

Chapter 11

Influence of Practice Management Software on Dental Services: A Case Study Approach

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ABSTRACT

In the 21st century, the main focus of technological advances is on data. Practice management software (PMS) is having its highest demand in the international market as a tool helping dental services operate in a better way. The main focus of this research is on analyzing the role of the implementation of PMS in dental clinics in Tirana, capital city of Albania. Qualitative and quantitative data through semi-structured interviews and surveys was collected to analyze the case. Low purchasing power, lack of knowledge, and informality in Albania are some of the limitations that restrain dentists implement new technologies. The results show that PMS implementation adds value to dental clinics through more effective and efficient services and improved customer relationship management.

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INTRODUCTION

Nowadays it is difficult to imagine a world without technology. The digital revolution that is transforming every aspect of the life is also impacting dentistry and medicine in many ways. Healthcare industry is one of the earliest to implement and integrate healthcare technologies. Yet, the paper system has stymied the ability of care givers to access the information vital to the delivery of care (Omachonu & Einspruch, 2010). During the past several decades healthcare has experienced an explosion of innovations designed to improve life expectancy and quality of life of patients. From electronic record-keeping and data analysis to the latest innovative diagnostic tools, technology has proved to be revolutionizing the healthcare industry. As Govindarajan (2007) emphasize, new digital information, nanotechnology, semiconductor products, and genetic engineering are revolutionizing health care, making old assumptions invalid and creating unanticipated prospects for innovation and improvement of existing processes

The adoption of technologies such as practice management software by the dentistry has enabled dentists to focus on the patients and improvement of customer relationship by allowing dentists to perform multiple tasks such as generating and compiling clinical, administrative and financial data efficiently. The state-of-the-art software solutions also enable dentists to manage their workflow and maximize the chair time utilization by attending more patients which leads to profit increase. Thus, the innovation that comes along with dental practice management software has completely transformed the dentistry sector worldwide.

Dentem is more than just a customer relationship management platform or electronic health record. It is a practice management software which allows dental practices to be more reliable and flexible. It offers a very neat and user-friendly page where dental practice can have a presence online and show the most important information. It also comes in the form of an application which provides some extremely helpful services to the dentists. Agenda management, patients and staff management, image uploading is only some of the services offered by this platform.

Dental health service in Albania is provided by both public and private sector. Private sector is considered the main provider since all dental clinics in Albania are privately owned and many patients with average incomes prefer private dental care clinics for the quality they provide. The good conditions and latest technology used to have a competitive advantage in the market make the private sector way more efficient and responsive to the needs of the patients; while public dental services exist at low efficiency.

Even though it has been decades now that technology and innovation has improved the way dental clinics operate in the market, this doesn't seem to be the case of Albania. Schwab (2017), in the Global Competitiveness Report for 2017-

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