



An investigation of the effects of empowering human resources on enforcing the clinical governance in the clinical hospital of Borujerd city

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Abstract: *Backgrounds and Purposes:* Clinical governance is a framework that guides healthcare organizations in order to continuously improve the quality of services, maintain the highest standards of conduct and create an environment in which excellence in clinical care leads to system improvements. Rather than merely establishing mechanisms to enhance the quality of the services, in the implementation of clinical governance, each individual shall be in a positive, enabling atmosphere enhancing his/ her daily performances, thus, having the appropriate knowledge and ability is necessary. The aim of this study was to investigate the effect of empowering human resources on enforcing the clinical governance in the hospital of Borujerd city. *Materials and methods:* In terms of purpose, this study is an applied research being in the category of causal researches. The population of the study includes the staff of the hospitals of Boroujerd city. For the data collection purposes, a questionnaire with 20 questions was used after being assessed for its validity and reliability. The structural equation modelling was used in this study, to study the relationship between the components of the model. LISREL software was used to analyze hypotheses. *Conclusion:* According to the data analysis, it was concluded that the empowering of the staff affects the independence, educating, Job enrichment and the implementation of clinical governance. Occupational independence, Job enrichment and educating have an impact on the implementation of clinical governance, in addition, the empowerment of human resources through occupational independence, educating and the job enrichment affects implementation of clinical governance. **Keywords:** Empowering human resources, Clinical governance, occupational Independence, educating, Job enrichment

INTRODUCTION

Clinical Governance is a term used to describe a classified planned (systematic) approach to maintain the quality of patient care and improve it in the health system. Clinical Governance is a framework within which organizations providing health care services are required to continually respond and improve the quality of the services, besides; it is necessary for them to maintain high standards of patient care and create an environment where, clinical care reaches to its highest point. Clinical government proposal is implemented to increase patient satisfaction in clinical services centers having four dimensions of increasing responsiveness and satisfaction, standardization and quality assurance of health services, retraining of staff and accreditation. It is worth mentioning that the implementation of clinical governance is not applicable without the participation of all the physicians, nurses and staff (Aryan Khesal, 2014:45). Clinical governance is a long-term program and its implementation needs an appropriate plan. Therefore, one of the goals of clinical governance is to provide an environment where health professionals can regularly think about the methods of better working. Human resources management is one of the most important issues of clinical governance, because an efficient, satisfied and motivated human resources increase satisfaction and accountability in the

health system. Improvement of job satisfaction and the development of personal skills make the human resources to continuously increase the quality of services to patients; this shows the importance of staff management in implementing clinical governance (Ghazanfari & Mubarak, 2013:479). Based on the above, it can be concluded that human resources play a vital role in either the growth and dynamism or disruption of organizations. In addition, the empowerment of employees has a great impact on the effectiveness of the organization, management and organizational innovation. Empowerment includes employees' independence in performing their daily activities. As service industries become more competitive, the importance of empowerment in service industries increases as a key factor in providing better and more effective services to customers. Since employees' empowerment influences their creativity and determination, it can be of utmost importance. In other words, empowered (educated) people become more engaged in their works, do their jobs with more confidence and try hard to fulfill their duties. Here, empowering is considered along with educating. A highlight of empowerment is educating; however, empowerment regards something far more than educating. In addition, giving responsibilities and independence in decision making to employees, and generally enriching their jobs is regarded as another manifestation of empowerment. Meanwhile, educating can be assumed as one of the basic foundations of the empowerment. All the above mentioned issues, are evidences of the importance of empowerment of human resources which is regarded as one of the prerequisites for the success of health centers in implementing clinical governance. Therefore, the present research attempts to evaluate the effect of empowering human resources on implementing clinical governance. For this purpose, Borujerd city's hospital and its employees are selected as the population of the study.

Theoretical framework and conceptual model:

The concept of clinical governance as the necessity of establishing a comprehensive system in health care was introduced, for the first time, in 1998 in UK. The concept was introduced to establish a new vision of health in terms of quality rather than quantity. Clinical governance integrates all activities related to patient care and assimilates them into a single strategy (Fathi et al., 2014:205).

The results of Baker and Feldman in 2009, indicate the dependence of the implementation of clinical governance on the competence and skills of human resources, so that clinical governance may create new challenges for the empowerment of human resources and affect the performance of human resources. In addition, according to Kabene and his colleagues, to overcome obstacles of the health care system, a proper implementation of human resource management is needed (Boromand & ranjbari,2009: 43).

Zimmerman (1995) believes that the definition of empowerment is easy and impossible at the same time. The first definition of the term dates back to 1788 where empowerment was regarded as the allocation of authority to the organizational role of an individual (Aghayar, 2003). Robbins et al. (2002) believe that in the definition of empowerment some factors are included, such as internal motivation, perception and commitment, job structure, the transfer of authority as well as the allocation of resources and information. Fokose (1998) believes that empowerment of employees is a process through which a culture of empowerment is shaped sharing the goals, objectives, boundaries, decisions and the outcomes on the organization. In such culture, resources and competition for needed resources are provided and sponsored. According to Blanchard et al. (1999) empowering is one of the positive concepts of the business world being less attended to. Despite the numerous benefits of empowerment, its implementation is small and insignificant (Habibi & Ali Miri, 2014:8). The results of the study of Amyghy et al. (2013) showed that all the aspects of clinical governance (participation of patients and society, training and education, risk management and patient safety, the use of the information, clinical effectiveness, clinical audit and staff management) have positive and significant impact on organizational trust.

In 1950, a new and more sophisticated approach was introduced called job enrichment in the context of job design. It was proposed by Frederick Herzberg being based on his research on stimulation and maintenance. Job enrichment means that more stimulation should be added to work to make it more interesting and profitable, although the definition now includes all the efforts paid for fitting a job to human beings. The main interests of job enrichment for all the staff is increased job satisfaction due to the increase in the intrinsic rewards of a job. Organizations benefit from reduction of high costs of absences, delays and lack of attention

to quality and other aspects of poor self-esteem. Job enrichment can increase planning and control as well as participation of staff in their tasks (Dehghan et al., 2009:39). The results of Arian Khesal and colleagues (2014) showed that the improvement of planned quality and teamwork was significantly correlated with hospitals within the system of clinical governance. Other issues included active risk management, unjustified punishments, educating, development and organizational learning that did not have a significant correlation with the performances of hospitals.

Hackman and Oldham (1975) define the structure of occupational independence as the extent to which self-employment and independence for planning, scheduling and determinacy of occupational methods are provided (Arshadi & Shokrkon, 2007: 135).

The model of the study is shown below; this model is a combination of three researches of King and Veringe (2012), Wu et al. (2015) and Ghazanfari and Mubaraki (2013).

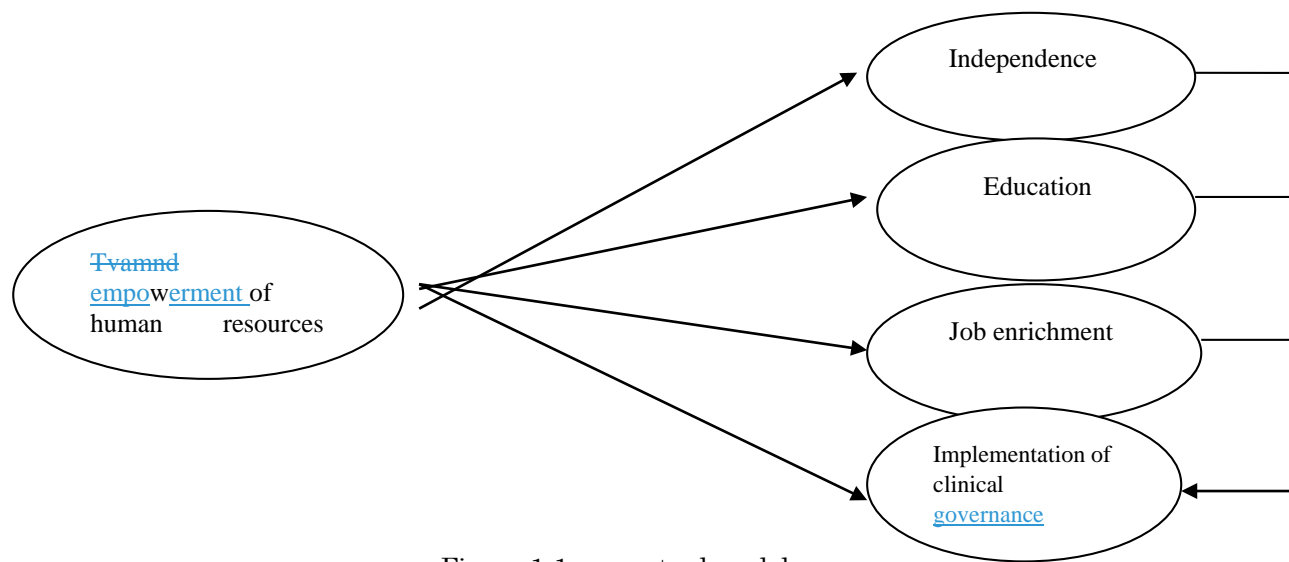


Figure 1-1 conceptual model

Source: King and Vernige (2012), Wu et al. (2015) and Ghazanfari and mobaraki (2013)

Clinical Governance is composed of the following seven factors: 1. educating 2. clinical audit 3. Clinical effectiveness 4. Staff Management 5. Use of Information 6. Risk management 7. The participation of patients and attendance.

Hypotheses:

The first hypothesis: the empowerment of human resources has an impact on the implementation of clinical governance

The second hypothesis: independence has an impact on the implementation of clinical governance.

The third hypothesis: educating has an impact on the implementation of clinical governance.

The fourth hypothesis: job enrichment has an impact on the implementation of clinical governance.

The fifth hypothesis: the empowerment of human resources through independence has an impact on the implementation of clinical governance.

The sixth hypothesis: the empowerment of human resources through educating has an impact on the implementation of clinical governance.

The seventh hypothesis: the empowerment of human resources through job enrichment. has an impact on the implementation of clinical governance

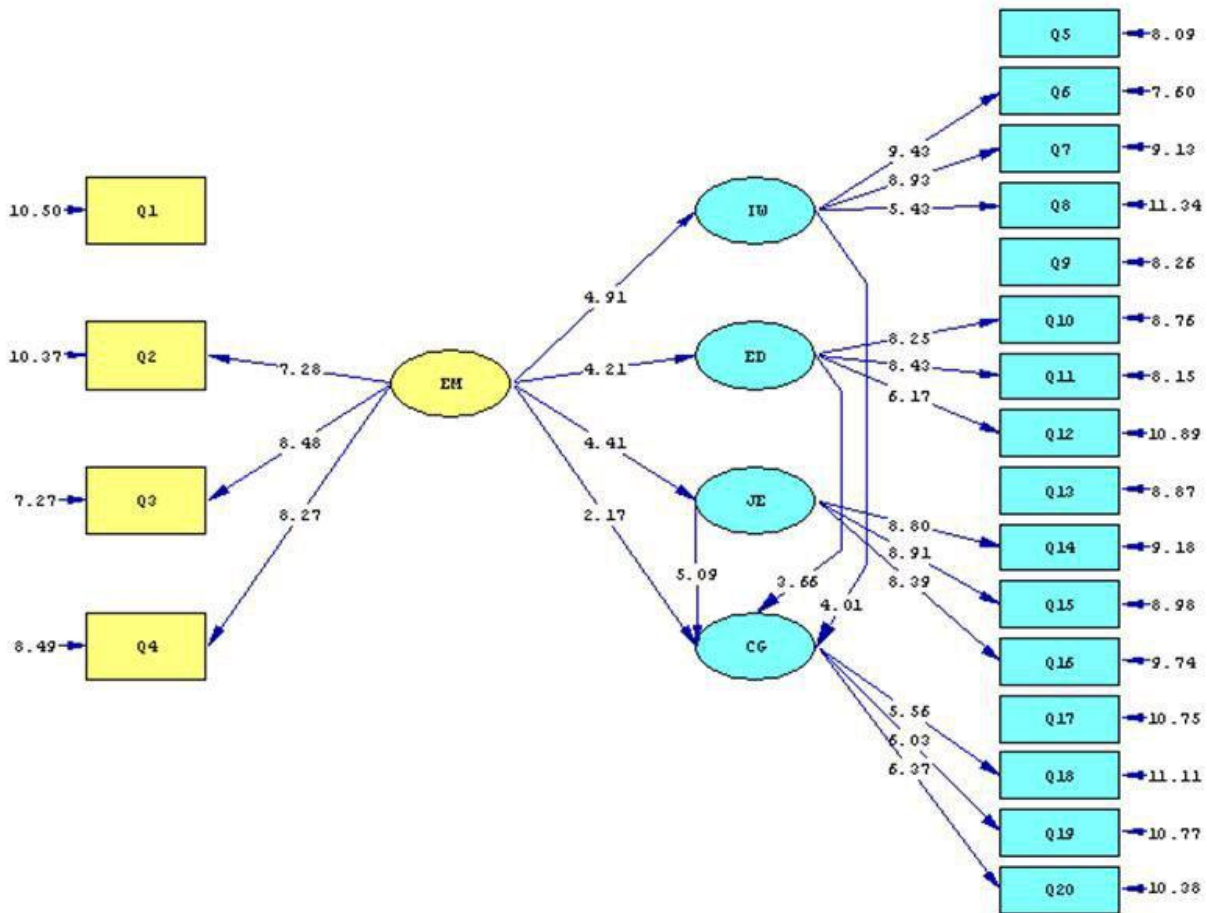
Research methodology:

The present research, in terms of its purpose, is applied and in terms of data collection is a descriptive survey research and causal. The population of this study includes the staff hospitals of Boroujerd city, being 1100 people according to the statistics. using Morgan table, n=284 subjects were selected. The method of data collection is Field method. To collect the data, standard questionnaires of empowering human resources Shtach et al. (2015), occupational independence, Wu et al. (2015), educating Shtach et al. (2015); job enrichment Hunter et al. (2010) and implementation of clinical governance, King and Veringe (2012) were used. Validity of data collection was considered from various aspects; in this study, face and content validities of the questionnaire were reviewed and approved by experts. The reliability was obtained for the empowerment of human resources (0.779), independence (0.883), educating (0.821), job enrichment (0.725) and implementation of clinical governance (0.836). Moreover, the reliability of the study was confirmed. In the current study to analyze data being collected from questionnaires, methods of descriptive and inferential statistics (structural equation modeling) were used.

Research findings

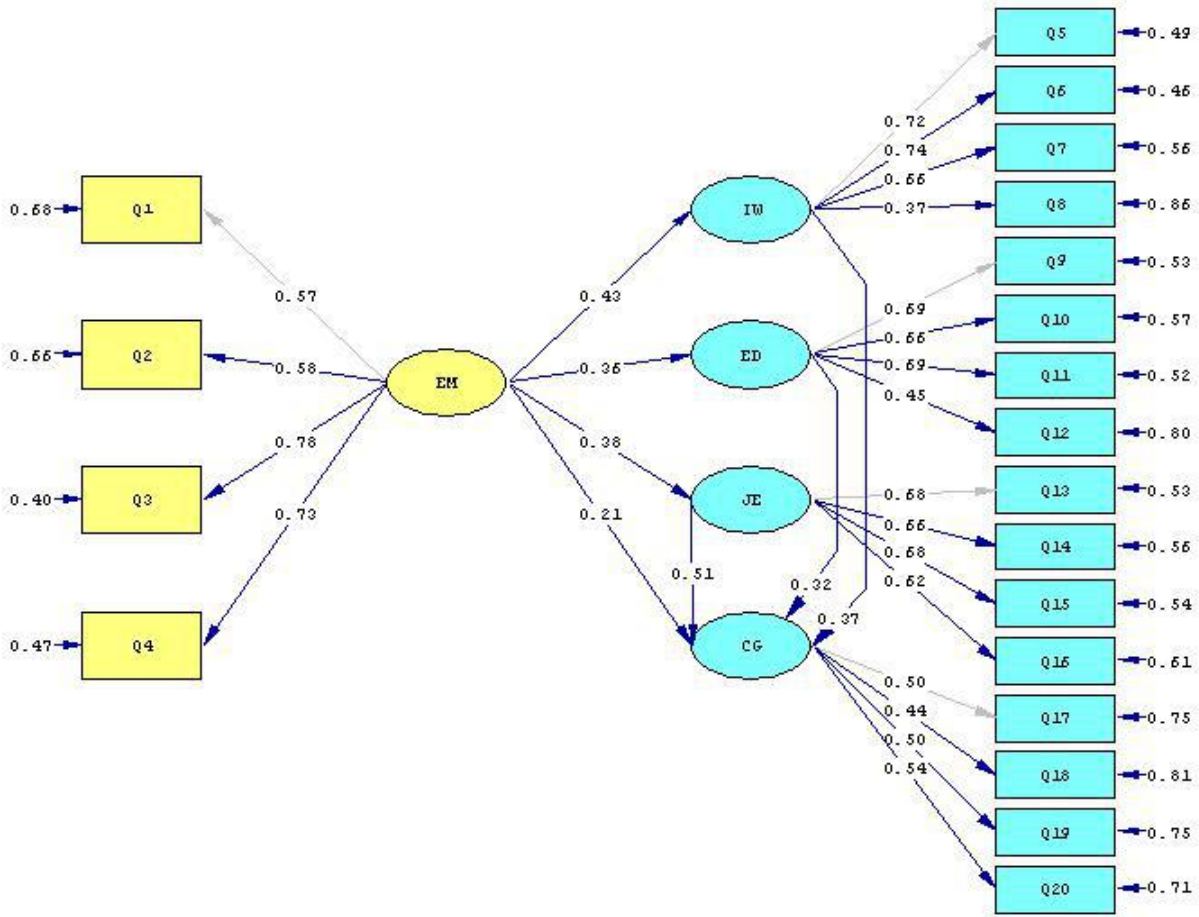
The investigation of research hypotheses:

The structural equations were used to analyze the hypothesis of this study and according to the model in relation to the effect of the independent variable (the empowerment of human resources) on the dependent variables (independence, educating, job enrichment, implementation of clinical governance).



Chi-Square=327.09, df=163, P-value=0.00000, RMSEA=0.060

The chart above shows t coefficients for the measurement of the model (t coefficients for questions and variables associated with them) and structural model (t coefficients for the proposed routes of variables in the model). In addition, the standard coefficients' curve shows the measurement model (standard coefficients for questions and variables related to them) and the structural model (path for routes between the variables). The route was identified and named for the independent variables and the dependent variables with a Gamma factor as well as the path between all the independent and dependent variables with beta factor. Hence, the proposed model contains four Gamma pathways and three beta pathways.



Chi-Square=327.09, df=163, P-value=0.00000, RMSEA=0.060

the variables introduced in the above model are described by acronyms as:

The variable of empowering human resources (EM), independence (IW), Education (ED), job enrichment (JE), implementation of clinical governance (CG).

Surveying the research model:

The chi-square / degree of freedom in this study was approved (2.00), given that this amount is less than the standard 3 (Lay et al., 2009).

Fitness index for the estimated root mean square's errors (RMSEA) is regarded as a good indicator, and according to Kalantari (2009) if the index is less than 0.08, the optimal fit being between 0.08 to 0.1 is an average fitness and greater than 0.1 indicates poor fitness. Since the index for the study is (0.060) it is regarded as a relatively good index. The standard root-mean-residuals index (RMR) is less than 0.08 (Lai et al., 2009). Since, the index is 0.062, we can conclude that the fitting is approved.

According to Hooman (2005) The perfect fit for the *Non-Normed Fit Index* (NNFI), comparative fit index (CFI) and incremental fit index (IFI) are greater than 0.9, given that the amount of these indices are (0.93 – 0.94 – 0.94) respectively and since the obtained amount for the four indices is higher than the standard, the fitting of the indices is approved.

According to (Lin et al., 2009) and Kalantari (2009), the standard for goodness of fit index (GFI) and adjusted goodness of fit (AGFI) are greater than 8.0; due to the fact that these indices for the present research equal (90/0) and (87/0) and complies with the standard, their fitting is also approved.

A summary review of hypotheses and findings:

Direction	Statistics t	Path coefficient p	significance/ insignificance of paths
Hypothesis1: empowerment of human resources→ Implementation of clinical governance	2/17	0/21	Significant (positive or direct)
Hypothesis2: Independence→ Implementation of clinical governance	4/01	0/37	Significant (positive or direct)
Hypothesis3: Education→ Implementation of clinical governance	3/66	0/32	Significant (positive or direct)
Hypothesis4: Job enrichment→ Implementation of clinical governance	5/09	0/51	Significant (positive or direct)
Hypothesis5: Independence→ empowerment of human resources	4/91	0/43	Significant (positive or direct)
Independence→ Implementation of clinical governance	4/01	0/37	Significant (positive or direct)
Hypothesis6: empowerment of human resources→ Independence	4/12	0/36	Significant (positive or direct)
Education→ Implementation of clinical governance	3/66	0/23	Significant (positive or direct)
Hypothesis7: empowerment of human resources→ Job enrichment	4/41	0/38	Significant (positive or direct)
Job enrichment→ Implementation of clinical governance	5/09	0/51	Significant (positive or direct)

*P<0/05**P<0/01

As can be seen in the table above, if the t values are greater than 1.96, their significance level will be 0.05. Also, for values of t being larger than 2.576 and 3.29, the significance level is 01/0 and 001/0.

Conclusion of hypothesis:

Hypothesis1: the empowerment of human resources has an impact on the implementation of clinical governance.

According to the results obtained from the hypothesis, it is made clear that empowering human resources has a significant positive impact on the independence, education, job enrichment and implementation of clinical governance. Thus the hypothesis is accepted. On the effect of empowering on education, we can refer to the study of Hojat and his colleagues; they showed that the education and educating affect the implementation of clinical governance through empowering (Hohat. et al., 2015, 47).

Hypothesis 2: independence has an impact on the implementation of clinical governance.

According to the results obtained from the hypothesis, it is made clear that independence has a significant positive impact on empowering human resources. The hypothesis is accepted.

Staff innately need independence, they love to choose how to do their jobs and to know that they are responsible for their work. So the way the leaders and managers of human resources provide information and create work environments determine whether they support this basic need or not. For example, when business tasks are communicated to the employees, they should not be imposed on them. The employees must participate in goal setting and be independent in their performances. In addition, they should be in control of their ways of reaching their goals. Therefore, the employees should never be pushed to reach a specific goal. So, managers have to try to create environments supportive of autonomy, and help employees meet the requirements to be more motivated in their work and thus to provide a good service to their clients.

Hypothesis 3: educating has an impact on the implementation of clinical governance.

According to the results of this hypothesis, education has a positive meaningful impact on the implementation of clinical governance. Therefore, this hypothesis is accepted. Clinical governance is a framework in which organizations provide clinical services, and are responsible to be improved continuously in terms of quality, create an environment in which excellence in clinical services is flourished, preserve high standards of services, focus on the responsibility to maintain the current level of health system and improve quality of health in the future, simultaneously. Also, the methods and tools of measuring and improving the quality integrate health system, so the implementation of the subject needs proper educating for staff to enable them to receive the education and implement it. So it can be concluded that the organizations can implement good standard clinical governance if their staff have received appropriate education.

Secondary Hypothesis: job enrichment has an impact on the implementation of clinical governance.

According to the results of the hypothesis, job enrichment has an obvious and significant positive impact on the implementation of clinical governance and the hypothesis is accepted. Job enrichment means to grant authority to employees to make decisions. Hence, when employees can do their jobs with responsibility, a sense of satisfaction will be achieved because they know the right decision and act as they are responsible for that reason, they try to provide clients with appropriate services so that they can benefit from clinical governance.

Hypothesis 5 and 6: the empowerment of human resources through independence and education has an impact on the implementation of clinical governance.

According to the results of this hypotheses, human resource empowerment through independence and education has a positive and significant impact on the implementation of clinical governance and this hypothesis is accepted. As mentioned before, empowered employees make their managers trust them so that they can grant them reliabilities through responsibilities. So they can show their qualities thorough the education. Consequently, providing services to clients will be improved. In this case, employees try to respond well to their managers and fulfill the tasks so that services to clients will be achieved by standards and their satisfaction will be increased.

Proposals based on research findings

Clarification of objectives and policies of the organization, duties and responsibilities of the job and homogeneity of ideals as well as standards, increase empowerment of the staff and this will cause the job to be done well in line with objectives.

Providing resources to organizations help employees to fulfill their tasks, make the employees feel that their managers care about them. Consequently, the feeling of effectiveness will be strengthened and they will try to act in accordance with their own standards.

The participation of the staff in the information is not only a necessity, but it creates an atmosphere of trust, intimacy and accountability. This contribution creates a sense of belonging, participation and ownership towards the hospital, it also makes the staff be determined and make use of the information to improve performance, so if employees participate in the selection of goals, gradually consider themselves as partners and the owners of the jobs. Therefore, the participation of the employees in information is recommended.

It is recommended to use participatory management to enhance the empowerment rather than commanding styles; in a way that employees in different categories are used for management purposes and their comments can be considered so their empowerment will be increased in different situations.

It is recommended to allow employees to participate in the working events. It means that when the employees are asked about the assignment of works and their times, it is more likely that employees eagerly accept the tasks with a sense of competence and empowerment.

Employees should be allowed to comment on their jobs. They can provide comments and ideas about the way of performances and managers can listen to them and show their support for the recommendations.

Employees should be allowed to choose the time and way of performing tasks if they do not conflict with the rules so that the irregularities are not created in the hospital.

Encourage employees to participate in the educating workshops so that they can learn new principles and working methods, be empowered and improve customer services for this purposes. Employees who have gained more expertise in these courses should be rewarded with raising salaries, promotions, etc.

Employees should be asked of educational needs, so that they can provide proper educating tailored to their needs and increase effectiveness of the education and be prevented from wasting money and time.

In order to create a variety of jobs, employees should be allowed to participate in planning and setting the goals, rules, work methods and working in the areas of policy implementation, control the operations and be involved in responsibilities being delegated to them so that they feel they are a part of job and are allowed to be innovative.

It is recommended to grant various job responsibilities to employees so that they can have a deep understanding of working conditions and prevent repetitive tasks that cause impatience; also they should be placed in different conditions to find new ways to perform tasks.

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