



The Relationship Between Head Nurses' Servant Leadership and Nurses' Performance at Roemani Hospital Semarang

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Abstract. Nurses, as essential human resources in hospitals, are required to possess smart thinking skills and abilities to ensure optimal performance, which is crucial for delivering quality nursing care services and staying abreast of contemporary demands. The leadership style of the head nurse significantly influences the performance of nurses. This study aims to investigate the correlation between servant leadership exhibited by head nurses and the performance of nurses at Roemani Hospital, Semarang. Employing a descriptive survey approach, this research adopts a cross-sectional design. The study population comprises inpatient nurses at Roemani Hospital, Semarang, totaling 143 individuals. A sample of 106 nurses meeting the inclusion criteria is selected using proportional stratified random sampling method and the Slovin formula. Findings reveal a significant and moderately strong relationship (correlation coefficient +0.361, $p \leq 0.05$) between servant leadership of head nurses and nurse performance at Roemani Hospital, Semarang. Recommendations include advocating for the implementation and utilization of servant leadership style by head nurses in the hospital to enhance nurses' performance effectively.

Keywords: Nurse, Servant Leadership, Nurse Performance.

1. Introduction

The success or failure of an organization in achieving its objectives is heavily dependent on its human resources. Without appropriate human resources support, an organization cannot sustain its operations, develop, or progress in the future. Nurses constitute a vital component of a hospital's human resources [1,2]. Enhancing the quality of nursing services necessitates effective performance evaluation, measured objectively to bolster service quality and nurse competency [3]. Nurse performance stands out as the pivotal factor in ensuring quality nursing care services [4]. Leadership plays a crucial role in cultivating a disciplined culture within nursing service provision, thereby influencing the smooth operation of hospital services [2,5]. Despite nurses' high expectations of the head nurse's leadership to enhance their performance, perceptions of the head nurse's leadership tend to be less positive.

Evidence suggests that head nurses often prioritize managerial responsibilities over directing or motivating nurses to deliver improved care [5].

Servant leadership, characterized by its focus on caring, ethical behavior, empowerment, personal development, teamwork values, and commitment to high-quality service, has the potential to enhance individuals' lives, foster organizational growth, and cultivate a just and compassionate environment [6]. A previous study revealed significant findings indicating that servant leadership was the most influential variable correlated with nurse performance. Room heads employing the servant leadership model demonstrated a fivefold increase in the performance of implementing nurses compared to those who did not utilize this model [7]. Despite its potential benefits, research on servant leadership within the context of Roemani Hospital Semarang remains unexplored.

Preliminary findings from interviews conducted with several executive nurses at Roemani Hospital Semarang highlighted key issues with the head nurse's leadership approach. These issues included the absence of a visionary leadership direction, inadequate attention to long-term problems, discrepancies in leave entitlements compared to nurses' expectations, and recognition primarily offered in verbal form. The lack of disciplinary control among implementing nurses underscores the need for more effective leadership practices within the hospital. Research has shown that transformational leadership has a significant impact on nurse innovation behavior and can positively influence the quality of care and intention to leave among nurses [2]. Additionally, the association between leadership of nurses and nurse-reported quality of care highlights the importance of effective leadership in ensuring high-quality care [8]. Furthermore, the influence of authentic leadership and supportive professional practice environments has been linked to new graduate nurses' job satisfaction, indicating the potential impact of leadership practices on the satisfaction and performance of nursing staff [9]. Therefore, implementing more effective leadership practices, particularly transformational and authentic leadership, may help address the disciplinary issues and improve overall nurse performance within the hospital.

2. Method

This study employed a descriptive correlational research design with a cross-sectional approach. The participants consisted of all implementing nurses from eight inpatient rooms at Roemani Hospital Semarang. A proportionate stratified random sampling technique was utilized to select 106 respondents. The research utilized questionnaires as measuring instruments, including the *Servant Leadership Questionnaire (SLQ)* and the *Nurse Performance Appraisal (NPA) questionnaire*, which was adapted from prior studies and previously validated for reliability and validity. Ethical considerations were paramount throughout the study, with informed consent being obtained from all respondents. The consent form provided to participants included a comprehensive explanation of the research objectives and procedures.

3. Result

Most of the respondents were female nurses (79.2%) and had completed a D3 nursing education (83.0%). The nurses in the study had an average age of 33.99 years and had been working at Roemani Hospital for an average of 10.36 years (Table 1).

Table.1 Participants Characteristics (n=106)

Variable	f	%	M±SD
Age			33.99±8.33
Sex			
Male	22	28.8	
Female	84	79.2	
Length of employment			10.36±7.86
Education			
Diploma III	88	83	
Nursing Bachelor	18	17	

Table 2 presents the analysis of nurses' perceptions regarding the servant leadership of the head nurses. The mean score obtained for the nurse's perception of the servant leadership of the head nurses was 34.00. Categorically, the majority of the servant leadership of the head nurses was classified as good leadership (92.5%). Across all leadership indicators among head nurses, ratings fell within the good category range, ranging from 92.5% to 95.3%. Furthermore, the assessment of nurses' performance in this study also revealed a predominance within the good category (93.4%). According to table 2, it is evident that there exists a significant relationship between the servant leadership demonstrated by the head nurses and the performance of nurses at Roemani Hospital, Semarang. The analysis indicates a notably strong correlation, wherein the relationship is positive and directly proportional. This implies that as the quality of servant leadership exhibited by the head nurses improves, so does the performance of the nurses.

4. Discussion

Servant leadership, characterized by its departure from traditional leadership styles, places a premium on prioritizing the needs and interests of others over one's own. Leaders who adopt servant leadership demonstrate sensitivity towards the needs and aspirations of their subordinates, thereby fostering an environment conducive to growth and communal well-being.

Among the indicators of servant leadership, active listening stands out as a pivotal aspect, where the head nurses actively solicit feedback and suggestions from their subordinates to facilitate mutual agreement [10]. This is evidenced by their ability to articulate a clear vision

for activities, consistently offer encouragement and motivation to their subordinates, and prioritize honesty in all endeavors [11].

Table.2 Description of nurses' perceptions of head nurses' servant leadership, leadership's indicators and nurses' performance and their relationship (n=106)

Variable	f	%	M±SD	r	P-value
Head nurses' servant leadership			34.13±3.80	0.361	0.001
Good	98	92.5			
Poor	8	7.5			
Head nurses' servant leadership indicators			3.71±0.71		
<i>Listening</i>	101	95.3			
Good	5	4.7			
Poor			9.57±0.78		
<i>Empathy</i>	99	93.4			
Good	7	6.6			
Poor			20.9±2.73		
<i>Openness</i>	89	92.5			
Good	8	7.5			
Poor					
Nurses' performance			58.10±6.49		
Good	99	93.4			
Poor	7	6.6			

However, empathy indicators are categorized as suboptimal, as evidenced by instances where leave entitlements for nurses do not align with their expectations or requests, particularly during major holidays, resulting in only a select few nurses being granted leave to ensure uninterrupted hospital operations. Moreover, indicators of openness are primarily limited to verbal expressions of appreciation [12].

Effective nurse performance plays a critical role in enhancing the quality of healthcare delivery. Various factors influence nurse performance, including individual, psychological, and organizational factors [13]. Individual factors encompass skills, abilities, knowledge, demographics, and family background, while psychological factors comprise perception, attitude, motivation, learning, and personality [13]. Organizational factors encompass resources, leadership, rewards, structure, workload, and job design [14,15].

The findings of the research conducted within the inpatient rooms at Roemani Hospital, Semarang, reveal that the majority of nurses exhibit good performance, with 99 respondents falling within this category. However, seven respondents are categorized as exhibiting poor punctuality. Further analysis suggests that good performance encompasses both quality and

quantity, with nurses consistently delivering appropriate care, collaborating effectively with colleagues, and achieving targeted work outcomes within their designated shifts [16]. Conversely, issues such as punctuality and occasional lapses in the quality of performance, such as incomplete activity reports, are identified as areas for improvement [17–19].

Previous studies corroborate the importance of leadership style in influencing nurse performance. Najir (2019) highlights the relationship between head nurses' leadership style and nurse performance in the Kendari City Hospital Inpatient Room [20]. Similarly, research conducted in a hospital in West Jakarta underscores the positive impact of servant leadership on nurse performance, with implementation of this model resulting in a fivefold increase in executive nurse performance compared to non-adopters [21]. Servant leadership has been associated with various positive outcomes in the healthcare sector. Servant leadership, characterized by genuine service-oriented intentions, holds promise in nurturing a supportive environment conducive to optimal nurse performance, ultimately enhancing the quality of healthcare delivery. Research has shown that servant leadership is related to increased innovative behavior due to its positive influence on the self-concept of employees, highlighting the importance of developing a favorable supervisor–subordinate relationship [22]. Furthermore, servant leadership has been found to positively influence nurses' job embeddedness and psychological contract fulfillment, indicating its potential to enhance nurses' commitment and satisfaction within their roles [23,24]. Additionally, servant leadership has been linked to controlling psychological distress in crisis situations, emphasizing its vital role in promoting the mental health of healthcare staff [25]. The literature also suggests that servant leadership indirectly impacts nurse turnover intentions via job satisfaction, highlighting the potential of this leadership style to mitigate turnover and enhance retention in nursing units [26]. Moreover, the association between servant leadership and staff nurses' career adaptability underscores the potential of servant leadership to facilitate nurses' ability to adapt to changing circumstances and challenges within their professional roles [24]. Overall, the evidence supports the significant influence of servant leadership on nurse performance and well-being. The positive impact of servant leadership on various aspects of nursing practice, including job satisfaction, turnover intentions, psychological well-being, and innovative behavior, underscores the importance of this leadership style in promoting optimal nurse performance and enhancing the quality of healthcare delivery.

5. Conclusion

The research results show that the servant leadership of the head of the room is related and significant to the performance of nurses, and the better the servant leadership of the head of the room, the better the performance of the nurses at Roemani Hospital, Semarang.

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