A study to determine managerial and supervisory competencies of ward sisters with a view to develop & evaluate an in service education programs in a selected hospital of Delhi

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Abstract

Nursing is a vital component of health care system, which contributes to attainment, protection, and restoration of health at any point in the life cycle of an individual. Nurses are in key positions of influence, not only on patient care outcomes, but also on the effectiveness of the organizations in which they work. Every nurse is a leader and manager at some level and the nursing role requires leadership and management skills.

Nursing leadership at ward level provided by a sister or charge nurse is vital to the delivery of safe high-quality care to patients. Every ward sister should have the capacity, time, resources and the authority to co-ordinate and deliver patient care in partnership with the rest of the health care team as well as patients and their families. Ward sisters are increasingly asked to do more with less- their managerial responsibilities have increased, but they have not received good training in management principles. This lack of educational preparation among nurse managers has become an issue of significant importance. Thus, enhancing the core competitiveness of nursing personnel lies in developing the managerial competencies of the basic level managers - the ward sisters.
Nursing service managers without necessary managerial attributes negatively influence planning, organizing, directing and control of delivering quality health care. With the broad objective to enable nurses to provide quality nursing services to the patients, to improve their communication skills, Directorate General of Health Services has sanctioned central assistance to various institutions in the country for training of nurses under Development of Nursing Services in terms of guidelines for planning programme and financial assistance to conduct ten days in-service education programme.

Till today, the planned ongoing in-service education does not exist in various hospitals of India. Thus a need was felt to determine the managerial competencies of ward sisters with a view to develop and evaluate managerial and supervisory competencies of ward sisters in a selected hospital of Delhi. The aim of the present study was to determine the managerial and supervisory competencies of ward sisters with a view to develop and evaluate an in-service education programme in a selected Government Hospital of Delhi.

The conceptual framework adopted for the study was based on Malcolm Shephered Knowles’ Adult learning theory. It provides a comprehensive, systematic framework for development and evaluation of learning opportunities for nurse managers. The research approach adopted for the study was experimental approach with one group pretest post test design. The independent variable in the study was IEPMS and the dependent variables are managerial and supervisory competencies of ward sister, knowledge of ward sisters regarding management and supervision.
The tools developed and used for data collection were structured managerial and supervisory competency scale, structured learning need opinionnaire on management and supervision, structured knowledge questionnaire on management and supervision and structured opinionnaire on acceptability of in-service education programme on management and supervision. The content validity of tools and IEPMS were obtained by submitting to nine experts from nursing administration, hospital administration in public and private settings. The study was conducted in a 1050 bedded tertiary level government hospital setting of Delhi. The IEPMS was developed to update the knowledge and competencies of ward sisters in management and supervision.

The knowledge and managerial and supervisory competencies of ward sisters were assessed before and after administration of IEPMS to evaluate the effectiveness of IEPMS. The IEPMS of 15 hrs duration having four sessions nursing as a profession, communication and coordination management techniques in nursing and staff development; spread over two days followed by first follow up/ discussion after 14 days and second after 60 days were administered to ward sisters.

Most of the ward sisters had more than years of experience as staff nurse and mean experience as staff nurse were 15.75. Majority of them 64.9% had less than 10 yrs experience as ward sisters with mean 7.37 yrs. Most of the ward sisters 89.4% attended in service education programs out of which only 5.92% could attend in management. The mean percentage managerial and supervisory competency score of ward sisters expressed by ANS was significantly higher than the score given by staff nurses and significantly lower than the score given by ward sisters themselves (F value 42.478, p value 0.001). Among the domains of managerial and supervisory
competencies, conceptual domain was highest as expressed by ward sisters, ANS and staff nurse, followed by technical, human and lowest was in mentor domain. The most preferred ten topics as expressed by ward sisters to learn were performance appraisal, supervision, team building, conflict resolution, managing stress and time, maintaining interpersonal relationship, ward management and problem solving, guidance and counseling and staff development and the least preferred topics were budget preparations, nursing research, material management, hospital information system, planning nursing care.

A significant increase in mean knowledge score was observed when compared with Pretest and Post test I (t value 20.458, p 0.001 < 0.05); Pretest and Post test II (t value 17.754, p 0.001 < 0.05) The IEPMS was effective in increasing the knowledge of ward sisters. The difference in the mean percentage competency score during pretest and posttest as expressed by ward sister, ANS and staff nurses were statistically significant as evident by p value 0.001. The ward sisters, ANS and staff nurses expressed that IEPMS was effective in improving managerial and supervisory competencies of ward sisters in conceptual, human, technical and mentor domains.

There was no significant relationship between knowledge score of ward sisters regarding management and supervision with managerial and supervisory competency score of ward sisters. The managerial and supervisory competencies of ward sisters were associated with age and not associated with professional education, total experience, years of experience as ward sisters, years of experience as staff nurse and exposure to in-service education of ward sisters. The managerial and supervisory competencies of ward sisters in conceptual domain were significantly higher among
older ward sisters compared with younger ones. The mean percentage competency score of ward sisters in human domain was significantly higher in ward sisters with age more than 50 years, professional experience more than 20 years’ experience. The mean percentage technical competency was higher in ward sisters with professional education above GNM. No significant association was found between mentor domain competency score and the selected factors. The mentor competencies of ward sisters were apparently low irrespective of their age, professional education, professional experience, experience as ward sister, experience as staff nurse and exposure to in service education. The knowledge of ward sisters regarding management and supervision increased irrespective of age, professional qualification, total professional experience, years of experience as staff nurse, years of experience as ward sister.