

**TO IMPROVE THE IMPACT OF LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT STYLES
ON THE PERFORMANCE OF SPECIALTY LIFE MEDICINE GROUP**

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UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MALAYSIA

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**A PROJECT REPORT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
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DEDICATION

To my mother, brothers my wife who endlessly sacrifices for my success and
showers me with moral support

To My supervisor who is the first supporter always keeps me going and
made my thesis happen

To everyone who was in light in this journey This research is dedicated to
you.

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed to assess the effectiveness of digital systems and training on them to improve the impact of leadership and management styles on the performance of the Specialty Life Medicine Group. Action research was applied in the study and an intervention plan was designed to examine the changes in the group performance performances. The study used a mixed method for data collection which consists of qualitative and quantitative methods the revising patients and group employees will be used as respondents for the study. The data collected from the mixed-method will be analyzed. Technique and SPSS. The finding from the study found that the intervention in the group the digital system and training program give an impact on employees' performance and reduced their turnover. There is a difference between before and after intervention as increased the skill and knowledge among the team, and keep the patients loyal through reducing the time waiting.

ABSTRAK

Kajian itu bertujuan untuk menilai keberkesanan sistem digital dan latihan ke atasnya untuk meningkatkan kesan gaya kepimpinan dan pengurusan terhadap prestasi Kumpulan Perubatan Kehidupan Khusus. Kajian tindakan telah digunakan dalam kajian dan pelan intervensi telah direka untuk mengkaji perubahan dalam prestasi prestasi kumpulan. Kajian menggunakan kaedah campuran untuk pengumpulan data yang terdiri daripada kaedah kualitatif dan kuantitatif pesakit dan pekerja kumpulan yang menyemak akan digunakan sebagai responden kajian. Data yang dikumpul daripada kaedah campuran akan dianalisis. Teknik dan SPSS. Dapatan kajian mendapati bahawa intervensi dalam kumpulan sistem digital dan program latihan memberi impak kepada prestasi pekerja dan mengurangkan pusing ganti mereka. Terdapat perbezaan antara sebelum dan selepas intervensi kerana meningkatkan kemahiran dan pengetahuan di kalangan pasukan, dan memastikan pesakit setia melalui mengurangkan masa menunggu.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

SPSS - Social Sciences Statistical Package

UTM - University Technology Malaysia

HRM - Human Resource Management

HPWS - High-Performance Work Systems

EOA - Expert Opinion Analysis

MBA - Master of Business Administration

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to show the case of the study and discuss the research questions and objectives. It also illustrates the theoretical as well as practical significance of this study, moreover demonstrates the scope of this study, and a chapter summary will be provided at the end of this chapter.

1.2 Case Company

Specialty Life Medicine Group was founded in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 2000 under Registration No 1156. The Group provides medical services for society.

Furthermore, Specialty Life Medicine Group has established two branches in Abha and Jizan and is planning to develop more branches across the kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The group plans to expand to wherever the patients are, and there is no limit to the expansion. The branches owned by Specialty Life Medicine Group, have gained substantial popularity in the medical field and industry within the kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Specialty Life Medicine Group has an ambitious vision to be the leading integrated medical services group in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, providing high-quality medical services, and excellent patient-focused services to improve profitability and enhance shareholder value, contributing to sustainable economic growth.

Table 1. Company information and background

Business address	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Najran, King Abdul-Aziz Road
Registered address	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Najran. King Abdul-Aziz Road
Nature of business	Providing services in the field of health care on different specialties
Type of company	Private limited company.
Company name	Specialty Life Medicine Group

Specialty Life Medicine Group owns several branches; as shown in Table 2

Table 2. Specialty Life Medicine Group Branches.

Branch Name	Address
Abha	Abha, King Abdulla Road
Jizan	Sabya, Abu Bakr Al Siddik Road
Najran (Main branch)	King Abdulaziz Road

1.2.1.SWOT Analysis

A SWOT analysis has been conducted and an evaluation of internal and external analysis of Specialty Life Medicine Group provided. The internal analysis consists of strengths and weaknesses, and the external environment analysis consists of opportunities and threats. SWOT analysis aims to evaluate and analyse the internal and external environment and develop the best business development strategy.

Table 3. SWOT Analysis Specialty Life Medicine Group.

Strengths		Opportunities	
	<i>High experience in the medical field.</i>		<i>Embrace new technologies such as digital processes.</i>
	<i>Strong financial position and ability to raise additional finance and government support.</i>		<i>Population growth with a limited distinguished medical service</i>
Weaknesses		Threats	
	<i>Relying on traditional processes and transactions leads to delays in overall group processes.</i>		<i>Economic downturn due to outbreak of COVID-19.</i>
	<i>The lack of having digital system or processes</i>		<i>Fierce competition in the medical industry due to the increasing number of medical centers.</i>

Source: Author

The internal analysis helps the group to diagnose and evaluate its capabilities to create a competitive advantage (Nayak, Bhattacharyya & Krishnamoorthy, 2021). There are a few internal analysis components such as management information systems, management, culture, and research and development. With the analysis, the group's management will obtain a more precise image of its actual position to strategize the future business plan.

As shown in Table 3, one of the Specialty Life Medicine Group strengths is having high skills and experience in the medical field in the kingdom of Saudi Arabia, potential patients and competitors will recognize its skills and experience in the medical treatments and relevant health services and name as the patient first choice when looking for distinguished medical services in the kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The Specialty Life Medicine Group provides high-quality medical services and due care.

However, the internal SWOT analysis has shown that the Specialty Life Medicine Group has some weaknesses, causing the current problem (the delay of the overall group transactions and processes). One of the weaknesses is the lack of having a digital system or processes to shorten the service time and speed up the group's transactions and processes. The Specialty Life Medicine Group has no history of using digital systems or processes. Therefore, such weaknesses have brought several severe impacts on The Specialty Life Medicine Group

Based on the analysis, Specialty Life Medicine Group has a great chance to employ digital processes as long as the group has the resources to adopt this strategy; furthermore, the kingdom of Saudi Arabia is a developing country with high use and accessibility of the internet; therefore, The Specialty Life Medicine Group can take advantage of those opportunities to adopt the use of digital processes to add value to the group.

1.2.1.1 Conclusion on the SWOT analysis

From the above SWOT analysis, starting with strength, the company is positioned at a better success chance over others due to its vast experience and ability to raise funds for its processes. Looking at the weaknesses, the company has not yet embraced digital literacy and technology, and therefore, it should focus on improving the same to overcome over-reliance on outdated modes. This focus will enhance its operational efficiency and propel it ahead of other companies. On opportunities, there are still several opportunities available especially with the high population growth rate and advancement of technology. Based on threats, the medical field is large, and therefore, several similar companies are emerging. The threat resulting from the competition can be used as a greater advantage to the company to improve its services.

1.3 Problematic situation and problem formulation

The business environment in Saudi Arabia is in line with the definition of the term “a VUCA World,” a term that lately has been used by management writers to describe a Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, and Ambiguous environment (Horney et al., 2010).

The literature has emphasized the role of effective leadership in making organizations survive and thrive in a VUCA World. For example, (Bennett and Lemoine, 2014) mentioned how leaders in an organization can use the available and scarce resources to improve their organizations’ performance.

Changes happening in the Saudi private sector are expected to bring about many challenges that require actions on many fronts including government regulations and policies, financing solutions, improvements in the logistics

infrastructure, and—of particular importance for this study—more and better leaders and effective leadership management.

A common theme in the few studies on leadership in Saudi Arabia was a shortage of leaders, especially in the private sector (Alexander, 2011; Almohaimeed, 2014).

As a result of all of that, Specialty Life Medicine Group did not perform well and using traditional procedures and processes with lower working hours of only 12 hours, most hospitals used to operate 24 hours, especially emergency section, besides the employees leaving the Specialty Life Medicine Group and join the competitors, and therefore the group going concern status in the industry has become threatened. This poor performance and other issues such as traditional processes can be linked to the absence of digital processes, since the establishment of the Specialty Life Medicine Group in 2000,

Digital processes strategies have not received enough attention from the group's management. Hence, the group has faced several challenges to operate in light of the new reality caused by intense competition and competitors in the medical industry in Saudi. This new reality has made several changes to patients' behavior. For example, most patients have tended to have their medical treatments and care at hospitals operating 24 four hours with a very low waiting and fast service time and to avoid the crowds and long waiting hours. Therefore, the lack of a digital process strategy led the group to face many problems, such as very long waiting time, and the waiting time is the total time patient has to wait to receive medical treatment and services. As a result of these mentioned points, the group did not perform well and many employees have left to competitors, Therefore, providing medical treatment

and services in a reasonable time with no or very low waiting time through digital processes is crucial to improve the group performance.

Work processes and procedures are defined as the backbone of Hospitals. They play a significant role in maintaining the hospital's sustainability and ensuring stockholder wealth and health. However, the poor performance due to the traditional processes and employees leaving the group, after reviewing the payroll seventeen employees left with the last eight months, have been highlighted. The case reported to the group managing director that the chief financial officer pointed out that the group registered very low performance in terms of total numbers of inpatient and outpatient received medical treatment in the group medical centers, which may cause significant problems, such as fulfilling its liabilities. Moreover, it threatens the Specialty Life Medicine Group as a going concern. Table 4 below shows the total numbers of the employees left the group and the total number of patients both inpatient and outpatients treated in the group medical centers within the last eight months (Jan.2021 – Aug.2021)

Table 4. Total numbers of employees left, and the total number of patients who received medical treatment in the group's medical centers.

o.	Month	The total number of employees left the group	Total number of patients (in and outpatient) treated in the group's medical centers
	Jan.2021	1	815
	Feb.2021	3	695
	Mar.2021	1	502

	Apr.2021	1	483
	May.2021	2	427
	Jun.2021	3	397
	Jul.2021	4	354
	Aug.2021	2	328
	Total	17	4001

1.3.1 Ishikawa (Fish Bone) Diagram

Fishbone analysis is a tool for analyzing the business process and its effectiveness. It is also commonly referred to as the "Ishikawa Diagram" because it was invented and incorporated by Mr: Kaoru Ishikawa, a Japanese quality control statistician. It is defined as a fishbone because of its structural outlook and appearance of a skeleton of a fish. The fishbone diagram and analysis typically evaluate the causes and sub-causes of one particular problem and, therefore, help uncover all the symptoms of any business problem. For problem formulation in this study, the fishbone will be implemented.

Figure 1. Fish Bone diagram

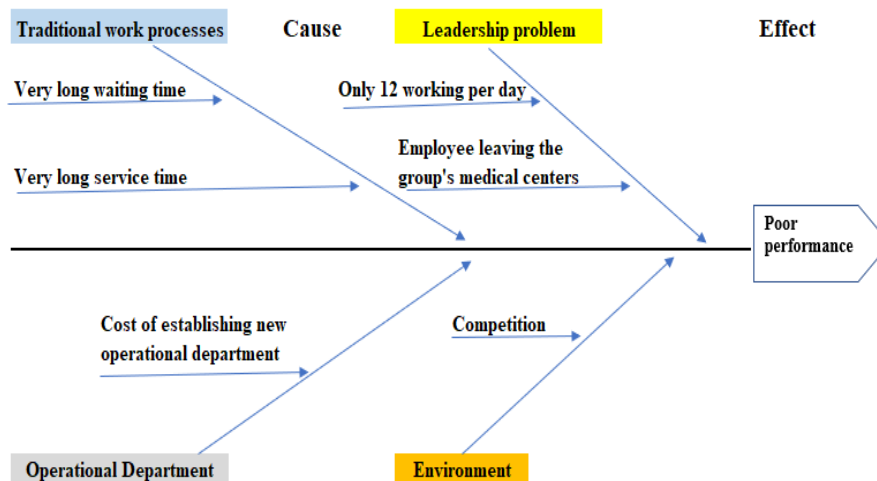


Figure 1 highlighted the root cause of the occurrence of poor performance in the Specialty Life Medicine Group, several reasons contribute to the poor performance in the Specialty Life Medicine Group.

Firstly, top management did not respond to resolve very material managerial issues within the group resulting in the group leadership problem, such as the issue of employees leaving the group and joining competitors, and the issue of working hours within the group’s medical centers, all of the group’s medical centers operates only twelve hours a day.

Secondly, the use of traditional working processes and procedures, the group adopt traditional workflow processes that result in a very long waiting time, the patient needs to wait for more than five hours to receive medical treatment and services in all of the group’s medical centers, not only that but also, the provision of medical treatments and medical services again is a very long time.

Finally, since the establishment of the Specialty Life Medicine Group in 2000, there has been no operational department for setting process strategies for the group, which is very important for continuous improvement of group performance.

Having an active and creative operational department is the major factor to gain patients' satisfaction with medical services provided by the group's medical centers, patient satisfaction in the medical environment can be obtained due to the vital role that the operational department performs in the medical centers. The absence of an operational department led to the inability to improve the workflow process, which adversely impacted patients' satisfaction with the group's medical center, therefore they shift to the competitors seeking reasonable service and therefore short waiting time, and responding to other patients' needs. Furthermore, the lack of digital processes within the group has created several problems, such as miscommunication with patients. This miscommunication is shown through the group's inability to respond to the patients' needs and wants.

1.4 Research goal

The researcher will identify the research questions depending on the research problem which has been explained in a very detailed in the Problem Statement section, besides that the researcher will also emphasize the research objectives of this research.

1.4.1 Research questions

RQ 1. What factors drive the patient's intention to the medical services provided by The Specialty Life Medicine Group?

RQ 2. What processes or procedures can be implemented to enhance The Specialty Life Medicine Group medical services?

RQ 3. Do the proposed digital processes strategies effectively improve the performance of The Specialty Life Medicine Group?

1.4.2 Research objectives

RO 1. To investigate factors that drive the patient's intention to the medical services provided by The Specialty Life Medicine Group.

RO 2. To propose effective intervention to enhance the Specialty Life Medicine Group medical services performance.

RO 3. To evaluate whether the proposed digital processes strategies effectively enhance the Specialty Life Medicine Group medical services performance or not

1.5 Researcher role

The researcher role in this study is as follows:

An interview was conducted with the Specialty Life Medicine Group managing director, to identify the problem facing the group. During the interview, the researcher asked a group of questions covering most of the group management processes and activities, followed by a discussion for all interviewing answers that identified the delay in processes as a research problem.

For Specialty Life Medicine Group problem diagnosis, the researcher will adopt the fishbone diagram, because it effectively evaluates the causes and sub-causes of one particular problem; moreover, the fishbone diagram provides a useful method that helps researchers uncover all the business problem symptoms.

Based on the problem diagnosis, the researcher has developed an intervention that relies on digital processes that assist Specialty Life Medicine Group in overcoming the identified problem. Thus, the Specialty Life Medicine Group management has agreed to appoint me as a process improvement assistant, this

proposed intervention will be applied to the Specialty Life Medicine Group during the current study period. The intervention will be re-evaluated to recognize whether it helps the company resolve the problem or if the improvement is needed.

The required data will be appropriately collected, taking into account the outbreak of COVID-19 in Saudi Arabia; therefore, the study will adopt an online questionnaire to collect responses. Also, further interviews will be held at the Specialty Life Medicine Group office at Najran. Data will be coded and analyzed using the SPSS software program.

1.6 Research ethic:

Many types of ethical standards should be considered when conducting research, the research and researcher should avoid harming the research participants, although the ethical principles differ from county to country in the research, these are fundamental ethical behavior and principles of the research, departure from fundamental ethical principles may lead the research to be criticized, one of fundamental of research ethics is that the researcher should attempt to minimize the risk of harm to the research participants, and during the process of data collection the researcher adheres to the privacy and confidentiality of respondents.

The researcher will not force anyone to answer the questionnaire. The responders have a right to express their opinions and thoughts without any interference from my side to ensure credibility and reliability. Further, the researcher will make sure that all personal information of the respondents is confidential. Also, the researcher commits to providing that all patients' information will be used only for education and is confidential. Lastly, the researcher will make sure this study's

findings are available for others, contributing to the knowledge transition and exploiting this knowledge to benefit hospitals, medical centers, and the community.

1.7 Importance of the proposed research

This study will have a significant contribution to obtaining more information and knowledge on the impact of digital processes in improving performance within the Specialty Life Medicine Group.

1.7.1 Theoretical

Digital process innovations in Health care influence operations and processes, the previous studies reveal various patterns in this regard, (Hong and Lee 2017) analyzed the effects of HIT and supported knowledge skills on Health Care quality and customer loyalty. They found a positive correlation between operational innovation and patient satisfaction, (Hong & Lee, 2017; Rubbio, Bruccoleri, Pietrosi, & Ragonese, 2019). A further contribution to this aspect is provided by Laurenza et al. (2018) they studied the influence of digital technologies on business process performance in the health care industry, throughout the case of the Italian pharmaceutical company MSD Italy. Their results showed that the adoption of digital technologies positively impacts the quality of care, moreover, Mazor, Heart, and Even (2016) developed a prototype of a digital dashboard that assesses the impact on patients' duration of stay in emergency departments of hospitals. the simulation results of their investigations showed that the average length of stay can potentially be reduced by 34%, therefore improving productivity.

1.7.2 Practical

Nowadays, hospitals and health care centers in Saudi face real problems and challenges related to leadership management. As a result of such challenges, many private hospitals and centers registered very poor performance in terms of the total numbers of patients being treated, which threatened the going concern of those centers.

Therefore, the outcomes of this study can assist the Specialty Life Medicine Group in particular and others in the same industry to address the problems related to leadership and reduce its impact on their hospitals and medical centers. Furthermore, the finding of this study will shed light on the importance of using digital processes and their effects on the Specialty Life Medicine Group performance.

Encouraging the company's management to recognize the operational department's fundamental role can enhance the group performance, providing more resources for the operational department to operate effectively. The intervention plan proposed in this study can be a reference for the Specialty Life Medicine Group management to solve and quickly respond to similar problems in the future.

1.8 Summary of Chapter

In summary, the problem facing the Specialty Life Medicine Group is the use of traditional processes and procedures resulting in poor performance. Thus, the group's poor performance can be linked to several reasons, such as changing patient's behavior. This research can identify factors and provide solutions via using digital processes strategies to assist the Specialty Life Medicine Group. to address this problem. A comprehensive literature review of prior studies related to the research area will be developed in chapter 2 as well as the study framework.

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