

Transformational Leadership Style and Barriers of Application as Perceived by First Line Nurse Managers and Registered Nurses

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Abstract: Healthcare organizations must position themselves in a way that promotes competence mechanisms to improve the patient safety, quality patient care performance, staff satisfaction. The healthcare organizations require centrally managed and highly active leadership for the development and advancement of nurse's career and productive professional life.

Aim: The study purposes to assess the Transformational Leadership Style and Barriers of Application as Perceived by First Line Nurse Managers and Registered Nurses.

Methods: Quantitative, descriptive cross sectional research design was conducted in this study.

Setting: The present study was carried out in six hospitals in Makkah city (Maternity and Children Hospital, Al-Noor Specialist Hospital, King Faisal Hospital, King Abdul-Aziz Hospital, Hera General Hospital and Ajjad Emergency Hospital). The Sample was selected from the population of the FLNMs` and RN by random selection 406 from RN. While, the convenient sampling technique included 62 from FLNMs.

Tool: The data gathering tool used Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), self-report survey instruments is developed by Bass and Avolio (2000).

Result: This study found that FLNMs` they do not have transformational leadership characteristics.in addition, the fourteen barriers that can face FLNMs` in applying TLS in all hospitals as their perception such as: weak awareness for the concept of transformational leadership and lack of accessible leadership education and training.

Conclusion and Recommendations: This study recommended, provide regular meeting with superiors in the organization to verbalize needs, views, resources, policies, and obstacles in implementing TLS, implement training and educational courses for FLNMs` regarding transformational leadership skills and principles.

Keywords: First Line Nurse Managers, Registered Nurse, Transformational Leadership Style

Date of Submission: 05-01-2018

Date of acceptance: 22-01-2018

I. Introduction

The healthcare organizations require centrally managed and highly active leadership for the development and advancement of nurse's career and productive professional life (West, et al., 2015). Active leadership is an essential and highly pivotal component for the success of any organization through influencing and affecting staff in clinical practice (Glickman, Gordon, and Ross-Gordon, (2014); Zori & Morrison, (2009).

Equally important, the leadership can determine the path of the work environment and the overall social performance of the organization (Ricci & Wiese, 2011). In any organization, leadership takes a central role which impact and affects both the organization and its registered staff nurses (Needleman and Hassmiller, 2009). According to Mosadeghrad (2014), nursing staffs have argued that certain styles of leadership can hinder their abilities to provide quality patient care. So, the employment of nursing leaders can positively influence the outcomes for their health care organizations, as well as patient satisfaction (Tsai, 2011). Among the commonest leadership styles accessible to nursing managers: transformational, transactional, and the laissez-faire styles. With each style coming with its merits and demerits, prudence requires that selective adoption of the leadership styles that deliver the best results be selected over those which do not (Negussie, and Demissie, 2013).

Keskes, (2014) defined transformational leadership as a leadership style that focuses on the leader developing active relationships with the subordinate based on idealized influence, individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation and inspirational motivation.

Leaders who displayed transformational leadership attributes, had a positive impact on their nursing staff outcomes, commitment, satisfaction, productivity and the outcomes of the healthcare organization (Marina Galante, and Rose Marie,(2017); Holly & Igwee, (2011); Cummings et al., (2008); Curtis. et al, (2011).

II. Problem Statement

Nursing researches in the kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) needs to be encouraged and supported, with particular attention on leadership style especially the transformational leadership style (TLS) in healthcare services and barriers to its application within the nursing profession.

Moreover, TLS has been argued to be an essential solution to improve health care organizations overall performance. Furthermore, the present study conducted depends on Alshammari, (2014), who explored the nursing leadership style of the nurse managers working in Hail hospital as well as, he recommended to examine the application of TLS in specific at Ministry of Health (MOH) hospitals in Saudi Arabia.

III. Significance Of Study

A transformational leadership style is essential to maintain the successful and safe operation of healthcare organizations (Al-Harhi et al., 2013). Moreover, various studies reported the effect of implementing of TLS on nurses such as; improve the job satisfaction levels, reduce turnover levels and could enhance the overall staff performance (Casida et al., 2012 and Cummings et al. 2010). Furthermore, numerous studies revealed that nurse's staffs who are directed by transformational leaders could generate innovative actions and effective outcomes. (Abualrub and Alghamdi, 2012), (Raup, 2008) and (Reuvers et al., 2008). Moreover, The current study is important because it simultaneously identify the perceptions of TLS from both FLNMs` and RNs` perspectives, as well as, the barriers to implement TLS among the FLNMs in Makkah hospitals.

IV. Research Questions

- Is FLNMs have transformational leadership style as perceived by FLNMs` and RNs`?
- What are the barriers perceived by FLNMs` in implementing TLS?

V. Aim Of The Study

To assess the Transformational Leadership Style and Barriers of Application as Perceived by First Line Nurse Managers and Registered Nurses.

VI. Objectives Of The Study

- Identify First-Line Manager`s and RNs` perception of TLS among FLNMs`.
- Explore the barriers in implementing TLS.

VII. Method

Quantitative, descriptive cross sectional research design was conducted in this study to assess the Transformational Leadership Style and Barriers of Application as Perceived by First Line Nurse Managers and Registered Nurses. The present study was carried out in six governmental hospitals in Makkah. The participating hospitals under the umbrella of the Ministry of Health (MOH). Each hospital differ hugely in their polices especially on leadership styles of nurse managers. Additionally they differ in their bed capacity and nursing staff numbers. Sample was selected from the population of the FLNMs` (Convenient sampling technique { n = 62 }), and RN (Simple random sampling technique { n = 406 }). The utilized method to collect the required data to conduct this study in effective way is the TLQ (5X-Short) which is validated in several past researches. Ethical approval was gained from the university and from the General Directorate for Health Affairs in the Makkah City to conduct this research on various settings. Also, the researcher took the permission from the MLQ original author, and got the approval to use this instrument, before using it.

VIII. Result & Discussion

Table1: Perception of First Line Nurse Managers` transformational leadership dimensions from both FLNMs` and RNs` perspectives

Dimensions of TLS		Participants'	n	Mean	±	SD
Idealized Influenced						
a)	Attributed	FLNMs`	62	1.41	±	0.63
		RN	406	1.39	±	0.67
b)	Behavioral	FLNMs`	62	1.49	±	0.53
		RN	406	1.45	±	0.61
Inspirational Motivation		FLNMs`	62	1.33	±	0.59
		RN	406	1.32	±	0.66
Intellectual Stimulation		FLNMs`	62	1.24	±	0.68
		RN	406	1.18	±	0.73
Individualized Consideration		FLNMs`	62	1.13	±	0.67
		RN	406	1.08	±	0.70
Total Mean and Standard Deviation		FLNMs`	62	1.32	±	0.62
		RN	406	1.28	±	0.67

The results of the current study showed that the overall means score of FLNMs transformational leadership characteristics for both groups of FLNMs` and RN` perception were below the 3.00 in all study settings. This means that both FLNMs` and RNs` in general do not perceive FLNMs` as having transformational leadership characteristics. While, the highest mean score in their responses was to idealized influence (behavioral) dimension, while the lowest mean score was found for individualized considerations dimension.

This study is supported by Alshammari, (2014) who indicated that staff nurse evaluated their managers as lightly transformational leadership characteristic (M=2.68), though the managers viewed themselves as to be more transformational (M = 3.3). Also, West et.al, (2015) found that the managers in health care do not follow transformational leadership style. On the other hand, this result is not in the same line with Suliman, (2009) who found that nurses supervisors appraised themselves as more transformational which was reported by their nurses staff. Likewise, Casida et.al, (2012), found that nurse managers follow the transformational leadership style as one of the common utilized leadership style in nurse`s practices, as perceived by staff nurse.

Table 2: First Line Nurse Managers` perception of barriers in applying transformational leadership style in all hospitals

In this study the first barrier as mention by FLNMs` is lack awareness for the concept of transformational leadership style. This study may be due to the system of MOH, not supporting TLS. This result is consistent with Bass and Riggio, (2006), who found that nurse leaders and staff have a weak awareness about the concept of transformational leadership.

As well as, van Knippenberg and Sitkin, (2013), indicated that the most barriers that faced the leaders to adopt of TLS effectively are the weak awareness and the lack of knowledge of transformational leadership theory and its concept.

The second barrier as reported by FLNMs` is lack of accessible leadership education and training. This result could be due to lack of the development opportunities in the FLNMs` healthcare organization. Similarly, studies done by Chow and Wu, (2003), McKendall, (1993), Bryman (1992), which found that the main barriers that could face the process of implementing transformational leadership practices are poor training, self-development and education.

This study indicate that the third barrier as reported by FLNMs` is multiplicity of job burdens and work stress. This result may be due to their accountability to multiple managerial roles, which keeping the FLNMs` under work stress. This finding is consistent with findings of previous studies conducted by Johnson, (2016); Brown et al., (2013), and Kath, et al., (2012), who found that the nurse managers face two main barriers in applying TLS, which are the stress felt in the work and needs of the role. It causes inadequate performance, poor patient results, disappointment of employees, and expanded nurse employees' turnover.

The results of the present study also suggest that the fourth barrier as mentioned by FLNMs` is no time for teaching and coaching the nurses. This result may be due to busyness of FLNMs` to accomplish their managerial role, which hinder them to teach and coach the staff. This result proved by Denker (2014), who found that the nurse leaders could face some barriers when implementing transformational leadership style, which the most one is the lack of time availability, due to the complex nature of the nurse career, which represented with the difficulty in finding adequate time to train, and teach their followers.

Also, our finding revealed that the fifth barrier as perceived by FLNMs` is preference for traditional administrative leadership styles. This result could be due to lack of awareness as mentioned by the FLNMs` in the first barrier. This result is consistent with Horwitch and Whipple (2014), who found that leader they prefer to follow traditional administrative leadership styles due to lack of talents and creativity.

The present finding reported that the sixth barrier as mentioned by FLNMs` is lack of support from higher authority regarding for modern style of leadership. This result is agreed with Oxenstierna et al, (2004), who found that nurse leaders could restrict to follow the transformational leaders' performance because of a lack of support and employees fear of decision authority and taking responsibility.

The seventh barrier as reported by FLNMs` is fear from loss of power. Hughes, (2008) indicated that nurse`s leaders face many barriers in implementing TLS, such as fearing from loss of power.

Moreover, the eighth and nine finding of the barrier as reported by FLNMs is lack of selection criteria of leaders, and unclear vision regarding to the TLS. The finding is consistent with findings of previous studies done by Zhu, et al., (2012); Menaker, (2010), which found that there is a problem of having a clear vision, and clear criteria of transformational leaders, because there are huge variances in standards that could be utilized when choosing a leader. As well, Smith, (2015), indicated that nurse leaders could face one of an essential barrier in implementing the transformational leadership, which is the lack of existed criteria on how to implement transformational leadership efficiently. In addition, Shariff, (2014) who found that the key barrier that face nurse managers is having unclear vision regarding to the development of the health care organization.

This study indicates that the tenth barrier as reported by FLNMs` is lack of incentives for leaders with

the skills and creative abilities. This result may be due to the lack of reward system especially for non-Saudi FLNMs`. Roussel, Thomas and Ratcliffe (2015) found that lack of leaders' talents and creativity is considered as one of the problems in transformational leadership practices among nurse leaders.

The present finding also report that the eleventh barrier as mentioned by FLNMs` is high centralized decision. This result is agreed with Alghamdi and Urden, (2016) who pointed that nurse leaders confront a few difficulties in accomplishing the TLS in managing the nurse employee's performance in Saudi Arabia, such as concentrated administration.

Moreover, the twelve finding of the barrier as reported by FLNMs is resistance to organizational change. This may also, due to centralized administration who resist to accept creative idea for improvement in healthcare organization. This is supported by Navickaite and Janiunaite, (2012); studies, which reveal that resistance to organizational change is one of the challenges that faced the nurse leaders in adoption TLS.

The result of the present study reported that the thirteen barrier as mentioned by FLNMs` is legislations, regulations and laws that inhibit to keep up to developments and to adapt with healthcare organization. This due to restricted regulations and laws which hinder the leaders in the healthcare organization to implement the TLS. Research done by Avolio and Yammarino, (2013) points towards unmanageable and uncertain legislations, regulations and laws structure of hospital management that may hinder the nurse leaders to adopt TLS.

Lack of nursing staff is last barrier to implement TLS as reported by FLNMs` because one of the requirement of implementing TLS is maintaining adequate numbers of staff nurses. Besides, Yasin Ghadi, Fernando and Caputi, (2013), found that the nurse leaders are facing problems in applying TLS such as lack of nursing staff.

IX. Limitation Of The Study

Lack of current studies in literature about the barriers of implementing the transformational leadership style in healthcare organization.

X. Conclusion

The study concluded that the overall means score of FLNMs` and RN` perception of FLNMs transformational leadership characteristics were below the 3.00 in all settings which means the participants do not perceive FLNMs` as having transformational leadership characteristics. In addition, the fourteen barriers that can face FLNMs in applying TLS in all hospitals as their perception.

In the light of the study findings the following recommendations are suggested for:

a) Administration:

- Provide regular meeting with superiors in the organization to verbalize needs, views, resources, policies, and obstacles in implementing TLS
- Promote rules and regulations related to the administration and management of leaders in hospitals.
- Establish clear comprehensive criteria to choose FLNMs`.
- Encourage and support FLNMs` to implement modern leadership style
- Establish a system of motivation and rewards to encourage FLNMs` to do more effort to implement TLS.
- Delegate the authority to FLNMs` to be autonomous in decisions making and problem solving.
- Provide material facilities, and technical assistance in the process of change and implement TLS.

b) Education:

- Implement training and educational courses for FLNMs` regarding transformational leadership skills and principles.

c) Future Research:

- Training program for FLNMs` to implement transformational leadership
- Additional studies on explore the relationship between the TLS among FLNMs` as perceived by NMs` and RNs, and exploring the barriers in applying TLS in private hospitals.
- Explore the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational commitment.
- The effect of implementing of Transformational leadership practices among First line nurse managers in healthcare organization.

Acknowledgements

In the name of Allah, the most merciful, all praise and glory go to him who alone helped us to complete this study. Thanks God for all the grace which countless conciliator is all that is good for the best Lord and supporter. Also, I am extremely thankful to my mother and family who supported and encouraged me to continue and develop my education. I wish to acknowledge the all who supported me to complete this master

research and encouraged me to do the best for that search. This research would not have been possible without the support of many people. My deep appreciation goes to my supervisor Dr. Azizah Rajab and Dr. Naglaa El Seesy for their constant help, support guidance and supervision.

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Taya Mohammed Abdulsalam "Transformational Leadership Style and Barriers of Application as Perceived by First Line Nurse Managers and Registered Nurses." IOSR Journal of Nursing and Health Science (IOSR-JNHS) , vol. 7, no.1 , 2018, pp. 01-05.