

**The Relationship of Nurse Managers'
Transformational and Transactional
Leadership with Staff Nurses
Absenteeism**

Thesis

Submitted for Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement
of Master Degree
in Nursing Administration

By

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List of Contents

Items	Page No
Introduction & Aim of the Study	1
Review of Literature	
Leadership Concept and Definition	10
Managers versus leaders	15
Qualities of Leader	16
Theories of leadership	16
Leadership style	24
Outcome factors of leadership	32
Different between the two leaderships Style	33
Absenteeism	35
Types of absenteeism	36
Causes of absenteeism	38
Effect of absenteeism	40
Factors contributing to employee's absenteeism	41
Leadership style influence on absenteeism	45
Subjects and Methods	50
Results	63
Discussion	89
Conclusion	102
Recommendations	103
Summary	105
References	109
Appendices	131
Arabic Summary	--

List of Tables

Tables No.	Title	Page No.
(1)	Socio-demographic characteristics of head nurses in the study sample	65
(2)	Postgraduate training among head nurses in the study sample	67
(3)	Leadership style as viewed by head nurses in the study sample	68
(4)	Leadership outcomes as viewed by head nurses in the study sample	70
(5)	Socio-demographic characteristics of staff nurses in the study sample	71
(6)	Work experience and training of staff nurses in the study sample	72
(7)	Head nurse 'leadership styles as viewed by their subordinate staff nurses in the study sample	73
(8)	Head nurses leadership outcomes as viewed by their subordinate staff nurses in the study sample	75
(9)	Comparison of leadership style and outcomes scores as viewed by head nurses and their subordinate staff nurses	76

Tables No.	Title	Page No.
(10)	Comparison of leadership style and outcomes levels as viewed by head nurses and their subordinate staff nurses	78
(11)	Correlation between leadership scores as assessed by head nurses and their subordinate staff nurses	80
(12)	Absenteeism days among staff nurses in the study sample	81
(13)	Relation between staff nurses absenteeism days and their socio-demographic characteristics	82
(14)	Correlation between staff nurses absenteeism and their view of their head nurses leadership scores	84
(15)	Correlation between staff nurses absenteeism and their leaders own view of their leadership scores	86
(16)	Best fitting multiple linear regression model for staff nurses total absenteeism	88

The Relationship of Nurse Managers' Transformational and Transactional Leadership with Staff Nurses Absenteeism

Abstract

Head nurses, transformational and transactional leadership is an important determinant of the unit nurses in relation to their work, which is reflected on their job satisfaction, health complaints, and absenteeism. **Aim:** the study aimed at investigating the relation between nurse managers transformational and transactional leadership and absenteeism among their nursing staff through assessing the transformational and transactional leadership behavior among nurse managers, assessing the intensity level of absenteeism among staff nurses, and finding out the relationship between head nurse' transformational and transactional leadership and absenteeism among their nursing staff. **Research design** A description correlation design was used to carry out the study. **Setting:** The study was conducted at two hospitals Elhalal and Dar Elshafa witch affiliated to the Secretary-General of Specialized Medical Centers (Cairo), **subjects** included in the study were 34 head nurses, 250 staff nurses. Data were collected by using Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (M L Q 5x-short) and absenteeism sheet. **Results:** The scores of transformational leadership as assessed by head nurses and their staff nurses subordinates were close, with statistical significant differences between them. As regards transformational, transactional leadership the scores of head nurses view were higher compared with their staff nurses $p = (0.03^*, 0.004^*, 0.003^*)$ respectively except for the domain management by exception (Active) $p = (0.04^*)$. Also There statistical significant differences were found between them in relation to leadership outcomes effectiveness, satisfaction $p = (0.047^*, 0.049^*)$. Annual and sick leaves had highest mean scores among nurses (21.4 ± 8.8 , 154 ± 17.1) respectively. **Conclusion:** the study finding indicates the score of transformational and transactional leadership style was higher as viewed by head nurses than nurse's point of view. Dar Al Shifa Hospital and inspirational motivation leadership was the statistically significant negative predictors of total absenteeism days. Finally there was statistical significant negative correlation between head nurses, transformational and transactional leadership style and nurses absenteeism. **Recommendation:** The study recommended that, urgent need for a plan for training head nurses about leadership styles and management. Further studies are needed to explore the impact of transformational and transactional leadership behaviors on other organizational outcomes.

Key words: Absenteeism, Head nurses, , staff nurses Transformational and transactional leadership.

Introduction

Studying leadership behavior is important, because it can help to improve the effective utilization of human resources, Prevent resistance to change, restriction of output, labor disputes, and often, it can lead to more efficient organization (*Northouse, 2015*). Charismatic leaders create an atmosphere of change and articulate an idealized vision for the future that is significantly better than what now exists (*Richard, 2014*).

Leadership is a process of interaction between leaders and followers, where the leader attempts to influence followers to achieve a common goal (*Yukl, 2014*). Concluded that, leaders carry out this process by applying or sharing attributes, such as beliefs, values ethics, character, knowledge and skills. This is an extremely important aspect of leadership, which appears at present to be overlooked in many instances (*Goleman et al., 2012*).

The importance of effective leadership in health care has been emphasized by a number of authors, and nursing leadership is pivotal to this, as nurses represent the largest discipline in health care. Leadership conjures up a variety of thoughts, reflections and images. These may include power, influence, followership, dynamic personality,

charisma, goals, autocratic behavior, innovation, cleverness, warmth and kindness (*Daft, 2012; Muchinsky, 2014*).

Effective leadership depends on the understanding by leaders of the attitudes, expectations, and behaviors of subordinates in various situations. Subordinates must also be motivated to satisfy leader's expectations of them. This also means that leaders must understand the needs and expectations of subordinates. Thus, the leader should lead in acceptable ways and encouraging the subordinates to strive for organizational and personal goals and objectives. Traditional studies of leadership, however, have generally focused on leader style and behaviors, and not on the congruence between leader and follower behaviors, expectations and attitudes (*Audra, 2014*).

Managers have formally assigned positions within organizations with a legitimate source of power, simply by holding a management position. As outcomes, the manager is also required to direct willing and unwilling employees to complete specific jobs. Additionally, constancy, solidarity and cohesion feature as components of management. However, the manager is required to maintain a balanced view, whilst the leader challenges and changes the status quo (*Marquis and Huston, 2013*).

Nurse Manager is one who coordinates, supervises persons, and insures optimal use of resources to accomplish the organization goals. Effective managers should have good decision making skills, which refer to the managers' ability to correctly recognize, define problems, opportunities, and then select an appropriate course of action to solve problems and capitalize on opportunities (*Griffin, 2011*).

Head nurses as first line managers occupy an important and pivotal position in the nursing unit, and play a critical management role in the success of health care organizations by translating plans into actions, carrying out the policies developed by the organization, and making decisions which influence the organization and affect the quality outcomes (*Casbel, 2012*).

Moreover, first line nurse managers are responsible for day to day management of their wards, the budget for staff, material resources, recruitment, selection of their own staff, ensuring and facilitating staff development, introducing and maintaining standards of nursing care. Moreover, encouraging research based practice, giving guidance and support to nursing staff, which is leading to improve the quality and effectiveness of patient care (*Wilmot, 2012*).

The organizations management and leadership style has a great effect on the working environment, and the employee's motivation. The development of an optimal leadership style and managerial skills is most appropriate to an organization, and is crucial for major effect on its life span. Therefore, understanding of manager's and leader's dominant style is the key to effective leadership. Even more critical, it is the ability to identify and harmonize with the leadership style of others with whom individuals work (*Folger et al., 2012*).

The leadership style is including transformational and transactional leadership. Transformational leadership has the ability to lead changes in the organization vision, strategy and culture as well as promote innovation in products and technologies. Rather than analyzing and controlling specific transactions with followers using rules, directions, and incentives (*Eagly, 2015*). Transactional leadership is transaction or exchange process between leaders and followers, the transactional leader recognizes follower's needs and desire and then clarifies how those needs and desires will be satisfied in exchange for meeting specified objectives or performing certain duties. Thus, followers receive rewards for job performance, while leaders benefit from the completion of tasks (*Richard, 2014*).

Absenteeism is an expression used to define the absence of an employee from work. It means the sum of the periods when the employees of a given organization are absent from work, Absenteeism is defined as, unscheduled absence from work regardless of the reason including long and short term disability. Absenteeism occurs when an individual does not show up for work. Absenteeism in nursing is a concern because it disorganizes the work routine, cause dissatisfaction, and overburdens workers that are present, consequently lowering the quality of patient health care (*Tonello, 2011*).

Absenteeism in health organization is both pervasive and expensive, as the costs of absenteeism, however, go beyond its effect in patient care, it can have a detrimental effect on the work lives of the other staff members, as they may have to work shorthanded, and they are expected to cover the unit despite their missing colleagues. Work shorthanded, especially for an extended period of time can create both physical and mental strain. If the health care worker is experiencing some form of role stress, leading to role strain, the results are increased absenteeism and turnover (*Senel and Senel, 2012*).

Basically absence can be divided into an involuntary part, and a voluntary part. Involuntary absence (e.g., certified sickness or funeral attendance), it is beyond the employees immediate control. Whereas voluntary absence (e.g., uncertified sickness and shirk) which is under the direct control of employee, and it is often based on personal aims. Moreover, several factors could lead to absenteeism in the workplace as personal factors, job factors, and environment factors (*Saiyadain, 2013*).

Employees, who feel content and secure, will be motivated to provide good quality health services to clients, and consequently show lower absence rates. Conversely, employees that experience changing job descriptions, interventions in the organization, and much uncertainty, will feel less motivation to go to work. Employees who are less satisfied may have a tendency to call in sick more often, thus, this might be an effect of leadership style (*Sullivan and Garland, 2014*).

Moreover, the way a leader handles sickness protocols may be a direct way, by which he influences absenteeism. The sickness protocols influence absenteeism levels, and therefore the leadership style can be a direct moderating influence, as well as an indirect moderating influence on absenteeism (*Barbuto, 2013*).

Significance of the study:

Leadership is necessary at any level within the organization to establish direction, provide good communications motivate and inspire employees who might have reflections on commitment and absenteeism (*Ruchlin et al., 2004*). The effect of transformational and transactional leadership on employee's absenteeism was tested in four United Kingdom Public hospitals. Findings indicated that transformational-reward and performance-oriented leadership can potentially influence absence behaviors. There is evidence, indicates that transformational and transactional leadership is able to foster an encouraging work climate which can affect absenteeism (*Richardson & Vandenberg, 2005 and Zhu et al., 2005*).

Absenteeism in the work force is a costly and complex problem for management. Absenteeism in nursing is uniquely problematic because attending to patients needs cannot be postponed. In some instances, replacement nurses may not be available over time work, substitute nurses, and working with less than required staff may have adverse effects on quality of care and on staff morale (*Gupta, 2014*). absenteeism is costly affects productivity as

well as the morale of the rest of the workforce, Also miss vital schedules and place extra pressure on remaining staff

Lack of satisfaction and motivation creates a downward spiral and is counterproductive to all concerned.