

Organizational Change, Teamwork and Health Records Management Practices in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study reviews how organizational change and teamwork influence health records management practices in Nigeria. The study aims at combining insights of how organizational change and teamwork bridges different aspects of health records management practices in Nigeria. The study objectively identifies some of the principles of organizational change and teamwork and their influence on health records management practices in Nigeria. Relationship between organizational change and teamwork, organizational change and health records management practice, and that of teamwork and health records management practice was examined. Also the combined effects of organizational change and teamwork on health records management practice were established. This study reveals among others that relationship exists between organizational change and health records management practice: It was found that health records management practice takes place in an organization settings and any organizational change directly and indirectly influences health records management services, practices and policies.

Keywords: *Organizational Change, Teamwork, Health Records Management Practice*

INTRODUCTION

Today, teams and organizations face rapid change like never before. Globalization has increased the markets and opportunities for more growth and revenue (Dave, 2015). However, increasing diverse markets have a wide variety of needs and expectations that must be understood if they are to become strong customers and collaborators. Concurrently, scrutiny of stakeholders has increased as some executives have been convicted of illegal actions in their companies, and the compensation of executives seems to be increasing while wages of others seems to be decreasing or leveling off (Dave, 2015). Thus, the ability to manage change, while continuing to meet the needs of stakeholders, is a very important skill

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required by today's leaders and managers (Carter. 2015). Also, significant organizational change occurs, for example, when an organization changes its overall strategy for success, adds or removes a major section or practice, and / or wants to change the very nature by which it operates. It also occurs when an organization evolves through various life cycles, just like people must successfully evolve through life cycles. For organizations to develop, they often must undergo significant change at various points in their development (Carter, 2015). That's why the topic of organizational change and teamwork has become widespread in communications about business, organizations, leadership and management.

Merriam Webster Online Dictionary, (2016) defines teamwork as work done by several associates with each doing a part but all subordinating personal prominence to the efficiency of the whole. Teamwork can be an important part of an effective workplace (Carter, 2015). An efficient team can be trained as a group, help each other maximize their job performance, and help to make an inviting and productive atmosphere for new team members. Certain elements of teamwork in the workplace should be in place for your company to benefit from group organization. A team is only effective when the members understand their roles and responsibilities within the group, and endeavour to execute them effectively. A task given to a group is completed more effectively when the responsibilities are distributed fairly among the group members. Each member is assigned a part of the task based on his role within the group and his level of expertise (George. 2016).

Tasks in health information management practice require teamwork. This is the reason why Fatiregun, (2006) asserts that health records management practice is a combination of people, equipment, data collection and processing methods, coordinated to produce information in support of planning, decision making and management of health care system. Also Olumide, (2006) opines that health records management practice is a collection of data base personnel, procedures, and instruments which are organized to develop and utilize available facts to become information which will be used to facilitate decision making. The submission of Osundina, (2007) also supports the above by pointing out that, health information management practice involves all the tools, techniques, devices and human resources used for recording clear concise and accurate history of a patient's life and illness, written from the medical point of view, including the significant characteristics of a patient and events occurring in the course of professional care for the purpose of providing the best medical care to the patient, teaching, research, medical care evaluation studies and legal requirements.

Health records management practice is critical to the success, growth and development of quality healthcare services delivery in any health institution (Omole, 2013). Could it be right to say that organizational change and team work could bring about effective health records management practice in Nigerian health institutions? This is why this study examines the influence of organizational change and team work on health records management practice; with a view to contributing to finding solutions to the problems associated with organizational change and team work in relation to health records management practices in Nigeria. The specific objectives are:

1. To find out the relationship between organizational change and health records management practice in Nigeria
2. To ascertain the association between team work and health records management practice in Nigeria
3. To determine the influence of organizational change and team work on health records management practice in Nigeria.

In line with the objectives stated above, the study seeks to provide answers to the following questions:

1. What is the relationship between organizational change and health records management practice in Nigeria?
2. Is there any association between team work and health records management practice in Nigeria?
3. What is the influence of organizational change and team work on health records management practice in Nigeria?

Health Records Management Practice in Nigeria

In Nigeria, health records are managed both manually and electronically. The common practice in Nigeria is computer assisted health records management system, in which patient registration particulars are fed into the computer system and the outcome of admission is also entered into the system after the discharge of the patient (Akanji, 2014). But the details of events occurring in the course of the admission are documented manually into the patient records. Also, monthly statistical reports are generated manually and they are uploaded into the national health management information system data base through Dhis-2 platform, which is a web-based package that is designed by the federal ministry of health, for management of health information on a national scale (Omole, 2017).

The above establishes the fact that health records provide reliable, accurate and high quality information for an improved health care delivery

service. Therefore health records practitioners must ensure availability of high quality data and information to support health care services delivered in order to provide a reliable, legally veritable source of evidence for decisions and actions (Osundina, 2014). The records are managed both manually and electronically by health records managers who are specialists in health information management; they manage healthcare data and information resources and possess professional registration license issued by Health Records Officers Registration Board of Nigeria (Omole, 2015).

Who are Health Records Practitioners?

Health records practitioner is a specialist or practitioner, saddled with the responsibility of providing accurate documentation and registration of patient health information and up to date health statistical information on hospital activities analysis, both on curative and preventive health services, in-patient and out-patient through the process of gathering and collection of patient information and manipulation for meaningful decision making (American Health Information Management Association, 2014).

Health Records managers are responsible for maintaining components of health information system, consistent with the medical, legal, accreditation and regulatory requirements of the healthcare delivery system (Huffman, 2001). Health Records Managers maintain, collect, and analyze data, crucial to the delivery of quality patient care. They compile and report health (information) data for reimbursement, facility planning, marketing, and research (Fatiregun, 2006). Also, they abstracts and code clinical data, using appropriate classification scheme, and analyze health records, according to standards (Omole, 2013).

Health Records managers are health care professionals, responsible for collecting, capturing, storing, analyzing distributing and protecting medical information, fundamental to providing quality patient care (Omole, 2013). The information supplied by them, are used by physicians and other health care professionals to provide optimum patient care, and support important medical decisions (W.H.O. 2011). The specific functions of health records managers as stated by Huffman (2001) are;

- i. Creation, care, custody, storage and retrieval of patients' health (records) information.
- ii. Documentation and registration of patients' physical and sociological information.
- iii. Provision of statistical information from the health records, for medical,

- administrative, research, monitoring and evaluation.
- iv. Rendering of associated services concerned with the release of patients' health information, such as legal services, insurance services and international health agencies, such as WHO
 - v. Coding and indexing of diseases and operations for compilation of morbidity and mortality health information at local, state and national levels for purpose of identifying specific area of interventions.
 - vi. Establishment of effective numbering control in order to facilitate accessibility of health information for research towards development of good surveillance strategies.
 - vii. Maintenance of confidentiality of health information to protect personally identifiable information from unauthorized person.
 - viii. Ensuring continuity of patient care through the establishment of an effective appointment system.
 - ix. Qualitative and quantitative analysis of health information and development of appropriate indicators for the evaluation of services rendered.
 - x. Participation in various training, programmed towards the development of health information management practice, which are aimed at contributing to advancement of knowledge in the practice.

The health records managers are responsible for maintaining component of health information system, consistent with the medical, legal, accreditation and regulatory requirements of the health care delivery system and the practice requires teamwork with a dynamic organizational change that promotes harmonious working environment (Osundina, 2007). In this regard the public will enjoy the impact of the usefulness of health records management practice on their health.

Usefulness of Health Records Management Practice to the Society

Osundina (2012) opines that a written record must be maintained on every person who has been admitted to the hospital as an in-patient, an out-patient, or as an emergency patient because of the under listed uses of health record:

- i Health record documents the hospital experience of the patient with the main objective of providing a means of communication between the physician and other professionals contributing to the patients care.
- ii It serves as a basis for planning individual patient's care and furnishes documentary evidence of the course of the patient's illness and treatment during each hospital admission.

- iii Health records serve as a basis for analysis study and evaluation of the quality of care rendered to the patient, assist in protecting the legal interest of the patient, hospital, physician and health workers.
- iv It also provides clinical data that are used in research and education for the purpose of extending frontiers of medical knowledge for an improved quality patient care.
- v The physiological and sociological data contained in health record such as; Name, Address, Sex, Age, Marital Status, Occupation, Place of Origin, Denomination, Next of Kin and Address of next of kin, Hospital Number, Phone Number among others help to distinguish the health records of one patient from another to avoid confusion.
- vi Health records are useful for the teaching, or giving instructions to medical Students, nurses, and other professionals.
- vii It is useful in seeking out etiological factors in a disease, compare progress and result of different forms of treatment for patient with similar disease. (Fatiregun, 2014).
- viii Quality of patient care is assured, as the health records provide continuity of patients' care on subsequent admission, evaluation of medical care rendered to the patients, and provision of clinical and health statistical data for the planning of health care delivery services and development of health policies, which have positivity impact on the health status of the society.
- ix Emerging ethical and legal issues are resolved, as health records serve as witness in court for hospital, its staff, and the patient.
- x Also, insurance claims for damages resulting from accident are made possible through evidence provided by health records (Osundina, 2014).

Therefore, health records management professionals carefully generate and collect health information, take custody of health information, manage health information and selectively disseminate them to the legitimate members of the society for quality health care service that guarantee socio-economic development of the nation (Omole, 2015). It is the health records managers as professionals that are behind provision of accessible, affordable, and cost effective health care services to the society, through teamwork and effective change management in health care institutions (Huffman, 2001). In view of this

continuous organizational change that promotes professionalism and best practices should be regular part of a dynamic health records management practices.

Organizational Change

Organizational change is a process in which a large company or organization changes its working methods or aims in order to develop and deal with new situations or markets. Sometimes deep organizational change is necessary in order to maintain a competitive edge (Cambridge, 2016). Sarah (2013) opines that organization is a group of people intentionally organized to accomplish an overall common goal. It is an integrated social system, divided up into smaller units or groups that have various resources (inputs) that are used to produce certain deliverables (outputs). Tricia, Army and Terry (2014) submit that the process of change begins with organization leaders developing an organization strategy, then with the creation of an initiative that is aligned with that strategy. These strategic initiatives are formulated as a direct response to a change in the business environment.

However, organizations that are highly effective at change management, change enablers (leaders) incorporate certain practices that they deem important to the success of their strategic initiatives. These practices according to Tricia, Army and Terry (2014) are: Having well-defined milestones and metrics, having senior management committed to change, establishing and communicating concrete ownership and accountability, using standardized project management practices, and having engaged executive sponsors. They state further that the primary reasons why organizations are failing and losing money are insufficient communications and lack of leadership, this inference justifies the explanation of Sarah (2013) that organizational change involves the extent, rate, and overall nature of activities, led by a change agent (leader), to enhance the overall performance of the organization.

Stage Theory of Organizational Change

The stage theory is based on the idea that organization pass through series of steps or stages as they change John, (2002). After stages are recognized, strategies to promote change can be matched to various points in the process of change (John, 2002). According to stage theory, adoption of an innovation usually follows several stages (McNamara, 2006). Each stage requires a specific set of strategies that are contingent on the organization's stage of adopting,

implementing, and sustaining new approaches as well as socio environmental factors (McNamara, 2006). Kurt Lewins (1951) as cited by McNamara (2006) was credited for creating one of the earliest stage models, modern stage theory is based on both Lewin's work and Rogers' diffusion of innovation theory, as analyzed by McNamara, (2006). Based on the analysis of McNamara (2006) the phases of stage theory are:

- i. Awareness of a problem and possible solutions,
- ii. Decision to adopt the innovation ,
- iii. Implementation that includes redefining the innovation and modifying organizational structures to accommodate it;
- iv. Institutionalization or making the innovation part of the organization's ongoing activities.

Therefore, different leaders or "change agents" within the organization assume leading roles during different stages and the strategies that organizations use depends on their stage of change and whether the nature of the social environment surrounding the innovation is supportive or otherwise (John, 2002).

Steps to Successful Change

John (2002) describes a helpful model for understanding and managing change. Each stage acknowledges a key principle relating to people's response and approach to change, in which people see, feel and then change. The eight steps change model is summarized below:

- i. Increase urgency - inspire people to move, make objectives real and relevant.
- ii. Build the guiding team - get the right people in place with the right emotional commitment and right mix of skills and levels.
- iii. Get the vision right - get the team to establish a simple vision and strategy focus on emotional and creative aspects necessary to drive service and efficiency.
- iv. Communicate for buy-in - involve as many people as possible, communicate the essentials, simple, and to appeal and respond to people's needs.
- v. Empowers action - remove obstacles, enable constructive feedback and lots of support from leaders - reward and recognize progress and achievements.
- vi. Create short-team wins - set aims that are easy to achieve - in bite - size chunks. Manageable numbers of initiatives. Finish current stags before starting new ones.

- vii. Do not let up - foster and encourage determination and persistence - ongoing change, encourage ongoing progress reporting - highlight achieved and future milestones
- viii. Make change stick - reinforce the value of successful change via recruitment, promotion, new change leaders, weave change in culture.

The adoption of the above steps is imperative in dealing with change management issues. When people are confronted with the need or opportunity to change especially when it is enforced, as they see it, by the organization they can become emotional (John, 2002). So can, the managers who try to manage the change. Diffusing the emotional feelings, taking a step back, encouraging objectivity, is important to enabling sensible and constructive dialogue (Opeke, 2016). To this end managers / leaders can find it helpful to use analogies to assist themselves and other staff to look at change in a more detached way through co-operation and teamwork (Root, 2013).

Teamwork

A team is a group of two or more individuals, who perform some work related task, interact with one another dynamically, have a shared past, have a foreseeable shared future and share a common fate (Merriam Website Online Dictionary, 2015). Teamwork involves those behaviours that facilitate effective team member's interaction (Omole, 2015). Also, Osundina (2014) asserts that teamwork is the interdependent components of performance required to effectively coordinate the performance of multiple individuals. Hence, team work is nested within the broader concept of team performance, which also includes individual level task work, this is why a team must be nurtured through appropriate training and sharing of uniform value system in order to motivate them towards achieving the cooperate goal (Root, 2013). It is also important to recognize the skill of everybody in the team, which can only be mostly discovered through organization of meetings in the most effective way. A good leader must be ready to build an effective team and learn how to manage conflict (Opeke, 2016).

Root (2013) posits that a good and efficient team contributes to the success of the organization. When you work in an environment that is team-oriented you automatically produce better results. The fact that you are in a particular department and have a particular job to do does not negate the fact that you are united with other members of the organization to successfully accomplish objectives of the company (Opeke, 2016). The opinion of George (2016) agrees with the above that team work can be important part of an effective

work place. An efficient team can be trained as a group, help each other maximize their job performance, and help to make an inviting and productive atmosphere for new team members. Certain elements of teamwork in the workplace should be in place in your company to benefit from group organization (George, 2016). These are, collaboration, conflict resolution, roles and responsibilities and differing points of view.

Benefits of Teamwork

Dave (2015) posits that two (good) heads are better than one as contained in an old adage which encouraged team work. Teamwork in the work palace facilitates answer for wining sales and here are the six ways that teamwork benefits you in the work place (George, 2016). Teamwork fosters creativity and learning, teamwork blends complementary strengths, it builds trust and confidence, it teaches conflict resolution skills, teamwork promotes a wider sense of ownership and encourages healthy risk-taking (George, 2016).

Also, Billie and Demand, (2016) list the benefits of teamwork in the work place as follows: Teamwork promotes Espirit de corps (Root, 2013). Teamwork enhances job satisfaction (Root, 2013). It promotes efficient resource utilization (George, 2016). It provides atmosphere for creativity (George, 2016). Teamwork enhances conducive learning environment and teamwork promotes effective communication (Billie and Demand, 2016). In health care, teamwork is a dynamic process involving two or more health care professionals with complementary background and skills, sharing common health goals and exercising concerted physical and mental effort in assessing, planning, or evaluating patient care (Olumide, 2006). Therefore teamwork needs competence. Good teamwork emerges when the team feels that all its members have the skill, knowledge and capability to handle issues or have the necessary access to all the help needed to accomplish the mission the team was created for (Billie and Demand, 2016).

Organizational Change and Teamwork

Change strategies are most effective and likely to be sustained when they are directed at multiple levels of organization and while simultaneously taking the group work behaviour change into account (Sarah, 2013). Based on Lewin (1951) model as cited by Sarah (2013) the modern stage theory is directed towards, unfreezing of past behaviour and attitudes within the organization, moving by exposure to new information, attitudes and theories, and refreezing through process of reinforcement, confirmation, and support for change.

Since the change strategies are to be implemented by the employees in the organization, the value of effective teamwork must be shared and identified with the employees (Root, 2013). There should be established protocols for team interaction in order to make each member's goals clear, foster the best relationships, express the value of cooperation, share team members' strengths, manage conflict effectively, and cultivate emotional awareness in your team. Leaders should communicate clearly that collaboration and teamwork are expected and that no one really owns a process or work area all by him/her alone, because teamwork as well as individual achievement promote successful implementation of organizational change in order to have a leading edge among other contemporary organizations.

Organizational Change and Health Records Management Practice

Health records management practices are faced with numerous forces for change in the recent times which presents a need for a systematic and planned format for managing this change (Omole, 2015). Planning, implementing and managing change in a fast - changing environment like health sector is increasingly the situation in which most professions now work (George, 2016) and health records management practice cannot be an exception.

The need for coping with change in the health sector mandated the regulatory body of health records management practice in Nigeria to change their training curriculum from HND programme to B.Sc. program, which takes a minimum of four years to obtain for candidates admitted from joint matriculation examination (J.M.E). Also, Maters and PhD degrees are now available for interested professionals to get to the zenith of their academic pursuit. Institutions offering these programmes are Lead City University, Ibadan; Adeleke University, Ede; University of Ibadan, Babcock University Ilishan Remo and Kwara State University, Ilorin: All these Universities are in Nigeria (Omole, 2015). The scheme of service for the professional practice which had hitherto been pegged to Grade Level (GL) 14 has been extended to Grade Level (GL) 17, for members with university degrees to get to directorate level like their contemporaries in the health sector (Osundina, 2014).

Therefore it is very clear that proper organizational change management can assist health records management practitioners in meeting the challenges that changes and complexities present to them by current trends in the modern health care sector, towards developing their members individually and collectively for best practices, job satisfaction and quality service delivery (Sarah, 2013).

Team Work and Health Records Management Practice

No matter what profession or occupation you hold, you will need to work with others to meet your goals (Osundina, 2014). This is especially true if you work with a team directly. Without a real sense of unity in your work-group, progress may suffer or may never be made at all (Olumide, 2006). By putting into practice certain team building principles, you can help foster a feeling of connectedness as you and your team meet your professional goals together (Root, 2013). Health records management practices consist of a set of inter-related activities that must be coordinated and harnessed together towards achieving the goals of the practice (Omole, 2015). There are various units and sections in the health records department of the hospital (such as registration, coding and indexing, statistics, appointment, library and so on) with specific functions that contribute to quality patient care and provision of health information services (Osundina, 2012). These sections are managed by people and their activities are interrelated and interdependent, they must foster the spirit of team work to enhance success in the practice (George, 2016).

Therefore, team building principles such as; discussion of teamwork with your group, understanding of team members' styles, practice of effective leadership, creation of a team that is the right size and setting of concrete due dates for the team's goals, should be adopted in health records management practice in order to accomplish best practices and professional development, for effective management of organizational change (Dave Mattson, 2015).

Organizational Change, Teamwork and Health Record Management Practice

The structure of any health records management practice is defined by its configuration and interrelationships of positions, units, and sections of the department (Akanji 2014). Organizational change is the creation of a re-design in an organization's structure. The organizational change of a company reflects its efforts to respond to changes, integrate new elements, ensure collaboration and allow flexibility (McNamara, 2006). A properly implemented organizational change process should result in a work environment where all team members are aware of their responsibilities (Opeke, 2016).

Carter (2015) posits that team work is the creation of a working culture that places collaboration in high esteem. People in this type of environment understand and fully believe that planning, thinking, actions and decisions are far better when done in cooperation with one another (Carter, 2015). To be able to have successful team work, health records managers should communicate

clearly so that collaboration and teamwork are expected, and that no one really owns a process or work area all by himself (Akanji 2014). Therefore, since health records management practice takes place in an organizational settings, any organizational change directly and indirectly influences health records management services, practices and policies, because health records management practice is dependent on organizational policies and practices that are targeted at health promotion, intervention and quality service delivery. Also, a good and efficient team work contributes to the success of health records management practice in an organization (American Health Information Management Association, 2014).

CONCLUSION

In the course of this study, inferences were drawn from existing literatures and postulated theories that, relationship exists among organizational change, teamwork and health records management practice, as evident in the work of Sarah (2013) that organizational change can assist with facilitating adoption of new innovation in health records management practice, because organizations must embrace change and innovation in order to achieve their goals and objectives. Also the work of Mattson (2015) reports the need for a good and efficient team and its contribution to the success of an organization. The opinion of Root (2013) agrees with the above, that, when you work in an environment that is "Team-oriented" you automatically produce better results.

Also, as indicated in the findings of Omole (2015) who reports that health records management practice involves interplay of various units and sections of health records department towards provision of quality, efficient, and effective health information services to the legitimate users. This depends on a harmonious teamwork that rest solemnly on a dynamic organizational change, for generation of accurate and reliable health information for action.

Therefore, government through the statutory regulatory agency of health records management practice is advised to give maximum support and encouragement to health records management practice, by providing enabling social environment that support new innovation, positive change and teamwork in the practice of the profession in Nigeria. Based on the information gathered for this study, the following are the summary of the findings.

1. The study reveals that relationship exists between organizational change and health records management practice: It was found that health records management practice takes place in an organization settings and any organizational change directly and indirectly influences health records management services, practices and policies.

2. It also reveals that there is an association between teamwork and health records management practice: It was shown that a good and efficient team work contributes to the success of health records management practices
3. The study reveals the influence of organizational change and team work on health records management practice. It was found that change is inevitable in every situation; health records management practice should be made flexible to be able to accommodate changes resulting from organizational dynamics through effective teamwork among health records management practitioners.

In view of the foregoing, there is need for government to facilitate procurement and installation of appropriate information infrastructure that will support changes resulting from organizational dynamics for effective health records management practice in Nigeria. Health Records managers should embrace continuous training and teamwork for capacity building towards meeting up with new changes in the practice of the profession. Government should put mechanisms in place to facilitate timely collection storage, analysis, and the use of health information for change management and organizational development.

The core value of teamwork should be embraced throughout the rank and files in health records management practice to facilitate better professional performance. Finally, government should put machinery in motion to ensure uniformity or standardization of health records management practice at all levels of health care delivery service in order to make the practice responsive to internal and external, cultural and environmental changes.

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