

Pharmacy Leadership Development: A case study of JCI accredited private hospitals in Thailand

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Abstract

Private hospitals nowadays pursuit for high standard of care and patient safety by using Joint Commission International standard (JCI) which is the highest level of quality standard for the hospitals in the world. Pharmacy department's head in the hospital is one of department leaders who plays significant role in the multi-disciplinary team. Effective department's head comes from intensive development from the hospital especially the previous department's head. Therefore this study has been conducted to explore the leadership development process, the succession situation, and suggest the ideas for practically implementation. Survey questionnaire has been created by information from literature review, discussion with some of pharmacy leaders. Target sample is the department head of JCI accredited private hospitals. Data was collected in November 15-30, 2013. Key findings are 1. The most frequently used development methods are On the Job training, Formal Training, Remember and Repeat Supervisor's approach, 2. key topic of knowledge are "Professional focused knowledge" and "Leadership-Management focused knowledge", 3. key skills needed for the successors are similar to topic of the knowledge with "decision making-problem solving", "Systematic thinking", and "Communication" additionally, 4. attitudes to develop successors of the department's heads are "Moral", "Positive thinking", "Good governance", "Integrity", and "Accept the diversity", and 5. last finding, Succession readiness of current successors is 28.6% from all successors which is acceptable comparing to 33.3% of the government hospital. Consequently it is a long journey for the sustainability of pharmacy department in the future and it is compulsory for every current pharmacy department's heads to do.

Keyword: Leadership, Leadership development, Pharmacy department's head, JCI accredited private hospital, Succession planning

1. INTRODUCTION

Leaders are key persons for the success of the organization. Successful leader contributes and delivers more than the less successful leaders. Even though it is an important role in every organization but there is less focus and lack of systematic process to create enough leaders for the needs of its organization especially in the pharmacy department in the hospitals.¹

Private hospitals currently improve and develop their systems and process to exceed the patients' needs. Many of hospitals have committed to the high standard of quality and care by using Joint Commission International (JCI) standard guideline since 2002. The guideline focuses not only the patient safety and quality of care but also the fundamental process like Leadership and human resource management.² Therefore the leadership is the organization's agenda for these hospitals which is the leadership

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development also be focused by the top leaders of the hospital.

Objectives of this research are to explore the current situation of leadership development in JCI accredited private hospitals, what are the key topic that have been taught to the current pharmacy department head prior to assume a department head position, to explore what are the essential knowledge, skills and attitudes for the successors of the department heads and lastly what is the succession readiness level for the current successor of the pharmacy department head in the target hospitals. In order to comply with the research in human criteria, the study has been approved by the ethic committee of Faculty of Dentistry and Faculty of Pharmacy Mahidol University.

2. METHODS

2.1. Sample

Target group of this research is the current pharmacy department heads of the JCI accredited private hospitals in Thailand which is 27 hospitals at the time of the survey, November 2013.³ All of these hospitals were included purposefully.

2.2. Questionnaire

Survey questionnaire was designed by using information from the leadership development and succession planning articles.^{4,5,6} Content and face validity was conducted with the pharmacy department head in other public hospitals. Cronbach's alpha coefficient of this survey questionnaire is 94%.

Research questionnaires consisted of 4 groups of question items; general information (type of hospital, highest education, interest to be department head, amount of training hours, formal development effort by their supervisors and self-development method) which contains 7 question items (filling in blank, multiple choices and answer "yes" or "no"), Current development for succession preparation which can be more than one answer (type of the course and development options included), necessary knowledge-skills-attitude for successors

which are 3 sections open-end questions and lastly succession readiness level of the successors rated by their current department head which is a 1-5 scale rating. The study protocol and instrument received approval by Faculty of Dentistry and Faculty of Pharmacy Mahidol University Institutional Review Board.

2.3. Data collection

27 questionnaires were sent to the target group by postal mail without follow up or reminding mail in November 15, 2013. Because the researcher would to test whether the respondents awareness and intention to leadership development in Pharmacy society.

This research has used SPSS to analyze the data.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

14 questionnaires were sent back from the respondents. It is 51.9% response which is acceptable.⁷ Regarding the purpose to test whether the pharmacy department heads have awareness to leadership development, it can imply that they have somewhat awareness. The respondents are 7 department heads of hospital in Bangkok Dusit Medical Service (BDMS) which 50% of the respondent and the rest is the stand-alone hospital which is no branch of hospital i.e. Bumrungrad International hospital, Vejthani hospital, Synphaet hospital and etc.

The average duration in the head position of respondent is 4.9 years comparing to at least 10 years in the position of the department's head of the government hospital.⁸ It implies that the department head position is not the end of the career path for the pharmacists in the private hospital. The pharmacy department's head can pursue the higher position in their career whereas the pharmacists in the government sector that their normal highest position are the department head. In the government hospital context, there is not so many cases that they can climb up a bit higher position like deputy hospital director or else.

Considering the year of service and duration in position, it explains that in general the pharmacy department's head have worked for 10 years since graduation before having been promoted to the head position. It is really fast while the pharmacy department's head in the government hospital takes more time before assuming the position.⁹ (Table 1)

3.1. Intention to be a department's head

This researcher finds out that 35.7% of the respondents desire to be a department's head comparing to 46.7% of the government hospital¹ and 30% of the finding from Miller, Mark and Powell.¹⁰ It is somewhat surprised because in general the people working in the

private sector should usually be ambitious. It has to investigate for more understanding.

3.2. Leadership development prior to assume the position

50% of the respondent discloses that they have been developed by their previous supervisors similar to 53.3% of the pharmacy department's heads in the government hospitals.¹ This implies that the pharmacy profession in the hospital in Thailand still be in a risky situation in term of leadership development because the another half of respondents who have never been developed do not be able to develop the other consequently. (Table 1)

Table 1. General information

Duration in position/Service	Frequency	Min	Max	Mean	S.D.
Duration in position (years)	14	0.25	19	4.9464	4.89915
Duration of service (years)	14	3	33	14.7857	8.29438
Highest education				Frequency	Percentage
Bachelor degree				8	57.1
Master degree				6	42.9
Intention to be a department head				Frequency	Percentage
No intention				9	64.3
Intention				5	35.7
Had been developed by supervisor				Frequency	Percentage
No develop				7	50
Develop				7	50
Formal training days				Frequency	Percentage
No training				4	28.6
1-3 day				3	21.4
4-6 day				2	14.3
More than 10 day				5	35.7

For the number of the formal training days for the current department head, 35.7% have attended more than 10 days of the training while 28.6% have never been in the classroom formal training but they have been developed by the other development methods i.e. on the job training, reading the book or journal, learning for the supervisors, and so on. (Table1)

From Table 2, most frequently used leadership development methods for the successors of the department's heads are "On the job training" (21.0%), "Formal training" (19.4%), "Remember and repeat supervisor's approach" (14.5%), "read the books" (12.9%), and "Discussion-learning from previous supervisors" (12.9%).

Similar to top frequently used in the government hospital which are “Reading books and journal” (22%), “Formal training” (18.1%), “Learning from supervisor” (18.1%), “On the job training” (14.7%), and “Remember and repeat supervisor’s approach” (10.2%).¹

It can be concluded that there are many development methods to enhance the capability of the successor besides “formal training” which we initially think of when the training needs exist. The variety of the development methods can fulfill the needs to develop the new department head in every aspects starting from the easiest way like remembering and repeat their supervisor’s

approach to more formal method like the classroom leadership training.

According to data from Table 3, the most frequently used topics are “Management”, “Leadership”, “Quality system management”, “Service management” and “Human resource management”. It shows that there are equally covered the top priorities of the private hospital which are Safety, Quality, and Service. In order to accomplish all of the priorities, the pharmacy department’s head must have a good leadership, good management skill and good human resource management skill.

Table 2. Leadership development methods prior to assume the position

Leadership development method	Frequency	Percentage	Acc. Percentage
On the job training	13	21.0	21.0
Formal training	12	19.4	40.3
Remember and repeat supervisor's approach	9	14.5	54.8
Book	8	12.9	67.7
Discussion-learning from previous supervisor	8	12.9	80.6
Journal/Article	4	6.5	87.1
Job rotation	4	6.5	93.5
Mentoring	2	3.2	96.8
Cross function team	2	3.2	100.0
Total	62	100.0	

Table 3. Previous formal training topic of the current pharmacy department head

Topic	Frequency	Percentage	Acc. percentage
Management	6	23.1	23.1
Leadership	5	19.2	42.3
Quality system management	5	19.2	61.5
Service management	3	11.5	73.1
Human resource management	2	7.7	80.8
Coaching	1	3.8	84.6
Communication	1	3.8	88.5
Financial management	1	3.8	92.3
Knowledge management	1	3.8	96.2
Competency	1	3.8	100.0
Total	26	100.0	

3.3. Necessary knowledge for department's head successors

From Table 4, the data shows that key knowledge for the successors are composed of "Professional knowledge", "Human resource management", "Financial management", "Strategic management", "Quality management", "Service management", "Inventory management" and "Leadership".

All of these knowledges can be categorized into 2 main groups which are "Professional focused knowledge" and "Leadership-Management focused knowledge". It is similar to what the president of Thailand

pharmacy council mentioned in the Leadership Seminar held by Faculty of Pharmacy Mahidol University on 2013*.

Professional focused knowledge consists of pharmacy professional knowledge, quality management and the "name of the game" for private hospital, service management. Secondly "Leadership-Management focused knowledge" which are management in all aspects in the hospital and how to be an effective leader who can motivate and inspire their followers to perform and deliver their performance to the patient safety, quality of care and being the best in the class in service excellence.

Table 4. Necessary knowledge for department's head successors

Knowledge	Frequency	%	acc%
Professional knowledge	11	20.0	20.0
Human resource management	10	18.2	38.2
Financial management	6	10.9	49.1
Strategic management	5	9.1	58.2
Quality management	5	9.1	67.3
Service management	3	5.5	72.7
Inventory management	2	3.6	76.4
Leadership	2	3.6	80.0
IT	1	1.8	81.8
Marketing	1	1.8	83.6
Economics	1	1.8	85.5
Change management	1	1.8	87.3
Project management	1	1.8	89.1
English	1	1.8	90.9
Communication	1	1.8	92.7
Motivation	1	1.8	94.5
Goal setting	1	1.8	96.4
Cooperation	1	1.8	98.2
Resource management	1	1.8	100.0
Total	55	100.0	

3.4. Necessary skills for department's head successors

The top necessary skills for the successors are "Professional skills", "Strategic

thinking", "Coaching", "Human resource management", "Decision making-problem solving", "Systematic thinking", and "Communication".

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All of the top ranked skills are similar to the necessary knowledge in both main groups (Professional focused and Leadership-management focused). Additionally systematic thinking, decision making-problem solving, and communication are included to the list of top necessary skills because all of these skills support and enhance the way the department's head work effectively to accomplish departmental goals.

For communication skills, it is really a crucial skill for the leaders. It works best for the effective communicators when they communicate with customers, colleague and subordinates. Ineffective communicators not only cannot be successful in their job but also trigger to dissatisfy all of the people around them.

Table 5. Necessary skills for department's head successors

Skills	Frequency	Percentage	Acc. percentage
Professional skill	8	14.0	14.0
Strategic thinking	6	10.5	24.6
Coaching	4	7.0	31.6
Human resource management	4	7.0	38.6
Decision making-problem solving	4	7.0	45.6
Communication	4	7.0	52.6
Systematic thinking	4	7.0	59.6
Motivation	3	5.3	64.9
Negotiation	2	3.5	68.4
Adaptation	1	1.8	70.2
Change management	1	1.8	71.9
Time management	1	1.8	73.7
English	1	1.8	75.4
Personality	1	1.8	77.2
Leadership	1	1.8	78.9
Customer focus	1	1.8	80.7
Life-long learning	1	1.8	82.5
Delegation	1	1.8	84.2
Understand other	1	1.8	86.0
Reliance	1	1.8	87.7
Project management	1	1.8	89.5
Trust building	1	1.8	91.2
Being a role model	1	1.8	93.0
Team work	1	1.8	94.7
IT	1	1.8	96.5
Management	1	1.8	98.2
Quality	1	1.8	100.0
Total	57	100.0	

Table 6. Necessary attitudes for department's head successors

Attitude	Frequency	Percentage	Acc. percentage
Moral	9	22.0	22.0
Positive thinking	9	22.0	43.9
Good governance	5	12.2	56.1
Integrity	4	9.8	65.9
Accept diversity	3	7.3	73.2
Calm	2	4.9	78.0
Safety culture	2	4.9	82.9
Teamwork	2	4.9	87.8
Creative thinking	1	2.4	90.2
Taoism leadership	1	2.4	92.7
Discipline	1	2.4	95.1
Customer centric	1	2.4	97.6
Networking	1	2.4	100.0
Total	41	100.0	

3.5. Necessary attitudes for department's head successors

Referring to data from Table 6, it explains the key components of attitude needed for the successors to have before assuming the department's head position in the future. It contains "Moral", "Positive thinking", "Good governance", "Integrity", and "Accept the diversity"

The finding reflects the need of the pharmacy professional in the present time that we are in the high social responsible era which all of the stake holders request for more responsibilities to the social and environment. As a result, currently there are so many social enterprises, corporate social responsible projects from many organizations and most importantly the voice of the society to prevent the less ethical practice in the society and thrive for zero-defect to all of the stake holders. Therefore, the current leaders ask their successors to have high moral, integrity and good governance.

Positive thinking is one of the crucial attitudes for the leaders who are confronting the rapid change of the world according to the globalization and global competition. It results in high stress in the

workplace therefore the leaders must handle and manage very well to bring back the balance of work and life for their own self and their people. If the leaders do not have a positive thinking, they will suffer from the negative impact of all these situations. Consequently they will not be happy with the position and will bring about the negative events to their subordinates and organization at the end.

Accepting diversity is important in the world of diversity like the present day. There are many kinds of diversity including social-cultural difference come from the ASEAN community in 2015, social generation in the workplace which are problematic recently, sexual diversity and so forth. As a result the new leaders should prepare themselves in term of accepting the diversity in advance.

3.6. Readiness to succeed of current successors

The current pharmacy department's head have been asked to assess the level of readiness to succeed of their successors. The survey result show 28.6% of the respondent identify their successors are highly ready

to succeed while 33.3% of the government pharmacy department's heads express that their successors are highly ready to assume the department's head position.¹

Another reason why the succession

readiness in some respondents are low to intermediate may because the current heads who have not been developed by their supervisors do not be able to perform the successor development successfully.

Table 7. Percentage of readiness to succeed of current successors

Succession readiness level	N	Percentage
Low (31-45 months to be ready to a department position)	3	21.4
Intermediate (16-30 months to be ready to a department position)	7	50.0
High (0-15 months to be ready to a department position)	4	28.6
Total	14	100.0

4. CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY

After exploration of the leadership development in the JCI accredited private hospital which can be trustworthy in their process and professionalism. It finds out that it is still less in succession readiness which bring about the adverse event in term of Leadership-Management consistency to reassure the standard of care and service in the future.

Low percentage of the intention to be a department head is important to investigate more breadth and depth of the problem. It may be one of the major root-cause issues to the low readiness of succession readiness level in public hospital pharmacy.

Leadership development process should be established in the hospital pharmacy context with systematic approach and should be support by The Association of Hospital Pharmacy Association (Thailand).

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