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Research Article

Impact of Leadership Practices of Unit Managers on Working Environment

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Abstract

Background: Leadership can be defined is the process of influencing employee in a way to achieve and meet the organizational goals and objective, nursing manager in hospital have authority and in a position to influence on hospital working environment either in positive or negative way, the main power of a nurse unit manager are their leadership styles which affect directly on working environment of the unit. **Objective:** To identify the leadership practices of unit manager and its impact on working environment of nursing staff. **Methodology:** this study was carried out by using a Quantitative descriptive co-relational study design, sample size was 154 which was selected by convenient sampling techniques. **Results:** all the study participants were female, majority 31% of study participants' fall in age group of 30-33 years of age. 72% of participants has qualification of general nursing. 72% of the study participants stated that "Manager Set a personal example of what she expects of others" while the response of 18% stated that mangers didn't set personal example. 66% of the study participants shows negative response that "Manager is clear to about his/her philosophy of leadership practice" while 15% have positive response to this statement and 19% were neutral. **Conclusion:** Leadership practice of nurse manager are playing an important role nurses job satisfaction, performance and empowerment. There are very few study carried out to show the level of empowerment in nurses in their respective organization. This study clearly stated that this is very important for nurse manager to know about the leadership style and its effect on subordinates.

Keywords: leadership practice; unit manager; working environment

Introduction

According to Porter O'Grady the significance of an effective leadership is becoming more prominent and every organizations are seeking for an effective manager and leaders to manage the organization and their unit in a more competent and efficient way with the aim of reducing patient complaint and providing quality care with the ultimate purpose of staff retention (Giltinane, 2013).

Health care systems are revolving under pressure due to cost-effective limitations, populations' health, day by day developing of disease, increasing number of clients and their demand. For ready access toward quality care and a wide-ranging of services and concerns the manager leadership practices should be reliable which relate to recruitment and retention of a skilled health workforce that

can meet the needs of their communities (Roberts *et al.*, 2014).

The more effective unit manager practices the more nurses are satisfied of their jobs, this ultimately improve the quality of care and organizational outcome. Job satisfaction is an important factor for retention of health workers within organization. Multiple factors have influenced the job satisfaction among nurses working in the public sector hospitals of Pakistan. A study revealed that 60% of nurses are satisfied with their job and 85.5% are dissatisfied which is similar with the results of Abbottabad13 where nurses were mostly dissatisfied with poor skill utilization and their manager behaviour (Waqar and Hamid, 2016).

Use of leadership practices of unit manager and employee job satisfaction are related to each other. Study showed the

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29% of job satisfaction of registered nurses by the use of leadership practices of unit manager which is similar to the study of unite state of America. (Roberts *et al.* 2014). A study conducted by (Bormann and Abrahamson, 2014) shows that there is strong relationship between leadership practices and empowerment and job satisfaction. Giving the right of decision making on workplace empower the employee and increase the job satisfaction. The findings showed 9% registered nurses of satisfaction on job and 46% empowerment in their workplace environment. (Laschinger 2014) reported that 53% of nurses leaves their organizations because they were dissatisfied with the lack of input to decision making that affect them. As study conducted by (Van Bogaert, *et al.* 2013) showed that 8.3% of nurses were dissatisfied with their jobs, 5.9% intended to leave the hospital within one year, and 10.9% had plans to leave the nursing profession. Health care systems are continuously change and growing rapidly in order to improve quality of care, standard of services provided and reduce the complaint of customers, for this many researches are carried out which find the role of nurse unit manager as a leader is very important. Numerous report on quality of care and patient safety stated that organizations focusing on the leadership practice of manager are more successful and rapidly growing because of the effective leadership practice of nurse manager staff remain and work in a professional and better working environment (Huotari 2016).

Leadership can be defined is the process of influencing employee in a way to achieve and meet the organizational goals and objective, leadership can be classified in two main type, first one transformational and the second one is transactional leadership style. Transactional leadership style doesn't work for changing existing organizational environment and work. While transformational leadership style strive for change in existing environment and this leader can try to bring some positive changes to improve the existing working environment, in the context of nurse unit manager they can to utilize the existing environment with some positive change to differentiate different nursing goals and improve working environment for nursing staff (Skansi 2017).

Nursing manager in hospital have authority and in a position to influence on hospital working environment either in positive or negative way, the main power of a nurse unit manager are their leadership styles which affect directly on working environment of the unit. The nurse unit manager are under constant pressure keep up with organizational reforms and change within the health care system, promote strategies to meet the organization goals and objectives (Blackman *et al.*, 2015).

The role of nurse unit manager are to deal with the complex environment, uncertainty of the situation, demands and protocol of the patient and organization, prioritizing the

patient need and department need according to the available resources and also to explore the new way to deal with any uncertainty, the effective leadership practice of nurse manager can meet and resolve all the conflict raised and meet the hospital and patient expectation with no effect on professional nursing environment (Bambao, 2017).

Leadership practice of a nurse manager effect every aspect of the health care system including utilizing human resource, improving quality of care and achieving organizational goals. Effective nurse leaders can actively and properly manage their subordinates and allocate staffing according to need which improve nursing professional environment and staff satisfaction by preventing staff from extra physical and psychological burden. It organizational level the nurse manager can utilize her skills and contribute in decision making meeting through active participation and also reserve the right of their staff according to hospital policy (Wong and Laschinger, 2013).

Problem Statement

Nursing staff are playing an important role in patient care and achieving organization goals but in many situations nurses are discouraged and demotivated by their managers and making the work environment very stressful. Without proper support of nurse unit manager, it is not possible for nurses to deliver quality care. Furthermore, it will have bad impact on patients. Leadership practices of unit manager have strong effect on working environment of nurses in the form of job satisfaction or dissatisfaction. A study conducted by (Regan, *et al.* 2016) Showed the 46% rate of leadership practices and its strong impact on nurses working environment. Pakistan is faces crisis in nursing profession due to improper leadership practices of nurse unit manager. The nurse's job dissatisfaction rate regarding their manager practices are high in Pakistan 22.5% as compared to Hong Kong which have 10% (Stuart, *et al.* 2017) .Currently in clinical settings nurses face a lot of issue, due to unfavourable work environment. They do great effort for quality of care but the work outcome is not compatible to their struggle. This might be due to unit manager leadership practices which influence the nurses working environment in the form of lack of empowerment/right of decision making and job dissatisfaction. Which seriously effecting the organization outcome (Clavelle, *et al.* 2013).

Study objective

The purpose of this study is to explore the impact of leadership practices of unit managers on working environment.

Literature Review

It is evident from a study that offering solution for most of the problem is usual in a healthcare organization by the nurse manager in their specific unit and the manager cover

many of the situation which can create problem. The nurse manager core role is to manage the ward and human resource of the unit in a proper way to fulfil patient needs and keep the staff in a professional working environment. Study findings showed 86% rate of impact manager practices on working environment (Hutchinson 2013). This revealed from a study that there are many studies on staff empowerment while very few studies which focus on the ability of the nurse manager to empower their staff and give them the power of decision making. It is evident from his study that the perception of nurse manager regarding staff empowerment is depend on the efficacy of nursing staff, their practical skills and theoretical knowledge these all play an important role in staff empowerment, nurse manager can easily empower their staff in while giving them courage, knowledge and an opportunity for professional growth (Clavelle, et al. 2013). Study shows that unit manager plays a very critical role in the currently rapid changing health care environment which include increased number of patient, financial burdens and the shortage of the nursing staff and other human resource. The nurse unit manager need to allocate sufficient nursing staff in the unit according to patient need to avoid any mismanagement. The leadership practice of nurse manager can improve hospital management system and working environment for their staff (Johansson, et al. 2013). It is evident from his study that empowerment in an organization can be divide into six empowerment structure in work environment which are mainly affected by leadership practice of the manager. These six structure are access to opportunity, information, and support, and resources, formal and informal power. The success of an organization depend on empowering their staff in all this aspects, whenever there are missing in these empowerment structure than staff feel that organization didn't value their views and didn't give them the proper place they deserve then the organization fail to achieve their goal. In the context of nursing profession nurses also want the same empowerment structure within organization and if there is any failure or mismanagement from the nurse manager then the nursing staff will never feel satisfied (Baruah and Borah, 2015). A study described that nurses' empowerment is an essential element contributing as a positive influence on the nursing profession. The leaders must help their subordinates in their professional development by giving them responsibilities and guiding them to fulfil these responsibilities efficiently. Study emphasizes the importance of nurses' empowerment, for fulfilling their professional responsibilities of empowering individuals and community for their health and well-being. Study explicitly claims that nurse leader cannot empower their nurses, if they themselves feel powerless (Gulzar, et al. 2016). Leadership practice of nurse manager affect job satisfaction in numerous way, job satisfaction can be defined as "a pleasurable or emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences". It is

evident from his study that leadership practice of nurse manager directly proportional with job satisfaction of staff. Nursing manager lead the specific unit in the health care organization and have the responsibility to manage the staff accordingly and help them feel satisfied and empower in decision making (Murphy, et al. 2013). According to (kousar, et al. 2017) stated that the job satisfaction depends on interpersonal and intrapersonal interactions. The interaction of registered nurses with nurse managers is important to examine leadership practices. When the manager nurses interact negatively with their subordinates (registered nurses) give the mental stress to them, it produces conflicts and these conflicts decrease the job satisfaction. Study provide the evidence that the nurses work environment has significant impact on nurses job satisfaction which increase their job stress, if the environment are good for nurses they increase their job satisfaction and decrease their stress level and if the environment is stressful, it decrease their job satisfaction (Kousar et al. 2017).

Methodology

The setting for this study was different wards and nursing counter of Jinnah hospital Lahore. A Quantitative descriptive co-relational study design was used for this study. Target population for this study was 154 Nursing staff (RN) of Jinnah hospital Lahore. Convenient sampling technique was used. Data were collected from the participant through self-administered Questionnaire the sample size for this study was 154. All Nursing staffs were included who have age 22 to 41 years, and have at least 1 year of experience, and those who are willing to participate in this study. Nursing staffs were excluded who are not willing to participate in this study and have age below 22 years and above 41 years and have less than 1 year of experience.

Ethical Consideration

Enough information of research was provided to participants with help of full consent and this was achieved via a consent form attach to the questionnaire. Confidentiality was considered by informing participants. Letter of conducting research was taken from the ethical committee of the University of Lahore, Lahore School of Nursing to carry out this research.

Results and Discussion

Data was collected from female nurses only in Jinnah Hospital Lahore and the total sample size was 154. According to Table 1, all participants were female and contributing of 154 (100%). The range of nurses' age was between 22 to 41 years, it is also evident from Table 1 that most of the participants fall in age group of 30-33 years contributing 31% of the total population while the least number fall in age group of 38-41 years contributing 9% of the total population. Moreover, Table 1 shows that 122

(79%) participants have qualification of General Nursing which was the highest number in this study while only 10(6%) have qualification of Master Degree in Nursing. 51% of the participants have 4-6 year of professional experience while only 11% have more than 10 years of experience. 44% of the participants complete their nursing training before 7-9 years while 14% completed their training before 1-years. More detail about demographics of the Participants are shown in Table 1. The leadership practices of nurse unit mangers play an important role in staff empowerment, performance and job satisfaction. This study was conducted to find the impact of leadership practices and its impact on working environment of nursing staff. The total sample size of 154 nursing staff were conveniently selected from Jinnah Hospital Lahore to collect data which include 100% of female participants and have no male participant in this study due to unavailability of male participants. The majority of study participants fall in age group of 30-33 years contributing 31% of the total population while most of the participants (79%) have qualification general nursing. Participants were asked about the leadership practices of their nurse unit mangers 72% of the study participants stated that "Manager Set a personal example of what she expect of others" while 18% didn't think so this results shows that the majority of study participants believed that vial it is important for nurse manager to set their role as an example for their follower. This results are also supported by Bormann and Abrahamson (2014) it is found in his study that 79% of nurse manger play an exemplary role for their subordinated to follow him and achieve organizational goal in a more competent way. This is also evident from the results of this study that 80% of study participants' believed that effective leadership practice of nurse mangers is to talk about future trends that will influence how our work gets done. This shows that mangers always keep eyes on future goals and make strategies for their achievements. These results are also supported by Roberts (2014) this is revealed from his study that the role of nurse manager in a health care facility is very prominent which decide the objective and make a path way for accomplishment of his objectives, 64% of his study participants were agreed that their manger set future goals while 36% were not agreed, the majority were stated that the important role of the nurse manager is to set future goals. Majority 66% of study participants stated that their Manager is unclear about his/her philosophy of leadership. It is evident from this study that mangers are trying to manage department but they have no clear leadership style either to follow a transitional leadership or transformational leadership. These results are also supported by Chatalalsingh and Reeves (2014), it is evident from his study that majority of the team leader in a health care organization are unable to identify the correct style of leadership in specific situation, 68% of the team leader were get confused when they face some unusual situation and

unable to solve the problem in an effective way. This is also evident from the results of this study that 63% of stud participants stated that their manger didn't provide an opportunity for challenging work. Manager need to work with their subordinates in a very cooperative way and allow the novice and old staff for challenging work to get confidence and make the task completed with or without in the absence of manager, but if manager didn't give an opportunity to their staff then they will never be satisfied from their job. These findings are also supported by Skansi (2017) stated that effective mangers always provide an opportunity for their subordinates to work freely but from the results of his study 71% of his study participants believed that their manager didn't provide an opportunity for new skills and management. Study findings shows that 74% of study participants stated that behavior of manager didn't increase their level of satisfaction which is very alarming sign for the health care organization to work on the behavior of nursing managers. Nurse Manager are influencing the working environment in a multiple way and the behavior of nurse manager play an important role in staff satisfaction. These results are also evident from the study of Van (2013) that majority 58% of nurse manger influence the behaviour of nursing staff in a negative way and he stated furthermore that nurse manager should be role model for every staff to build their level of satisfaction. This is a cross sectional study with a minimum sample hence the result can't be generalized.

Table 1: Demographic data

Demographic	Classification	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	0	0%
	Female	154	100%
	Total	154	100%
Age	22-25yrs	27	17.5 %
	26-29yrs	44	28.6%
	30-33yrs	48	31.2 %
	34-37yrs	21	13.6 %
	38-41yrs	14	9.1%
	Total	154	100%
Qualification	General Nursing	122	79.2 %
	BSN (Post RN)	22	14.3 %
	BSN (Generic)	10	6.5%
	Total	154	100%
Professional Experience	1-3 Years	27	17.5%
	4-6 Years	79	51.3%
	7-9 Years	30	19.5%
	10 and Above	18	11.7%
	Total	154	100%
From How Long You are a registered Nurse	1-3 Years	22	14.3%
	4-6 Years	48	31.2%
	7-9 Years	68	44.2%
	10 and Above	16	10.4%
	Total	154	100%

Table 2: Questions for performance appraisal

Performance Appraisal	Never	Rarely	Sometime	Often	Always
Your manager gives you rewards for innovation on the job.	44(28.6%)	44(28.6%)	23(14.9%)	30(19.5%)	13(8.4%)
Your manager provides you the amount of flexibility on job.	39(25.3%)	43(27.9%)	22(14.3%)	31(20.1%)	19(12.3%)
The amount of visibility of my work-related activities within the institution is.	7(4.5%)	17(11%)	4(2.6%)	60(39%)	66(42.9%)
Your manager appraises you when you have some good work	16(10.4%)	32(20.8%)	19(12.3%)	37(24%)	50(32.5%)
Your manager praises you for job well done.	13(8.4%)	10(6.5%)	9(5.8%)	54(35.1%)	68(44.2%)

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