

Assessing the Strategic Position of Telemedicine Technology in Iran

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Original Article

Abstract

Introduction: Given the very broad nature of telemedicine technology and its interaction with other available technologies and socio- economic effects, this technology requires long-term planning. The first step in the developing of telemedicine technology is recognizing the strategic role of this technology in the country. This study aims to investigate the strategic use of telemedicine technology in the country.

Methods: This research was a descriptive survey. Data gathering tool was a questionnaire. A purposive sampling method was used. The tables which were used for data analysis consisted of minimum and maximum scores, also median and inter-quartile range.

Results: To determine the status of environmental factors, the experts have given score 3 for all four factors. There were no controversies about the status of social environment of telemedicine in Iran (inter-quartile distance= 0). To determine the status of internal factors, the experts have given score 3 for financial and knowledge resources. Score 3 representing the relative strength in this setting. There were no controversies about the status of internal factors (inter-quartile distance=1). The total score for all internal factors were 790, of which experts dedicated 297 for Iran status. This score is 38% of total score and indicates that Iran has relative weakness in this regard.

Discussion and Conclusion: SWOT analysis to specify strategic situation of telemedicine technology shows that Iran has located in 4th section of strategic situation table in terms of applying telemedicine technology. Environmental situation for this technology in Iran is slightly positive, while internal factors are a bit weak. In this way, we recommend that in the current strategic situation, an internal empowering policy with strengthening of infrastructure should be used.

Key words: Telemedicine, Technology evaluation, Strategic status, Iran

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