

12th Nursing and Healthcare Congress

October 03-05, 2016 Vancouver, Canada

The relationship between and factors influencing, the staff nurses' perception of nurse manager caring and their perceived exposure to workplace bullying within multiple healthcare settings

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Objective: To examine the relationship between, and factors influencing, the staff nurses' perception of nurse manager caring and their perceived exposure to workplace bullying within multiple healthcare settings.

Background: This study was based on Watson's theoretical position (1979, 2008) that caring is reciprocal in nature and promotes caring and healing for and among each other (and including within an administrative context).

Methods: A descriptive correlational design was employed to assess staff nurses self report of nurse manager caring (using the Caring Factor Survey-Caring of the Manager, Nelson, 2010) and their perception of being exposed to negative acts meeting the definition of workplace bullying, among 156 staff nurses working within multiple healthcare settings in a large metropolitan area within the United States.

Results: Results confirmed a significant inverse relationship between nurse manager caring and exposure to workplace bullying in the nursing workplace ($r = .534$, $p .001$) meaning that as staff nurses' perceptions of their nurse manager caring increases, their perception of exposure to negative acts (meeting the definition of workplace bullying) significantly decreases. Study findings also indicated that gender and workload negatively influenced these findings. Further, data analysis revealed that staff nurses who were females and those who worked in Medical/Surgical settings were significantly more likely to perceive their managers as caring ($p < .05$ respectively) and that a high workload significantly influenced the staff nurses perception of exposure to bullying ($p < .05$) in the workplace.

Conclusions/Clinical Relevance: In consideration of the 2025 prediction of severe nursing shortages as baby-boomer nurses retire at the same time the demand for health care will increase (AACN, 2009), study findings highlight the importance of caring leadership to ensure the health and availability of our nursing workforce. Study findings also suggest the need for shifting nurse manager work priorities to optimize their time and availability to staff at the point of care. Further, empirical findings lend support for the design and implementation of caring curriculum and related competencies for nursing leaders both within the clinical and academic work settings.

Biography

Lynda Olender has completed her PhD from Seton Hall University, NJ. She is the author of numerous articles and book chapters primarily focused on the concepts of caring, incivility and workplace bullying within nursing. She is currently a Distinguished Lecturer and Graduate Program Director at Hunter College. She is also the Co-Principle Investigator on two research initiatives: 1) a qualitative study to record the life stories of female veterans, and, 2) the impact of implementing shared governance and a professional practice model on select inpatient and ambulatory care units within a tertiary medical center.

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