

Delivering Quality Care through Scientific Management

Scientific Management is the best way to increase employee efficiency and achieve quick result.

The alarming increase in the number of maternal and neonatal death cases reported in Namibia has put the Namibia's Ministry of Health and Social Services in tragedy. Most of the cases were from the sub-Saharan Africa. In order to meet the challenge, Namibia's Ministry of Health and Social Services (MOHSS) partnered with McKinsey and Massachusetts Institute of Technology and planned a pilot project called MHI (Maternal Health Initiative). MHI's aim was to form different teams to target four most populous suburbs of Namibia's capital- Hakahana, Katutura, Okuryangava and SamoraMachel-that were deprived of the antenatal checkups. The application of scientific methods like division of labor and proper methods of selection and training improved staff efficiency in health systems and reduced maternal and neonatal deaths in Namibia.

- **The division of labor:** The entire team was divided into sub-teams to design solutions to the problems related to health workers and to the prevailing health system. The formation of sub-teams and delegation of work to reach the needy people fast were seen as hopeful. There were four sub- teams aimed at different targets to ensure quick results.

- **Selection and Training:**

Team 1 focused on educating the expecting mothers about the care during pregnancy with the help of the hospital's superintendent and with nurses and doctors. Earlier patients were not mentored due to shortage of nurses and lack of motivators. This was met by involving social leaders, ambulance drivers and middle managers by giving them proper training in the areas of mentoring and coaching.

Team 2 helped an NGO to design a mobile 'container clinic' with fully equipped examination room to increase access to rural women because hospitals were located far from the village. They named the clinic as CWI, acronym for child, woman and infant. This not only costed them 25% less than permanent buildings, but their nurses were trained to deliver quality care.

Team 3: There was a shortage of nurses. Those present also were not utilizing their time properly at the clinic. This team emphasized time management by reducing the operational time through preparation of staff schedules and trained them to utilize the idle time.

Team 4: Women in these areas were illiterate and were unaware of the potential risks of HIV/AIDS to their babies. This problem was attended by this team by promoting health shows in local radio stations with the help of the Education and Health Care Officials.

The above case shows how MHI, through scientific management could improve maternal health care for rural women.

Frederick W. Taylor, 'the father of **scientific management**,' propagated the importance of the human element in organizations. Taylor proposed management practices such as division of labor and the use of scientific methods in selection, placement, and training of workers. Taylor made a significant effort to improve the working conditions of workers.

Discussion Questions

1. What are the management practices advocated in Scientific Management?
(**Hints:** division of labor- scientific methods of selection, placement and training of worker- improving working conditions- increasing employee efficiency)
2. Explain how application of scientific method helped MHI in improving maternal health care for rural women in Namibia
(**Hints:** formation of sub teams- educating expecting mothers- mobile clinics- time management- health shows)

Source: Kathleen McLaughlin et al., Saving mothers' lives in Namibia, McKinsey & Company, June 2010