

MAGNET PRINCIPLES AND BURNS TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP THEORY FOR NURSE RETENTION IN PAKISTAN- A POSITION PAPER

Sumaira Warwani

Karachi Adventist Hospital College of Nursing
MSN, BSN Principal & Director Academic Affairs, Karachi, Pakistan.

Email: sumaira.haq33@gmail.com
(Corresponding author)

Sumera Danish

MSN, BSN Assistant Nurse Manager, South City Hospital.

Email: sumera.zulfiqar1@gmail.com

Farzana Kausar

MSN Scholar, Senior Lecturer, City Institute of Health Sciences.

Email: azharfarz@gmail.com

Devi Das

MPH, BSN, Assistant Professor, City Institute of Health Sciences.

Email: devidasvp.cihs@gmail.com

Saleem Ullah

PhD Scholar, MS/MPhil, MSN, MBA (HHCM), BSN, PBS A&E Director/Principal & Associate Professor City Institute of Health Sciences.

Email: saleemullah1992@gmail.com

Abstract

The purpose of this position paper is to highlight and propose recommendations on the role of nurse leaders in overcoming nursing retention issues in Pakistan through evidence-based leadership strategies. Guided by Burns' Transformational Leadership Theory, the paper emphasizes the importance of encouraging, empowering, and motivating nurses while nurturing professional development and a positive work setting. It also recommends the adoption of Magnet Recognition principles to reinforce organizational culture, improve nurse satisfaction, and augment retention. Innovative strategies and recommendations are needed for nurse leaders to overcome nurse retention challenges. One such strategy is Magnet certification, whose gold standards influence nurses to remain within their organizations. Burns' transformational leadership theory emphasizes a leadership style that motivates, influences, empowers nurses, and handles grievances efficiently. Hence, Magnet recognition will help organizations and nurse leaders retain nurses and enhance patient care quality outcomes.

Keywords: Future of Nursing, Magnet Principles, Burns' Transformational Leadership Theory, Nurse Retention.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this position paper is to highlight and propose recommendations on

the role of nurse leaders in overcoming nursing retention issues in Pakistan through evidence-based leadership strategies. Guided by Burns' Transformational Leadership Theory, the paper emphasizes the importance of encouraging, empowering, and motivating nurses while nurturing professional development and a positive work setting. It also recommends the adoption of Magnet Recognition principles to reinforce organizational culture, improve nurse satisfaction, and augment retention.

BACKGROUND

Nursing shortages and high turnover have become an alarming situation for healthcare organizations worldwide, including Pakistan. Retention of experienced nurses is vital for maintaining continuity of care, improving patient outcomes, and reducing recruitment and training costs. Nursing retention remains one of the most pressing challenges facing Pakistan's healthcare system. Factors such as limited career advancement opportunities, inadequate salary compensation, poor working conditions, and insufficient leadership support have accelerated nurse turnover and migration.

CHALLENGES OF NURSING RETENTION IN PAKISTAN

The nursing workforce is the mainstay of every healthcare system, and retaining skilled nurses is critical for warranting high-quality, safe, and effective patient care. The upsurge in disease burden has increased the demand for nursing professionals, who are the critical assets of any healthcare organization. Nurse retention refers to the prevention of nursing turnover and the retention of nurses within the hospital setting, and it remains a recurrent issue for healthcare organizations (Jeffreys, 2015). Nursing turnover leads to a nursing shortage in an organization when the demand for nursing professionals exceeds the supply (Marcé et al., 2019). Numerous factors impact nursing retention in Pakistan, including a lack of positive team environment, limited opportunities for professional growth, inequitable workforce distribution, safety and security concerns, nepotism, insufficient availability of personal protective equipment (PPE), career and family pressures, pregnancies, domestic problems, burnout among nurses, poor infrastructure of teaching and learning resources, lack of participation in decision-making, workplace violence, overwork, improper work-life balance, underpaid and low salary compensation, brain drain, inequality, lack of rewards and recognition, the public image of nurses, lack of empowerment, and lack of motivation from nurse leaders (Jeffreys, 2015). Retention issues among nurses in Pakistan are mostly due to brain drain and the migration of nurses abroad for better job opportunities (Hamid, 2014).

OUR POSITION

It is crucial to identify the factors that affect nursing retention. Besides that, it is important to emphasize the interventions required to overcome and prevent the constant nursing retention issues in Pakistan. Since Pakistan is a low- and middle-income country (LMIC) with limited healthcare resources and healthcare professionals, the disease burden has tremendously increased. Our identified position centers on the role of the nurse leader in overcoming nursing retention issues in Pakistan. The remainder of this position paper will specifically describe, analyze, and contribute strategies, action plans, a futuristic outlook, relevant theories, and recommendations for nurse leaders to overcome nurse retention issues in Pakistan.

ROLE OF NURSE LEADERS TO OVERCOME NURSING RETENTION ISSUES IN PAKISTAN

Nurses are the backbone of any healthcare system, and nurse leaders hold a key stake in healthcare delivery. Nursing leaders influence and mentor their staff to provide quality care to patients and work toward staff satisfaction, retention, and motivation by building effective teams.

There are certain qualities that a nurse leader must possess to effectively lead her team to success: emotional intelligence, critical thinking, enthusiasm, effective interpersonal skills, professionalism, socialization, and respect and dignity for subordinates (Khowaja, 2019). Nurse retention is predominantly substantial, as it connects to the overall consistency and quality of care. In healthcare systems where nursing retention issues exist and new nurses must be hired, patient quality of care may be affected. Due to novice and inexperienced staff, patients might miss out on critical services and quality care within an organized structure. In addition, hospital costs and expenses related to job advertisement, orientation, and recruitment are saved through nurse retention. Ultimately, lower productivity associated with newly hired nurses can be prevented through the retention of experienced staff (Jeffreys, 2015).

Mentorship.

Due to complicated and undefined lines of communication, staff nurses are often unable to communicate effectively with their supervisors. Besides that, a lack of timely and consistent feedback leaves nurses feeling disconnected from their nurse leaders and organizational guidelines. This leads to burnout and frustration among nurses. Hence, a lack of overall mentorship from nurse leaders may exacerbate nursing retention issues, and finding ways to support nurses' career growth is a prime responsibility of nurse leadership (Jeffreys, 2015).

Staff Motivation.

Retention of nurses depends on its attributes, antecedents, and consequences. Among its attributes are motivation, purpose, geographic context, attachment to work, and personal decision-making. Similarly, motivation is an integral part of work, encompassing excitement, level of competency, and complex and challenging tasks. An increase in motivation results in greater competency, engagement in work, better performance, and satisfaction (Efendi et al., 2019).

Career Growth and Low Salary Compensation.

Incentives also play a vital role in increasing motivation and employee commitment toward their organization. Furthermore, according to the World Health Organization (2018), in terms of geographic area, rural areas experience a greater shortage of nurses compared to urban areas. Likewise, nurses migrate to developed countries in search of better job opportunities. Moreover, among the antecedents that retain nurses within their institutions are the healthcare facility, the health system at the macro level, health personnel, living conditions, and driving forces including career opportunities. These factors therefore carry consequences for the health organization and the broader healthcare system.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Organizational, International, and Policy Level.

At the organizational level, it is necessary to develop a culture that motivates staff and shares organizational concerns; such strategies lead to lower levels of job dissatisfaction, decreased burnout among nurses, better work environments, and a lower intention to leave the organization (Efendi, Kurniati, Bushy, & Gunawan, 2019; Nantsupawat et al., 2017). Similarly, orientation programs designed so that new employees can understand procedures easily reduce stress and job dissatisfaction. Moreover, leadership style should shift from task completion toward quality outcomes, adopting transformational and relational leadership styles to enhance nurses' satisfaction and job retention (Nauman, Raja, Haq, & Bilal, 2019). Alongside an encouraging work environment, it is necessary to establish an empowering environment in which nurses' voices are acknowledged so they can contribute to decision-making at the organizational level. Moreover, job gratification has been linked to a high level of empowerment among nurses.

At the international level, it is suggested that professional development opportunities be provided along with incentive schemes to support nurse retention, that recruitment

practices be changed to hire nurses with long-term commitment, and that intensive advising create a positive learning environment, with retention programs integrated into the nursing curriculum (Mooring, 2016). Moreover, at the policy level, poor work environments require coordinated action from policymakers and nurse managers (Nantsupawat et al., 2017). Policies should be integrated for the retention of nurses who benefit from organizational support, such as scholarships for advanced training and certification, in exchange for a service bond that supports retention within the organization.

The environment plays a crucial role in the retention of competent nurses, which in turn affects the quality of care. Many strategies have been proposed to reduce nurse turnover. Therefore, in an effort to create an environment that attracts, motivates, and retains expert nurses, hospitals are striving for Magnet certification to support nurse retention. The first Magnet hospital was established in the United States, and to date 41 hospitals have been identified as Magnet hospitals, attracting nurses and improving nursing retention such that nurses work with enthusiasm. Magnet hospitals are considered a gold standard for nursing practice (Rivaz, Ebadi, & Momennasab, 2018).

Magnet Hospital

Magnet hospital recognition rests on several components: transformational leadership, structural empowerment, exemplary professional practice, and new knowledge, innovations, and empirical quality results. The Magnet hospital foundation is built on distinction in nursing practice and outstanding patient outcomes. This influences nurse retention, as nurses' grievances are well handled, and they experience career growth and motivation, all of which result in improved patient outcomes and nursing retention. As nurse leaders, their role is crucial in the establishment and maintenance of a professional nursing practice environment that promotes a culture of distinction (Prado-Inzerillo, Clavelle, & Fitzpatrick, 2018).

Transformational leadership has been described as an ideal leadership style, characterized by extroversion, amicability, and openness (Hansbrough & Schyns, 2018). Transformational leaders focus on high-performance goals. Similarly, transformational leadership behaviors are essential components that should be present within a good organizational environment.

Futuristic Move: Implementation and Magnet Recognition

During the Magnet certification journey, staff nurses play a vital role and are invited to participate in the development of the hospital's planned program meetings, the system of core values, and the shared foundation guiding nursing care planning. Similarly, A3

reports are developed at the unit level to summarize problems and issues based on data, establish goals and desirable outcomes, develop and implement interventions, and evaluate, adjust, and sustain improvements — all on a single page, hence the designation "A3 report." Likewise, the hospital's quality improvement department provides relevant data for unit-level improvement, visualizing trends in clinical indicators and the outcomes of goals set at the team and organizational level. These efforts are highlighted and recognized in the final Magnet report. Moreover, leadership training programs will be implemented to support the desired transformational leadership style and the accessibility of nursing leaders. Furthermore, quality improvement projects grounded in shared values of change encourage the development of mutual respect and involvement (Van Bogaert et al., 2020).

Burns' Transformational Leadership Theory

The concept of transformational leadership was first identified by leadership expert James MacGregor Burns (Hansbrough & Schyns, 2018). According to Burns, transformational leadership is vital, and a nurse leader should possess a strong vision along with a relationship between the leader and the team in which the leader motivates, listens, inspires, and drives goal attainment toward high standards of patient care, reflected in patient clinical outcomes (Hansbrough & Schyns, 2018). Moreover, transformational leadership focuses on change and transformation; a leader who is able to change and transform in response to the needs of the digital era uses their qualities and personality to motivate and influence their team toward progress and goal attainment. Transformational nurse leaders share their vision, empower nurses, and motivate them to achieve organizational goals. Furthermore, transformational leadership theory holds that trust must always be a priority between leader and team. Trust helps team members remain receptive to feedback and motivates them toward independent decision-making, which in turn empowers their actions. Moreover, a nurse leader should believe in their vision and possess the self-confidence and courage to achieve their goals. Thus, transformational leadership theory provides guidance for nursing retention and cultivates charismatic nurse leaders who contribute to nursing retention.

CONCLUSION

Many challenges have been observed globally that contribute to nursing turnover. Innovative strategies and recommendations are needed for nurse leaders to overcome nurse retention challenges. One such strategy is Magnet certification, whose gold

standards influence nurses to remain within their organizations. Burns' transformational leadership theory emphasizes a leadership style that motivates, influences, and empowers nurses, and handles grievances efficiently. Hence, Magnet recognition will help organizations and nurse leaders retain nurses and promote quality patient care outcomes.



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