

Analysis of article on nursing management styles



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Introduction Recent developments in the health industry have highlighted the need to develop management competencies that can increase the productivity and realize potentials of nursing professionals. According to Johnson (2004), nursing managers and administrators have become more adept at considering nursing issues as management concerns which in turn have translated to the development of work designs, strategic planning, and policy and sensitivity analyses. Supported by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing's (2000) study, the recognition for the importance of honing management skills in the nursing profession has created a demand for the development and institution of management styles and techniques in nursing. The response to the advocacy has been a significant increase in research to improve current management and administrative training, improving insights for not only nursing managers but the profession in general (Besner, 2006).

Spotlight: Grzeskowiak's Management Styles

In Mark Grzeskowiak's (2005) article, *Management Styles*, he points out that one of the first tasks of developing management competencies is determine what management style is to be utilized. He develops this idea by highlighting how different management styles affect work outcomes. This implies the need to assess not only management competencies but also the characteristics of the organization it is to be applied in.

According to Grzeskowiak, there are two main management styles, known as authoritarian and democratic and considers all other styles of management as a product of either. Authoritarian management is characterized by a high degree of control limited to one or a small group of individuals. It is a prescriptive or instructive in nature, allowing for limited discussion or

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alternative channels. Mandate and power is not reserved to the head of the organization but he has advantage over all other members of the organization. To create a contrast with authoritarianism, Grzeskowiec presents democratic management as a counter-point. This is characterized as an egalitarian style, encouraging discussion and collaboration. Though there are authority figures, there is wider distribution of power. Furthermore, decisions are developed from consensus rather than by instruction.

Applications

As Grzeskowiec (2005) illustrates through case scenarios, what works for one organization may not necessarily work for another. Managers should then be able to formulate and implement management styles that will be most beneficial and productive. In the context of nursing, some functions or operations may require greater authoritarianism while other democratic styles. For example, authoritative styles may be more appropriate in clinical or medical functions but nursing functions would lean towards the use of democratic management. Hermann (2004) points out that as that in the latter scenario, authority figures are critical to establish control over intervention and procedures while in the former, collaboration can increase the cooperation and participation in delivering care.

Grzeskowiec acknowledges as well that both styles have their value and discourages conventional wisdom that would encourage assumption on the merits of either. Moreover, he points out that it is very rare that management prerogatives are purely democratic or authoritarian. He points out that managers use variations of both styles to affect management personas such as coach-manager, friend-manager or parent-manager, citing that, " good managers will vary their style according to personality types and

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practical needs" (para 13).

Conclusion

Considering the correlation of management effectiveness to nurses' performance, job satisfaction, efficiency, effectivity and relationship with clients, appropriate focus should be given in improving in developing management skills in nursing professionals and administrators alike (Besner, 2006; Gail et al, 2000). The management of any organization is challenging. In cases where the organization is of critical importance to the community such as nursing, the importance of developing appropriate and effective management strategies become even more of a concern. In conclusion, determining management styles to employ is the foundation for all subsequent management decision and therefore deserves careful thought and consideration.

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