

Summary

Managers are essential to any organization. Manager's functions are vital, complex and frequently difficult .They must be directed toward balancing the needs of patients, the health care organization, employees and physicians. Nurse Manager needs a body of knowledge and skills different from those needed for nursing practice. Frequently managers depend on experiences. Today, all nurses are managers. They direct the work of non professionals and professionals in order to achieve desired outcomes in patient care. All nurses need to learn leadership and management skills to be more efficient and effective (*Patricia, 2008*).

The present study aims to identify the effect of leadership training program on the head nurses' performance at Benha University Hospital through assessing the knowledge, skills and attitudes of head nurses regarding leadership, designing and implementing training program regarding to leadership and evaluating knowledge, skills and attitudes of head nurses leadership after program.

The medical and surgical units at Benha University Hospital were taken in the study. The subjects included in the study consisted of 60 head nurses and assistants with minimum of one year experience.

Three tools were used for data collection in the study. Structured interviewing questionnaire It consisted of two parts. The first part included questions about demographic characteristics. Second part, used to assess the head nurses' knowledge about leadership. It consisted of 32 items subdivided into :5 major categories, 9 items for concept and importance of leadership , 7 items for planning , 8 items for sources of organizing, 5 items for directing & coordinating ,finally 3 items for evaluation & controlling .Second tool, performance checklists: it included 33 items, were subdivided to planning 4 items, 22 items of organizing,

5 items for coordinating & direction and 2 items for evaluation. Third tool the leadership style scale it used to measure leadership attitude of head nurses included 30 items, the items were subdivided under 10 main subscales for autocratic the items were subdivided under 10 main subscales for democratic leadership style and finally the items were subdivided under 10 main subscales for laissez faire leadership style. Fourth, handout about leadership program for head nurses.

The study has generated the following findings:

- Regarded to department more than half (53.3%) of head nurses are working in medical departments. As regarded to age (46.7%) of study subject ranged between 24-30 years (31.65 ± 8.20). Meanwhile, nearly half of them (51.7%) graduated from baccalaureate degree of nursing. The majority (45%) of the study subjects are holders of concerning to their experience are having experience 1- 10 years and 10-20 years in nursing field, in relation to marital status about three quarter of subjects (75.0%) are married. Finally (85%) of them didn't attend any administration courses respectively.

- Head nurses' knowledge, performance and attitude were deficient in the pre-program assessment.

- Statistically significant differences with high score were detected of head nurses in Benha University Hospital regarding to head nurses knowledge, performance and attitude was noticed throughout the immediately post and after three months of program ($p < 0.001^{**}$) than in the before program phases.

- There was no a significant relation between head nurses' knowledge scores and demographic characteristics before program. No a significant relation between head nurses' performance scores and demographic characteristics before program.

Also there was a significant relation between head nurses' attitudes scores and their qualification and year of experience before program.

-A highly statistically significant positive correlation was revealed between knowledge and performance scores ($p < 0.001^{**}$), adjusted for the effect of program.

- No statistically significant correlation was revealed between attitude and performance.

In the light of the findings obtained from the present study, these points are recommended:

1. In-service training and education programs must be a continuous process for increasing nurses' knowledge, regarding managerial skills. And accordingly, Benha University Hospitals should establish development department for regular assessment of all levels nurses' performance.
2. Nurse supervisors should to be empowered through provision of access to opportunities for job growth and development and allowance to increase skills and competence .This could be done through conducting regular training programs in areas of deficiencies, providing necessary resources for effective performance and removing obstacles to performance.
3. Selection nurses for leadership position as nursing director positions should be based on criteria of competency rather than seniority

4. Job description must be structural and measurable based on the role responsibilities of nursing director and develop a controlling system for both appraisal and monitoring nursing service based on nursing standards.
5. Head nurse position (senior position) should be given to those with Bachelor degree.
6. Another study should be done on the same group after one year for impact assessment of the program (follow up study).