Leading from the margin: Nurses' power and influence

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Disclosure

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- No known or potentially perceived conflicts of interest
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Objectives

- Demonstrate how personal power is activated to influence change and its significance in the delivery of health care today.

- Recognize and validate the power that nurses have to influence health care transformation.

- Motivate and empower nurses to embrace their power and influence in leading change and transforming health care.
Background & Significance

- The nursing profession, a 365/24/7 operation, due to its sheer size, specialized training and competencies in all healthcare settings has been called to lead healthcare transformation.

  IOM, 2010

- Issues of quality, access and cost greatly impact the global health care system and ultimately population outcomes.

  Bisognano, 2010
The Problem

Nursing has not always been considered a leadership source for healthcare transformation, from within the profession or from outside of the profession.

Vandriel, Bellack & O’Neil, 2012
The Meaning of Power

- Power is a widely used concept
- The capacity of a person, team or organization to influence others.
- Ability and capacity to act or produce an effect
- Influence: The act or power of producing an effect without apparent exertion of force or direct exercise of command
- Self-Efficacy: A person's belief about his or her ability and capacity to accomplish a task or to deal with the challenges of life
- Counter power is the capacity to a person, team, or organization to keep a person more powerful or a group in the exchange.
Dependence in the Power Relationship
Contingencies of Power

- Substitutability; the extent to which people depend on a resource have alternatives.
  - Controlling Task
  - Controlling Knowledge
  - Controlling Labor
  - Differentiation

- Interdependence between the power holder and others.
Contingency of Power

- Discretion - freedom to exercise
- Judgment - to make decisions without referring to a specific rule or receiving permission from someone else.
- Visibility - those who control value resources or knowledge will yield power only when others are aware of these power bases.
- Mentoring - process of learning the ropes of organizational life from a senior person within the company
Sources of Power

- Legitimate power; the capacity to influence others through formal authority.

- Reward Power; person’s ability to control the allocation of rewards valued by others and to remove negative sanctions.

- Coercive Power; ability to apply punishment.

- Health care formal power
  - Organized healthcare systems
  - Clinical administration
  - Physicians

(Paynton, 2008)
Sources of Power

- Expert Power; an individual’s or work unit’s capacity to influence others by possessing knowledge or skills that they value.

- Referent Power; when others identify with them, like them, or otherwise respect them.
Theoretical Framework

- Albert Bandura’s theory of self-efficacy
  - One's belief in one's ability to succeed in specific situations or accomplish a task; one's sense of self-efficacy can play a major role in how one approaches goals, tasks, and challenges.

- People are self organizing, proactive, self-regulating, and self-reflecting.

- People are contributors to their own circumstances not just products of them.
Performance Outcomes

Feeling of high self-efficacy based upon having prior successful experiences

Vicarious Experiences

A situation in which levels of self-efficacy are either increased or reduced as a result of observing another person or group’s performance

How is Self-Efficacy Developed

Verbal Persuasion

Increased or decreased feeling of self-efficacy centered around positive or negative feedback related to task performance

Physiological Feedback

Feeling of positive or negative self-efficacy linked to the signals that one’s body is sending related to performance
Influencing Others

- Power is only the capacity to influence others. It represents the potential to change someone’s attitude of behavior.

- **Influence**: Refers to any behavior that attempts to alter someone’s attitudes.
  - It is power in motion.
Gender difference in Influence Tactics

Men:
- More likely to rely on direct impression management tactics
- Tend to advertise their achievements and take personal credit for successes
- Likely to assign blame and less likely to assume it

Women:
- Reluctant to force the spotlight on themselves. They prefer to share credit with others.
- More likely to apologize—personally take blame—even for problems not cause by them.
- Generally have difficulty exerting some forms of influence in organizations
- Viewed as less (not more) influential when they try to directly influence others by exerting their authority or expertise.
The Haitian American Nurses Association of Florida, Inc. (HANA) was established since 1984.

In 2008 a nurse introduced the concept of expansion and founded the first chapter in Rockland County,

Currently, HANA comprises of eight chapters in the United States and working to become an international organization.

Story follows....
Second Narrative

- October, 2025 - A healthcare agency placed a help wanted advertisement that discriminates against Haitians nurses in a newspaper.
- A nurse used social media to do a call for action to build awareness and brought attention to the issue. The post went viral and drew national as well as international attention.
- Story follow....
Conclusion

- These narratives demonstrated that nurses have the power and influence to stimulate change.

- Nurses use formal and informal power, expert and referent power strategies to reach intended patient outcomes and ultimately health care transformation.

- Nurse must however believe in their ability to organize and self-regulate to serve as leaders and contributors in health care transformation.
REFERENCES


