Mangers' Leadership Style and its Association to their Staff Nurses' Job Satisfaction

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Abstract

Background: Nurses deal with a variety of situations and patients, all of which are factors in the circumstances and workloads at the patient level. Furthermore, a higher level of nurse dissatisfaction leads to nurses leaving the profession. Managers' leadership style has a substantial impact on the job satisfaction of staff nurses. **Aim:** To assess the managers' leadership styles and its association to their staff nurses' job satisfaction. **Subjects and methods: Design:** A descriptive correlational design was used. **Setting:** The study was conducted in two governmental hospitals in Damanhour City. **Subjects**: A total of 300 staff nurses were selected from previous settings based on the non-probability convenient sampling technique. **Tools used for data collections:** Tool I: Demographic datasheet, Tool II: The multifactor leadership questionnaire, and Tool III: The work quality index questionnaire. **Results**: Managers' leadership styles, as perceived by staff nurses, in this study were transformational leadership frequently, transactional leadership occasionally, and laissez-faire leadership on occasion. The job satisfaction of staff nurses was rated as somewhat satisfied' for professional work environment (4.83±0.09) and professional relationships (4.39±0.05) and 'neutral' for autonomy (4.42±0.01), work worth (4.89±0.08), role enactment (4.43±0.03) and rewards (4.32±0.07). Transformational leadership had significant positive correlation with the level of job satisfaction with a p-value of 0.000. There was significant negative correlation between level of job satisfaction of the staff nurses and the managers' transformational leadership style, as judged by the staff nurses. **Conclusion:** The current study revealed that nurse managers exhibited transformational leadership style more than transactional and laissez-faire leadership styles. The nurses' job satisfaction was significantly positively correlated with transformational leadership styles. **Recommendations:** Further study needs to be conducted to head of staff nurses perceptions about various leadership styles and their effects.

Keywords: Job satisfaction, Leadership styles, Nurses managers, Staff nurses.

Introduction:

Because of the aging population in every country, nursing experts and services are in more demand. This increase in demand is also due to global stability, peace, and order; less volatile conditions in many countries; and the development of new technology to cure ailments **(Al-Omari et al., 2015; Botelho, 2019).**

Are nursing managers exemplifying the art of leadership, or are they contributing to the plight of nurses? Nursing managers and their leadership styles are focused on motivating the workforce and creating a work environment that allows nursing professionals to stay longer and contribute their skills and expertise to improve the nursing services provided to their clients **(Breakey et al., 2019).**

The art and discipline of guiding, directing, motivating, and inspiring a group or organization toward common goals are known as leadership. In the workplace, different sorts of leadership styles exist, each with its own set of pros and cons. Which leadership style best suits an organization's culture and goals is determined by the institution's culture and goals. Depending on the responsibilities required to meet departmental demands, several institutions offer a variety of leadership styles inside the organization **(Al-Omari et al., 2015).**

Nursing leadership is important in today's healthcare environment, which is experiencing unprecedented intense reform. Nurse leadership requires effective communication, self-awareness, and social awareness. Unlike yesterday's leadership requirements for stabilization and growth, today's leaders must transform their organization values, beliefs, and behaviors. Nurse managers are responsible for creating an environment that supports the professional practice and employee engagement. They must encourage personal development and professional growth among staff **(American Nurses Credentialing Center, 2020).**

The level of enjoyment a person feels about his or her employment is referred to as job satisfaction. This sensation is mostly depending on the individual's satisfaction perception. Job satisfaction is determined by a person's capacity to do required duties, an organization's level of communication, and how management treats employees. Affective job satisfaction and cognitive job satisfaction are the two types of job satisfaction. Affective work satisfaction refers to a person's overall emotional reaction to their employment. Employees' feelings about certain aspects of their jobs, such as their salary, work hours, or benefits, are included in cognitive job satisfaction **(Styron & Styron, 2017).**

Nurse managers have exhibited a variety of leadership styles in clinical settings, including guiding health care providers. Transactional and transformational leadership styles were thought to be the best in health care settings and administrations by many nurses managers **(Negussie & Demissie, 2017).**

Transformational pioneers enlist the help of their followers to share a vision and use goals as motivation. Supporters are encouraged to think about old concerns in new ways and are seen as self-sufficient. Furthermore, a transformational pioneer who is direct, reputable, and determined has an impact on supporters **(Lin et al., 2015).**

To maintain the status quo, transactional leadership provides clarity around tenets and standards to subordinates, as well as attentively observing and fixing followers' mistakes to ensure short-term success. Transactional leadership motivates followers to do and comprehend their jobs by focusing on rules, responsibilities, desires, strength, avoiding mistakes, and the current, temporary plan **(Hamstra et al., 2017).**

Information about the relationship between views of nursing leadership styles and job satisfaction, according to a prior study, can lead to viable solutions for boosting nurse job satisfaction and retention **(Perez, 2014)**. Furthermore, **Kleinman (2014)** discovered a link between transformative leadership and nurse job satisfaction. Furthermore, while **Robbins and Davidhizar (2017)** found that leadership styles have an impact on job happiness, they did not investigate nurses' opinions of their supervisors' leadership styles or the strength of the association between leadership style and job satisfaction. According to Jean Watson, a nurse theorist, one of the most important aspects determining job satisfaction is the manager's leadership style **(Despres, 2019).**

Furthermore, according to **Cox (2018),** higher job satisfaction can lead to better patient outcomes and hospital care quality. According to a Joint Commission survey, 41% of employed nurses were unsatisfied with their careers, and 43% of nurses felt burnt out in their field. In addition, 22% of nurses said they wanted to leave their jobs in the coming year. The two characteristics that were most closely linked to nurses' dissatisfaction were: (I) nurses not feeling that they were a part of the decision-making process when it came to patient care, and (II) nurses not being recognized for their competence **(Despres, 2019).**

In a complicated organizational context like a hospital, effective leadership is essential. Hospital executives must understand how to engage their employees, implement performance management systems, and resolve issues with poor employee performance. The supervisor-employee connection is a major factor in job happiness. Nurse satisfaction and job engagement are positively influenced by managers who exhibit a commitment to their people by executing organizational change **(Wood, 2018).**

Significance of the study:

As nurse educators, the researchers saw a gap in the literature regarding nurse managers' leadership styles and employee job satisfaction. Administrators can use the findings of this study to teach nurse managers about effective leadership styles and how they improve staff nurse job satisfaction. Nurse work satisfaction can be increased by using the proper leadership style, resulting in lower turnover rates in hospitals and a reduction in the resources spent on hiring and orienting new personnel. Patients will notice staff nurse satisfaction in the form of improved patient care, which will lead to higher patient satisfaction and a positive impression of the institution. The hospital will also gain from staff nurse satisfaction, as seen by increased productivity, efficiency, and better patient outcomes **(Despres, 2019).**

Nurses operate on the front lines of a healthcare system, providing direct nursing care to patients. The leadership styles of managers have a significant impact on nursing performance. The findings of this study will assist the nurse manager in adopting the best possible leadership style, which will lead to higher levels of satisfaction among the staff nurses. More satisfied nurses will be more likely to stay on the job, have a lower turnover rate, and have a better manager-nurse connection. Furthermore, the findings of this study will assist health care providers, particularly nurse managers, in determining which leadership style is preferable, transformational or transactional. They will begin to feel better about their career if they have the best leadership style. They will feel content with their job, think emphatically, and demonstrate optimism in their clinic and hospital setting**.**

Operational Definitions:

Job satisfaction: is the level of contentment staff nurse feels regarding the job. This feeling is largely based on his or her perception of satisfaction.

Head nurse managers: are responsible for creating an environment that supports the professional practice and employee engagement.

Aims of the study:

To assess the managers' leadership style and its association to their staff nurses' job satisfaction.

Research questions:

1. What is the nurse managers' leadership style?

2. What is the level of job satisfaction among the staff nurses regarding:
   a. Professional work
   b. environment
   c. autonomy
   d. work worth
   e. professional relationships
   f. role enactment
   g. Benefits?

3. What is the relation between the managers' leadership style and their staff nurses' job satisfaction?

Subjects and Methods:

Research design:

A descriptive correlational design was used in this study. Descriptive research is used to describe the characteristics of the population or phenomenon being studied. It does not answer questions about 'how', 'when' or 'why' the characteristics occurred; rather, it addresses the 'what' question. The aim and objectives of this study were based on determining leadership style of the nurse managers and job satisfaction level of the staff nurses.

Research setting:

The study was conducted in two governmental hospitals in Damanhour City**,** Damanhour National Medical Institute and Chest Hospital in Damanhour City.

Subjects:

A total of 300 staff nurses were selected from previous settings based on the non-probability convenient sampling technique.

Data collection tools:

Tool (I): Demographic datasheet consisted of 4 items related to demographic data of

nurses such as age, gender, qualification, and Years of job experience.

Tool (II): The multifactor leadership questionnaire: The multifactor leadership questionnaire (MLQ) was employed to determine the leadership styles of the immediate superiors (head nurses) to whom the respondents reported **(Whitley & Putzier, 1994).** MLQ was used to assess nurse's manger leadership style as perceived by their staff nurses.

The assessment scales of MLQ included the following:

1. Transformational leadership
   a. idealized attributes
   b. idealized behaviors
   c. inspirational motivation
   d. intellectual stimulation
   e. individualized consideration

2. Transactional leadership
   a. contingent reward
   b. management by exception (active)

3. Passive/avoidant
   a. management by exception (passive)
   b. Laissez-faire.

Forty-five descriptive statements were listed; the nurse manager assessed how frequently each statement fitted the leadership style she or he was using, and rated with the following scale:

Score	Rate
0	Not at all
1	Once in a while
2	Sometimes
3	Fairly often
4	Frequently, if not always.

Tool III: The work quality index questionnaire:

The **work quality index questionnaire** (**Ramey, 2002**): The WQI is a 38-item scale developed to measure the satisfaction of staff nurses with their work and work culture. The tool was developed using factor analysis and maximum likelihood extraction techniques. The index contained six subscales: professional work environment, autonomy, work worth, professional relationships, role enactment, and benefits.

Score	Rate
1.00–1.50	Very dissatisfied
1.51–2.50	Dissatisfied
2.51–3.50	somewhat dissatisfied
3.51–4.50	Neutral
4.51–5.50	Somewhat satisfied.
5.51–6.50	Satisfied
6.51–7.50	Very satisfied

Tool validity and reliability:

The content validity of the tools was determined through an extensive review of the literature. The content of the data collection tools was submitted to a panel of three professors' experts in the nursing administration field, with more than ten years of experience in the field. Modifications of the tools were performed according to the panel judgment on the clarity of sentences, appropriateness of the content, sequence of items, and accuracy of scoring and recording of the items. Examination of the content validity index (CVI) showed that CVI = 88%. Reliability was assessed through Cronbach's alpha reliability test α= 89% which revealed that each of the two tools consisted of relatively homogenous items as indicated by the moderate to the high reliability of each tool.

Pilot study:

It was carried out on 10% of the studied nurses (30 nurses) for modification, clarification, and estimation of the time needed for filling the study tools and testing the feasibility of the research process. To fill in the sheets unclear items were clarified, unnecessary items were omitted, and new items were added. Those who shared in the pilot study were excluded from the study sample

Methods:

The official letters were obtained to conduct the study. The researchers explained the aim of the study at the beginning for all participants, so they were reassured that all gathered information would be confidential. The study was conducted in the previously mentioned settings for a period of six months (from September 2020 to February 2021).

Data collection:

- Official permission was obtained from Damanhour University Hospital administrators and the manager of the previously selected setting. Permission was also obtained from the head nurse of the same settings. Written informed consent was obtained from each nurse.

- The researchers attended the previous setting of the study two times / a week from 9 am to 1 pm. The data were collected by using study tools. The participants took approximately 25-35 minutes to complete the tools.

- About 60 nurses were filled the tools during the month, 15 nurses per week during two days.

- The multifactor leadership questionnaire (MLQ) was employed to determine the leadership styles of the immediate superiors.

- The work quality index questionnaire was employed to measure the staff nurses' job satisfaction.

Ethical consideration:

The researchers first introduced themself to the nurses and then explained the aim of the study at the beginning of the interview, so the nurses were reassured that all gathered information would be confidential. The researcher informed them that the study is voluntary; they had the right to withdraw from the study at any time, without giving any reason, and that their responses would be held confidentially.

Statistical analysis:

The data obtained were reviewed, prepared for computer entry, coded and scored, then analyzed and tabulated. Data entry and analysis were performed using SPSS (statistical software package) version 17.0. Data are expressed as the means, SD, and percentage distribution. A person's correlation is used for the numeric variable. P > 0.05 was not significant, and P < 0.05 was used as a cutoff for significance.

Results:

Table (1) shows age of (63%) of the studied nurses was ranged from 20 to 30 years, and (83%) of them were females. Approximately half of them (49%) had a diploma in nursing educational qualification. According to years of nursing experience, 75% of the studied nurses their experience was from one- to ten years.

The mean replies of managers' leadership styles, as perceived by their staff nurses, are shown in **Table 2**. The following are the staff nurses' perceptions of their managers' leadership styles, according to the analysis. The managers utilised a transformational leadership style 'fairly often' (2.89 ± 0.88), a transactional leadership style 'sometimes' (M = 2.42± 0.02), and a laissez-faire leadership style 'once in a while' (1.37±0.05).

Table 3 depicts the job satisfaction of the staff nurses. Staff nurses were relatively satisfied with their current employment in the areas of the professional work environment (4.83±0.09) and professional connections (4.39±0.05), as seen in the table. In contrast, when asked to rate their job satisfaction in terms of autonomy was (4.42±0.01), work worth (4.89±0.08), role enactment (4.43±0.03), and benefits (4.32±0.07), the staff nurses were neutral.

There was a correlation between manager transformational leadership with the work satisfaction level at an r-value of 0.259 with a p-value of 0.000; **table 4** indicated the correlation between the managers' leadership style and the job satisfaction level of their staff nurses. With a p-value of 0.833, there was no significant correlation between transactional leadership and work satisfaction. Furthermore, with a p-value of 0.006, there was a significant correlation between laissez-faire leadership and job satisfaction. Whereas, a negative correlation was revealed by the correlation coefficient was 0.203.

The association between the manager transformational leadership style and the level of job satisfaction among their staff nurses was seen in **Table 5**. Professional work environment received an r-value of 0.247 with

a p-value of 0.001, autonomy received an r-value of 0.237 with a p-value of 0.001, work worth received an r-value of 0.277 with a p-value of 0.001, and professional relationship received an r-value of 0.293 with a p-value of 0.000. Role enactment had an R-value of 0.177 and a p-value of 0.016, indicating a significant relation. Benefits, on the other hand, had an R-value of 0.137 and a p-value of 0.062, indicating that there was no significant relation.

In addition, there was no relation between manager transactional leadership style and job satisfaction among their staff nurses. The professional work environment was given an R-value of 0.036 and a p-value of 0.618, autonomy was given an R-value of 0.000 and a p-value of 0.997, work worth was given an R-value of 0.132 and a p-value of 0.077, the professional relationship was given an R-value of 0.093 and a p-value of 0.213, role enactment was given an R-value of 0.026.

The table also shows the relation between manager laissez-faire leadership style and satisfaction of their staff nurses. Professional work environment received an R-value of 0.176 and a p-value of 0.018, autonomy received an R-value of 0.177 and a p-value of 0.017, professional relationships received an R-value of 0.187 and a p-value of 0.010, and role enactment received an R-value of 0.195 and a p-value of 0.008, indicating a significant negative relation between laissez-faire leadership style and The r-value for work worth was 0.106, and the p-value was 0.158. The p-value was 0.002.

Table (1): Frequency and percentage distribution of the studied nurses according to their demographic characteristics

Variables	No	%
Age		
20–30	189	63
31–40	75	25
41–50	24	8
51–64	12	4
Gender		
Male	51	17
Female	249	83
Qualification		
Diploma in Nursing	147	49
Bachelor of Science in Nursing	144	48
Master of Nursing	9	3
Years of experience		
1-10	225	75
11–20	51	17
21–30	24	8

Table 2: Distribution of the studied nurses according to their managers' leadership style as perceived by them

Leadership style	Mean response	Remarks
Transformational leadership	2.89 ± 0.88	Fairly often
Transactional leadership factors	2.42± 0.02	Sometimes
Laissez-faire leadership	1.37±0.05	Once in a while

Table 3: Distribution of studied nurses mean and standard deviation regarding level of job satisfaction

Job satisfaction	Mean response	Remarks
Professional work environment	4.83±0.09	Somewhat satisfied
Autonomy	4.39±0.05	Neutral
Work worth	4.42±0.01	Neutral
Professional relationships	4.89±0.08	Somewhat satisfied
Role enactment	4.43±0.03	Neutral
Benefits	4.32±0.07	Neutral

Table 4: Correlation between Managers' Leadership Style and their Staff Nurses' Job Satisfaction

Leadership style	Job satisfaction	X^2	P-value
Transformational	Job satisfaction	0.259**	0.000 Sig.
Transactional		0.017	0.833 Not sig.
Laissez-faire		-0.203*	0.006 Sig

$P < 0.05$ was significant
$P < 0.001$ was highly significant

Table 5: Correlation between Managers' Transformational, Transactional, and Laissez-faire Leadership Style, and their Staff Nurses' Job Satisfaction

Leadershipstyle	Job satisfaction	X^2	P-value
Transformational leadership	Professional work environment	0.247	0.001
	Autonomy	0.237	0.001
	Work worth	0.277	0.001
	Professional relationships	0.293	0.000
	Role enactment	0.177	0.016
	Benefits	0.137	0.062
Transactionalleadership	Professional work environment	0.036	0.618
	Autonomy	0.000	0.997
	Work worth	0.132	0.077
	Professional relationships	0.093	0.213
	Role enactment	0.026	0.727
	Benefits	-0.126	0.082
Laissez-faire leadership	Professional work environment	-0.176	0.018
	Autonomy	-0.177	0.017
	Work worth	-0.106	0.158
	Professional relationships	-0.187	0.010
	Role enactment	-0.195	0.008
	Benefits	-0.235	0.002

$P > 0.05$ was not significant
$P < 0.05$ was significant
$P < 0.001$ was highly significant

Discussion:

This study aimed to assess the manager's leadership styles and its association to their staff nurses' job satisfaction. The results of the study revealed that the majority of staff nurses were females. Nursing has always been a female-dominated profession, according to these statistics (**Huppatz, 2017**).

The results are matched with the findings of **Naseem et al., (2018)** who studied "Relationship between Leadership Styles of Nurse Managers and Staff Nurses Job Satisfaction in Punjab, Pakistan" and showed that M±SD of participants was 28.81±3.34 years old and was females. The results are supported by the findings of **Karadag (2015)** who studied " Leadership and organizational outcomes: Meta-analysis of empirical studies" and found that the high percentage of nurses were females.

The findings of the study revealed that approximately half of them had diploma in nursing educational qualification. This result is similar to that of **Alshammari, (2018)**, who studied "Nursing leadership in the Ministry of Health Hospitals of Saudi Arabia" and found that a high percentage of the staff held a diploma degree.

The findings of the study indicated that nurse managers utilized transformational leadership than a transactional leadership style. From the researchers' point of view, the results indicated that the nurses perceived that their managers were using a transformational leadership style more often than the transactional or laissez-faire leadership styles, and that managers used all five important transformational leadership methods to influence their subordinates: ascribed idealized influence, behavioral idealized influence, inspiring motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized concern. This result could be significant given that transformational leadership can encourage employees towards achieving more than what they had planned **(Krishnan, 2015).**

The findings backed up the premise that a mix of leadership styles is needed to achieve the desired results, and more research is needed to figure out what the best leadership techniques are **(Aboshaiqah et al., 2018).**

According to the findings of this study**,** the staff nurses' satisfaction mean scores ranged from somewhat satisfied to neutral. From the researchers' point of view, the results reflected that the staff nurses were fairly satisfied with their jobs because they allowed them to contribute to the hospital and profession, allowing them to use their entire range of nursing talents while also providing a variety of challenges and opportunities to help others. They were also content in their current position since they were given support and had positive interactions with their supervisors, peers, and physicians. They had enough time to fulfill patient physical care responsibilities while still having obvious career progression options **(Bander, 2019)**.

The result of the present study revealed that there was positive correlation between the transformational leadership style of managers and the level of job satisfaction among their staff nurses. From the researchers' point of view, the results indicated that when the managers had transformational leadership style, it help their staff nurses to be satisfied with their job and provide good care.

This result is similar to that of **Mah'd Alloubani et al., (2018)** who studied " Effects of Leadership Styles on quality of services in healthcare" and reported that there was a direct and a positive connection between job satisfaction level and transformational leadership style. Similary, **Naseem, et al., (2018)** revealed that all dimensions of leadership styles had a relationship with job satisfaction. Results revealed that most factors of leadership styles of head nurses significantly correlated with job satisfaction.

The result of the present study indicated that a there was negative correlation between a laissez-faire leadership style and job satisfaction among staff nurses. From the researchers' point of view, the results indicated when the managers had laissez-faire leadership style is less effective and may causes less job satisfaction. This finding is also, matched with **Yahaya and Ebrahim, (2016)** who studied" Leadership styles and organizational commitment" and showed that laissez-fair leadership models are the least effective forms of leadership and can negatively affect job satisfaction.

Similary**, Negussie, & Demissie (2013)** found that in their study about "Relationship between leadership styles of nurse managers and nurses' job satisfaction"; they found that in general, nurses were more satisfied with transformational leadership style. Therefore, nursing managers must adopt a transformative leadership style to increase nursing job satisfaction. Results showed that a statistically significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction

The current results are similar to the study conducted by **Abualrub and Alghamdi (2017)** about "The impact of leadership styles on nurses' satisfaction and intention to stay" in which they concluded, based on their results, that transformational leadership enhances nurses' job satisfaction levels.

This study result is consistent with **Babalola**, **(2016),** who conducted a study about "The effect of leadership style, job satisfaction and employee-supervisor relationship on job performance and organizational commitment" and indicated that the laissez-faire leadership style is the least important predictor of organizational commitment

The current study result found that there was positive correlation between transformational leadership with the work satisfaction level. This finding agrees with a study conducted by **Krishnan, (2015),** who found that transformational leadership style encourages an organization's employees to achieve more than they had planned. In a parallel study conducted in Taiwan, transformational leadership was found to have a significant impact on supervisor support. Notably, workplace support especially from the boss was discovered to be a crucial mediator variable in explaining the association between transformational leadership and job satisfaction **(Lin et al., 2015).**

Conclusion:

According to the findings of the current study, the study concluded that nurse managers demonstrated transformational leadership styles more than transactional and laissez-faire leadership styles. Although the staff nurse respondents were satisfied with their work environment and professional contacts, they were unsure whether they were satisfied with characteristics such as autonomy, work worth, role enactment, and benefits, as seen by their neutral comments. Job satisfaction among nurses was found to be significantly positive correlated with transformational leadership styles.

Recommendations

According to the conclusions of the study, the study suggested that hospital administrators should focus on training and continuing education for nurse managers to further improve their management skills and help them develop transformational leadership behaviors. Staff nurses' motivation and job happiness could be improved in this way, resulting in better patient care and satisfaction. Further study needs to be conducted to head of staff

nurses perceptions about various leadership styles and their effects.

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