Implementation of a Transformational Leadership Development Program for New Lead Clinical Nurses

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Background

➢ High nurse turnover has numerous negative consequences on patients, staff, and organizations.[3, 8, 12, 13, 14, 24]
➢ Nurse leaders who demonstrate transformational leadership promote nurse retention.[5, 7, 9, 17]
➢ Unfortunately, nurse leaders are often unprepared to practice transformational leadership as leadership development programs are limited or unavailable.

Purpose & Aims

➢ **Purpose**: To implement an evidence-based transformational leadership development program for new lead clinical nurses
➢ **Aims**: To evaluate if the intervention will:
  1. Improve new lead clinical nurses' transformational leadership competency;
  2. Improve staff nurses' perception of new lead clinical nurses' transformational leadership behaviors;
  3. Improve staff nurse turnover intention

Methods

➢ **Design**: Pre-post test intervention
➢ **Setting**: Medical department of a large academic hospital
➢ **Sample**: 16 lead clinical nurses with <18 months in role
➢ **Intervention**: 12-week evidence-based transformational leadership development program
➢ **Measures**: Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (Leader and Rater Forms) and Turnover Intention Scale
➢ **Analysis**: Wilcoxon signed rank test and paired t-test

Intervention

➢ Structured leadership development program[10, 15]
  • Six 90-minute sessions offered every other week over 12 weeks
  • In-person and virtual sessions
➢ Inclusion of coaching[7,10, 19, 22] and reflective practice[4, 10, 19] elements
  • Topics included emotional intelligence, Strengthsfinder™, Emergenetics™, reflective practice, the art of coaching, high performing teams, and financial management

Results

Table 1. Participant Demographics

Variable	n=16
Age in years, median (IQR)	28 (9)
Years of nursing experience, median (IQR)	5 (3.5)
Months of experience in lead clinical nurse role, median (IQR)	6.5 (8)
Sex, n (%)	
Male	1 (6.3)
Female	15 (93.8)
Education, n (%)	
Bachelor's degree	11 (68.8)
Master's degree	5 (31.3)

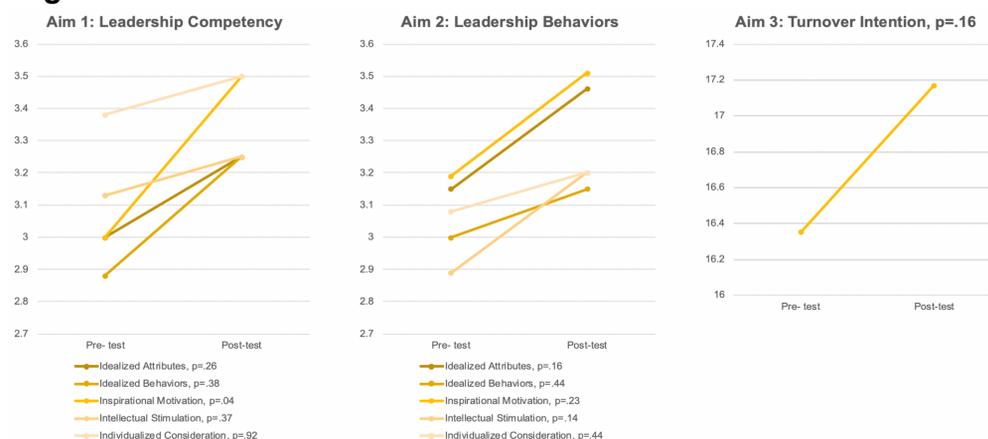IQR = interquartile range

Aim Results

➢ **Aim 1:** Increase in all 5 subscales; increase in the Inspirational Motivation subscale was statistically significant
➢ **Aim 2:** Increase in all 5 subscales, but none statistically significant
➢ **Aim 3:** Increase in turnover intention, but not statistically significant; score indicated intent to stay in current position overall

Table 2. Aim Results

Item	Pre-test	Post-test	t/Z	p-value
Aim 1: MLQ-5X Leader Form, n=13, median (IQR)				
Idealized Attributes (IA)	3.00 (.94)	3.25 (.54)	-1.13	.26
Idealized Behaviors (IB)	2.88 (1.00)	3.25 (.88)	-.87	.38
Inspirational Motivation (IM)	3.00 (.69)	3.50 (.75)	-2.06	.04
Intellectual Stimulation (IS)	3.13 (.69)	3.25 (.63)	-.90	.37
Individualized Consideration (IC)	3.38 (.75)	3.50 (.63)	-.10	.92
Aim 2: MLQ-5X Rater Form, n=16, median (IQR)				
Idealized Attributes (IA)	3.15 (.51)	3.46 (.87)	-1.40	.16
Idealized Behaviors (IB)	3.00 (.39)	3.15 (.87)	-.78	.44
Inspirational Motivation (IM)	3.19 (.61)	3.51 (.64)	-1.19	.23
Intellectual Stimulation (IS)	2.89 (.60)	3.20 (.94)	-1.40	.16
Individualized Consideration (IC)	3.08 (.49)	3.20 (.85)	-.78	.44
Aim 3: TIS-6, n=42, mean (SD)	16.35 (4.41)	17.17 (4.69)	1.43	.16

MLQ-5X = Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire; IQR = interquartile range; TIS-6 = Turnover Intention Scale; SD = standard deviation

Figure 1. Aim Results

Aim 1: Leadership Competency — Idealized Attributes, p=.26; Idealized Behaviors, p=.38; Inspirational Motivation, p=.04; Intellectual Stimulation, p=.37; Individualized Consideration, p=.92

Aim 2: Leadership Behaviors — Idealized Attributes, p=.16; Idealized Behaviors, p=.44; Inspirational Motivation, p=.23; Intellectual Stimulation, p=.14; Individualized Consideration, p=.44

Aim 3: Turnover Intention, p=.16

Discussion

➢ Findings supportive of evidence demonstrating positive impact of transformational leadership programs on participants' self-perceived competency and observed behaviors by others.[1, 2, 7, 16]
➢ High pre-test MLQ-5X scores could have affected ability to demonstrate statistically significant findings.
➢ Participants shared positive feedback. Reported receiving "helpful insight to information that [they] might not get in other places," benefitting most from coaching, reflective practice, and financial management sessions, and ability to share and interact with cohort.
➢ To date, no studies were found that investigate direct effect of leadership development programs for nurse leaders on staff nurses' turnover intention. Studies show nurse leaders' transformational leadership style has a significant negative relationship with nurses' turnover intention[11, 20, 23] while others do not. [18, 21]

Strengths & Limitations

➢ **Strengths**: Evidence-based intervention; valid and reliable measurement tools; education provided by subject matter experts;
➢ **Limitations**: Could not isolate effects of intervention versus other confounding variables; small convenience sample; length of intervention limited to 12 weeks; inability to match all pre- and post-test responses

Conclusion

➢ Participation in an evidence-based transformational leadership development program can improve new lead clinical nurses' transformational leadership competency and behaviors as perceived by staff nurses. There is no change to staff nurses' turnover intention.
➢ Research needed to determine necessary content, structure, length, etc. that would yield significant results in regards to nurse leaders' competency, behaviors, and staff nurse retention.

Acknowledgements & References