

The Influence of Head Nurses Leading Role and Assertiveness on Staff Nurses' Achievement Motivation: A Comparative Study

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Abstract

Background: Leading is critical to advancing the nursing profession. All work units require strong nursing leaders to establish a healthy work environment. Current and future head nurses need effective leading strategies and assertiveness skills to guide and encourage nurses and enhancing their achievement motivation to work safely and effectively. **Aim** of this study was to compare the influence of head nurses leading role and assertiveness on staff nurses' achievement motivation at Tanta Emergency and El-Menshawy Hospital. **Methods:** Descriptive, comparative through cross-sectional study design was adopted. The study was conducted at Tanta Emergency Hospital and El-Menshawy Hospital. **Sample:** All available staff nurses working at Tanta Emergency Hospital (n=258) and El-Menshawy Hospital (n=212) was included in this study. **Tools:** Three tools for data collection were used: Head Nurses' Leading Role Scale to measure head nurses leading role, Assertiveness Assessment Scale to assess head nurses assertiveness behaviors and Achievement Motivation Scale. **Results:** Staff nurses' perceived a high level of head nurses leading role at Tanta Emergency Hospital, while low level at El-Menshawy Hospital with the emphasize on supervising leading role. At Tanta Emergency Hospital staff nurses perceived a high level of assertiveness techniques and assertiveness behavior than El-Menshawy Hospital. Staff nurses' achievement motivation behavior had statistically significant favorable correlations with their years of experience, age, education level, total leading role and assertiveness at both hospitals. **Conclusion:** There were significant influences of head nurses leading role and assertiveness on staff nurses' achievement motivation. **Recommendation:** Building a supportive work environment that promoting effective communication and conduct regular training programs for head nurses to refresh their knowledge, skills and experiences and motivating good performance to enhance staff nurses' achievement motivation are necessary.

Key words: Achievement motivation, assertiveness, leading role, staff nurses.

Introduction

Head nurses in today's health care environment confront many challenges in their daily work. Increased demands for services from competent personnel to culturally diverse population, higher patient acuity, increased cost saving

measures from agencies, increased use of technology and new medications, heavy workloads and psychological stressors are important factors contributing to these challenges (Orgev & Demir, 2019, Pryby, 2016 and Keorekile, 2015).

Excellent communication skills and the ability to effectively manage conflict as well as using assertiveness skills, cooperating in teams and high motivation to lead nursing staff toward high quality patient care are key qualities to achieving role success and maintaining a safe environment for patients. Leading role of head nurses is important for nurse's satisfaction and retention, safe patient outcomes, and decreasing costs; all of which are associated with quality of care and healthy work environment (Chhabra, 2016 & Sherwood, 2015).

Leading is a process of influencing, motivates, guides, and directs individuals toward goal achievement (Stockham, 2016). This leading process comprises of various factors such as personality of the leader, attitudes and needs of nurses, the structure and maturity of work group, and the situational factors present at work setting (Cherry & Jacob, 2017). Leading role is necessary for accomplishment of job activities, helps in goal setting of nursing staff, motivates them to work enthusiastically toward attainment of organizational goals, builds good staff relationship resulting in higher performance, facilitates the spirit of cooperation and coordination by encouraging mutual understanding and team spirit, facilitates change, and enable them to cope with fast changing working environment (Clement, 2016) Directing, supervising and coordinating are fundamental to the leading role of head nurses (Saleh & White, 2017).

Directing is the process by which actual performance of nursing staff is guided towards accomplishment of organizational goals. Head nurses direct nursing staff through effective guidance, clear communication, inspiring and motivate them to better accomplishment in the organization (Marquis & Huston,

2015). Supervising is a teaching-learning process, which provides constant observation, monitoring, and guidance to nursing staff to enable them to perform their activities effectively and efficiently through evoking their curiosity and controlling of their performance (NHS Education for Scotland, 2015). Coordinating is the integrating process in an orderly pattern of group efforts in an organization toward the accomplishment of common objectives. Effective coordination of nursing staff leads to better clinical outcomes, enhance quality of care, efficiency and cost effectiveness of health care organizations by avoiding overlapping and duplication of work (Eid & Northouse, 2016).

Head nurses as a true leader shows nursing staff at first hand, how to manage work issues, evaluate their needs, solve their problems, communicate effectively, demonstrates how to work and live by values and beliefs. Enhance desire to training and learning, motivating them toward achievement, develop and provide them with the necessary tools to continue to improve and achieve quality in the work place are important (Hube, 2018 & Murray, 2017). Assertiveness skill is one of the communication skills that enable head nurses to advocate for their interests openly, encourage discussion and listen to the other party which in turn results in clearer communication among nursing staff and building an effective team relationship as well as promoting harmonious work environment for provisions of quality patient care (Ilhan et al., 2016 & Kim et al., 2015).

Assertiveness is the ability to express one's own feeling, beliefs, opinions and needs directly, honestly and openly without violating the others' rights (Allahyari & Jenaabadi, 2015). It is one of the essential leadership skills toward

career success which provides head nurses with more powerful role in their practice and more supportive relationships with others (**Mohamed et al., 2016**). Also, behaving assertively allow them to negotiate more effectively, express feeling (both verbally and non-verbally), gain self-confidence, earn respect from others, improve communication, create win-win situations, effectively manage conflicts, understand different behavior styles as well as able to face with enthusiasm the changes and challenges in organizational life (**Parray and Kumar, & Nakamura, 2017**).

Certain characteristics of assertive head nurses are involving that making direct, open feelings, opinions and needs, standing up for their rights without apologizing or feeling guilty with taking into account the rights of others, listening attentively and letting other people know that they have heard them. Also, they respected other people, dealing effectively with criticism, being open to negotiation and willing to exert high level of efforts toward achievement of goals (**Hemavathy & Christy, 2016**). One of most important leadership's responsibilities of head nurses is to build a supportive work environment that encourage and enhances nurses' achievement motivation that enables them to fulfill extraordinary outcomes (**Abdallah et al., 2019 & Abo Gad, 2018**).

Achievement motivation is the desire of individual to exercise strength and control and strive to do their tasks well and quickly whenever possible, and to achieve high levels of superiority and competition with others (**Utomo et al., 2017**). Achievement motivation plays an important role in raising the level of nurses' performance, their products in the various fields and activities which it

directs their energy to implement the desired goals, and the efforts necessary to achieve a good capacity and expected work which a standard of excellence is thought to apply (**Saker, 2015**). It is a combination of two personality variables; tendency to approach success and tendency to avoid failure which nurses are willing to assume responsibility and strive for excellence to achieve certain goals, perseverance and overcoming obstacles and problems facing them and feeling the importance of time and planning for the future (**Khater et al., 2020**).

Achievement motivation of nurses is characterized by the fact that the nurses are responsible for the outcomes (success or failure), anticipates results, tend to choose medium-difficulty and challenging tasks and avoids very easy tasks due to the lack of a challenging element, exert continuous arduous efforts towards achieving what he/she is doing, pay more attention to long-term future goals as having a broader future perspective as well as having a strong desire to receive feedback about their performance and prefer tasks and jobs in which rewards are based on individual achievement and prefer to deal with the problem than to seek help to solve it. Consequently, they will be more self-confident, tend to resist external social pressure, doing their tasks skillfully and effectively with high ambition, adapt and apply shared vision, more freedom in decision-making, fostering innovation behavior and support persistence of challenging work (**El Sayed & Ali, 2017**).

Significance of the study

Head nurse' leading role in any organization is considered a key axis for taking the organization towards progress and development, reaching to the desired results and taking the work team towards excellence, advancement, creativity and positive thinking (Akca & Murray, 2017). It's essential for the nursing advancement, implementing and preserving of high-quality care as revealed by Abdallah and Mostafa et al., (2019), in a studies conducted on Tanta Emergency & Teaching Hospitals. These studies reported that those leaders need to have assertive behavior to behave with integrity in all that they do to empower nursing staff toward achievement through their ability to influence, motivate, communicate, coordinate and control of their performance. Therefore, this study directed to assess the influence of head nurses leading role and assertiveness on staff nurses' achievement motivation to enable them to provide high quality care and promote their professional practice to enhancing effectiveness and success of the organization.

Aim of the study

This study aimed to compare the influence of head nurses leading role and assertiveness on staff nurses' achievement motivation at Tanta Emergency Hospital and El-Minshawi Hospital.

Research question

1. What are the level of leading role and assertiveness among head nurses at Tanta Emergency Hospital and El-Menshawiy Hospital?
2. What is the influence of staff nurses' perceived leading role and assertiveness on their achievement

motivation at Tanta Emergency Hospital and El-Menshawiy Hospital?

Subjects and method

Research Design

A descriptive, comparative through cross-sectional design was operated for this study. This design is used to describe, compare, and examine differences in variables in two or more groups that occur in a setting at one given point in time (Grove et al., 2015).

Setting

The study was conducted at two hospitals; Tanta Emergency Hospital and El-Menshawiy Hospital.

Subjects

The subjects included all available staff nurses' working in preceding settings at Tanta Emergency Hospital (n=258) and El-Menshawiy Hospital (n=212). Nurse supervisors and novice nurses (with < 6 months of experiences and outpatient units' nurses) were excluded from the study.

Tool of the study: the researchers prepared a- structured questionnaire to collect data of this study. It consisted of three tools as follow;

Tool (1): Head Nurses' Leading Role.

This tool was developed by researchers guided by Abidoye et al., & Burns (2016) and review of recent related literature to assess the head nurses leading role. The tool included two parts: **Part (1):** personal characteristics including age, years of experience, marital status and level of education. **Part**

(2): Head nurses leading role items to assess the level of head nurses leading role through (50) items distributed into three subscales: **directing** (25 items): was subdivided into 3 subscales: Guidance, communication, and motivation, **supervising** (17 items): was subdivided into 2 subscales: Evoke curiosity and controlling and **coordinating** (8 items).

Tool (2): Assertiveness Assessment Scale

This tool was developed by the researchers guided by **Mostafa et al., (2019)** and **Hamouda (2016)** to assess head nurses' assertiveness levels through (43) items distributed into three subscales: workplace assertiveness behavior (14 items), relationship assertiveness behavior (17 items) and assertiveness techniques (12 items).

Tool (3): Achievement Motivation Scale

This tool was developed by the researchers guided by **Belkacem (2017)** and **Al-Azmi (2016)** and to measure staff nurses' achievement motivation behavior. It included (41) items distributed into four subscales: Commitment and responsibility (13 items), desire to succeed and excel (16 items), challenge (7 items), and independence and self-reliance (5 items).

❖ Scoring system:

The staff nurses' responses' in each scale were measured in four point Likert scale ranging from (1-4) when never = (1), rarely = (2), sometimes = (3), and always = (4). Scoring system for data collection was calculated by summing up the scores of each subscale. The scores were converted into percent scores to assess the staff nurses perceived level of

leading role, assertiveness and achievement motivation as follows: High level > 75%, moderate level 60 - 75%, and low level < 60%.

Method:

Validity and Reliability

The tool of the study was translated into Arabic and its content validity and relevance was tested by a jury of six experts from the field of specialty and based on their opinion, necessary modifications were done. The internal consistency (using Cronbach's alpha coefficients) was for the guidance =0.84, communication =0.74, motivation =0.84, evoke curiosity =0.76, controlling =0.83, coordinating =0.78, for assertiveness =0.82, workplace assertiveness behavior =0.75, relationship assertiveness behavior =0.88, assertiveness techniques =0.84, Commitment and responsibility 0.79, desire to succeed and excel =0.80, challenge =0.81, and independence and self-reliance =0.88.

Pilot study

A pilot study was conducted on 10% of the sample of staff nurses (n= 47) randomly selected from the above-mentioned hospitals and excluded from the subjects to recognize the complexities and problems that may encounter during data collection and to estimate the required time.

Fieldwork

The data was collected by researchers from staff nurses included in the study in each setting. The researchers met the subjects during their work shifts to distribute the questionnaires. The subjects recorded the answer in the

presence of the researchers to ascertain all questions were answered. The questionnaire sheets were taken 20-30 minutes for each staff nurses to be filled. The data was collected in a period of two months.

Ethical consideration

An approval of the study was taken from authorities bodies at two hospitals before initiating the data collection. The aim of the study was explained to staff nurses to gain their cooperation for participation in the study and they had the right to withdraw from the study. Their anonymity and confidentiality of the information were preserved and their voluntary participation was assured.

Statistical analysis:

Statistical analysis is performed by statistical Package SPSS in general (version 20), also Microsoft Office Excel is used for data handling and graphical presentation. Quantitative variables are described by the Mean, Standard Deviation (SD), while qualitative categorical variables are described by proportions and percentages. Descriptive statistics are used to analyze the response to individual items and the respondents' characteristics. An independent sample t-test was used to estimate differences in two groups' means. Pearson's R was used to verify the correlation. Significance level is considered at $P \leq 0.05$.

Results:

Table (1): shows the distribution of staff nurses according to their personal data. As regard to staff nurses' age, nearly half (48%) of them who working at Tanta Emergency Hospital had age less than 30 years old compared to (47%) of them at El-Menshawey Hospital aged from 30-40 years old with mean scores 34.56 ± 6.3 and 33.67 ± 5.26 respectively with range from 24 to 48 years. More than half (62.26, 58.53%) of staff nurses at both Hospital were married. As regard to education level, equal (41.86%) of staff nurses at Tanta Emergency Hospital compared to more than half (51.89%) of them at El-Menshawey Hospital had Technical Institute of nursing. Less than half (45.35%, 49.53%) of staff nurses at Tanta Emergency and El-Menshawey Hospital had from 10 to 20 years of experience with mean scores 14.35 ± 5.84 and 16.5 ± 6.07 respectively with range from 1-27 years.

Table (2): illustrates level of leading role as perceived by staff nurses at Tanta Emergency and El-Menshawey Hospital. It noticed that there was a statistically significant difference between perceived level of staff nurses' leading role at Tanta Emergency and El-Menshawey Hospital. As a general, the majority (80.0%) of head nurses had high leading role level at Tanta Emergency Hospital compared to more than half (52.5%) of them at El-Menshawey Hospital with mean 157.34 ± 26.84 and 104.32 ± 24.32 respectively. In specific, the majority (82.2%) of head nurses had high supervising level at Tanta Emergency Hospital compared to only (30%) of them at El-Menshawey Hospital with mean 55.31 ± 12.41 and 36.4 ± 4.61 respectively followed by high percent (80.0%) of head nurses had high directing level at Tanta Emergency Hospital compared to more than half (52.5%) of them at El-Menshawey Hospital with

mean 78.14 ± 14.76 and 48.67 ± 7.26 respectively. While, the lowest level (77.8 %, 52.5%) were for coordinating role at the two hospitals with mean 23.22 ± 3.44 and 16.57 ± 3.18 respectively.

Table (3); illustrates level of assertiveness as perceived by staff nurses at Tanta Emergency and El-Menshawey Hospital. The table shows that there was a statistically significant difference between perceived level of staff nurses' assertiveness behavior at Tanta Emergency and El-Menshawey Hospital. As a total, the majority (77.8%) of head nurses had high assertiveness level at Tanta Emergency Hospital compared to half (50.0%) of them at El-Menshawey Hospital with mean 132.8 ± 16.7 and 84.56 ± 15.9 respectively. Staff nurses perceived that assertiveness techniques as the highest level (80.0%), followed by (77.8%, 73.3%) for relationship and workplace assertiveness behavior at Tanta Emergency Hospital respectively. While, around half (55.0%, 50%) of them perceived that assertiveness techniques and workplace assertiveness behavior as the highest level at El-Menshawey Hospital respectively.

Table (4): illustrates level of staff nurses' achievement motivation at Tanta Emergency and El-Menshawey Hospital. There was a statistically significant difference between level of staff nurses' achievement motivation at Tanta Emergency and El-Menshawey Hospital. As a total, the majority (82.2%) of staff

nurses had high achievement motivation level at Tanta Emergency Hospital compared to more than half (55.0%) of them at El-Menshawey Hospital with mean 132.57 ± 2.41 and 87.62 ± 17.53 respectively. In specific, the highest level (86.7%, 84.4%) of staff nurses for challenge, independence and self-reliance at Tanta Emergency Hospital with mean 24.74 ± 4.18 and 16.23 ± 2.61 compared to more than half (57.5 %, 55.0%) of them at El-Menshawey Hospital with mean 15.42 ± 3.78 and 12.74 ± 3.49 respectively. The lowest level (77.8%, 52.5%) was for the desire to succeed and excel at the two hospitals with mean 48.52 ± 6.49 , 33.6 ± 5.62 . respectively.

Table (5): There was a statistically positive correlation between total staff nurses perceived leading role and assertiveness with their achievement motivation behavior ($p \leq 0.001$) at both hospitals as illustrated.

Table (6): There was a statistically significant positive correlation between total staff nurses' perceived leading role, assertiveness and achievement motivation and their age ($p \leq 0.05$) at Tanta Emergency and El-Menshawey Hospital. Also, there was a statistically significant positive correlation between total staff nurses perceived leading role, assertiveness and achievement motivation behavior with their age, years of experience and level of education ($p \leq 0.05$) at both hospitals as evidenced.

Table (1): Distribution of staff nurses according to their personal data.

Staff nurses' personal data	Tanta Emergency Hospital (N=258)		El-Menshawhy Hospital (N=212)	
	N	%	N	%
Age (years)				
<30	124	48.06	88	41.51
30 – 40	84	32.56	100	47.17
> 40	50	19.38	24	11.32
Mean±SD	34.56±6.3		33.67±5.26	
Range	24-46		25-48	
Marital status				
Single	79	30.62	66	31.13
Married	151	58.53	132	62.26
Divorced	13	5.04	8	3.77
Widow	15	5.81	6	2.83
Education level				
Diploma in nursing	58	22.48	52	24.53
Technical Institute of nursing	108	41.86	110	51.89
Baccalaureate degree	92	35.66	50	23.58
Experience (years)				
<10	93	36.05	83	39.15
10 – 20	117	45.35	105	49.53
> 20	48	18.60	24	11.32
Mean±SD	14.35±5.84		16.5±6.07	
Range	1-26		1-27	

Table (2): Level of leading role as perceived by staff nurses at Tanta Emergency and El-Menshawhy Hospital.

Leading role	Tanta Emergency Hospital (N=258)				El-Menshawhy Hospital (N=212)				T-test	
	High %	Moderate %	Low %	Mean ± SD	High %	Moderate %	Low %	Mean ± SD	T	P-value
1. Directing	80.0	13.3	6.7	78.14 ± 14.76 ± 24.12	52.5	22.5	25	48.67 ± 7.26	26.548	<0.001**
Guidance	80.0	15.6	4.4	3.24 ± 27.24	55	25	20	16.47 ± 3.2	25.613	<0.001**
Communication	75.6	13.3	11.1	6.57 ± 25.3 ±	47.5	22.5	30	17.1 ± 4.15	19.500	<0.001**
Motivation	82.2	8.9	8.9	3.8 ± 55.31	52.5	20	27.5	16.78 ± 3.7	24.475	<0.001**
2. Supervising	82.2	11.1	6.7	12.41 ± 21.47	30	15	55	36.4 ± 4.61	21.023	<0.001**
Evoke Curiosity	77.8	13.3	8.9	6.3 ± 32.86	35	12.5	52.5	13.78 ± 2.75	16.524	<0.001**
Controlling	84.4	8.9	6.7	7.4 ±	30	15	55	21.54 ± 5.16	18.826	<0.001**

3. Coordinating	77.8	11.1	11.1	23.22 ± 3.44	52.5	30.0	17.5	16.57 ± 3.18	21.573	<0.001**
Total	80.0	11.1	8.9	157.34 ± 26.84	52.5	22.5	25	104.32 ± 24.32	22.226	<0.001**

Statistically significant at $p \leq 0.05$

Table (3): Level of assertiveness as perceived by staff nurses at Tanta Emergency and El-Menshawey Hospital

Assertiveness assessment scale	Tanta Emergency Hospital (N=258)				El-Menshawey Hospital (N=212)				T-test	
	High %	Moderate %	Low %	Mean ± SD	High %	Moderate %	Low %	Mean ± SD	t	P-value
Workplace assertiveness behavior	73.3	15.6	11.1	40.57 ± 8.64	50	35	15	27.56 ± 5.70	18.81	<0.001**
Relationship assertiveness behavior	77.8	13.3	8.9	53.64 ± 7.32	45	35	20	30.41 ± 6.74	35.47	<0.001**
Assertiveness techniques	80.0	11.1	8.9	37.61 ± 5.12	55	20	25	25.3 ± 4.2	28.09	<0.001**
Total	77.8	13.3	8.9	132.8 ± 16.7	50	30	20	84.56 ± 15.9	31.84	<0.001**

Statistically significant at $p \leq 0.05$

Table (4): Level of staff nurses achievement motivation at Tanta Emergency and El-Menshawey Hospital.

Achievement motivation scale	Tanta Emergency Hospital (N=258)				El-Menshawey Hospital (N=212)				T-test	
	High %	Moderate %	Low %	Mean ± SD	High %	Moderate %	Low %	Mean ± SD	T	P-value
Commitment and responsibility	80.0	13.3	6.7	41.6 ± 6.8	62.5	17.5	20.0	31.5 ± 5.78	17.13	<0.001**
Desire to succeed and excel	77.8	11.1	11.1	48.52 ± 6.49	52.5	25.0	22.5	33.6 ± 5.62	26.32	<0.001**
The challenge	86.7	8.9	4.4	24.74 ± 4.18	57.5	25.0	17.5	15.42 ± 3.78	25.10	<0.001**
Independence and self-reliance	84.4	8.9	6.7	16.23 ± 2.61	55.0	20.0	25.0	12.74 ± 3.49	12.39	<0.001**
Total	82.2	11.1	6.7	132.57 ± 2.41	55	22.5	22.5	87.62 ± 17.53	23.82	<0.001**

Statistically significant at $p \leq 0.05$

Table (5): Correlation between staff nurses' perceived leading role and assertiveness with their achievement motivation behavior.

Achievement motivation behavior	Leading role		Assertiveness	
	r	P-value	R	P-value
Tanta Emergency Hospital	0.745	<0.001**	0.622	<0.001**
El-Menshawwy Hospital	0.567	<0.001**	0.504	<0.001**

Table (6): Correlation between staff nurses characteristics and their perceived leading role, assertiveness and achievement motivation behavior at Tanta Emergency and El-Menshawwy Hospital.

Items	Age		Years of experience		Level of education	
	R	P-value	r	P-value	r	P-value
Leading role						
Tanta Emergency Hospital	0.427	<0.001**	0.230	0.004*	0.422	0.014*
El-Menshawwy Hospital	0.672	<0.001**	0.430	<0.001**	0.304	<0.001**
Assertiveness assessment						
Tanta Emergency Hospital	0.284	<0.001**	0.247	0.040*	0.410	<0.001**
El-Menshawwy Hospital	0.218	0.015*	0.384	<0.001**	0.248	0.039*
Achievement motivation scale						
Tanta Emergency Hospital	0.398	<0.001**	0.443	<0.001**	0.239	0.046*
El-Menshawwy Hospital	0.433	<0.001**	0.169	0.035*	0.367	<0.001**

Statistically significant at $p \leq 0.05$

Discussion

Nurses leader play a key role in the organization's performance and effectiveness, both in terms of teamwork, task organization, problem solving, conflict resolution, and decision making. Therefore, it is important for the leader to be able to lead with integrity means, observe, defend one's ideas and interests in an unwavering manner without ambivalence and speaking up confidently with assertive behavior, to know how to listen and to give and receive feedback so that the necessary changes are made as

well as guide, motivate and inspire a group of organization towards the achievement of common goals contributing to a better work environment and consequently, bringing best results (Albagawi, 2019).

Staff nurses' perceived head nurses leading role

Current study result revealed that there was a statistically significant difference between staff nurses' perceived their head nurses leading role at Tanta Emergency and El-Menshawwy Hospital.

This result could be related to that Tanta Emergency Hospital staff nurses may have more opportunity to learn and understand about leadership practices than El-Menshawey hospital staff nurses. Simultaneously, their head nurses had previously received a management training program for improving nursing staff knowledge and practice of leading role. That program assisted those head nurses to perform their effective leadership practice. Since they showed a high level of directing, supervising and coordinating items of leading role as perceived by staff nurses. Therefore, those head nurses need sufficient knowledge and training about their responsibilities to professionally lead staff nurses toward professional actions. The head nurses' specialized training should be established, not only for skills to carry out processes but also to improve their knowledge and experiences to be effectively lead nursing team members. Theoretically speaking, all head nurses need to be prepared with special skills through orientation programs before hold their leadership role to accomplish their role duties and responsibilities. Along with current study results was **Abdallah et al., (2019)** and **Youssef (2017)** whose found that head nurses don't practice their leading role effectively due to their knowledge deficiency and improper training.

Present study findings showed that high percent of staff nurses perceived high directing level of leading role at Tanta Emergency Hospital compared to more than half of them at El-Menshawey Hospital. Those head nurses showed high level on guidance, communication and motivation role. Actually they succeed to be role model and direct staff nurses for performing their work. While they are responsible to exhibit guiding, motivational and supportive behaviors

consistent with their staff nurses needs and potentials. Ideally they pay attention for ensuring open channel of communication and giving positive and negative feedback as well as continuous encouragement to staff nurses. Present result was confirmed by **Elizabeth (2015)** who revealed that, more than ninety percent of head nurses performed directing activities in the work unit. She asserted that, those nurse supervisors are successful leaders carrying out their functions depending on appropriate communication and delegation skills, providing them with regular directions, guidance and motivation.

In contrast, the low level of directing leading role at El-Menshawey Hospital as perceived by staff nurses may be due to lack of head nurses competency and educational preparation. Apparently those head nurses not guide staff nurses to perform their tasks, not explain their roles and responsibilities. Also, they not conduct regular meetings with staff nurses to exchange information, discuss important issues and utilize their suggestions. As well as, they do not demonstrate concern for staff nurses and not recommend incentives to their contribution. Present result was confirmed by **(White, 2017 & Clark, 2016)** whose found that more than half of nurses reported lack of direction, guidance and training from head nurses due to lack of their educational preparation.

Current results revealed that more than half of staff nurses perceived that head nurses had low supervising level at El-Menshawey Hospital compared to the minority at Tanta Emergency Hospital. This result may be due to those head nurses cannot evoke staff nurses curiosity effectively and cannot fulfill the activities of their controlling leading role. So they

require educational programs to remind them and improve their knowledge and practice to supervise their staff nurses and lead them to manage their work. As well as to enable them to create healthy work environments and reduce work related risks that induced by their insufficient knowledge and practice.

Really those head nurses are in great need to know that they have important responsibility to inspire staff nurses curiosity through motivating their participation in research utilization and evidence-based practice. Also, helping them to gain insight about the work place by regular inspection of working units, environment and care processes. Beside, attention for good controlling and checking of work conditions, arrangement of facilities, monitoring performance of nursing staff and evaluating deviation of actual performance from standard. Yet those head nurses need to be oriented and trained to play efficiently their role for achieving effective work environment. Along with this result was **Abdallah et al., (2019)** and **Youssef (2017)** whose supported the present study findings and revealed that more than half of nursing staff reported that head nurses do not practice supervision and controlling of work due to knowledge deficiency and improper training in this area. They asserted that head nurses required doing supervision from time to time to discover and direct staff nurses for proper prevention.

Current results revealed that the lowest staff nurses' perceived head nurses' level of leading role was for coordinating role at the two hospitals. Actually, those head nurses were not promoting enough numbers and mix of staff nurses at day or night shifts. They do not organize for promoting rest time for

nurses during work and not fairly distribute daily work between them. Also, they not coordinate work with human resources department and not make enough supplies and equipment available for staff nurses.

Those head nurses should pay their attention for their responsibility for identifying staff nurses needs of resources and ensure its availability to meet these needs. They also need to make sure from scheduling of enough numbers of staff nurses to reduce risk exposure especially at night shift. Also, they have to make plan for fairly distribution of work activities between staff nurses to balance their workloads. As well as identify factors that contribute to staff nurses occupational hazards and develop appropriate coordinating strategies to promote staff safety. Head nurses should clever nurse supervisors make an effective coordination for clinical and administrative resources with human resources department, other departments and institutions (**Sabra and Morsy, 2016**). The current study result was in line with **Abdallah et al., (2019)** and **Burns (2016)** whose revealed that only half of head nurses showed satisfactory level of practice of total coordinating leading role for managing of staff nurses pre-program.

Staff nurses' perceived head nurses assertiveness

Current study result revealed that there was a statistically significant difference between level of staff nurses' assertiveness behavior at Tanta Emergency and El-Menshawey Hospital. This result could be related to that Tanta Emergency Hospital staff nurses may have previous educational program sessions which clarified to them assertiveness rights and differentiate

between assertive and non-assertive behaviors as well as explained assertive behaviors in communicative conditions with others in right manner. Theoretically, all head nurses need to be prepared with assertiveness educational programs to read and interpret verbal and nonverbal communication, control their emotions and behavior, communicate the needs without threatening, frightening and finally, pay attention to the feelings and needs of other nursing staff. These findings supported by, **Mostafa et al., (2019)** and **Mohamed (2018)** whose found that majority of nursing staff had high assertiveness.

In contrast, the low level of assertiveness at El-Menshawey Hospital perceived by staff nurses may be due to having lack of knowledge about assertiveness, lack of courage to talk, and fear from punishment when asking for their rights as well as hospital doesn't promote or support assertive behaviour and lack of nurses' assertiveness training program so, they couldn't be assertive. Therefore, they require educational programs to improve their knowledge and practice to strengthen their inter-professional relationships, prevents workplace violence, reduces occupational stress, and to be more competent in the provision of quality of patient care and more comfortable in their communication within society. Along with this result was **Mostafa et al., (2019)** whose indicated that majority of ICUs were moderately assertive due to they did not know their rights and responsibilities at the workplace, lack of motivation and no nurses assertiveness training program.

Results of the current study clarified that staff nurses perceived that assertiveness techniques as the highest level at Tanta Emergency Hospital compared to around half of them at El-

Menshawey Hospital. These finding may be related to those staff nurses at Tanta Emergency Hospital may know techniques of assertiveness like using body language and held their head erect without feeling guilty or apologizing and considering others' rights also, keeping eye to eye contact during the conversation, speaking in modulated tone of voice, listening carefully to their colleagues and using "I" statement with focusing on the issue as well as they may have high self-concept translated into professional performance in positive direction. Present result was confirmed by **Hamouda (2016)** who found that majority of assertive nurses follow rules of assertive techniques.

Current results revealed that staff nurses perceived that relationship assertiveness behavior as the highest level at Tanta Emergency Hospital compared to around half of them at El-Menshawey Hospital. These finding may be related to those staff nurses at Tanta Emergency Hospital, can communicate in constructive manner, dealing with the conflict without aggression and build an effective team relationships. In this respect, they can ask their colleagues for request about patient condition, help new colleagues in learning new skills and have the ability to share knowledge and experiences with different people e.g. doctors, nursing staff and patients. Therefore, it is necessary to learn how to be assertive in order to achieve their personal and hospital goals while building a good working relationship with clients and colleagues. The present study finding is congruent with **Mostafa et al., (2019)** and **McCabe and Timmins (2015)** whose asserted that the assertive nurses had a good relationship with other colleagues.

Current results revealed that staff nurses perceived that workplace assertiveness behavior as the highest level at Tanta Emergency Hospital compared to around half of them at El-Menshawey Hospital. These finding may be related to those staff nurses at Tanta Emergency Hospital, can recognize their assertiveness rights at work and tell other colleagues their mistakes in calm and logical manner as well as dealing with conflict situations directly with respect everyone involved in an interaction and fosters trust and cooperation, this reflects that those nurses are in charge of their own actions and know when to speak up with the same time understands the needs and feelings of others. Therefore, when learning to be assertive, it is necessary that nurses manage to get what they want at their workplace by asking for what they want exactly without offending any junior or senior at workplace. This finding is supported by **Dehnabi et al., (2017)** who found that ICU nursing staff had high level of workplace assertiveness behavior immediately post program.

Staff nurses' perceived achievement motivation behaviors

As demonstrated in the present result as there was a statistically significant difference between level of staff nurses' achievement motivation at Tanta Emergency Hospital and El-Menshawey Hospital. These finding may be related to those staff nurses at Tanta Emergency Hospital strive to achieve an advanced position in their work and strive to increase or to keep as high as possible, tend to choose medium-difficulty and challenging tasks, exert continuous arduous efforts towards achieving what they are doing as well as having a strong desire to receive feedback about their performance and prefer to deal with the problem than to seek help to solve it.

Along with the present study, **Adegboyega (2018)** and **El Sayed and Ali (2017)** whose reported that more than three quarters of nurses have achievement motivation.

In contrast, the low level of achievement motivation at El-Menshawey Hospital perceived by staff nurses may be due to lack of head nurses educational program. Apparently those head nurses not motivate their staff nurses to perform their tasks, not give recognition to them for their achievement and not acknowledge and value their contribution in nursing practice. Therefore, achievement motivation is a prerequisite for the successful leading role and the ability to make prompt decisions, take certain risks, successfully resolve conflicts at work place, and remove innovative barriers. This finding is contraindicated with **El Sayed and Ali (2017)** who indicated that more than three quarters of nurses have achievement motivation.

Current results revealed that the highest level of staff nurses for challenge and independence and self-reliance at Tanta Emergency Hospital compared to more than half of them at El-Menshawey Hospital. These finding may be related to those staff nurses at Tanta Emergency Hospital prefer jobs that are challenging, intellectually demanding, and thought-oriented. Also, they prefer to solve most of their problems by themselves and able to complete tasks already started, take a proactive attitude toward work and loves what they do as they obtain sense of satisfaction from work and pursue self-realization and growth. This finding is supported by **Solobutina and Nesterova (2019)** whose indicated that the study subjects set a high value on choosing tasks with a really high degree of complexity that may not be fulfilled.

Results of the current study clarified that highest level of staff nurses for the desire to succeed and excel at Tanta Emergency Hospital compared to more than half of them at El-Menshawey Hospital. These finding may be related to those staff nurses at Tanta Emergency Hospital have desire to excel in all tasks combined with the capacity to experience tried in accomplishment, desire for success and avoidance of failure, self-respect, recognition, and prestige, mastering of skills and have the hope for victory and the desire to win over others as well as they have great dreams and hopes for success in life and plan for their future. This finding is supported by **Solobutina and Nesterova (2019)** whose indicated that the study subjects set a high value on the desire for success and avoidance of failure, the desire for career growth and the need for social prestige and respect from others.

Correlation between staff nurses' head nurses' leading role, assertiveness behavior, nurses' characteristics and their achievement motivation

Finding of the current study clarified that there was a statistically positive correlation between total staff nurses' perceived leading role and assertiveness with their achievement motivation behavior at both hospitals. This may be related to by being assertive in the right way, leaders can express their legitimate needs and ideas, share their own vision and create honest relationships with others while at the same time concerned about staff nurses' wellbeing, needs, and their professional problems and their individual growth. Also, leaders can drive force that stimulates ones' interest and commitment towards achieving organizational objective so, successful leaders know

what they want, have a clear path to achieving it, and are driven by intrinsic rewards and by a need for success and achievement as well as these leaders are willing to change and prefer opportunities to find out something new and have a strong desire to perform challenging tasks well for successful outcomes. These result in line with **Milinkovic, Kovacevic & Onete (2020), Clipa and Šerban (2018)** whose found that there was a statistically positive correlation between total leading role and achievement motivation. Also, **Parray et al. (2020), Sitota (2018) and Ghodrati et al., (2016)** found that there was a statistically positive correlation between total assertiveness behavior and achievement motivation.

Finding of the current study clarified that there was a statistically significant positive correlation between total staff nurses' perceived leading role, assertiveness and achievement motivation and their age at Tanta Emergency and El-Menshawey Hospital. This result related to age maturity is important in development of assertiveness, achievement motivation and ability for leading as old nurses are physically energetic and this extra energy keeps them moving and keeps on motivating them to go ahead in life. Also, they had analytical problem solving skills with the ability to negotiate a workable situation, ability to effectively cope with work related demands as result of experience and education gained by growing older but the young staff nurses continue to practice nursing in most dependent roles and least influenced by change in general. Along with the present study, **Abdallah et al., (2019)** who found a statistically significant positive correlation between charge nurses leading role and their age. She noted that this weakness might be due to younger charge nurses unaware about the importance of

leading role or lack of training about their responsibilities to lead the nursing staff. **Maheshwari and Gill (2015)** reported that older nurses working in government hospitals were more assertive as compared to nurses who were younger. Also, **Adegboyega (2018)** found that there was a statistically significant positive correlation between undergraduates' age and their achievement motivation.

Finding of the current study clarified that there was a statistically significant positive correlation between total staff nurses perceived leading role, assertiveness and achievement motivation behavior with their years of experience at both hospitals. This may be interpreted by that those nurses with more years of experiences had professional maturity, communication skills and sufficient information about their rights enough to solve problems and to deal effectively with other health care members within hospital units. In addition, they know their own roles and more engage at their workplace. Therefore, age maturity and increase number of years of experiences are more important in the development of leading role, assertive behavior and achievement motivation. The present study is congruent with **Abdallah et al., (2019)** who found unsatisfactory level of leading role among nurses less than five years of experience. As well as, **Abd El-Wahab (2017)** revealed that there is statistically significant positive correlation between nurses' years of experiences and assertiveness. Also, **Zhang et al., (2015)** found that the highest level of achievement motivation was found in higher officers with more years of experiences.

Finding of the current study clarified that there was a statistically positive correlation between total staff

nurses perceived leading role, assertiveness and achievement motivation behavior with their educational level at both hospitals. These findings may be related to staff nurses with higher level of education develop stronger assertiveness communication skills due to increase personal maturity, interpersonal skills and expanding their experiences gained by developing their education which are important in the development of leading role and achievement motivation which in turn increased their ability to link their education with organizational needs to analyze situation, recognize problems and make appropriate critical decisions. The present study is congruent with **Abdallah et al., (2019)** who found a statistically significant positive correlation between charge nurses leading role and their educational level. As well as, **Elizabeth (2015)** supported present study results and mentioned that the nurses with bachelor degree or higher, and those in supervisory position had significantly higher perception of leading role. Also, **Haladin (2015)** indicated that nurses who obtained a Master of Science in Nursing or PhD in Nursing had higher assertiveness levels than any other group including the baccalaureate holder. In addition, **Zhang et al., (2015)** found that there was a significant positive correlation between educational level and achievement motivation.

Conclusion

This study has made an important contribution to the nursing professional and healthcare literature by clarifying the influence head nurses leading role and assertiveness on staff nurses' achievement motivation. Staff nurses perceived a high level of head nurses leading role at Tanta Emergency Hospital, while low level at El-Menshaway Hospital with the emphasize on supervising

leading role. At Tanta Emergency Hospital staff nurses perceived a high level of assertiveness behavior and assertiveness techniques than El-Menshawey Hospital. Staff nurses' achievement motivation behavior had statistically significant favorable correlations with their years of experience, age, level of education, total leading role and assertiveness at both hospitals. There were significant influences of head nurses leading role and assertiveness on staff nurses' achievement motivation.

Recommendations

Based on the study finding, the following recommendations are suggested:

- Newly posted head nurses should attend orientation programs about leadership and communication skills.

- Maintaining continuous offering staff development activities and workshops to enforce head nurses leading role and assertiveness behavior.

- Motivate staff members to express their opinions and personal rights and provide them greater autonomy by participating in decision-making.

- Build positive work practice environment (supportive management, openness communication and adequate resources) to enhance nursing staff achievement motivation.

- Development of self-assertiveness skills as approach for understanding of the self and others to facilitate effective communication.

- Hospital needs to set up policies and guidelines to encourage leading role, assertiveness communication and achievement motivation among nurses.

- **Further research** can be conducted to identify level of assertiveness behavior and achievement motivation among nursing students at faculty of nursing.

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