NRS-451V Lecture 1

Theories and Concepts in Leadership and Management

*Introduction*

Organizations rely on managers and leaders to fulfill their mission and their vision of the future. The focus for this week will be on selected management and leadership theories and their application to biblical and secular leaders.

Management Versus Leadership

According to Marquis and Huston (2009), the functions of management include planning, organizing, staffing, directing, and controlling. Within each of these functions, decisions must be made to optimize the care provided while remaining fiscally responsible.

Leadership is a more challenging role to define. At times, leaders may not have formal authority, but they may have power through their ability to influence others. A leader's emphasis is on interpersonal relationships; they may be known as mentors, coaches, advocates, or role models (Marquis & Huston, 2009).

Management Theories

Scientific management is the earliest management theory known, dating back to the early 1900s. According to the foundation of this theory, humans are motivated by money, and there should be a separation between managers and the workers. The application of this theory results in a dramatic increase in productivity of the workers and profits for the organization. Around the same time the scientific management theory was developing, Fayol (as indicated by Marquis and Huston, 2006) began mapping management functions which came to be known as planning, organizing, staffing, directing, and controlling. Many comparisons can be drawn between the delineation of these management functions and the elements of the nursing process.

In the early 1920s, workers in the United States began to feel unsettled. A sense of dissatisfaction with repetitive tasks led to unrest. Workers understood that they knew specialized tasks, yet they felt unskilled and under-utilized. This was the first time that worker satisfaction was linked to productivity, and participative decision making was born.

Leadership Theories

Because of the participative decision-making movement, management theorists began to focus their attention on elements and styles of leadership. The *great man theory* is the earliest known leadership theory. It states that leaders are born and others are meant to be led.

In early 1970, the *situational and contingency leadership theory* emerged. The premise of these theories indicates that leaders should vary their decision-making and responses according to the situation or the employee, with the idea that no one approach is ideal for every situation. At this same time, employees began stating that they were being treated unfairly.

Current leadership theories include *interactional theory* and *transformational theory.* Interactional theory builds upon the individuality of the leader and the situation. People are complex and their motives change over time. The leadership exchange involves many variables including personality, perceptions, and the ability of both the leader and the employee, as well as the context of the specific situation.

Transformational leadership raises each person to a higher level of morality and motivation. Vision and environment are the keys to this theory. Transformational leaders are able to forecast the path of the future and guide others to a higher standard of performance.

Biblical Leadership

Leadership examples abound throughout the Bible, not just in character but in style. The leadership styles are described as visionary, strategist, team leader, servant leader, shepherd, trainer, and encourager (Manz, 1998).

A curious notion about most of the biblical leaders is that many of them were perceived as weak and humble, as noted in the stories of David and Moses. Interestingly enough, followership is one of the characteristics God looks for in leaders because those that allow themselves to be led by God will not follow other people. They will lead other people to follow God in their own process of following God. God wants faithful people, not just successful people (Manz, 1998).

Servant Shepherd Ministries describes four factors that are the key to leadership: model, motive, manner, and method. Internally, there must be a mental model and a motive. In essence, an individual should lead as a servant and love God and others above himself or herself. Externally, there must be a manner and method. In other words, an individual should look on others with benevolence and use wisdom and reason in all actions and choices.

Julian (2002) describes business principles versus God's principles. Some of the unwritten business rules include achieving results at all costs, pleasing others, making leadership the first priority, and subscribing to the idea that an individual can never do enough. Julian challenges these notions by stating that God asks His followers to serve a purpose, to work to please Him, to see leadership as serving, and to have unconditional love for others.

Additional Roles in Leadership

Leadership can also come in the form of service to communities and others. For example, a sexual assault nurse examiner (SANE) serves those who have been victims of sexual assault (both male and female). Nurses are also mandated reporters. By serving as protectors and advocates to victims of child abuse, elder abuse, mental abuse, and sexual abuse, nurses are in a position of leadership (Brent, 2017).

Conclusion

Although both management and leadership are important, those individuals who are in positions to influence the future of nursing need to integrate five traits:

1.       Long term, visionary thinking

2.       Ability to rise above bureaucracy and influence others

3.       Emphasis on vision, values, and motivation

4.       Ability to cope with multiple and conflicting priorities

5.       Ability to think in terms of change and renewal

If all health care leaders demonstrated these characteristics, organizations might prosper through the many challenges that health care providers encounter today.

References

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