

Healthcare Workforce Issues and Industry Impacts Critical Analysis

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Introduction

The prevention of diseases and the acquisition of an improved quality of life require immense health care around the globe. For this purpose, healthcare providers are central factors in improving the health and well-being of the commoners. Winter (2020) argued that in modern times, it is an open secret that the healthcare industry, especially the healthcare workforce, is facing massive problems in the overall fabric of the health sector. Addressing healthcare workforce issues and the impacts of these glitches on the social, political, and economic fabric of any society is highly significant. The formula in this regard is very simple: improved quality of patient care is directly dependent upon the highly focused and professional healthcare workforce. Without solving such healthcare workforce issues, no rational mind can aspire to attain and retain a quality, healthful life in any society. It is a fact that the healthcare workforce currently faces a unique set of numerous challenges. In accordance with modern development, the overall efficiency of these professionals is at a menace due to these issues. So, in present times, it is important to look deeply into the matter, and respective authorities should take severe action to make things moderate and fruitful.

Moreover, the issues and challenges faced by the healthcare workforce breed long-lasting impacts and consequences in the end. The current problems in the healthcare industry and anticipated stress among the healthcare workforce are of great concern. Unlike other industries, healthcare professionals, i.e., nurses, doctors, paramedics, administrators, technicians, helpers, and all unitary members, face multidimensional crises, including emotional and psychological challenges at their peak. In addition, the trauma and suicide risks are also entitled to the healthcare workforce, along with other problems. Their overall engagements in their respective professional life seem to get the hardest hit in the usual manner. So, it is very important and need of the hour to discuss and address the problems of the healthcare workforce and put forward some viable solutions in the long run.

However, looking back at historical perspectives regarding the problems faced by the healthcare workforce in various periods, the outcomes are heart-rending. Regarding the life and education of health professionals in the ninth and tenth centuries, three main issues emerged in the past, i.e., textual, sociological, and conceptual. The health education manuscripts were outdated and hard to read. With inadequate facilities, health professionals were often under social pressure from the masses (Nelson, 2014). In addition, medieval times were adorned with the fear of infection and death for the healthcare workforce. The epidemics and infectious diseases had easy targets for healthcare professionals due to inadequate facilities and lessened precautionary measures.

Similarly, in the previous few centuries, healthcare professionals had to face many problems and issues. Even in wars around the globe, healthcare professionals had to fulfil their duties in very risky areas. While in peaceful times, healthcare professionals had to face the socioeconomic problems at large. It can be vividly estimated that hospitals were established in the USA in the 1700s. After that, the specific roles were distinctly assigned to different healthcare professionals. Before this period, they did not even have specific recognition among societal units. Even in present times, the COVID pandemic has bred numerous challenges for healthcare professionals, inadequate safety kits, mental and physical relief and support, specific protocols, etc. (Bozdağ, & Ergün 2020). One can imagine what had to be borne by the healthcare workforce in past pandemics in the context of present-day advancement and development. However, with the passage of time, the development of medical sciences emerged as a revolution around the globe that has enlightened the minds of humanity. So far, much advancement has occurred to ease and facilitate healthcare professionals, and indeed, much is still needed to handle the severe challenges.

However, recent modern researchers have burnt the oil to address various dimensions of this issue. Kinman & Teoh (2018) reported that the wide range of stress upon healthcare professionals is alarming. The study outbreak conducted on the mental health workforce in the UK showed that the workforce was badly demoralized, mentally depleted, and physically exhausted. These healthcare professionals were at high risk before augmented demand for work and lessened staffing levels at the specific unit. Kinman et al. (2020) suggested that the current challenges to the well-being of the healthcare workforce have accumulated and transformed into a blunt, pressurized situation. The level of pressure and risk to their health and normalcy is at high risk.

Similarly, Iserson (2020) pointed out that the healthcare workforce has to confront a two-dimensional challenge in the present healthcare system. The first is state licensing, and the second one is institution-specific credentials to perform specific procedures. In this regard, the best possible solution on the part of hospitals should demand only credentials if a volunteer wants to serve within a state for which he has a license to practice. Meanwhile, the overall process can become simple, tranquil, and flexible, even when handling disaster situations in a specific state.

Moreover, the healthcare workforce also faces challenges on an ethnic and racial basis. Sometimes, people complain about not accessing equitable healthcare services at hospitals, which is actually due to short staffing at specific units. Such disparities in the healthcare system gravely demoralized the workforce and caused a social and moral dilemma in society based on health services. So, a diverse healthcare workforce seems to be inducted for huge and diverse patients to avoid any misunderstanding. Meanwhile, the burden and workload on health professionals can be countered by better services and the establishment of social justice in society (Wilbur et al., 2020).

Furthermore, Ginter et al. (2018) concluded that healthcare systems are evolving day by day worldwide, and managers and leaders take a pivotal position in this regard. Integrated management to respond to technological, social, political, and economic changes is mandatory in present times. Prioritized health service management can address and cope with modern challenges globally and

enhance the efficiency of the healthcare workforce.

Analysis

Meanwhile, huge barriers exist in solving the problems on social, psychological, political, and economic fronts. The major barrier in this regard is the lack of advancement opportunities in the present or previous work position. Proper training, future career counselling, and further promotional criteria need to be addressed on priority. Insufficient development programs and a lack of advanced training result in a dejected and demoralized situation for the healthcare workforce. In addition, a heavy workload on the shoulders of healthcare professionals breeds unnecessary stress for them and also hits healthcare organizations. While such downsized healthcare organizations put extra effort into staffing, overall demolished efficiency can have a strong impact.

On social fronts, such barriers cause a poor organizational culture among the staff for the mentioned reasons. Such social circumstances impede innovational characteristics, and various perceptions regarding low development take place. With the passage of time, such reluctance results in a skill gap among staffing in various units. Ultimately, the poor personal fit among staffing and between boss and employees may reach a high level that breeds amalgamated challenges for healthcare professionals and organizations.

On the economic front, low wages for healthcare professionals are immense impact-oriented challenges for both healthcare staffing and organizations. The unavailability of funds and lust for profit maximization on the part of investors in the healthcare industry are core reasons in this regard. Overall, the burden on the shoulders of a patient is not just a technique in the modern century. Healthcare professionals have to face such economic issues along with social problems in their field. Resultantly, the standard of services, satisfaction of patients, and overall morale of healthcare professionals are at stake due to economic discrepancies. The healthcare industry in modern times lacks a comprehensive economic system to address economic challenges at full capacity worldwide.

However, the barriers on the political front regarding healthcare workforce problems are of grave danger. Hence, for better or worse, the political affairs of any country and society play a critical role in shaping and facilitating the healthcare industry. New medical developments on research fronts, the overall availability of medical services to huge masses, the preservation of healthcare professionals' rights, and the emergence of a responsible healthcare industry are core aspects in any country. They mainly depend upon the overall drug regulations, policies, and legislation of political bodies. The approval of policy agendas to address the problems of healthcare staffing also depends on societal pressures. In this regard, unfortunately, getting good health services has remained a public demand, but speaking for the rights of the healthcare workforce can never be a public stance among the masses. In addition, the severity of problems, the reactions of affected populations, and the magnitude of impact on polls are ingredients to call upon governmental responses.

In the modern century, political leadership opts for incremental policies instead of comprehensive reforms due to personal interests, dividend political institutions, fiscal starvation, and priority to the elite over the general public. One dimension in this aspect lies with policy development regarding the interest and benefit of healthcare entrepreneurs, which has caused the development to cease. The overall impacts of such political behaviour result in a disaster for the healthcare industry, especially the healthcare workforce. Healthcare professionals are actual victims of such policies, and the overall morale and esteem of these lifesavers are depleted. In the modern century, stagnation, slow development in research, and selected growth patterns have left the healthcare workforce as a slave of healthcare investors and businesspeople (Oliver, 2006).

Moreover, the common barriers to solving the problems of healthcare staffing lie in the psychological domain. Inadequate and limited availability of mental health facilities to the healthcare workforce is increasing day by day. The respective authorities have paid less attention to mental health care and formulated relevant policies to address the problems among staff. Such carelessness and irresponsibility create constant mental stress, pressure, nervous breakdown, little social life, disturbed family life, mental diseases, and stigma for the healthcare workforce. These impacts have disturbed healthcare professionals' overall life patterns and behaviour, making them strange creatures among the human masses.

Recommendations & Conclusion

The rule of thumb lies in the fact that challenges, burning issues, and glitches within any strata of any society can be solved with proper planning, strategic implementations of fruitful policies, and the adoption of recommended guidelines. In this context, various recommendations can be fruitful in overcoming the challenges faced by the [healthcare workforce](#). First of all, the healthcare industry should adopt a value addition and value proposition system for employees. Such a system can ease the recruitment process within a healthcare unit to induct the right health professional for the right job according to set litigation and recruitment policies. Meanwhile, all healthcare professionals should be given an identification regarding their work and duty to improve their morale. To get high results on the part of healthcare services, proper training and healthcare mentorship in the respective units, availability of modern equipment, and provision of amplified opportunities are key factors in reducing challenges.

Furthermore, managerial staff and investors should listen to the healthcare workforce attentively regarding the problems. Encouraging the staff, appreciating their work, and discussing personal and family issues with secrecy can enhance the morale of healthcare professionals manifold. Additionally, proper psychosocial assistance to cope with personal and career issues is highly recommended. Media can play an active role in providing them with high social appreciation by civil society and the general public. The appreciation for healthcare professionals from the societal fabric of multiple strata can nullify their social as well as psychological problems in a well-versed way.

Moreover, sufficient fund allocation to raise the wages and salaries of healthcare professionals is highly recommended. Adequate facilities and pay according to work hours, nature of duty, and capabilities of respective staffing are mandatory. For this reason, the respective governmental and non-governmental authorities should prioritize the production of funds. Similarly, the political influence in the healthcare industry should be restricted to policymaking and legislation for comprehensive reforms. In this aspect, it is highly recommended that political leadership devise policies to nullify healthcare problems in the long run instead of only requiring polls. Similarly, integrated usage of modern technology can resolve the problems of the healthcare workforce. Management of the workforce, real-time investment, technology-based recruitment, and proper feedback mechanisms can enhance staffing efficiency and ultimately reduce healthcare professionals' problems.

Last but not least, healthcare professionals face an accumulated set of challenges in their personal and professional lives in the modern century. Immense mental pressure, psychosocial stress, low salaries, inadequate facilities, non-recognition in society, and political interference are core issues in this regard. In addition, lack of professional training, ambiguity regarding future careers, and inefficient skill development lead to an alarming situation for healthcare professionals. It is an open secret that the exploitation of the healthcare workforce is a historical fact during various regimes and periods. In this concern, sufficient legislation and policymaking are mandatory on the part of political leadership to curtail the issues. The respective authorities should take serious steps to annul the healthcare workforce's economic, political, social, mental, and psychological problems. In this context, the need of the hour is to utilize all available resources by the governmental authorities and civil society to deplete the problems and issues of the healthcare workforce so that they can lead a prosperous and tension-free life.

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