Title:
Dean’s Perceptions of Leadership Strategies Used to Manage a Multicultural Faculty Environment in Saudi Arabia

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Session Title:
Faculty Development
Slot:
J 07: Tuesday, 31 October 2017: 8:00 AM-8:45 AM
Scheduled Time:
8:00 AM

Keywords:
Leadership, Multicultural Environment and Nursing Faculty

References:


Abstract Summary:
Majority of nursing faculty in Saudi Arabia are expatriates. Because leading an academic multicultural environment in Saudi Arabia has not been examined, five interviews were conducted via Skype with Saudi deans of Schools of Nursing to explore how they lead their multicultural environments and improve school performance.

Learning Activity:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEARNING OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>EXPANDED CONTENT OUTLINE</th>
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<tr>
<td>The learner will be able to describe the faculty work environment of School of Nursing in Saudi Arabia.</td>
<td>The learners will have information about how the faculty work environment in the Saudi School of Nursing looks like. The deans who participated in the study are leading different schools of nursing from different geographical regions in Saudi Arabia. Learners will have information regarding the percentage of non-Saudi faculty members, the backgrounds of faculty members, and how deans lead their faculty workforce and improve their schools' performance.</td>
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<td>The learner will be able to recognize the perceptions of deans of schools of nursing in Saudi Arabia regarding leading multicultural faculty environment.</td>
<td>The content would include the perceptions of deans of Schools of Nursing in Saudi Arabia, for instance, what a multicultural faculty environment means to them, what it is like to lead a multicultural faculty workforce, and what their experience of working with faculty from different cultural backgrounds, and what the leadership strategies they used to lead a diverse faculty environment.</td>
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<td>The learner will be able to describe the influence of cultural diversity on the school outcomes.</td>
<td>The deans of Schools of Nursing answered some questions during the interviews about the impacts of having cultural differences among faculty members (either positive or negative impacts) on school's outcomes.</td>
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<td>The learner will be able to prepare and foster an effective multicultural work setting for improving schools’ outcomes.</td>
<td>The presentation will discuss the most important leadership strategies used by deans of Schools of Nursing to improve the advantages and overcome the challenges of multiculturalism in their faculty work environment.</td>
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**Abstract Text:**

**Background:** Hospitals in Saudi Arabia rely on expatriate nurses with different cultural backgrounds and linguistics. Expatriate nurses from countries other than Saudi Arabia bring a diversity of opinions, ideas, and approaches which can contribute to misunderstandings or failure to recognize the significance of local cultural norms. Faculty in schools of nursing in Saudi Arabia represent the same workforce diversity. Expatriate faculty represent different nationalities, cultural values, beliefs, customs, behaviors, and attitudes that can differ from co-workers, students, and employers. Leaders of multicultural workplaces face issues that might impact the work performance such as language barriers, cultural awareness, and employee values (McLaurin, 2012). However, still no studies have examined the experience of leading a largely expatriate academic environment.

**Objective:** To examine the deans’ perspective on leadership strategies used in leading a multicultural faculty environment and how this influences their school’s outcomes.
**Method:** A descriptive cross-sectional qualitative design was chosen for the study. After IRB approval, semi-structured interviews were conducted with a convenience sample of five deans of schools of nursing in Saudi Arabia via Skype. Interviews ranging from 30 minutes to one hour were taped and transcribed. For coding and interpreting the interviews, the qualitative data was analyzed descriptively by hand (line-by-line and word-by-word).

**Results:** Data analysis reveals that five deans are Saudis; two have non-nursing advanced degrees in nursing. Each dean reported that 70% to 90% non-Saudi faculty from Egypt, India, Sudan, United Kingdom, South Africa, Philippine, and others are representing different values, beliefs, language, and views of nursing that may vary from Saudi nationals. Descriptive categories emerged: (1) challenges and opportunities facing Saudi deans including multiculturalism, faculty cultural adjustments, maintaining fairness and open communication (2) leadership strategies including transparency of actions, effective communication, mentoring, having a clear vision, and considering the others’ personal identity, and (3) the impact of cultural diversity on school outcomes provided appropriate skill mix, mentoring, and consideration and openness to multiple views of nursing, educational approaches, mindsets, preferences, and languages.

**Conclusion:** Deans of Saudi schools of nursing experience both challenges from leading a multicultural workforce and benefits from its positive impacts on the faculty members themselves, students, and the school’s outcomes. The results of this qualitative pilot study can be used to enable deans in the future to prepare and foster an effective multicultural work setting for improving schools’ outcomes.