



Research Article

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Investigating Barriers to Sharing Knowledge from The Perspective of Shahid-Rajai Hospital's Nurses and Oil Company's employees in Gachsaran

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ABSTRACT

Considering to knowledge is increasing in the Healthcare organizations as a vital asset to this organization and its management is considered as an important issue. The employees of the organization need to up-to-date information to enhance their knowledge and to provide evidence-based healthcare services for their customers. Sharing knowledge causes to develop skills, employing key competencies, and continuing competitive advantages in the organization. The aim of this study is to determine the barriers to sharing knowledge from the perspective of nursing staffs. The methods of the study is a descriptive cross-sectional survey which was conducted based on census way on all nursing staffs in Shahid-Rajai hospital and on Oil company's employees in Gachsaran. Instrument of data collection was questionnaire made by researcher based on behavior of sharing knowledge. The data were analyzed by SPSS version 18. The results showed that the greatest reasons for lack of knowledge sharing behaviors are related to not having enough time for knowledge sharing (with an average of 3.3 and a standard deviation of 0.97), lack of confidence in organization (with an average of 3.7 and a standard deviation of 1.1), the risk of career path because of wrong performance (with an average of 3.07 and a standard deviation of 1.3) and lack of culture in transferring of experience in the organization (with an average of 2.99 and a standard deviation of 1.1), respectively. The results of the findings suggest that confidence in the organization, having enough time, and culture of sharing knowledge result in employees will be more willing to provide useful knowledge to each other which lead to the suitable establishment knowledge management in health care organizations and lead to improve quality and competitive advantages and to success of these organizations. Therefore, the attention of the nursing managers is necessary for identifying these potential barriers and timely acting to remove or limit them.

Keywords: knowledge management, knowledge sharing, nursing management, barriers to knowledge sharing

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, various organizations and companies have begun to join to the knowledge process and new concepts such as knowledge work, knowledge worker, management of knowledge and management of knowledge organizations indicate the development of this process. Druker by using these words shows creating a new kind of organizations in which the power of the mind is the rule inside of them instead of the arm strength. According to this, in future societies can expect to have development if they will benefit more knowledge. Increasing importance of knowledge in today's knowledge-based organizations made more necessary than before need to focus and investment on management of knowledge, so that ideals and goals of many organizations is to define proper knowledge management system and to enjoy it effectively. Providing service is a knowledge-based process in healthcare organizations, hence, knowledge management meets an opportunity to improve the performance process (Nilakanta et al., 2009). The hospital organization must employ knowledge management to improve process of knowledge management, i.e. creating knowledge, using knowledge, and sharing knowledge. Through this hospital will become a learner organization with sustainable competitive advantages (Edna & Tuyva, 2011). In many countries such as Iran, managers eager to make knowledge management systems with the aim of taking advantage of the beneficial results. One of the most important processes which is more common, presented in different structures, is for knowledge management and sharing knowledge and motivation of people to share their knowledge in organizations is one of the main priorities of knowledge management practitioners in the world (Keshavarzi, 2007). Effective sharing knowledge among members of organizations results in decreasing costs of producing knowledge and in ensuring dissemination of best working methods in the organizations and enables organizations to solve their problems and plays an essential role in the success of the organization (Chmielecki, 3, 2013). Whatever sharing useful knowledge is more targeted, this facilitates individual and organizational learning and manifested in productions development and providing

better services (Ghalichli & Hakimi Tehrani, 2013). While the Sharing of knowledge can improve competitive level, the lack of sharing knowledge can lead to serious problems for the organization. For example, the absence of this matter in hospitals is an important reason for occur various medical mistakes such as severe injury, missed diagnosis, wrong treatment, increasing multi-drug resistance, and unexpected mortality (Fogarty & Shaw, 2010; Alvarez et al., 2009). One of the main challenges of knowledge management is to make people to share what they know, since people think why knowledge they gained hardly should be shared with others, while this knowledge is one of the key factors of their individual advantage in the organization (Karimi Zarchi, 2011). A huge body of knowledge and experience accumulated over many years in nursing staff's mind after the end of serving their terms this valuable treasure go outside organization with them. Therefore, management of this valuable knowledge has a particular importance (Gressgard, 2014). However, in practice, inappropriate sharing is a major obstacle for knowledge management. Therefore, understanding employee's behavior of sharing knowledge has important implications for organizations. Although there have been studies on the sharing of knowledge, in the field of investigating knowledge management barriers in Third World countries, including Iran, there have few studies (Abdolshah, 2011). As well as there is shortage in the study of how people are sharing their knowledge in organizational environments (Pour & Mortazavi, 2013). Hence, the identification of the most important factors influencing knowledge sharing behavior among the hospital employees is essential for managers, healthcare organizations' staffs and other relevant entities to make the programs based on evidences for solving this problem (Gressgard, 2014). Therefore, the current study was conducted to determine the barriers to knowledge sharing from the perspectives of the nursing staffs to be able through this way to provide recommendations in the field of improving management and sharing of knowledge in hospital.

EXPERIMENTAL SECTION

This study conducted as a descriptive cross-sectional study, the sample consisted of all nurses of Shahid-Rajai hospital and Oil company's employees in Gachsaran in 2014. Sampling is Census. Therefore, sample size and size of population are equal and included 200 subjects studied in the period of 21 January to 20 February 2015. Criteria of entrance to this study is employing in one of the Shahid-Rajai hospitals and in Oil Company of Gachsaran as nursing staffs during the study period and willing to participate in the study. The criteria of going out of the study are to leave the study after the completion of the questionnaire up to the analysis of the data. Instruments of data collection included questionnaire made by researcher based on behavior of sharing knowledge accompanied by questionnaire of individual variables including age, sex, education, managerial and clinical experiences, previous and current job, workplace and the number of shifts per month which was completed by employees. The questionnaire was adapted from a standard questionnaire based on "to assess the organization's attention to knowledge management" (Jacob & Ruth, 2007). The questionnaire were examined by 7 members of scientific group in faculty of nursing and midwifery in Islamic Azad University, Isfahan (Khorasgan) branch in terms of validation of formal content and after necessary corrections, instruments of data collection were provided. To evaluate the reliability of the questionnaire, internal consistency method were used that Cronbach's alpha was calculated as 0.826. The questionnaire is in two parts. The first part includes two sections: first section involves demographic data and second section involves work experience. Second part includes 27 questions about the barriers to sharing knowledge. The whole 5-item Likert were used to score on each question. 0-4 score were given to each question. The item that has highest average were considered as the most important reason of lack of sharing knowledge in the organizations and the item that has the lowest average were considered as the least reason for lack of sharing knowledge in the organizations.

RESULTS

In this study 200 people were participated, with an average age of 30.48. 86.5% of the subjects were female and 13.5% of the subjects were male. 21% subjects were nurse's aide, 73.5% were bachelor of nursing, and 5% were master of nursing. The average of their work experience was 2.3. 59% subjects didn't have managerial work experience. The lowest rate of them was 1% that had 6-10 year managerial work experience. The average clinical work experience of total subjects was 2.05 year. Most of the subjects belonging to the emergency department is 19% and the lowest one belonging to the neonatal department is 4%. According to Table 1-1, The studied subjects claimed they have lack of knowledge sharing behavior because of not having enough time for knowledge sharing (with an average of 3.3), lack of confidence in organization (with an average of 3.07), the risk of career path because of wrong performance (with an average of 3.07) and lack of culture in transferring of experience in the organization (with an average of 2.99), respectively.

Table 1-1: Distribution of the participants according to respond to the reasons for knowledge sharing

| | | very Low | Low | Medium | High | too much | The average | standard deviation |
|---|---------|----------|------|--------|------|----------|-------------|--------------------|
| 20. If the wrong career path you are compromised. | Number | 13 | 43 | 79 | 48 | 17 | 3.07 | 1.3 |
| | Percent | 6.5 | 21.6 | 39.2 | 24.1 | 8.5 | | |
| 21. There is enough confidence in the organization. | Number | 12 | 40 | 87 | 44 | 17 | 3.07 | 1.1 |
| | Percent | 6 | 20.1 | 43.2 | 22.1 | 8.5 | | |
| 22. Your organization will not have to disclose their knowledge. | Number | 24 | 56 | 72 | 35 | 13 | 2.79 | 0.77 |
| | Percent | 12.1 | 27.6 | 36.2 | 17.6 | 6.5 | | |
| 23. Others will gain you more success in the organization. | Number | 18 | 52 | 80 | 40 | 10 | 2.86 | 1.05 |
| | Percent | 9 | 25.6 | 40.2 | 20.1 | 5 | | |
| 24. You ample opportunity for knowledge sharing in the workplace. | Number | 5 | 38 | 81 | 45 | 31 | 3.3 | 0.97 |
| | Percent | 2.5 | 18.6 | 40.7 | 22.6 | 15.6 | | |
| 25. Others you are not interested in learning experiences. | Number | 18 | 57 | 81 | 30 | 14 | 2.83 | 1.3 |
| | Percent | 9 | 28.1 | 40.7 | 15.1 | 7 | | |
| 26. There is no culture in your organization experiences. | Number | 22 | 39 | 80 | 38 | 21 | 2.99 | 1.1 |
| | Percent | 11.1 | 19.1 | 40.2 | 19.1 | 10.6 | | |
| 27. There is no Effect on organizational performance. | Number | 19 | 47 | 85 | 37 | 13 | 2.88 | 1.1 |
| | Percent | 9.5 | 23.1 | 42.7 | 18.6 | 6 | | |

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

In a study by Pourserajian et al. (2013) based on identifying and prioritizing barriers to sharing of knowledge in universities and higher education institutions including case study of higher education institution Imam Javad, results showed that not having enough time and lack of culture in transferring knowledge are as the barriers to knowledge sharing that are consistent with the results of this study. The result also consistent with the findings of the study by KarimiZarchi et al. (2011) that indicates not having enough time and lack of knowledge sharing as the barriers to sharing knowledge. Karimi Zarchi and colleagues claim one of the ways of dealing with these barriers is the changing of cultures. Karamitri et al. (2015), in their research entitled "Methods of knowledge management in healthcare organizations" shows time limitations as one of the barriers to knowledge management in these organizations that is consistent with our results. The results are consistent with the results of Chmielecki's study (2013) that states do not having proper culture in the organization is one of the barriers to sharing knowledge. He also claims other organizational factors as hierarchy, power, available resources, supporting, and reward systems are the effective factors in knowledge sharing. Williams (2013) divided obstacles of knowledge sharing to both individual and organizational levels. He considers lack of confidence in organizations as one of the barriers to knowledge sharing across the organization that is consistency with the results of this study. Asish et al. (2014) note that culture is one of the most important organizational factors affecting knowledge management, they state creating culture of mutual confidence that people share their knowledge and occurring organizational learning are the first steps toward the success of knowledge management which is consistency with our study's result. Shahbandarzadeh & HasanNiazi (2014) present model-based study to identify the most important factor influencing sharing knowledge in organizations, in which show existence of confidence in organization is one of the most important individual factors influencing sharing knowledge that is consistency with the current study's result. Alipour Darvishi (2012) in his study on model presentation of factors effecting sharing knowledge of departments in Islamic Azad University concluded that in sharing knowledge within the group, motivational methods including material and immaterial methods have the greatest impact and documentation of knowledge has the greatest impact in sharing knowledge between groups. To explain these findings, we can say that the approach of research on barriers to sharing knowledge in the hospitals is from the perspective of nursing staffs that is more individual approach, in while in the research of Alipour Darvishi, departments are considered as multiplexing unit.

In this study the risk of career path because of wrong performance are known as one of the barriers to sharing knowledge that was not found in similar studies. To explain these findings can be said that job insecurity is a important deterrent in the sharing of knowledge. To believe that knowledge is power and sharing that makes power and prestige of employee be endangered in organization, lead to non-participating of him in knowledge sharing activities. This could be because objects and purposes of sharing knowledge are not clear in organization very well. Also, due to the differences among organizations from the various directions such as size (small, medium, large), ownership (private and public), mission of organization (profit-making and non-profit), a particular knowledge sharing strategy or certain managerial actions will not work equally for the various organizations. Therefore, goals and strategies of knowledge sharing will be extremely different from one organization to organization based on the planning and strategic thinking. As a result, it may existence of one of the barriers and intensity and weakness of that in one organization to organization be different based on various features of it (Keshavarzi, 2007). In fact, the main goal of each healthcare organization, especially hospital, is improving the quality of health care. The other goals of the organization are improving quality of services such as protection of the patient, reducing medical errors, and increasing use of advanced technologies in healthcare services that make necessary employing trained and skilled staffs. Therefore, healthcare organizations can seek to access to benefits of the knowledge management by focusing on knowledge management and by investment in this area and they should attempt to improve their performance by implementing strategy of knowledge management. Due to the lack of a unit of knowledge management strategy that work for the all organizations very well and equally, every organization need to plan own special strategy. For this important, organization primarily must recognize barriers to knowledge sharing and the gap between existing state and desired state of knowledge sharing activities, and take appropriate action to eliminate barriers and move towards the ideal situation.

Suggestions

1. The study showed that lack of enough time is one of the barriers to knowledge sharing in the organization. Therefore, it is recommended that a team be formed to share knowledge in the organization with the aim of spreading sharing knowledge. Enough time should be allocated to understand and improve internal process in regular meeting of work groups. Many of the sessions focus on tasks and outputs, but the methods of achieving the achievements and successful results have neglected.
2. The study indicated that the absence of a culture of knowledge sharing in organization is one of the barriers to knowledge sharing that is essential to make a suitable context in this field in organization. To redesign culture of knowledge sharing in organizations, the following can be considered: 1. it should be emphasized on importance and necessity and importance of sharing knowledge. 2. Confidence should be upgraded.
3. The study showed that lack of confidence among nursing staffs is one of the barriers to knowledge sharing among them. Therefore, it is recommended that senior managers create an atmosphere of trust among staffs of a work unit and also among the other staffs of work units to make staffs be able to share essential needs of knowledge.
4. Manager should try to have optimized used of accumulated experience and knowledge of individuals, for example, experience of people with more work experience should be drafted. Or they should take advantage of knowledge of people nearing retirement to train other employees.
5. In this study risk of career path because of wrong performance are recognized as a one of the barriers to sharing knowledge. Free atmosphere of organizations can play a role in success or failure of knowledge management. An organizational architecture that is more social, clearer, freer, flexible, with more respect by staffs can be useful in effective sharing knowledge.

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