

The Effect of Leadership Styles of Managers on the Loyalty of Nurses in Government Hospitals Level and its Impact on the High Level of Quality of Health Care

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Abstract: *It is a known fact that employees get affected by their leaders. In the field of health care as well nurse leaders and managers has an astounding effect on staff nurses. The extent of such leadership and effective communication is such that it forms to be the deciding factor whether nurses will remain with the hospital for long term or not. This paper is an evaluation of the same in Australia government hospitals.*

Keywords: nurse manager's leadership styles, impact on nurses, manager's leadership styles, leadership style of nurse managers, influence manager's leadership style.

1. Introduction

It is a known fact that leadership styles are the basis using which communication is strengthened in the employees in an organization. It is on the basis of this leadership quality and style that employees feel engaged and associated with the organization. It is also the reason why they remain loyal to the firm for years. Hence, the subject of choosing the most appropriate and effective leadership style for communicating becomes a crucial decision making choice for the management. In Australia it has been witnessed that nurses in hospitals and clinics in government hospitals are positively affected and showcases loyalty if there is an effective leadership style prevalent in the management (Nyberg, Bernin and Theorell, 2005). The reason for this has been speculated that they are having adequate satisfaction in their job roles due to the smooth inter communication channel they have with their team and higher management. The nurses in these hospitals get the adequate support needed for them to continue their job role for years in one hospital. This paper discusses the same in a detailed form.

Research Question/Aim

The main purpose of this research is to answer the question that what kind of leadership style can be used by managers so that it positively improves satisfaction level of nurses engaged in Australian government hospitals and its direct impact on their loyalty and quality of health care services provided.

Methodology Proposed

A combination of both qualitative and quantitative methodology is proposed in undergoing this research paper. For this three government hospitals of Australia has been chosen.

Project Aim

The primary purpose of his paper is to make a demonstration of how various styles of leadership has an

effect on the job satisfaction levels of the nurses working with hospitals in the healthcare field. A satisfied employee is considered to be a better engaged one and one who in turn serves the customer better.

Research Implications

Transformational style of leadership has won the highest score in the test where these three hospitals in Australia has participated. The second style of leadership which resulted in great scores was the transactional style of leadership. And the last was the type of passive avoidant kind of leadership role. The study showcased great levels of job satisfaction in nurses. The first two type of leadership has a direct relationship with the level of job satisfaction of nurses while the third showcased a negative result. The conclusion drawn in this paper hence shows that the higher the level of transformational leadership in managers, the highest is the quality of health care and loyalty of nurses.

2. Background and Context

The main reason of the existence of the healthcare sector in the world is to provide quality health care services to the community. The health care organizations are also accountable for the quality of services they provide and the resources they use for this purpose. Nurses are the direct representation of health care. They are the medium or the face which is directly interacting and solving the health issues and providing care and support wherever needed. Many literatures has hence studied about the job satisfaction of the nurses. Here an interesting correlation has been witnessed. There occurs a relationship of how managers in a health care service communicate using a particular or a combination of leadership style and their satisfaction levels about their employment (Alloubani, Almatari & Almkhtar, 2014). A hospital be it a private or a government cannot keep changing its nurses. Good quality nurses once recruited must be retained for long to ensure quality health care giving possible. It is also a matter of the reputation and credibility of the hospital concerned.

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The work of nurses takes place in groups in most of the scenarios. Hence it requires leadership for its effective execution. One can presume high job satisfaction amongst nurses where there is the presence of high quality effective leadership (Huber, 2010). In turn this has a profound effect on the patient satisfaction levels and thus works in favor of hospitals.

Leadership can be defined as a process of transformed ideas where the leader has a clear vision about the future keeping the organization in the picture and initiates various creative and efficient ways and processes using which the team members or the followers can work together to achieve the goals set by the organization (Schreuder, Roelen, Zweeken, Jongsma, Klink, & Groothoff, 2011). In this paper three government hospitals present in Australia has been used. It has been found that they have used three distinct styles of leadership and the results of job satisfaction in their nurses groups are also having varied levels.

3. Literature Review Theory Discussion

It is a mix of a quantitative and qualitative study where head nurse managers in three government hospitals in Australia have been interviewed via questionnaires. There are many features of leadership which needed to be understood to understand the term in a better manner (Forsyth, 2010). Following are the basic features of leadership styles:

- A reciprocal process is associated with leadership styles which means there can be variables which can influence as well as get influenced by the leadership style used. The leader, the follower and the environment all come in this group. If the style of leadership is interactional then

there is a smooth flow of communication in between these three elements.

- Leadership process can also be considered as transactional by nature. This signifies there is an element of exchange in between the leader and the followers. For example members in a group can spend their energy and time in return of a monetary value under this leadership form. Such efforts can also have social rewards.
- Leadership also is highly transformational in certain places. In such a kind of a leadership the aim of the leader is improvement of motivational level of the group members, their confidence levels
- and their satisfaction levels as well. The effort of the leader is to unite the team together and making transformational changes in their values, requirements and beliefs.
- Leadership is not just exercising power to the subordinates. Rather it is a legitimate cooperative process. In certain situations it has also been witnessed that leaders are chosen voluntarily. The one in the group who has the intellect to envision coming times, find ways to problems and supports the team becomes an unofficial leader.
- The process of leadership is also looking for achieving certain targets or goals. It is adaptive by nature. By uniting and organizing the team, leaders in this style try to fulfill personal, individual and group goals.
- In a work environment there exists many different type of leadership styles. Each of these styles has their respective pros and cons ((Johnson, 2016). Depending upon the respective culture or goals in a firm the leaders chose their individual style of leadership.



(Source-<http://oregonnursesonboards.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Nurses-Improve-Boardroom.jpg>)

Autocratic Leadership Style- The autocratic leadership style is such that in this style managers and leaders make decisions all by themselves. There is no involvement of any other in the decision making. The complete authority to take decisions belongs to the managers. They impose it on the followers. And the followers do not challenge or question the decisions made by leaders in this autocratic leadership style (Khan, Khan and Qureshi, 2015). Employees who have weak skills and require direct supervision are the only ones who gets benefitted by this style. Any employee having creative mindset finds this uncomfortable.

Participative Leadership Style-This style of leadership is also known as the democratic leadership style. Here the leader considers the feedback and opinion of the members of the team. However the final decision and responsibility lies with the leader only. This style of leadership helps in boosting up the morale of employees (Bell and Mjoli, 2014). Employees feel satisfied with their jobs as they make important contributions to the organization. They feel their opinions are taken seriously. In such companies where a participative leadership style is prevalent any new change or policy is accepted easily by the workforce.

Laissez -Faire - Leaders who adopt the Laissez-Faire leadership does not have the natural ability to supervise team members. They lack the habit of giving feedbacks to the team. The team hence falls in their performance as the team leader does not supervise or guide them about their weak areas. Very few highly trained employees can be self analytical and make continuous self improvements (Jeet, 2016). Hence with no proper supervision, level of production or output is low, control in the team is less and it often associates more cost expenditures.

Transactional Leadership Style-In this style of leadership managers involves employees in predefined tasks or objectives (James, 2012). Based on the performance of the employees they are either rewarded or feedback is given to them to improve. Hence, in this leadership style all team members follow the same direction. They work in the same

path for the accomplishment of the various goals. Results are reviewed by the manager. If goals are not met members are guided. If goals are achieved members receive rewards.

Transformational Leadership Style-The transformational leadership style is completely based on high quality communication amongst the leader and the team. Here the leader makes extra efforts in keeping employees motivated (Bass and Riggio, 2006). The aim is to improve individual skills and performance level with the help of efficient communication. With improved personal performance levels in totality the total performance of the organization is improved. The management completely helps such leaders to accomplish their objectives (Sultana, 2015). These leaders envisions the future and how by taking small steps the firm together with the team can achieve goals are set out by them.

4. Methodology Research Design

It is a mix of a quantitative and qualitative study where head nurse managers in three government hospitals in Australia have been interviewed via questionnaires. The design has correlation as such a style helps obtain huge amount of data from given samples. It is an efficient way unlike the descriptive way where potential occurrences of causal results are more (Parahoo, 2006). Here questionnaires has been used where various data about the nurse's beliefs, their behavior, knowledge, feedbacks, opinion, staff, perception, clients all has been collected.

Participants

Three different government hospitals situated in the country of Australia has been chosen. At the management levels all these three hospitals are distinctive and this is the basis of selecting these. The name of these three hospitals is Amidale Hospital, Griffith Hospital and Lockhart Hospital located in the New South Wales region in Australia. The head or manager nurses were the targets of this survey. Working level nurses has been chosen to derive studies and conclusions. Samples were taken from these nurses.

Data Collection

Nurses work in these hospitals in shift basis. Hence, the questionnaires were given in all the different shifts. They had six days to fill them and submit them. 100 different candidates were used for collecting data. Out of these 20% of the nurses were from the managerial levels. And the rest 80% of the level of staff nurses. Out of these almost 56% of the total nurses belonged under a age group of 30. The age of managerial level nurses were evidently more than staff nurses. Manager Nurses were almost 40 and above with over 18 years experience while the staff nurses were majorly below 30 years with 7 to 8 years experience.

5. Data Analysis

Various styles of leadership have been assessed. The head manager nurses who have implemented transformational leadership style showcased the highest scores. Under this transformational leadership style the motivational style used which gathered the highest ranks was the inspirational one. Laissez-faire style on the other hand got the lowest scores. In this questionnaire based study the 20 manager nurses has disclosed that they have used five types of transformational leadership and two sub styles belonging to transactional leadership (Baruch & Holtom, 2008). The study showcased satisfaction level of staff nurses were positively inspired by the implementation of transformational and transactional style of leadership by manager head nurses. The staff nurses have recognized these two styles of leadership being used by their managers.

6. Ethics

The relevant hospitals has their centralized ethical committee who has given approval. Before the survey was made every participant was handed a paper which contained the primary reason for the survey, the rights of the participants, the process of the survey, how data is collected and the methods used ((Germain. & Cummings, 2010). Participants were made aware that all information provided them were confidential and not to be shared anywhere. Above all they knew it's a voluntary work and anyone who does not approve was free not to take part in the survey.

7. Findings

The main reason of undergoing this survey was to see how individuals working in these hospitals in the managerial level is impacting the satisfaction level of nurses at staff levels. Various variables helped investing the subject in depth. This study aimed in finding out whether any relation exists between leadership styles and nurses loyalty from job satisfaction. A leader who is inspirational provides encouragement in the team and helps the team understand what is the purpose of the task they have been given. One of the main issues in every organization today is job related problems. The job satisfaction questionnaire, participants beliefs in the mission and targets of the hospitals, their agreement to be associated with these hospitals for long term and their desire to make better contributions were evident from this survey.

All the three hospitals showed that job satisfaction level of staff nurses is high in them. In the third hospital however, it was noted that some members of the team were positive about changing their organization given the opportunity. This hospital nurse managers were mainly using a Laissez-Faire leadership style (McGuire & Kennerly, 2006). Managers bifurcated the tasks here for the staff nurses. However no feedback comes to these nurses. Hence, they do not get any reflection of the work being done by them on a daily basis. It is true that they are not affected by this approach directly. But, there is a loose bond in between them and their employer organization. In the two hospitals where a combination of transformational and transactional leadership were used no feedback were positive about nurses willing to change their employer. Here they were being rewarded for their performances. The leaders in this transformational style used a Multi Factor Leadership Model. Contingent rewards were provided occasionally at annual reviews where bonus as well as recognition was given to the best performers.

8. Concluding Statement

It is highly significant to understand the link and relationship between job satisfaction and style of leadership used by managers in government hospitals. This study made will be extremely beneficial to trainers of nurses, policy makers and hospital administrations. The problems faced or challenges experienced by nurses on a daily basis can be solved using this study. Many areas have been disclosed by this study. This must be studied and researched further. To conclude this study has enough evidence to disclose that transformational leadership enhances levels of job satisfaction to high levels. With better satisfaction nurses contribute more efficiently and help the organization grow with their continued support for long term.

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