

## Addressing Shortage of Skilled Workers in the Iranian Healthcare Industry

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### Abstract

This paper can be considered as the result of 9 years of investment and policy making done by government for education in order to solving the skilled workers shortage. This shortage is existed in healthcare industry and 2 different areas of Iran, mainly rural areas. In final part of this research a framework will be proposed which is developed based on familiarity, education, intention, industry image and also intention to enter.

*Keywords: Education, Healthcare, Familiarity, Skilled worker shortage, Industry Image*

### 1. Introduction

Skilled workers shortage is one of the main issues in many industries such as gas and oil (Golmohammadi et al., 2014; Pascolini and Mariotti, 2012; Paik, 1996) and healthcare (Fulton et al., 2011; Scheffler et al., 2009; Clark et al., 2006; Stilwell et al., 2004). In these two cases there is a need for macro policy makings in order to be able to help the growth of country's economy besides solving skilled workers shortage issue.

This paper is the result of developed projects from 2004 to 2013 related to workforce supplement in healthcare industry. Before 2004, rural areas in North West of Iran and also South East severally were facing with skilled workers shortage. Ministry of Health of Iran in year 2004 decided to solve the issue of doctor, nurse and other professional's shortage in these two mentioned areas. Therefore, this question rose that "How we can provide the required workforce for this industry?" It will require studying previous studies and also interviewing the experts.

### 2. Literature Review

There are two highly important and clear points for providing required workforce: education and motivation for entering healthcare industry. Through considering the fact that healthcare and government attempt to solve the issue of skilled workers shortage by developing efficient policy making, in this regard one method could be educational policies that lead to increasing awareness and knowledge of external workforce and students from the firm.

Lemmink (2003) utilized information sources for enhancing familiarity, corporate image and also employer image. Lastly, the mentioned framework will be finalized with intention application. The framework's emphasize is mainly on some informative sources for instance advertising or print media. Kabst and Baum (2013) investigated the effects of company image (working context, career opportunities, payment attractiveness and working life comfort) on apply intention in various countries regarding engineering students. Through their study the moderator was national context. By utilizing informative sources along with many courses of training there is a possibility to impact job performance of the organization simultaneously in long term. It can be

the outcome of some investigations conducted by scholars for example Cho et al. (2006), Wright, (2001), as well as Huselid, (1995) due to all of them focused on effects of training, reward systems and also compensation on firm's performance. Moreover, Healthcare industry requires many studies for identifying role if effective factors.

### 3. Methods and Results

According to review of previous studies, some factors such as intention to apply and education are appearing to be highly influential. Therefore, their existence of their relationship with providing skilled workers required interview with experts.

After interviewing 18 experts (11 top managers and 7 academicians in Healthcare industry) it was revealed that it is better to provide the required workforce from the people in those areas and it is better to train these individuals for solving the issue in long term. In this regard, it is necessary to building more schools, employing experienced teachers in the field of empirical science, giving more information to guidance school and high school students and also giving more information to parents in order to create motivation in their children, allocating more scholarship and financial support for these courses.

It should be mentioned that giving information should have been done through local newspapers, TV advertisement and also local radio stations so there was a need for government's collaboration. In addition, role of government in other aspects was also highly crucial.

This policy continued until year 2013 and the number of these students by the end of 2013 was equal to 20. From 2004 to 2013, the number of schools in different rural areas have increased and the number of students in empirical science field increased by 17 times.

Finally, Ministry of Healthcare along with financial support of government was able to minimize the issue of skilled workers shortage in these two areas acceptably. Excluding the exact statistical data, the obtained results can be generalized to the following framework (Figure 1). In this framework, education has the potential to impact industry image, intention to enter healthcare and familiarity. Additionally, skilled workers growth can be impacted by 4 other variables regarding its performance and number.

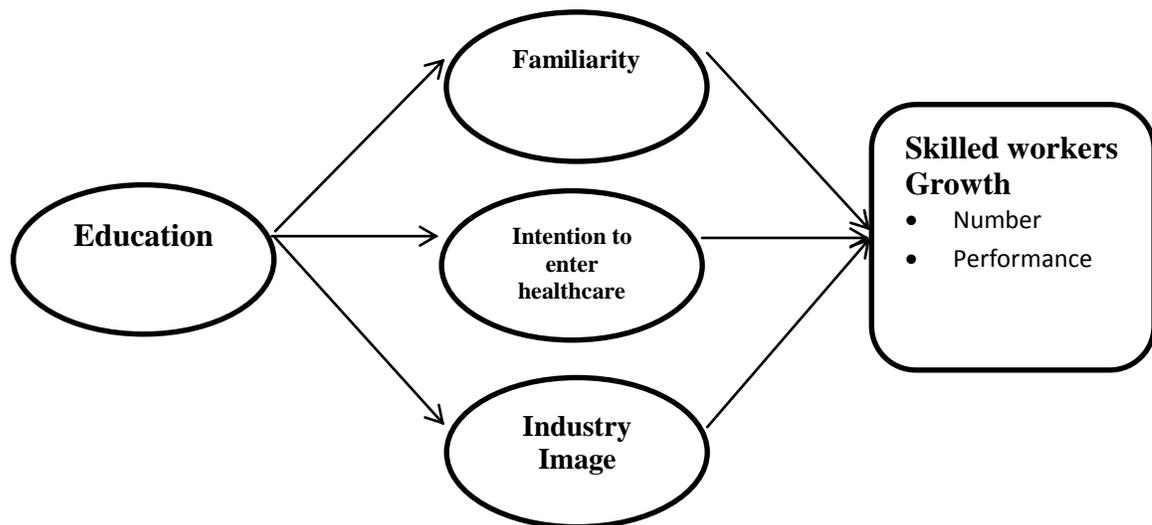


Figure 1: Proposed framework

#### 4. Conclusion

The issue of skilled workers shortage can be solved through education as well as creating motivation in students. On the other hand, for solving the issue of skilled workers shortage in long term, two different subjects should be considered. First, “how we should train the students and second how to shift them toward the considered industry? “

The future researches can test the proposed framework of this study in other industries. But as the gap of previous studies, it is better to define different dimensions of education according to considered industry. This subject requires a qualitative research.

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