

NAVIGATING LEADERSHIP IN NURSING: ASSESSING EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP AMONG NURSE MANAGERS

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Abstract

Background: Effective nursing leadership is essential for guaranteeing a top-quality of patient care, enhancing the group performance, and creating a conducive work place environment. Nurse managers especially have a fundamental role in integrating the administrative demands and the day-to-day needs of frontline workers especially nurses. With the healthcare organizations experiencing mounting challenges, including nursing shortages, shifting patient care needs, and structural changes, competent and effective leadership has never been more important. Emotional intelligence (EI) and authentic leadership (AL) have been referred to as determinants of effective leadership with EI facilitating the understanding and management of emotions by leaders. AL ensures ethical, transparent, and self-aware leadership style. While EI and AL are important, few studies have examined EI and AL specifically for nurse managers in terms of their interaction. This research intends to explore these two dimensions of leadership, gauging their interrelation and effect on the effectiveness of nursing leadership with a view to providing knowledge that will make leadership development and training more effective in health organizations.

Result: The findings identify that the nurse managers exhibit a high emotional intelligence on all of dimensions, such as self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills, to strengthen their leadership performance. They also exhibit high ratings of authentic leadership in terms of self-consciousness, moral fibre, and right-headed decisions, which signifies a strong foundation for ethically and openly oriented leadership in healthcare organizations.

Conclusion: The research concludes that nurse managers have a high emotional intelligence and genuine leadership attributes, which influence the workplace relationships and ethical decision-making in a positive manner. These leadership attributes, such as self-awareness, empathy, and moral integrity, are necessary for developing effective team management and quality patient care.

Keywords: Leadership, Nursing, Emotional Intelligence, Authentic Leadership, Nurses Managers.

Introduction

Successful nursing leadership is important for promoting a quality patient care, teamwork, and a healthy work place environment. Nurse managers have a significant role to play in leading the healthcare teams, making an ethical choices, and administrative duties and clinical tasks. Authentic leadership, which involves a self-awareness, relational transparency, internalized moral perspective, and balanced processing, has been a identified as an important driver of the organizational performance for the improvement and employee engagement. Emotional intelligence is a key factor for effective leadership. Good leadership contribute satisfaction and performance. This evidence indicates that it is important to design leaders in emotional intelligence (Gómez-Leal et al., 2022).

There is also a need to align the work environment to address interpersonal competency education considering research on emotional intelligence, experiential learning and transformational learning (Fulmore et al., 2023). Moreover, issues like excessive workload, communication issues, and ethical challenges could affect their potential to effectively demonstrate these kinds of leadership traits. Knowing how the nurse managers assess and utilize these dimensions of leadership is crucial in determining the strengths and areas of weakness. The study seeks to examine the existence and influence of these kinds of leadership characteristics among the nurse managers and offer a insights that could help with the leadership development and enhanced healthcare management.

Methods

Research Design

This study employs a descriptive correlational design within a quantitative research approach. As described by Pandey and Pandey (2023), quantitative research systematically gathers and analyzes numerical data to assess variables and evaluate hypotheses.

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Respondents of the Study

This study will include 129 participants, specifically selected from nurse managers working in Level 2 hospitals. The sample size is determined based on the methodologies.

Instruments of the Study

A specialist content-validated the self-developed questionnaires and affirmed that the new instrument could be utilized in the study. For reliability, internal consistency was determined. Internal consistency, states Middleton (2020), is the degree to which items assessing the same construct produce similar responses. It is normally tested by statistical means such as Cronbach's alpha, which calculates the average correlation among the test items to find the reliability.

Result

Demographic Profile

Most of the respondents are between 21–31 years old (29.9%), and the other groups follow from 21% to 25%. Gender distribution is almost even, with 48.5% being female and 51.5% being male. Most of them have 1–5 years of experience (27.8%), followed by others with 6 to 15+ years (23%–25%). The sample consists of very educated individuals with 27.8% having a master's degree and 36.1% having either a bachelor's or doctoral degree.

Emotional Intelligence Among Nurse Managers

The findings show that the nurse managers have a high emotional intelligence in all the variables. They have an excellent self-awareness, being aware of their feelings, strengths, and weaknesses. Their self-regulation enables them to remain calm, even handle a conflicts professionally, and create a harmonious working environment for their team. They are also highly motivated with the persistence, initiative, and resilience in coping with the difficulties. Their empathy can be seen in their capacity to comprehend and assist their co-workers, fitting into the team members' affective needs. Finally, their good social skills facilitate them with a efficient communication, collaboration, and conflict resolution. The uniformly high ratings indicate that the overall perception of strong emotional intelligence among participants.

Similar to the result states that nurse managers generally scored higher in EI compared to average working adults (Hirai & Yoshioka, 2020). Nurses perceive EI as crucial in clinical settings, identifying benefits such as improved patient care and job satisfaction, but also noting barriers to its development (Lu & Shorey, 2021). It has shown a positive correlation between nurses' EI and nurse-nurse collaboration, which can lead to enhanced job satisfaction, retention, and healthcare efficiency (Al-Hamdan et al., 2021).

Authentic Leadership in Nurse Managers

The findings show that the nurse managers have high self-consciousness, relational transparency, internalized moral point of view, and balanced processing, all of which lead to a effective leadership. They are reflective about their leadership decisions and are accountable for the errors, although they indicate a slightly lower agreement with adherence to personal values. Relational transparency is rated as moderate, implying the perception of fairness and openness but a requirement for improvement in encouraging an open communication with the team. Their internalized moral point of view is strong in terms of ethical leadership, especially in leading by example and integrity. Balanced processing had the highest ratings, highlighting their capacity to think about the different points of view, solicit feedback, and make a fair decisions. The overall consensus shows a strong foundation for the ethical and transparent leadership.

Similarly stated that authentic leadership is positively correlated with work engagement (Hazar Assi et al., 2024), staff performance (Safa'a Ali Allan & A. Rayan, 2023), and nurses' resilience and self-efficacy (Heba Farouk Mohammad et al., 2023). It is also negatively associated with nurses' intention to leave (Safa'a Ali Allan & A. Rayan, 2023). However, research indicates that a significant proportion of nurse managers exhibit low levels of authentic leadership, mindfulness, and managerial competencies (Warda Mohammed Elsayed Shurab et al., 2024).

Proposed Program

The following programs are proposed to enhance nurse leadership effectiveness:

Emotional Intelligence Building Program

This initiative is designed to enhance the nurse managers' emotional intelligence by offering a training on self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Workshops, role-playing exercises, and reflection practices will be incorporated to enable the nurse managers to handle emotions more effectively, resolve the issues, and establish effective team dynamics.

Authentic Leadership Training Initiative

Designed to promote self-awareness, relational openness, and moral character, this initiative will provide nurse managers with the means to lead ethically and openly. The program will involve mentoring, peer review, and scenario discussions to foster ethical decision-making and the development of leadership values that are congruent with organizational objectives.

Leadership Communication and Team Building Program

Intended to enhance the relational transparency and effective communication skills, the program will work towards the development of the transparent, effective lines of communication between the nursing teams. The program will consist of trust-building workshops, constructive feedback giving, and a teamwork-based leadership which facilitates the team members' participation in decision-making and problem-solving initiatives.

Conclusion

It conclude that the results of the study bring to the highlight the strong levels of emotional intelligence and authentic leadership among nurse managers, which are important in shaping effective leadership



within healthcare organizations. Nurse managers are characterized by strong self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills, leading to positive work environments and effective team management. Furthermore, their internalized moral framework, relational openness, self-awareness, and balanced processing enhance their capacity for leading ethically and openly. The findings reinforce the significance of such leadership capacities for improving teamwork, facilitating ethical decision-making, and providing quality patient care and suggest that a deeper development of such competencies can enhance leadership behaviors in nursing.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest in this manuscript. Results have been deduced objectively; nothing influenced this result by any individual, monetary, or institutional interests. In effect, utmost endeavors were in order to conduct a bias-free operation of gathering and analyzing the data into interpretation and producing a study based on merit, away from research inconsistencies.

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