavoosi et al. conducted a research which aimed to investigate the level of employees' and managers' tendency based on features of different units. The results obtained by them was an indication of the strong tendency managers had to outsource radiology and laboratory units [20]. The findings of this research showed that the majority of their statistical population did not come to terms with the idea that by privatization the HIT, patients or those accompanying them become more satisfied with the services of the HIT. On the contrary, Tabibi et al. have done a study called "evaluation of the strategy for privatization support services in hospitals affiliated to the Ministry of Health Care and Medical Education. In this study, they concluded that privatization services triggers a rise in the efficiency of the hospital and in the level of satisfaction of employees and patients [16]. In addition, studies have shown that privatization affects the performance in terms of presenting health care services and improving the quality of treatments and making patients more satisfied [21, 22]. In 103 health care centers of a city in Pakistan, a rise in the level of satisfaction of the patients was observed when the services were outsourced [23]. In most statistical populations, it is believed that privatization is neither considered as a factor playing an important role in providing services with higher qualities nor as a factor which escalates how satisfied patients or those who accompany them are with the services of this unit. Perhaps, the majority of the statistical populations believe that patients are dissatisfied because the privatizing firms do not keep patients' information confidential. Confidentiality of the information is a priority no matter how big or small the center providing health care services is [24, 25]. Generally speaking, the first thing that immediately comes to mind when most people hear about privatization is that private companies do not provide clients with suitable services. These concerns become more significant when the focus is on the sensitive and confidential information of the patients such as their medical file [26]. In fact, it is these concerns about the violation of the confidentiality and development of new standards that has been identified as the factor preventing the members of the population from accepting privatization [27, 28]. Anciaux et al. it was not guaranteed that the electronic health files are not secure enough outside the range of health care services [29]. It was by reviewing the results of this study that it was concluded that the studied health centers need to ensure that privatizing authorities can both provide high-quality services to patients or their escorts and protect patients' information and keeping them confidential. In doing so, the latest improvements and executable principles must be considered.

Studies shown that reducing the costs as much as possible and making the customer satisfied is the most important factor affecting the decision to do privatization [30, 31]. However, the findings of this study showed that a few of the employees believed that privatization the services of the HIT makes internal customers more satisfied including doctors, nurses and other personnel. In 2012, Ferdosi et al. conducted a research called "effectiveness of giving the services of the imaging center of Isfahan's Ayatollah Kashani Hospital to the private sector". In this study, they came to the conclusion that privatization has had positive

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influences. It has caused a 78% improvement in the performance of the unit and a 95% promotion in the satisfaction of internal customers [15]. It is believed that in the opinion of the majority of the statistical population, privatization the services of the medial records department is factor causing a fall in the regulatory levers. In their view point, this fact negatively affects the performance of the employees of this department and as a result, the employees become more dissatisfied. It might also be the case that the statistical population is concerned with the hunch that privatizing companies might not be able to integrate medical data in health centers. This is a problem leading to shortcomings and human errors in the clinical environment [32, 33]. It is necessary for the members of this population to be reassured that it is in fact by privatization the HIT that accurate information can be provided for those who provide health care services. And in addition, in this case, if the services are outsourced, the patients would be excellently cared for and clinical specialists and staff would become more efficient. By reviewing the findings, it becomes apparent that there is this thought that privatization is considered to be an investment in education and it is what makes individuals more skilled and reduces problems. All in all, more than one third of the statistical population have cited that privatization the HIT makes the students more satisfied since they are more involved.

Studies show that managers are not able to overcome this problem by only focusing on training and educating human resources in the organization. Therefore, the best way to reduce the problems and to obtain desirable results is to give this responsibility to an outside source [34-36]. If outsourcing, as a part of the economic development project of the society, was to create a substrate for individuals' creativity and innovations to blossom and to provide equal and proper facilities for the education process in the organization, the work-related needs of the employees would be met [37, 38]. The results showed that most employees were uncertain when it came to the impact the privatization of the HIT has on equipping this department and consequently making the employees satisfied. Conversely, Susomrith and Brown conducted a research and concluded that it is for using more specialized and qualitative services that privatization is quite significant [39]. In addition, Jacobson et al. studied the privatization of information technology in the hospitals of USA in 2004. In this study, they showed how privatization makes technologies more accessible [40]. The study Salmani et al. did aimed to evaluate the experience of privatization health services in the city. In this study, they concluded that since supervisors have put greater importance on the physical structure and equipment standards, it has also been more observed by the private sector [5]. In contrast, nowadays health centers insist on investing in making the specialized force associated with the health-related information improve and on using new technologies. Their goal is to present the employees with secure and accessible information when they are needed for them to take care of the patients and to improve the results [41]. However, by reviewing the results of this study, it can also be concluded that the members of the statistical population of this study probably think that the employees cannot gain access to new technologies, skills and specialties only through outsourcing. While the members of this population must be confident that privatizing companies can reduce the costs of the HIT, increase the security of the patient and significantly affect the quality of health care services by introducing new technologies. The results of this study indicated that some employees probably believe that privatization improves documentations by making the activities identical. Less than half of the employees have cited that by privatization the staff becomes more responsible in the documentation of medical files. Karimi conducted a review study and concluded that by standardizing the jobs, accurately defining the job and its result, privatization becomes successful [10]. Numerous studies confirm the results of the present study. For instance, Omrani concluded that privatization improves the behavior of employees and makes them more responsible [42]. In addition, Salmani also came to the result that documenting and recording information in outsourced databases has been more desirable than in governmental databases [5].

The results showed that approximately one third of the respondents were not informed of the advantages of privatization the HIT or they did not look at them optimistically. If these approaches were to develop, those health centers that have limited sources will face problems. On the other hand, if the ambiguities are not eliminated, the confidence and trust in the organizational decisions will be lost [43]. It is essential to note that if there are complexities and ambiguities, the costs of the services won't be evident and the health centers will lose their organizational competence. This will also escalate financial, political and cultural risks that the organization might face in case of privatization the HIT. Thus, it is quite important to analyze the risks of privatization when you want to select and use tools to reduce the risks. This analysis is a key factor that plays an important role in the success of outsourcing. If we seek to find out about the risks, we will also be confronted with additional advantages of privatization [44].

It seems that informing the staff about the opportunities brought by privatization the HIT might be beneficial for those of health centers that have a limited number of sources [45]. On the other hand, the position of the employee working in the HIT in a hospital is important. When the employee directly reports to the head of the hospital, that employee will be a manager in the hospital who is in charge of making decisions. In this case, they might be given a better position to have a positive impact on the strategy of the organization and then on the decision to outsource the services of the HIT [46].

It must also be noted that information technology is strategically important in a hospital; since it might be reason why the hospital outsources its information system [47]. The geographical location of the hospital, whether it is located in the city or in the capital of the province, is an effective factor on outsourcing. The size of the hospital and the intervention of the doctors in the activities of the information might also affect privatization [48].

CONCLUSION

The results showed that employees had various approaches to the privatization of the HIT. Some of them embrace this process and some believe that it cannot make the clients satisfied or improve the commitment in medical documentation. The results showed that the majority of the statistical population were concerned with the probability of unpredicted risks happening as a result of outsourcing. If the employees believe that privatization is in compliance with their own cultural – value systems and don't see it as a threat, they won't resist it and they will cooperate with the organization in this regard. Therefore, it can be concluded that for any evaluation program to be successful, the employees of any organization need to be aware of them and have a positive approach to it. In fact, employees who embrace the changes that guarantee their welfare and happiness. Otherwise, they will resist it. Thus, the organization have to inform the employees about the privatization programs and purposes, and its advantages and benefits. They must also create an intellectual correlation about privatization between various levels of the organization and therefore, create a cultural and intellectual system which is in proportion with privatization in the organization. The results obtained from this study is crucial for managers because it will inform them about the probable risks of privatization and prepare them for facing and then overcoming these risks and concerns. In the end, it must be noted that when it comes to outsourcing-related decision makings, managers must ask the employees for their opinion and try to find out their tendency towards this before executing the project for them to be accepted and embraced more and also to prevent failure.

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