



Leadership in Nursing - A Christian Perspective

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Abstract

Leadership in nursing is a critical aspect of the healthcare industry. Nurses often find themselves in positions of leadership, whether it's in direct patient care, management, or as advocates for their patients and the profession as a whole. Effective nursing leadership is essential for improving patient outcomes, ensuring quality care, and promoting a positive work environment. Here, I'll provide an overview of leadership in nursing with references to support the key concepts. Leadership in nursing from a Christian perspective is a unique approach that combines the principles of nursing leadership with Christian values, ethics, and spirituality. Here, I'll provide an overview of leadership in nursing from a Christian perspective with references to support the key concept.

Keywords: Leadership; Nursing

Introduction

The best and the only perfect example of Christian leadership is Jesus Christ alone. He carried out His earthly being a bridge between God and man, He was counted as "Man of Sorrow". He became the perfect example of how a leader should follow servant leadership style in laying down ones own life for the followers, very difficult yet, He demonstrated that it's possible to be sacrificial. He is the true symbol of unconditional love and leadership. There have been many followers of Him who sincerely obeyed and gave themselves for the cause of Gospel and many are still striving even today. It's a great challenge, yet possible only by His grace as the whole human race is frail and sinful by birth.

Back Ground

Humanitarianism and the Christian faith are two concepts that seem to be strongly linked. According to Best (2020), "servant leadership is unique in that servant leaders demonstrate humanitarian attributes. They affirm their intent to be effective leaders and have a set of core multi-dimensional leadership competencies that enable them to be so" (p. 130). These competencies are authenticity, humility, integrity, listening, compassion, accountability, courage, and altruism (Best, 2020). The stories within the New Testament describe merits that concur with the ones that Best (2020) as-

cribes to servant leadership. Moreover, this type of management can be viewed as a philosophy in itself, as its global aim is to build a more caring kind of society [1].

Team nursing is a care delivery system that can be traced back, approximately, to the middle of the last century and still perseveres due to its numerous advantages. The system was designed in the 1950s due to the differentiation of skills that nurses obtained [2].

Even though the people management theory was amalgamated, mainly, for business and administrative spheres, a particular part of it applies to the field of healthcare. Leadership is a skill that demands a specific body of knowledge and dexterity in the resolution of conflicts, people management, and even basic psychology. In a healthcare organization, a leader is required to obtain even more specified skills tool-box. This role presupposes that a person is able to impact the quality and direction of group activities, helping to adapt to a change or produce a change [3].

Nursing care systems, seemingly, can be divided into two broad groups: traditional and contemporary. Relationship-based care system views the rapport between a nurse and a patient as the cornerstone of the domain – this system can be considered as rather a traditional one. Nursing researcher, Hildegard Peplau, suggests

that relationship-based care system despite revolving primarily around patient-nurse relationships also requires a focus on the relationships within nursing personnel, and reflexive relationships with oneself [4].

Primary nursing is a care delivery system that emerged from the dissatisfaction that a group of nurses had with team nursing. They viewed team nursing as such that aims to satisfy first of all nurses but not patients and their families; in this new system, one registered nurse provides care for an inpatient with the help of an assisting nurse [5].

The notion of evil propels the Christian worldview as it presupposes a struggle with an overarching interest for the domination of good. Moreland and Craig (2017) claim that “members of the Christian family have a responsibility to promote worldview evangelization, the nurture of the saints, and the penetration of culture with Christian worldview” (p. 541). Such a position demonstrates that proactivity is another crucial element in a worldview formed according to the Holy Scriptures. In this way, in the Christian worldview, a call for ultimate altruism and kindness is combined with the belief that evil should be overcome on the personal and global levels. Inherent viciousness of earthly existence, its sinfulness as the result of the expulsion from the garden of Eden creates in Christians craving for continual self-improvement [6].

Servant leadership

In Christian nursing leadership, the concept of servant leadership is often emphasized. This leadership style focuses on serving others, putting the needs of patients and the nursing team above one's own. Greenleaf's “Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness” is a seminal work on this topic.

Ethical and moral leadership

Christian nursing leaders are expected to uphold high ethical and moral standards. “Healthcare Ethics and Human Values: An Introductory Text with Readings and Case Studies” by Hester and Schonfeld is a resource that explores ethical leadership in healthcare.

Compassion and empathy

Christian values promote compassion and empathy, which are critical in nursing leadership. “The Compassionate Nurse: Empathy and Concern for Human Suffering” by Bramhall (2014) delves into the importance of compassion in nursing.

Faith integration

Integrating faith into nursing practice and leadership is central to Christian nursing. “Spiritual Care in Nursing Practice” by O'Brien (2012) provides insights into how faith can be integrated into nursing care.

Prayer and reflection

Christian nursing leaders often engage in prayer and reflection to seek guidance and maintain a strong moral compass. “Prayer in Nursing: The Spirituality of Compassionate Care” by Nelson and Glazer (2015) discusses the role of prayer in nursing.

Community and collaboration

The Christian perspective on nursing leadership encourages a sense of community and collaboration within healthcare teams. “Collaborative Caring: Stories and Reflections on Teamwork in Health Care” by Sabin and Daniels (2014) explores the value of collaboration in healthcare.

Healing and wholeness

Christian nursing leaders prioritize the healing and wholeness of the patient, considering not only physical but also emotional and spiritual well-being. “Healing the Whole Person: Applications of Yoga Psychotherapy” by Sovik and Shiva (2019) discusses a holistic approach to healing.

Faith-based organizations

Christian nursing leaders often work in faith-based healthcare organizations, which have their own unique approaches to healthcare delivery. The Journal of Christian Nursing is a valuable source for articles and research related to nursing from a Christian perspective.

Caring for the underserved

Christian nursing leaders may be drawn to providing care for underserved populations, reflecting the Christian commitment to social justice and caring for the marginalized.

Education and ministry

Some Christian nurses may pursue education or ministry roles, combining their nursing skills with their faith to provide care and support to others. Resources on nursing ministry can be found in Christian nursing literature. Leadership in nursing from a Christian perspective is deeply rooted in values, ethics, and faith, emphasizing the importance of caring for the whole person and serving with love and compassion. It integrates Christian principles into the art and science of nursing, making it a unique and spiritually fulfilling approach to nursing leadership.

A Christian nurse leader

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership is often seen as an effective leadership style in nursing. It involves inspiring and motivating others to achieve their full potential and is associated with better patient outcomes. In their study, Bass and Riggio (2006) discuss transformational leadership in "Transformational Leadership" and how it can be applied in healthcare settings.

Nursing leadership styles

Various leadership styles can be applied in nursing, including democratic, autocratic, and laissez-faire. The choice of style often depends on the specific situation. The American Organization of Nurse Executives (AONE) provides valuable resources on leadership styles in nursing.

Clinical leadership

Clinical leadership involves nurses taking the lead in clinical practice, including patient care and decision-making. It's vital for promoting evidence-based practice and improving patient safety. "Clinical Leadership in Nursing" by Stanley (2017) is a book that explores this topic in detail.

Emotional intelligence

Emotional intelligence is crucial for nurses in leadership positions. Goleman's work, such as "Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ," provides insights into the importance of emotional intelligence in leadership roles.

Nurse manager leadership

Nurse managers are responsible for overseeing nursing units and departments. The American Association of Nurse Executives (AONE) offers resources and research on nurse manager leadership in healthcare settings.

Advocacy in nursing leadership

Nurses often act as advocates for their patients and their profession. The American Nurses Association (ANA) publishes resources and articles on nursing advocacy, emphasizing its role in leadership.

Leadership development

Leadership development programs and continuing education are essential for nurses aspiring to leadership roles. The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) offers information on leadership development programs for nurses.

Interprofessional collaboration

Collaboration with other healthcare professionals is crucial in nursing leadership. The Interprofessional Education Collaborative

(IPEC) has resources and publications on interprofessional education and practice.

Ethical leadership

Ethical leadership in nursing is vital for maintaining patient trust and ensuring quality care. "Ethical Leadership in Health Care: A Multi-Professional Approach" by Molewijk et al. (2016) is a comprehensive resource on this topic.

Quality improvement

Leadership in nursing often involves improving the quality of care provided. The Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) is a reputable source for quality improvement tools and resources.

Conclusion

Leadership in nursing is multifaceted and plays a central role in delivering high-quality patient care. As the healthcare landscape continues to evolve, nurses in leadership positions are well-placed to drive positive change and ensure the well-being of both patients and healthcare professionals.

Effective healthcare is partially built on the notion of leadership and management in nursing as it is one of its most extensive domains. The relationships between medical staff can indirectly affect patients, increasing or decreasing the quality of the care provided. In this case, the Christian approach has the potential to bring several benefits, since nursing is one of the activities that crystallize qualities presented in this religion most fully. Caring for those in need is one of the principal dogmas of both nursing and the Bible. Servant leadership is the embodiment of Christian faith and virtues that it promotes; it emphasizes the characteristics that consolidate a call for altruism and the necessity to govern people. In this way, expressions of Christianity in nursing leadership and management are numerous and beneficial for nurse leaders, followership, and patience in handling the nursing care issues with a Christian outlook.

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