

Perception of work Locus Control among Nurses in Shree Birendra Hospital, Chhauni, Kathmandu, Nepal

Bajracharya M.*

Introduction:

A nurse is one who, takes care and protects the helpless and desirables and these who are suffering from diseases. A nurse is a person who completed a program of basic nursing education and is qualified and authorized in her country to provide responsible and competent professional service for the promotion of health, prevention of illness, the care of the sick and their rehabilitation (ICN's council of National representatives in May (1973).

Sellinger (2001) said that Canada's nurses are not happy with their jobs. Many of them were leaving for other countries or leaving profession altogether as they wanted changes to restore respects and dignity to the nursing field. Anderson 1985 indicated workload as the most frequent cause of stress for nurses. Nurses had to choose between conflicting priorities among their patients in physical tasks and tend to take precedence over psychological or emotional work. Results of many studies indicate his/her performance is affected while working in stressful situations.

Lazarus and Folk man (1984) also suggested that locus of control refers to the extent to which a person believes he can control events and outcomes. People with an internal locus of control believe in their ability to influence results, where as those possessing an external locus of control believe that events are contingents upon the actions of others. The person who has internal locus of control capacity can solve problems, and he or she can have the ability to cope, decision making in his/her job performance and satisfaction in any work place.

Work locus of control refers to nurse's beliefs about whether the out comes of their actions are dependent on what they do (Internal control orientation) or are determined by events outside their personal control (External control orientation). There are two types of work locus of control – internal and external. Internal refers to people who believe they

have control over their successes and failures. External refers to people who believe that their lives are control by forces outside themselves by luck.

Blegan(1993) conducted a meta-analysis of 70 studies found that locus of control was a factor, that associated strongly with job satisfaction. The previous findings cited by Boey, Chan and Ke (1998) stronger senses of control in well educated personal would be more prone to adopt their action strategies to deal with work stress.

In Nepal, nurses are one of the major work forces in the health care system. Nurses are only one health care provider who provides integrated service as general nursing care, midwifery and community services, so the scope of nursing in Nepal is dynamic.

The nursing profession in Nepal is at a critical juncture at present. The government has clearly defined the staffing pattern and level of the cadre ladder for the nurses. Equal pay system has been existed with the similar level of other personnels. The nurses have less priority experience to involve in health care policy, nurse's participation in policy is not taken in to consideration in the planning of health care strategy of the country.

Further more, there are shortages of nurses in the country. Nurses are leaving their jobs and work in private hospitals or go to work in foreign countries because of work stress and dissatisfaction. The number of patient is increasing. The hospitals are suffering from shortages of nurses even in the capital. Nurses feel that they have heavy workload and this results in frustration in their job by which the quality of care is going down.

Nurses have to work shift duties so they cannot be involve in house hold chores becose of which they become frustrated in their jobs. They are even called to work during their earned leave.

In stress situation of working in health care institution perception of control is important for nurses to deal with work stress and provide prompt care to patients. No published study could be located that examined the locus of control in Nepal. Thus the researcher examined perception of work control of nurses in Nepal.

* Mrs. Manjari Bajracharya, BN, MSc
Maj., Nursing Officer
Shree Birendra Hospital, Chhauni

Method

This descriptive comparative study is concerned about the belief of hospital's nurses to control of their jobs to examine and compare level of work locus of control among nurses at Shree Birendra Hospital, Chhauni, Kathmandu, Nepal. The samples consisted of all 92 nurses who work in the hospital. Instruments used in this study were Demographic questionnaire and work locus of control scale. Work locus of control scale was measured by using Specter's (1988). Work locus of control scales is a 16 items instrument designed to assess control beliefs in work place organization. The formate is a rating with six responded choices ranging from 1; disagree very much to 6; agree very much, total score 16 to 96. The external score receive high and internal low.

Internal locus of control items are following

1. A job is what you make of it.
2. On most jobs, people can pretty much accomplish whatever they set out to accomplish.
3. If you know what you want out of a job, you can find a job that gives it to you.
4. If employees are unhappy with a decision made by their boss, they should do something about it.
5. Most people are capable of doing their jobs well if they make the efforts.
6. Promotions are given to employees who perform well on the job.
7. People who perform their job well generally get rewarded.
8. Most employees have more influence on their supervisors than they think they do.

External locus of control items are following

1. Getting the job you want is mostly a mater of luck.
2. Making money is primarily a matter of good fortune.
3. In order to get a really a good job, who you need to have family members or friends in high places.
4. Promotions are usually a matter of good fortune.
5. When it comes to landing a really good job, who you want is more important than what you know.
6. To make a lot of money you have to know the right people.

7. It takes of lot of luck to be and outstanding employee on most jobs.
8. The main different between people who make a lot of money and people that make a little money is luck.

Level of work locus of control scale is following

16-42; Low external control/High internal control
43-69; Moderate external control/moderate internal control

70-96; High external control/Low internal control

The reliability testing of WLCS questionnaire was tested for its internal consistency reliability using Cronbach's Alpha method.

Data collection procedure

The permission was obtained from Shree Birendra Hospital's Commandant and Matron. Theirafter the researcher went to meet head nurses and nurses who were on duty and took verbal permission from them. The questionnaire was distributed to head nurses and collected within 1-2 weeks and confidentiality and anonymity of the nurses was maintained.

Data analysis

Demographic data was analyzed using descriptive statistics in frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation. Independent t-text was used to compare the mean score of perception of work locus of control between groups of nurses who were different in age, education and marital status.

Findings

Level of work locus control result showed that (56.5%) had moderate level of external control. The result of difference in mean score of work locus of control between two groups of nurses in age, education, and marital status results showed that statistical significance difference at 0.05 levels with age over 30 years had mean scores of external control than those with the age of 20-30 years ($M=46.71, 44.56$). Education had statistically significant difference at 0.05 levels with certificate in nursing mean scores higher of external control compared to bachelor degree in nursing (46.76, and 40.71). However, there is no statistical significance difference at 0.05 levels in mean scores of work locus of control between single and married nurses.

Score Range	Level of work locus of control	Total (N = 92)	Percentage
16-42	Low external locus of control	40	43.5
43-69	Moderate external control	52	56.5
70-96	High external control	0	0

Table - 1: Frequencies, percent, and level of work locus of control among nurses (n=92).

Above table shows that the majority of the nurses reported moderate level of external control.

Factors	N	M	SD	DF	T	P
Age						
20 - 30 years	54	44.56	8.88	90	1.95	.05
> 30 years	38	46.71	8.16			
Education						
Certificate	68	46.76	8.74	90	2.55	.01
Bachelor	24	40.71	7.17			
Marital status						
Single	33	44.5	8.65	90	.75	.46
Married	59	45.95	8.60			

Table - 2: Independent t-test of work locus of control by age, education and marital status of nurses (n=92)

Discussion

The majority of nurses had moderate level of external control. The previous study of Goffman (1961) and Diamond (1986, 1992) found that the nature of organization rules, regulation decrease opportunities for personal control in institutional environments. However this study is under the Ministry of Defense and the Army Head quarter. So it has its own rules and regulation. Policies are different from private teaching and other government hospitals so, nurse in this hospital may have control in the working place. Also Nepali people who have high education believe little in luck and fortune.

The results from 92 nurses showed that there were statistical significant differences at 0.05 levels in mean scores of work locus of control between nurses with the age of 20-30 years and over 30 years. Nurses with the age over 30 years had higher mean scores of external control. Siu, Specter, and Donald studied locus of control in 634 managers in Hong Kong and found that older managers reported fewer sources of stress, better coping and less external locus of control but this study did not support the previous study. More senior nurses have had higher responsibilities than junior nurses. Thus senior nurses may have higher stress than junior nurses and higher external locus of control. Age

may contribute to nurses's attitudes in working and perceptions of locus of control.

There were statistical differences at 0.05 levels in mean scores of work locus of control between nurses who have different in education. Nurses with a certificate in nursing education had higher mean scores of external control than those with bachelor's degree (46.76 and 40.71). The nurses with higher education have more internal control style working than nurses with lower education. This finding supported the hypotheses of this study. This finding is consistent with previous studies of Boe Chan, and Ko (1998) and Chan (1996). They reported stronger sense of control in well-educated personnel and they would be more prone to add their action strategies to deal with work stress. An explanation for the finding in this study is that education makes update knowledge, increases self-esteem, autonomy in their work by which they are able to cope with stress, burn out and ability to solve problems easily.

There were no significant differences between single and married nurses on the level of work locus of control. The finding did not support the hypotheses of this study. Revicki and May's (1996) study showed that in married nurses depression was less likely than unmarried nurses. Nurses with greater work-related stress and burnout would

associated with poor locus of control (Schmitz, Neumann & Opperman 2000). Also, nowadays all nurses; both married and single are similar in education, work place, and they like to be independent and take interest in their work. Also, the culture of Nepal and Western countries are different. Thus, the finding in this study does not support previous studies from Western countries.

Conclusion

This study on work locus of control helps to find out the level of work locus of control of nursing in Nepal. The findings from this study showed that nurses are in moderate external control level. So, the institution or organization need to improve the level of control especially internal control of nurses in the organization by making changes in some rules and regulation and management accordingly. This may help to improve organizational design and management in order to reduce stress and external control. However, the results showed that there were significant differences in locus of control in nurse with different age and education. This finding suggested that age and education may contribute to the improvement of level of internal work locus of control. So, organization could improve internal work locus of control of nurses by providing more continuing education and in-service education to up date knowledge and autonomy of nurses in their work.

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