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Using Images to Elicit Leadership and Management in Nursing Praxis: A Photovoice Research

Juneau Flor Encinares Julian, MAN

Administration, Subic Bay Colleges (SBCI), Inc., Olongapo City, Philippines

Carren B. Manalo, MAN

College of Nursing, Lipa City Colleges, Batangas, Philippines

Esteve Adrian Estiva, MSN

College of Nursing and Allied Health Sciences, Manuel S. Enverga University Foundation, Lucena City, Philippines

INTRODUCTION: Today's leaders, both formal and informal and managers must be intensely mindful of the internal and external pressures that healthcare is facing and have the correct knowledge, skills, and attitude to be able to facilitate change and improve patient outcomes. An accomplished manager will need to be armed to deal with financial, quality and human resource management built on the establishment of sound knowledge of the healthcare system and organizational structure and culture.

OBJECTIVES: The primary objective of the study is to typify leadership from the descriptions of selected photos eidetic of management. This study will also explore, document and reflect on the experiences of the participants on their exercise of leadership and to excerpt from their own insights of what leadership means.

METHODS: The study uses photovoice method in the process of collecting, exploring, and analyzing data reflecting the experiences of the participants on their exercise of nursing leadership and management. Several pictures were randomly selected by the researchers which may reflect the type of leadership a person may have. The researchers started with casual discussion with every participant to elicit information on their professional and leadership background including their experiences as leaders and managers on their field of nursing practice. Later, the pictures were presented to the participants for close examination and were requested to choose one that will directly represent the type of leadership and management suited from the participant's own praxis. The participants were invited to illuminate why the specific picture was chosen. The whole process of data collection was documented using voice recorders complemented with field notes to allow the researchers record the verbal and nonverbal cues.

Purposive and convenience sampling was employed in the study. All participants suited the requirement of being an (1) administrator, manager, or a leader from a nursing school, tertiary training hospital, and a national professional organization, (2) with at least 2 years of leadership experience in the Philippines, and (3) currently employed in the aforementioned country. Sixteen (16) participants were involved in the study. Transcripts were comprehensively and cautiously handled. Funneling and coding was conducted, and analysis and interpretation was done with regular consultation with the team to continually validate and identify emerging concepts until saturation was achieved.

RESULTS: Based on the qualitative analysis, the themes that emerged are: "Leaders as Shapers": leaders have so far played a relatively active role in developing subordinates and view themselves as primary enactors and communicators. Leaders are practicing shared responsibilities with the subordinates in realizing the visions of the organization. On the other hand, subordinates are allowed to go on their unique ways provided that the result will be congruent with the organizational goals. "Leaders as Shifters": leaders take charge and initiate changes. Leaders take responsibility for all, and guided by positive values, lead their subordinates into becoming future leaders. Leaders act as promoters of new paradigms in leadership. Leaders are able to inspire others to realize more of their potential, channelize the aggregate social vitality and sort out into a power that achieves. "Leaders as Shakers": leaders embrace innovations and positive disruption. The scale of the challenges that leaders face and the accelerating speed of innovation demands a new approach to leadership, a new way of fostering counter-intuitive ideas, forcing improbable insights and opening minds to uncomfortable solutions.

CONCLUSION: The study meritoriously uncovered leadership typologies through photovoice approach in nursing research. Results of the study may potentially offer reflection, inspiration and aspiration among present and future leaders. It may also provide ideas on the changing landscape of nursing leadership in the Philippines. Future researches may expand the number of key informants and utilize the mixed method approach to provide both theoretical and conceptual descriptions of leadership.

Title:

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Abstract Summary:

This study used photovoice to typify leadership from the descriptions of selected photos eidetic of management. This study will also explore, document and reflect on the experiences of the participants on their exercise of leadership and to excerpt from their own insights of what leadership means.

Content Outline:

I. Introduction

Today's leaders, both formal and informal and managers must be intensely mindful of the internal and external pressures that healthcare is facing and have the correct knowledge, skills, and attitude to be able to facilitate change and improve patient outcomes. An accomplished manager will need to be armed to deal with financial, quality and human resource management built on the establishment of sound knowledge of the healthcare system and organizational structure and culture.

Leadership is complex- it is comprised of many definitions and qualities (Grimm, 2010). It is viewed as a multifaceted process whereby one person provides support and influences others to work toward a goal and helps them pursue a vision (Yulk and VanReet, 1992; Porter-O'Grady, 2003). It only shows that the main essence of leadership is to motivate, to inspire, to empower and create a consistent focus towards goal attainment. According to Giltinane (2013), one of the roles of a leader is to elicit effective performance from subordinates. Leadership is an important factor in the success of an organization. When there is a good leadership, it can be felt throughout the organization- thus organizational culture is developed where there is an open and effective communication and everyone understands the vision and

goals. Everyone has input into how they can improve and people will feel important and will give their best for the success of the organization.

II. Body

The importance of leadership in the academe has been widely noted. Leadership definition of group or designated leadership integrates effort toward commonly accepted goals emerged as crucial factor in determining success (Clark et. al, 1980). They observed that effective leaders framed goals and objectives, set standards of performance, created a productive working environment, and obtained needed support. For optimizing leadership effectiveness, leadership functions call attention to the need for group leadership in addition to individual leader behavior on the part of the school executive (Sergiovanni and Carver, 1973). They have to create environments in which educators can work effectively.

In the clinical practice, leadership is becoming more relevant for nurses which results to quality care and outcomes for the clients (Ennis, 2016). As clinical leadership continues to become more significant, the need to gain understanding of how clinical leaders in nursing develop becomes increasingly imperative considering the current global trends in the practice. Effective clinical leadership is offered as the key to healthy, functional and supportive work environment for nurses (Mannix et.al, 2013). Successfully preparing nurses on future leadership roles will be challenging within the current situation considering the discrepancies between education and the realities in the practice (Swartz, 2013).

Research is considered as the heart of every organization since it is a scientific way of improving and developing new methods in the healthcare sector. Leadership to be effective in research setting involves coordination of multiple challenges and that leaders need to possess a notable skill. Provision of clarity of setting, direction of change, and propagating as example are the main roles of leaders in this setting. As such, a deeper sense of commitment and dedication of the leader is needed.

Nursing leaders holding positions in a professional organization are geared towards nursing practice excellence, policy making, protection of its members, and an advocate of professional development to improve health care to all (ANA, 2018). In order to meet such responsibilities, Hill (2011) and Cox (2016) claimed that effective leadership is reflected by having a vision that is adaptable and has the capacity to motivate others in attaining a common objective. Whereas, management basically means planning and organizing people and resources in order to accomplish a certain goal. Thus, an effective manager should be able to trust, empower, and inspire its subordinates towards achieving organizational goals.

A nurse's leadership ability can be demonstrated regardless of their level of experience and stage in their careers. In fact, one does not need to manage or hold position in order to display leadership. Mere support and companionship offered to less experienced nurses can be a way to promote competent nursing practice that would influence the health care quality that a nurse is able to provide (*The Sentinel Watch, 2014*). The United States Institute for Medicine (2011) supported this claim and further added that a leadership style that demonstrates collaboration and mutual respect with full partners i.e. physicians and other health professionals is needed in the advancement of health care. Though studies have shown the benefits of collaboration, norms within the healthcare field indicate otherwise. Because of this, there is a call for nurses to lead. Particularly, nursing organizations must continue to collaborate and put effort in developing joint messages – even in missions and visions, and work together in providing evidence-based solutions for patient care enhancement.

The use of pictures to convey messages, encourage dialogue, and shape people's perspective is nothing new. Visual thinking uses pictures and images to evoke ideas, thoughts, and feelings to foster powerful conversation. They provide a powerful and metaphoric meaning to people and can be seen as more inviting for them to express their own perception and idea. People uses them as the starting point for talking about complex and difficult topics like their own view about leadership. It is believed that using pictures and symbols can cut to the heart of issues and able to uncover multiple solutions. Using images

works effectively with diverse people from all walks of life and by putting images in the middle of the conversation taps into the whole brain, invites interpretation and is very positive way to bring their own perspectives.

Research Method

1. Research Design

To shed light on the purpose of this study, a qualitative research design was employed. It is an exploratory research designed “to reveal a target participant’s range of behavior and the perceptions that drive it with reference to specific topics or issues”, Qualitative Research Consultant (2017). Respondent’s views, perspectives and beliefs were treated on the basis of the results and findings of this study. The selection of the sample population is through purposive sampling technique, they should be leaders or managers in different fields of nursing.

Specifically, the researchers used photovoice technique to explore, to document and to reflect on the experiences of the participants on their exercise of leadership and to excerpt from them their own insights of what leadership means. Wang and Burris (1997), proposed the term photovoice to illustrates the approach of blending narrative with photography to investigate on the issues concerning the community.

Close, (2007), Photovoice is one of the most popular methods used in a qualitative research and it also permits researchers from various disciplines to visualize individuals’ perceptions about their everyday realities. Photovoice projects have been conducted with a variety of cultures and population groups to explore a range of factors relating to health and social inquiry, Nykiforuk Cl.et.al.,(2016); Wilson et al., (2007).

For participants, this process offers an opportunity to visually portray experiences and share personal knowledge about particular issues that may be difficult to express with words alone, Nykiforuk Cl.,et.al. (2016); Minthorn, R. S., & Marsh, T. E. J.,; (2016); Wang & Burris, (1997). For researchers, the use of photographs helps to ignite a substantial dialogue among participants about their insights of the issues under discussion; further, different ideas may be obtained than those gathered solely from interviews or focus groups, Darbyshire, MacDougall, & Schiller, (2005). Photovoice is a combination of the narrative and visual interpretations that enhances the ability of researchers to accurately capture the explicit meaning of an issue from the participant’s point of view; Nykiforuk Cl.,et.al. (2016); Nowell et al., (2006).

2. Study Sites and Subjects

This study was conducted in Iloilo city Philippines, particularly the researchers utilized two (2) tertiary training hospitals, two (2) Nursing schools, and (1) organization of nursing. These areas were chosen for its remarkable and distinct characteristics in terms nursing education and health. Aside from, history of nursing in the Philippines started here, the top nursing schools in the country based on the Nursing Licensure examination results are situated in this area. While, the hospitals selected were both historically relevant to the practice of nursing in the country and the organization chosen is considered as a fast growing association of nurses and very active and outstanding based on their activities and accomplishments.

All participants suited the requirement of being an (1) administrator, manager, or a leader from a nursing school, tertiary training hospital, and a national professional organization, (2) with at least 2 years of leadership experience in the Philippines, and (3) currently employed in the aforementioned country. Sixteen (16) participants were involved in the study. These leaders have been in the position for as short as two (2) years and as long as 35 years. This proves that they are qualified as respondents for this study.

3. Instrumentation and Data Collection.

In order to extract the necessary data, researchers employed an interview to obtain common themes from the participants' response. Interviewing is a way to collect data as well as to gain knowledge from individuals. Kajornboon, A. (2005); Kvale (1996), regarded interviews as "... an interchange of views between two or more people on a topic of mutual interest, sees the centrality of human interaction for knowledge production, and emphasizes the social situatedness of research data."

Interview is a one approach for participants to get engaged and communicate about their perceptions and ideas. In addition, the interviewees are able to discuss their views and accounts in regards to a given situation. It is their expression from their point of view.

Photos that were selected from the internet undergone team deliberation before it was submitted to the lead researcher for finalization. The internet constitutes a rich source of visual materials and a number of sites that can be scanned in order to find suitable images to explore about leadership. Selection of the images was based on its being neutral in nature and that would elicit different perceptions and views from the participants. Out of the twenty-nine (29) images that were downloaded, eighteen (18) were finally chosen and produced as picture type material to be used for the interview.

As courtesy, the research team sent an intent letters to the different subject institutions. Prior to the interview, series of discussions and meetings pertaining to the research project were made and orientation was facilitated by lead researcher as to how and what questions to ask the day before the scheduled interview. The members were primed about the proper approach and procedure on how to execute the interview in order to accomplish the purpose this study effectively.

The interviews including the photo elicitation were conducted in sequential manner depending on the schedule set by both parties. Each interview took around thirty (30) minutes to one (1) hour. All of the interview were in the form of casual conversations and were conducted inside the premises of the institution that were quiet and private like offices, conference room and amphitheater type classroom. Interviews were audio-recorded and the research team was present to take part in the discussion. Following an introduction to the purpose of the interview and after consent has been sought, every interview started with questions like, "how long have you been in that position" and "what is your perception about the diversity of your subordinates". The length of the discussion depends on the participants' degree of outspokenness and on the texture of their narration. Once the tone of the discussions were established, the prepared 18 pictures were shown and held by the research team while the facilitator asked the participants to choose one out of the 18 pictures that best described their leadership style, it was succeeded with follow-up questions and prompts were initiated in order to get an in-depth clarification and deeper insights about the topic being discussed.

4. Data Analysis

The data collected are considered substantially sufficient for the study because of the comprehensiveness of the discussion during the interviews. The Recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim by members of the research team. To protect the identity of the participants and to follow the data privacy act, their names were given codes. A process of funneling transformed initial coding into categories (Ezzy, 2002). After which, a major theme is assigned on the common and significant findings. Analysis and interpretation of the data were done by the lead researcher with regular consultation and discussion with the team. This facilitates validation of both the emerging concepts and interpretation of the data.

Based on the qualitative analysis, the themes that emerged are: "Leaders as Shapers": leaders have so far played a relatively active role in developing subordinates and view themselves as primary enactors and communicators. Leaders are practicing shared responsibilities with the subordinates in realizing the visions of the organization. On the other hand, subordinates are allowed to go on their unique ways provided that the result will be congruent with the organizational goals.

To illustrate this, participants use different images to capture their thoughts and ideation. Respondent 1 claimed that, *"People have different aspirations like branches. Like branches of a tree, you go in different directions but you are rooted to only one. And that is the goal, the organizational goal. So when you, when you develop people you have to consider the fact that this each and every one is unique. Each and every one has its own goal. Each and every one has its own aspiration. But as a leader we have to anchor them and these aspirations would also focus on."*

Another participant showed another image (Image 2) illustrating collaboration and motivation of group efforts wherein he claimed that, *"I can direct them, guide them, but most of all I need to be with them. I always value a working relationship that into reaching a certain goal, we need to work together. I have to capacitate people down the line so that everyone achieves the target of the university."*

Another participant also explained on his photo chosen (image 3) that to be a shaper, a leader must imbibe and understand the concern of his subordinates wherein Respondent 3 stated that, *"It's a visionary person who thinks whatever, with all people supporting him. Yeah I would go down to the level of the lowest rank in the hierarchy. I would mix and drink with them, so that I may know what's their problems."*

"Leaders as Shifters": leaders take charge and initiate changes. Leaders take responsibility for all, and guided by positive values, lead their subordinates into becoming future leaders. Leaders act as promoters of new paradigms in leadership. Leaders are able to inspire others to realize more of their potential, channelize the aggregate social vitality and sort out into a power that achieves.

This was illustrated by photograph (image 4) which explains most the attribute of being a shifter. Respondent 4 stated that, *"As a leader you have to look and tried to find ways to reach your goal despite in these obstacles and our/your opportunities to overcome these obstacles to reach your goals or sunshine. Because I believe that wherever you are and whatever organization you are there is always obstacles but it is depends on you on how you able to overcome all these obstacles and continue to focus on your goals."*

"Leaders as Shakers": leaders embrace innovations and positive disruption. The scale of the challenges that leaders face and the accelerating speed of innovation demands a new approach to leadership, a new way of fostering counter-intuitive ideas, forcing improbable insights and opening minds to uncomfortable solutions.

One participant described this as shown on the photo below (image 4) informing other people that striving harder and improving oneself are key attributes to be successor. Respondent 5 claimed that, *"I choose this picture because it recognizes that you should be a strong leader and then beat and grow to strive hard to be a successor."*

III. Conclusion

The study meritoriously uncovered leadership typologies through photovoice approach in nursing research. Results of the study may potentially offer reflection, inspiration and aspiration among present and future leaders. It may also provide ideas on the changing landscape of nursing leadership in the Philippines. Future researches may expand the number of key informants and utilize the mixed method approach to provide both theoretical and conceptual descriptions of leadership.

First Primary Presenting Author
Primary Presenting Author
Juneau Flor Encinares Julian, MAN
Subic Bay Colleges (SBCI), Inc.
Administration
VP for Administrative Affairs

Olongapo City
Philippines

Professional Experience: 2007 to present Trainor, Paramedical Department, Subic Bay Colleges (SBCI), Inc., Olongapo City, Zambales, Philippines VP for Administrative Affairs/Owner, Subic Bay Colleges (SBCI), Inc., Olongapo City, Zambales, Philippines January 2009 to December 2012 Nurse, James L. Gordon Memorial Hospital, Olongapo City, Zambales, Philippines

Author Summary: Ms. Juneau Flor Julian is a current student in the Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing Major in Nursing Administration of Our Lady of Fatima University - Valenzuela City, Philippines. She is the current VP for Administrative Affairs of Subic Bay Colleges (SBCI), Inc. located at Olongapo City, Zambales, Philippines. She is a nurse by profession and an educator.

Second Secondary Presenting Author

Corresponding Secondary Presenting Author

Carren B. Manalo, MAN

Lipa City Colleges

College of Nursing

Clinical Coordinator

Batangas

Philippines

Professional Experience: 2015-present- Clinical Coordinator, Lipa City Colleges, Lipa City, Batangas, Philippines 2015-present- Competency Assessor of TESDA for Professional Caregiving Program, Batangas, Philippines 2013-2015- Occupational/ School Nurse, New Era University, Lipa City, Batangas, Philippines 2008-2015- Professional Caregiving NC II Trainor, St. Augustine School of Nursing, Lipa City, Batangas responsible for the development of training materials/modules of caregiving program at Lipa City Colleges (2015-present) Speaking engagement regarding first aid and emergency nursing and basic life support

Author Summary: Carren B. Manalo, Clinical Coordinator of Lipa City Colleges, Philippines. She took her Master of Arts in Nursing at St. Jude College and right now, she is a PhD student major in Nursing Administration at Our Lady of Fatima University, Valenzuela City, Philippines. Her advocacy as a nurse educator is to strengthen one's knowledge and be an effective nurse leader.

Third Secondary Presenting Author

Corresponding Secondary Presenting Author

Esteve Adrian Estiva, MSN

Manuel S. Enverga University Foundation

College of Nursing and Allied Health Sciences

Associate Professor

Lucena City

Philippines

Professional Experience: 2016- to present Clinical Coordinator of the College of Nursing and Allied Health Sciences of Manuel S. Enverga University Foundation 2007- to present Associate Professor of the College of Nursing and Allied Health Sciences of Manuel S. Enverga University 2006- 2008 Emergency Room Nurse of Mt. Carmel Diocesan General Hospital in Lucena City Presenter of numerous paper study in local fora

Author Summary: A nurse, a researcher, and an educator. He has the passion for caring and for teaching. He is happy to impart things that he knows to his students and feel the sense of fulfillment once they have learned something from him. He loves to share what he has learned and wanted to be a catalyst for the improvement of the profession