

Essential managerial attributes of the nowadays nursing service manager in the South African context

Prof K Jooste, (Dlitt et Phil), Department of Nursing, Rand Afrikaans University

Abstract

Nursing service managers need certain essential managerial attributes in taking the lead in effective management of the nowadays health care organisations in South Africa. Major changes in restructuring and human resources planning are taking place through transformation of health services and specific managerial attributes are needed in this scenario. Without nursing service managers with the necessary managerial attributes, change in the health care environment will be hampered and planning, organising, directing and control of the delivering of quality care will be negatively influenced.

The research problem was addressed in the following question that guided the study: *Which essential attributes/ characteristics should a nursing service manager possess to run a health care service effectively?* It was unclear what the opinions of all level of nurse managers were regarding the necessary managerial attributes the health services manager currently need to run the current health care services effectively.

This study aimed at highlighting the necessary attributes of the nowadays nursing service manager in running a health care institution in the current health care environment of South Africa. Purposive sampling was done and forty-five functional, middle and top-level managers registered for a second year degree course in Health Services Management at a South African university participated in the study. The findings indicated important managerial and leadership attributes, which the current nursing service manager should possess. This article will only discuss the important managerial attributes needed. A conceptual framework came to the fore according to which an example of a self-evaluation instrument was compiled for nursing service managers for future use.

The results of the data analysis indicated that the nursing service manager should promote good interpersonal relationships with colleagues, subordinates and patients through the attributes of openness, being inviting and empowering behavior. The purpose of this article is to make nursing service managers more aware of the necessary attributes they should possess and should develop to manage nursing services more effectively.

Abstrak

Verpleegdiensbestuurders benodig sekere essensiële bestuurskwaliteite om in die hedendaagse gesondheidsorgorganisasies in Suid-Afrika die leiding te neem in effektiewe bestuur. Groot veranderinge in herstrukturering en herstrukturering vind deur transformasie in gesondheidsdienste plaas en spesifieke bestuursvaardighede is nodig om hierdie scenario te hanteer. Sonder verpleegbestuurders met die nodige bestuurskwaliteite, sal veranderinge in die gesondheidsorgomgewing gestrem word en beplanning, organisering, leiding en beheer van die lewering van gehaltesorg sal negatief beïnvloed word. Die navorsingsprobleem is deur die volgende vraag aangespreek wat die studie gerig het: Watter essensiële kenmerke behoort 'n verpleegdiensbestuurder oor te beskik om 'n gesondheidsdiens effektief te bestuur? Dit was onduidelik wat die menings van alle vlakke verpleegbestuurders was aangaande die nodige bestuurskwaliteite wat die hedendaagse verpleegdiensbestuurder benodig om die huidige gesondheidsdienste effektief te bedryf.

Hierdie studie was daarop gemik om die nodige kwaliteite van die hedendaagse verpleegdiensbestuurder in bestuur van 'n gesondheidsorginstansie in die hedendaagse gesondheidsorgomgewing van Suid-Afrika te beklemtoon. Doelbewuste streekproefneming is gedoen en vyf-en-veertig funksionele, middel en topvlakbestuurders wie vir 'n tweedejaarsgraadkursus in Gesondheidsdiensbestuur aan 'n Suid-Afrikaanse universiteit geregistreer was het in die studie deelgeneem. Die bevindinge het op belangrike bestuurs- en leierskapskwaliteite gedui waarvoor die hedendaagse verpleegdiensbestuurder behoort te beskik. Hierdie artikel sal slegs die belangrike bestuurskwaliteite wat benodig word aanspreek. 'n Konseptuele raamwerk het na vore gekom waarvolgens 'n voorbeeld van 'n selfevalueringsinstrument ontwerp is vir verpleegdiensbestuurders vir toekomstige gebruik.

Die resultate van die data-analise het daarop gedui dat die verpleegdiensbestuurder goeie interpersoonlike verhoudinge met kollegas, ondergeskiktes en pasiënte behoort te bevorder deur die kenmerke van openheid, uitnodigende gedrag en bemagtigende gedrag. Die doel van hierdie artikel is om verpleegdiensbestuurders meer bewus te maak van die essensiële kwaliteite waarvoor hulle behoort te beskik en moet ontwikkel om gesondheidsdienste meer effektief te bestuur.

Introduction and background

The nowadays nursing service manager needs certain managerial attributes to promote quality nursing care and staff satisfaction, and to implement health legislations effectively in their services. The South African health summit of 2001, focuses on reaching out for better health for all. This document outlines key issues in developing an equitable, efficient, coherent and high quality health quality health system in South Africa. One requirement is to meet the goal of equity and the nursing services manager should use the resources available within the public and private sector for the benefit of the whole population (Health summit 2001:32). On the other hand the National patients' rights charter (1997) outlines the patient's rights in the national health care setting. Among others it stipulate that every patient has the right to a healthy and safe environment, participation in decision-making on matters affecting their health, health information on for example how best to use services, continuity of care, and the right to complain about health services. The charter holds different challenges for the nursing service manager.

The eight principles for transforming public service delivery – the Batho Pele principles- have been identified by the Department of Public Service and Administration (1997).

Putting these principles of Batho Pele into practice is another challenge facing the nursing service manager in the South African public sector. Consultation will give citizens the opportunity of influencing decisions about services rendered to them and foster a more participative relationship between for example the nurse, doctor and the patient. Patients should be told what level and quality of service they would be receiving so that they are aware of what to expect. Services should be provided economically and efficiently in order to give patients the best possible value for money.

In this scenario the nursing service manager has to display several attributes in her role along with other members of the multi-disciplinary team to adequately address the health care needs of the community.

Certain attributes are essential for a nursing service manager in charge of a health care service who must manage resources in the delivering of health care and therefore also promoting the current health care situation in South Africa. *This article will only address the managerial attributes needed by the nursing service manager to run a health care institution effectively.*

Management and leadership

Management is often equated with leadership. However, leading differs significantly from managing. Leadership is human communication whereas a leader exerts influence over others, modify their attitudes and behaviors in order to reach group goals and needs. Management on the other hand recalls the terms status quo, stability, harmony, maintenance and constancy. Both management and leadership are important in the daily functioning of an organization but key differences exist between these two terms.

Managers tend to rely on systems, while leaders tend to rely on people. Managers tend to think of the everyday problems they are faced with in their planning, whereas leaders are more

concerned with long-term or strategic planning. Managers thus focus on getting things done and react to everyday pressures and events, while leaders re concerned with the future. Leaders develop a vision of the future and a strategy to get there (Booyens 1998:418).

In their role interpretations, managers differ from leaders. According to Swansburg (1996:435) the manager is a problem-solver who succeeds because of persistence, tough-mindedness, hard work, intelligence, analytical ability, and tolerance and good will. Managers focus on results, analysis of failure, and tasks. They emphasize control, decision making and decision analysis.

Management is a conglomerate of attributes that when used effectively "get things done" through people. It is about discipline, methodology, and right and wrong (Flarey 1997:8).

Problem statement

Pressures for change in health care delivery make the move from bureaucratic management to effective democratic management and leadership essential. Several debates have also taken place on the need for a nursing service manager to possess certain leadership and managerial attributes. The need for the development of an appropriate framework of a manager-leader, that will ensure that nursing service managers play a pivotal role in effective management of a health care service, was identified. The research question that guided the study entailed the following: *Which essential attributes/characteristics should a nursing service manager possess to run a health care service effectively?*

Objectives of the study

The objectives for the study were as follow:

- To explore and describe how informants viewed the essential managerial characteristics of an effective nursing manager in health services, based on their personal experiences in nursing management practice
- To explore and describe how informants viewed the essential leadership characteristics of an effective nursing manager in health services, based on their personal experiences in nursing management practice
- To establish a conceptual framework outlining the essential characteristics of a nursing service manager
- To draw a profile of an effective nursing service manager in the South African context. From this profile guidelines for addressing the professional development of managers could be drawn as well as a schedule to be used in selection committees for managers in health services.

The overall aim of the study was to determine the essential attributes of the nursing service manager in running a current health care service effectively.

This article will focus on the first and third objectives as mentioned.

Assumptions

The approach to management in this paper takes the perspec-

tive that

- management and leadership are related but are not the same;
- leadership can not replace management; and
- there is a time to lead and a time to manage.

It was further assumed that personal experiences of informants are sources of knowledge.

Key concepts

Health care service

The term refers to any health care setting such as a clinic or hospital that deliver health care services to patients on a 24-hour basis.

Nursing service manager

Managers are maintenance thinkers. Their goal is to make sure that things runs right, efficiently, and with as few problems as possible, to maintain the status quo (Kerfoot 1998:173-174). In this discussion the term “manager” will also refer to a nursing service manager in a top-level management position held by a professional nurse in charge of a health care service or clinic.

Management

Management is a set of attributes. Practice of these attributes leads to greater levels of perfection (Flarey 1997:8-9). This definition is applicable to the study.

Attribute

The Oxford advanced learners dictionary of current English (1986) defines the word “attribute” as a quality looked upon as naturally or necessary belonging to a person. In this study “attributes” will refer to the qualities and attributes of the nursing service manager in a top-level management position. The word “characteristic” will be viewed as synonymous with the term “attribute”.

Effectiveness

This term refers to “having an effect, able to bring about the result intended” (Hornby 1986:277). In this study the term “effectiveness” refers to bring about the expected result, namely quality of nursing care.

Research design and method

A qualitative, exploratory, descriptive and contextual research design was utilised (Burns & Grove 1993:28-29). The researcher worked inductively to explore and describe participants’ views on which essential characteristics a nursing service manager should have in running their health service effectively.

Data collection

Unstructured data collection was done by means of narrative sketches. Participants were asked to share information based on their experiences in practice on how they viewed “the effective nurse manager in charge of a health care service” who is needed in current health services in South Africa. According to Gadaw (1996:8) any description of a situation can be viewed as a narrative. Within the context of this study narrative sketches were aimed at revealing the views of students

regarding what characteristics a nurse manager has to possess in running a nursing service effectively, based on their nursing management experiences in nursing practice.

Population and sampling

A population of two hundred and twenty five professional nurses representing functional, middle and top level management, were registered as second or third year students for the course in Health Services Management II at a South Africa university. They attended practica workshops for this course, in the first semester of 2001, at different regional offices of the University in South Africa in Durban, Cape Town, Pietersburg, Bloemfontein and Port Elizabeth. Purposive sampling was used and the criteria of being a third year student was set to be selected as a participant. A sample size of 45 students complied to this criteria and were selected to answer the research question. Data saturation occurred.

Measure to ensure trustworthiness

Trustworthiness was ensured according to the four principles related to credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Babbie and Mouton 2001:276). *Credibility* was ensured through student’s engagement in management situation in their own nursing practice. Consensus between the researcher and an external coder, an expert in qualitative data analysis, was reached with regard to the categories derived from the data collected. Follow-up interviews will be conducted with nurse managers to validate the essential characteristics of a nursing manager. Furthermore a thorough literature review was conducted and the data analysis brought forward known concepts of nursing management.

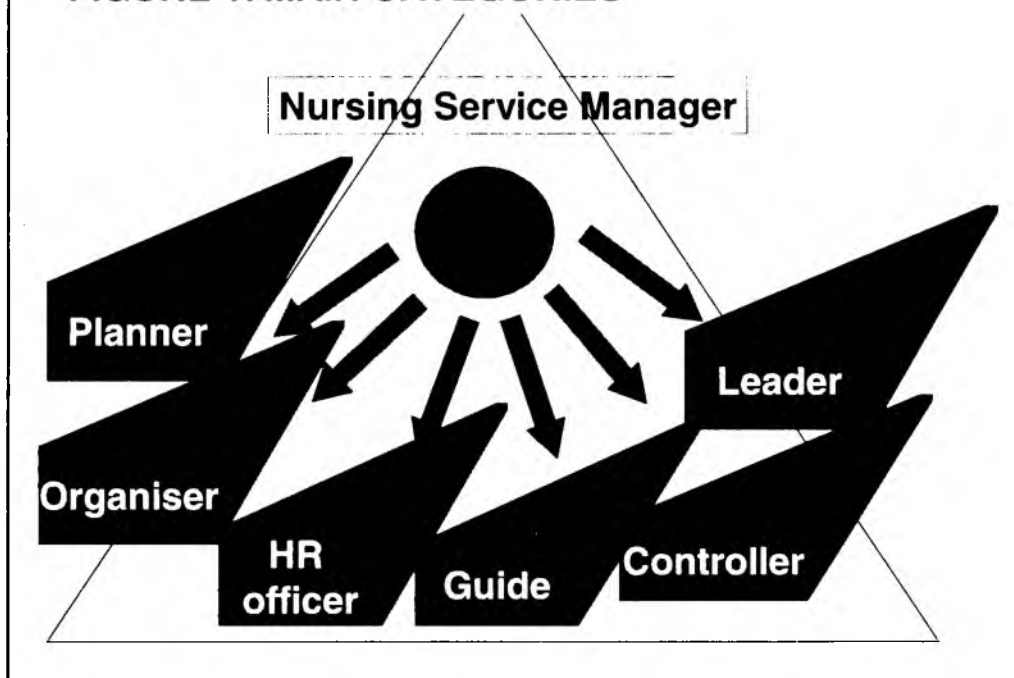
Transferability was established by research findings obtained from participants represented functional, middle and top level nurse management positions in health clinics and hospitals in South Africa. The conceptual framework arrived at was discussed by an expert group of managers for in-depth discussions of interpretations of research findings. They judged whether the findings could be applied in their own contexts and in their health care situations.

The establishment of an audit trail, enhanced the *dependability* of this study.

To enhance *confirmability*, the researcher established an audit trail, by importing the narrative sketches into a qualitative data-analysis programme, namely QSR NUD*IST 4.0. The data analysis is available in printed format. The raw data, the coded data and the researcher’s interpretations were scrutinized by a colleague as expert in qualitative data analysis. No major discrepancies were identified between the researcher and experts’ analysis of the data.

Meaning in context was arrived at because participants aired their views of their experiences in the nursing management practice. During the group discussions preceding the enquiry, the question stated in the study addressed their experience regarding their nursing service manager. On the other hand the group discussions covered the curricula on the role of the unit manager. The research project was not aimed at evaluating any outcomes related to the group discussion.

FIGURE 1: MAIN CATEGORIES



Narrative sketches were written repeatedly in different centres in South Africa until no new data emerged, data saturation took place.

Data analysis

The QSR NUD*IST program was used for the qualitative analysis (ordering) of data. The following steps according to the protocol of Tesch (in Creswell 1994:155) were followed by the researcher in the data analysis:

- The researcher read through all the sketches to form an idea of the profile of a nursing service manager;
- The researcher thought about the underlying meanings and wrote notes in the margin;
- All similar topics were clustered together under major topics;
- Coding was done;
- The most descriptive wordings for topics were turned into categories.

As the researcher followed the steps of the data analysis, a research assistant was of help in processing the data into the QSR NUD*IST program.

The researcher interpreted the results to elicit the meanings that emerged from the data. This enabled the researcher to identify and describe the characteristics of the nursing service manager from the point of view of participants. Main categories of management and leadership characteristics emerged from the data obtained from nursing service managers of which the leadership characteristic appeared to be the most prominent category. This category will not be discussed in this article. However, the main leadership category indicated that the characteristics needed for good interpersonal relationships, knowledge, motivation, participative management, guidance, acting as a change agent, conflict management and problem solving. Findings were supported by a literature review, which was done after the data collection.

Ethical measures

Strict ethical measures were adhered to during this research. Students attending the group discussions of health services management were asked to voluntarily participate in the project only after their group discussions were completed, so that participants did not feel intimidated to participate. Participants could withdraw in any stage of participation. Students were ensured of confidentiality and anonymity as well as of the benefits of the study. All students registered for the course will have access to the results of the study (DENOSA 1998:1-7).

Attributes contributing to

an effective nursing service manager

Participants expressed specific and clear elements that could enhance the role of the nursing service manager creating an effective workplace towards fulfilling institutional goals (figure 1). These elements were also an indication of what the needs of nursing service managers are in terms of in-service training needs.

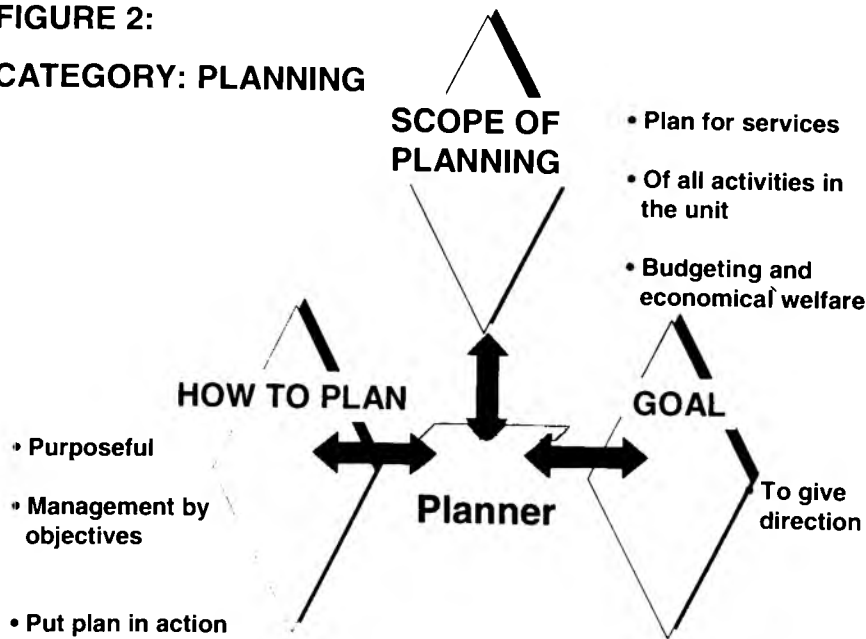
A planner

An informant wrote, "plan first of all" and commenced by stating, "planning is the first cornerstone of running a service". Higher-level managers spend more time in the planning function than lower level managers (Quible 2001:175). Other participants stated that the manager should "have attributes regarding good planning" and "knowledge and attributes about planning of work".

Participants highlighted the *scope of planning*, the *how to plan* and the *goal of planning* as a managerial tool (figure 2). The aspects outlined by members as important for the *scope of planning* are "for services", "of all activities in the unit" and through financial planning. Participants commented that "she try to economize and not to be wasteful" and "budget and promote economical welfare". The budget is based on the aims and objectives of the service (Muller 1998:228).

The *how of planning* was described as "purposeful", and through "management of objectives". A participant stated that "putting a plan into action by identifying problems and making decisions" is essential for planning effectively. Managers are generally responsible for ensuring that planning efforts are consistent with the organisation's vision statement, namely *how* the organization gets where it wants to go (Quible 2001:175). The *goal of planning* was identified by a participant as "to

FIGURE 2:
CATEGORY: PLANNING



plan work so as to give direction". The mission of an organization is the reason for the organisation's being (Quible 2001:175).

From the above it is clear that an effective nursing service manager should determine the goals of the organization and the means of achieving them.

An organiser

A participant viewed the manager as a "good organiser" and other comments of participants like "able to co-ordinate well", "well developed organising abilities", "organisational attributes", and "organisational qualities" outlined the managerial function of organising. The organizing function thus involves the development of an environment in which subordinates can be productive and efficient.

Muller (1998:133) states that organization is the orderly structuring of functions or responsibilities in order to ensure the smooth running of activities. Informants mainly indicated the *who/what, how* and *why* of the managerial function organizing (figure 3).

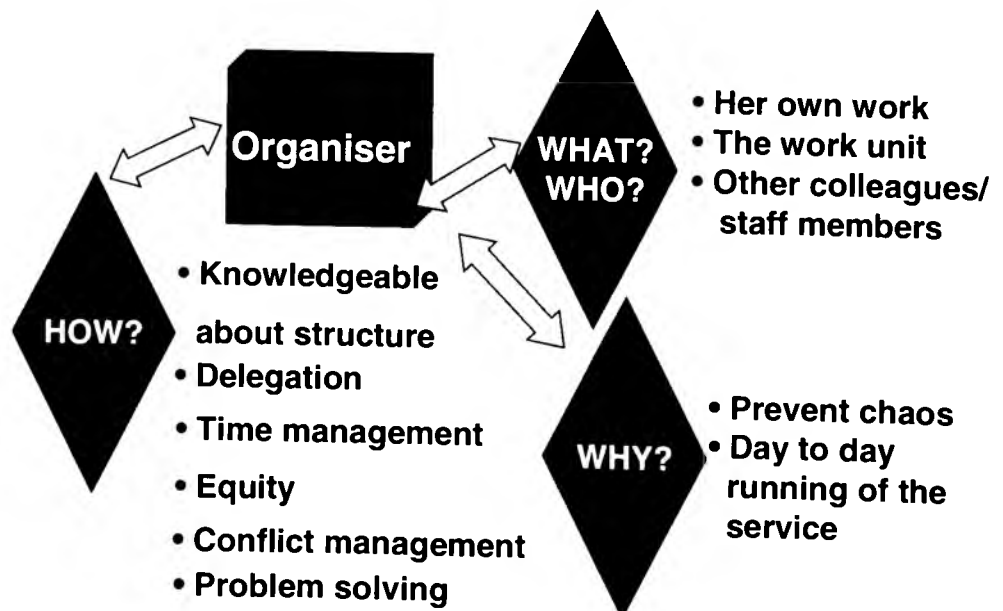
Participants indicated that an effective manager should know *who/what* to organise.

in order to achieve unity in goal achievement (Muller 1998:183).

Participants expressed that the four concepts of "knowledgeable about the organisational structure", "delegation", "time management", conflict management, problem solving and "equity" indicate the "*how*" of organising.

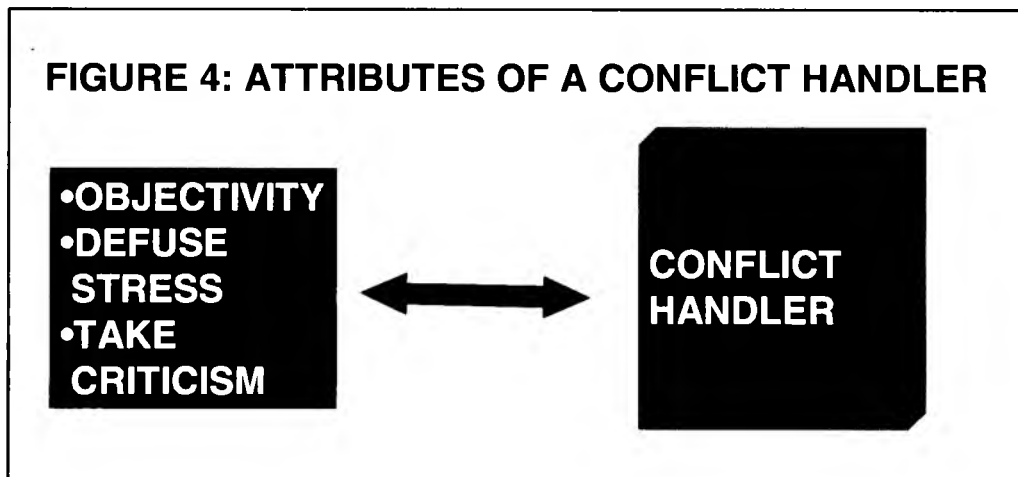
The characteristic of the manager, to be knowledgeable about the organisational structure, came to the fore in the suggestion of a participant that "effective utilization of resources" is essential.

FIGURE 3: CATEGORY: ORGANISING



They worded it that the manager should organise "her own work", "coordinate her work" and "should be organised". Members further indicated that the effective manager should have the characteristic to organise "the work unit" and "be able to co-ordinate all activities in the unit". An effective manager should "be able to organise staff effectively" as well as "other staff members and colleagues". This indicated that the manager should be able to organise her own and others work activities. The role of the manager in relation with other members of the multi-disciplinary team was underlined in the wording "she must be able to co-ordinate with other paramedical staff e.g. x-rays, laboratory staff, doctors and therapist". Coordination is a process to combine different activities

FIGURE 4: ATTRIBUTES OF A CONFLICT HANDLER



The concept of delegation was emphasized by participants who specifically stated that the obligation of the manager is to be able "to delegate to staff according to their scope of practice" and "not to give out orders and relax. It was further written, "she is to do a follow up on what she has delegated her subordinates on".

The concept of time management was highlighted by the phrases "complete her own duties on time", "be able to utilize time effectively" and "observant, to notice change in time to take corrective measures". A direct quote that supports the importance of the *concept time management* reads as follows: "In practice I found being a manager attending a lot of meetings, doing a lot of administrative work, did nothing for the morale and productivity of the unit". The nursing service manager should effectively plan and schedule work time to ensure that the most important work is completed and that sufficient time is left for unexpected emergencies that may occur (Booyens 1998:289).

The concept equity was highlighted by the comment "should give all individuals equal opportunities in everything, for example promotion, performing of tasks" and "no favoritism". An informant stated "favoritism should not be practiced because other employees would be left out". *Why* should the manager have characteristics to organise the work activities? Participants expressed the needs to "be able to organise the unit to prevent chaos" and "responsibility for the day to day

running of the service".

The nursing service manager should possess the characteristic to be able to handle conflict effectively (figure 4). Different strategies to manage and prevent conflict in the work situation were suggested by participants, as the following quotes indicate:

"must be able to handle conflict without taking anyone's side", (This strategy indicates objectivity on the part of the nursing service manager.) Stressful situations can lead to conflict and participants suggested the nursing service manager should be able to "defuse stressful situations before they become conflict situations", and "take criticism", "handle stress" and "develop the mind by being willing to learn from staff". The positive side of conflict was pointed out. A participant concluded that the manager should be "able to work with and direct different personalities effectively". Several measures such as increased self-awareness, regular vacations, and outside interests can assist the manager to lesson the effect of conflict and stressors in the workplace (Booyens 1998:149).

Informants added the following on the value of being a problem solver (figure 5) as a skill of an effective nursing service manager: "must be able to solve problems, which is based on knowledge and attributes".

Giving subordinates the opportunity to solve their own problems was emphasized. A participant stated: "Promote problem solving by subordinates, do not solve problems for them".

The attributes of being impartial and listening to subordinates during problem solving came to the fore. An informant wrote: "When ever there is a problem in a unit, she must not take sides. She has to listen to both parties when solving the problem."

The nursing service manager is seen as the helper in solving problems as highlighted in the following quotes: "she should be an assertive person but staff should be able to can come to her with their problems and concerns", and "be able to correct mistakes". Some participants indicated the option of the nursing manager to prevent problems in the service and stated: "anticipate problems or take action to prevent them", and "able to handle stress".

The nursing service manager is seen as the helper in solving problems as highlighted in the following quotes: "she should be an assertive person but staff should be able to can come to her with their problems and concerns", and "be able to correct mistakes".

Some participants indicated the option of the nursing manager to prevent problems in the service and stated: "anticipate problems or take action to prevent them", and "able to handle stress".

Human resource officer

The managerial concept of staffing was least addressed by participants (figure 6). A member in-

FIGURE 5: ATTRIBUTES OF A PROBLEM SOLVER

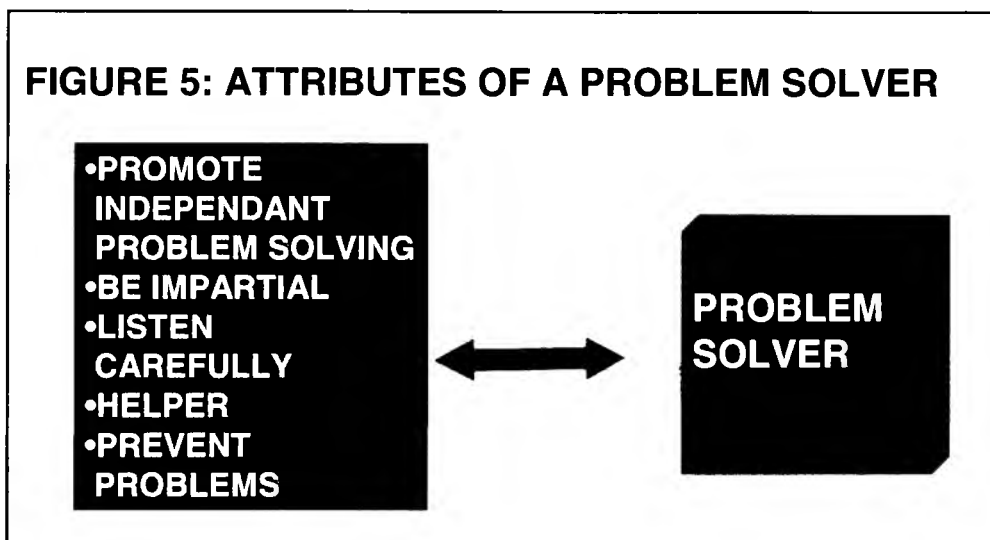
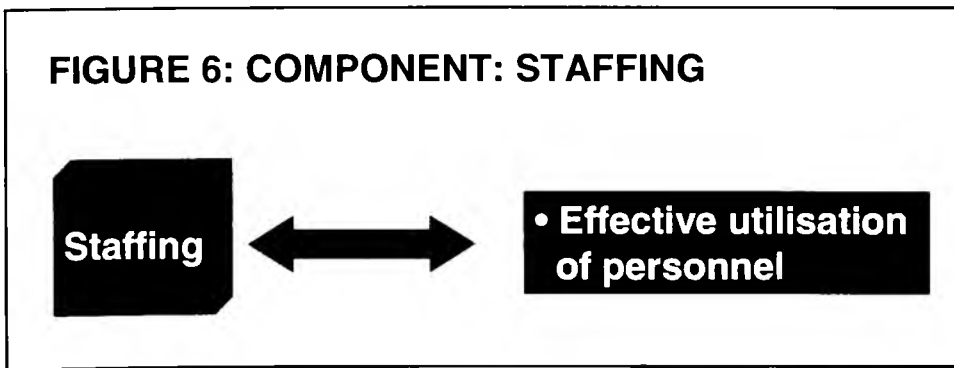


FIGURE 6: COMPONENT: STAFFING



ity to supervise”, “other than delegating she should be able to supervise” “budget orientated”, infection control attributes”. The manager as controller is thus described as a(n) supervisor, evaluator, infection controller, and cost container.

Participants described that for the nursing service manager to effectively run a health care service she/he should have the attributes to manage the *what, how and why* of

dicated the importance of “effective utilisation of personnel”. Seen against the current situation of migration of nurses it was interpreted that the participants viewed the role of the nursing manager as essential in utilization of existing staff rather than trying to address the difficult task of recruiting new staff members.

controlling the different activities in the service.

On what the manager should control informants stated “effective control of staff members and equipment”, “evaluate whether objectives of plans were met”. Control is a management activity whereby the manager checks whether the set objectives have been achieved (Muller 1998:134).

Director/guide

The nursing manager being a guide for and supporter of staff members was identified as an essential ingredient of other attributes of the nursing service manager (figure 7). Of the various responsibilities of managers, directing subordinates is likely the most demanding and time-consuming aspect of their jobs (Quible 2001:176). Participants wrote that the nursing service manager should “be able to guide and advise staff”, “should be able to guide and direct staff” and “should support staff in experiences they have”. A participant stated that the nursing service manager “should guide her/his staff in relation to their jobs”. This indicates a definite relationship between the nursing service manager being a guide and the managerial task of staffing.

From the data analysis it became apparent that *how* the manager should exercise control was rooted in the concepts of authority, discipline and being punctual.

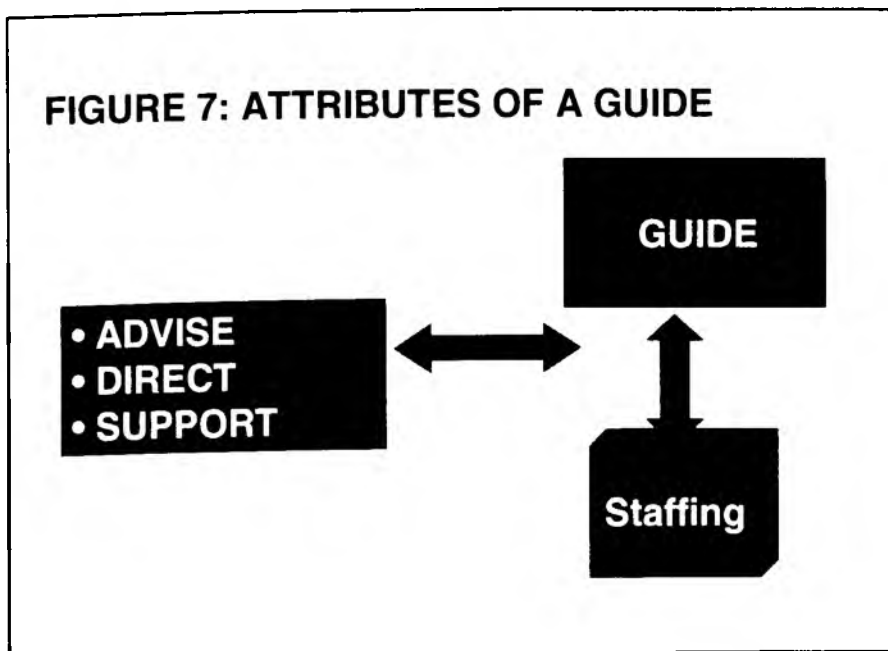
Regarding the concept “authority” a participant stated “she must be able to exercise authority and be able to know when to exercise authority and when not to”. Authority is the power given to the manager because of the top position she holds. Authority also comes from perceptions that she is ethical, judicious, fair, and trustworthy (Dienemann 1998:411-412).

Controller

A participant identified the characteristic of the nursing service manager as a controller (figure 8), as “to be able to apply and maintain control”. Participants outlined the following concepts related to a controller: “should be able to control” “abil-

The concept “discipline” came to the fore by participants who commented that the manager should “set rules and all must obey to them”, “apply and maintain discipline and control”, and “be able to take disciplinary steps”. A participant wrote, “she must be strict when needed, firm but friendly”. Another member stated, “live up to standards what is expected of a nurse-in-charge executive”. It should be remembered that standards of performance are not static but they should reflect changes in the profession and society (Dienemann 1998:17-18).

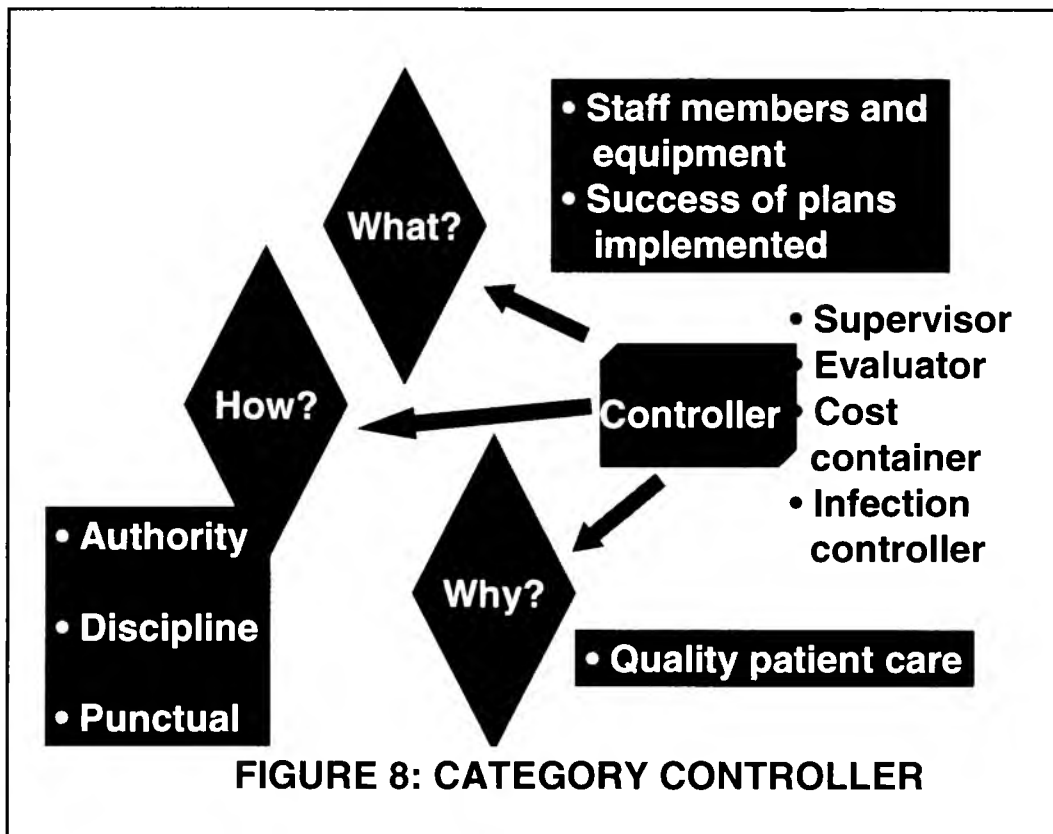
FIGURE 7: ATTRIBUTES OF A GUIDE



The characteristic of being punctual was highlighted by the following quotes: “responsibility that certain things are handed in on certain times”, “staff members should obtain feedback on a monthly or weekly basis with regard to their ward performances”.

The main reason (*why*) that the nursing service manager should be a controller of quality patient care was expressed in the following wording: “able to meet client’s needs”. This is the ultimate goal for providing quality nursing care.

Controlling is an ongoing process to compare present performances with pre-established performance standards. The nursing service manager should include the control actions of quality assurance, produc-



The attribute of openness was expressed by the quotes of “good public relation attributes”, “must be approachable by her subordinates at all times”, “be open for her colleagues”, “be a people person and be able to work with people and maintain good human relationships”, “must be approachable for the staff”. The attribute of trustworthiness was mentioned in a quote that stated: “should build and maintain a trusting relationship between her and other staff members”, and “trust staff enough when they perform their duties”

Being inviting was identified in the wording “be an extrovert”, “be friendly”, “outgoing and active in things like nursing societies”. A participant elaborated by stating “ must not be moody, staff members will feel uncomfortable to report aspects and she will loose a great amount of information and feedback”. Another informant stated “be supportive, so as to boost morale of personnel”.

tivity, disciplining, coaching and legal and ethical issues to ensure the actual outcomes that are consistent and congruent to planned outcomes (Naude, Meyer and Van Niekerk 2001:134-135).

Principles of empowering behavior were identified in the discussions of the characteristics of participative management, decision-making, problem solving and motivation. It could be concluded that the manager should play a significant input in empowering staff members in their work situation.

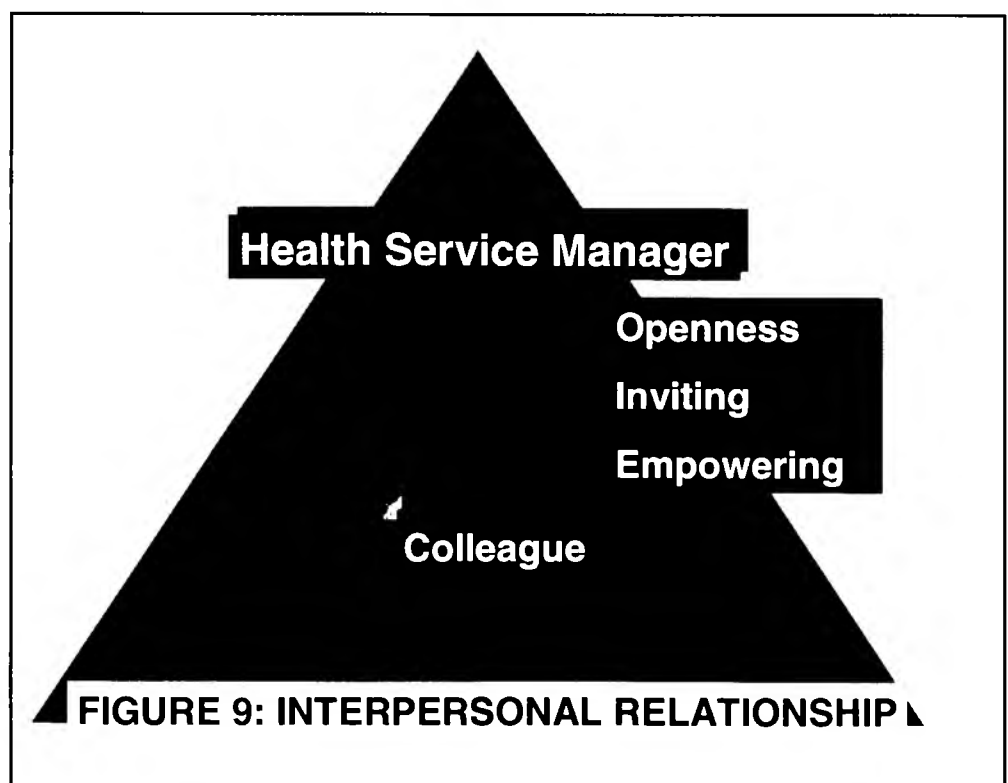
The conceptual framework

The results of the data analysis indicate the management characteristics of the nursing service manager followed by her/him being a leader with personal characteristics and other attributes (figure 10). The nursing service manager should promote good interpersonal relationships with colleagues, subordinates and patients through the attributes of openness and being inviting. Empowering behavior should be an essential characteristic of a nursing service manager.

Underlining processes (figure 9)

Three processes namely promoting openness inviting and empowering behavior underlined the final conceptual framework.

Various informants identified the importance of “good interpersonal attributes” and “interaction attributes”. The attributes of openness, and inviting emphasized the good interpersonal relationship of the nursing service manager that is needed with others.



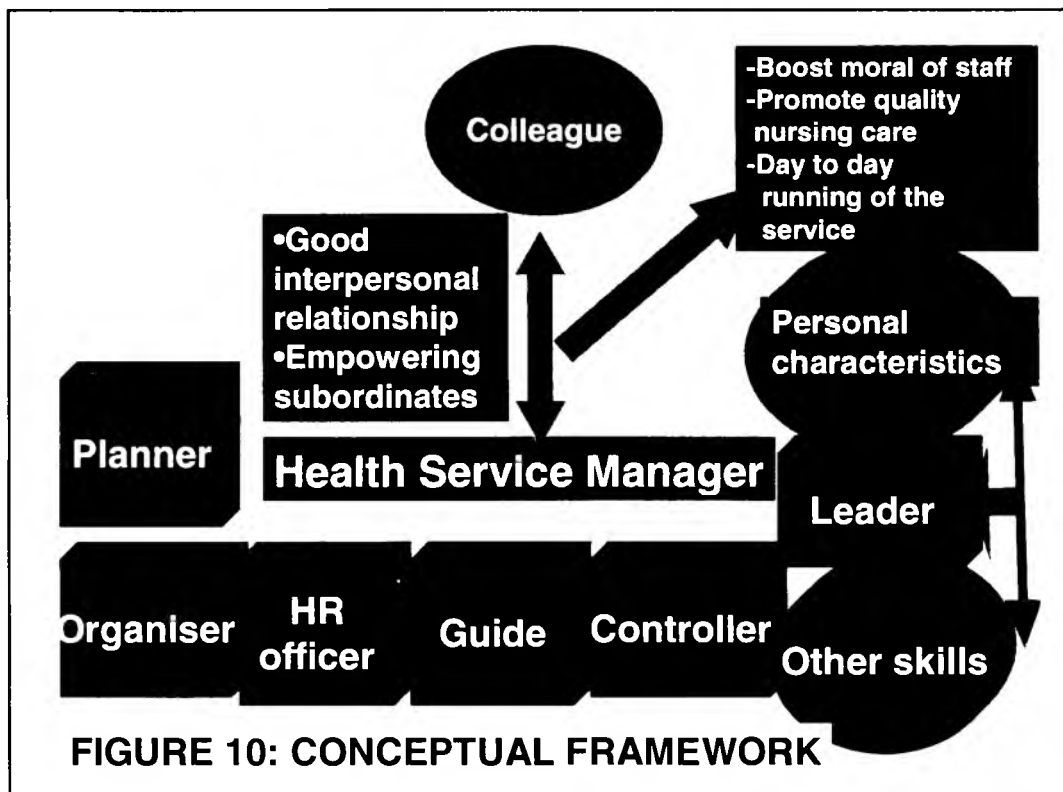


FIGURE 10: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual framework serves as a departure for drawing a profile of an effective nursing service manager in the context of health services in South Africa. The manager with an effective profile and adequate attributes will be able to boost the moral of staff and promote quality nursing care.

Recommendations

- The profile of the nursing service manager could be set out in the format of a self-evaluation instrument (table 1). Each nursing service manager could identify her own shortcomings. The profile of the nursing service manager could thus assist in determining important issues to be addressed in staff development programs for all nurse managers.
- The complete profile/conceptual framework could be used in the format of a selection tool in selection committees specifically for nursing service managers, focusing on essential managerial attributes needed in health services.

Limitations

There was a limitation to this study that should be noted. The fact that the participants did not elaborate on the concept of "staffing" should be further investigated.

Conclusion

Each nursing service manager in charge of a clinic or hospital setting should become actively aware of what characteristics she/he should demonstrate in her daily work performances in playing her role in addressing the health care needs of our country South Africa. A self-evaluation instrument is a useful tool to promote self-awareness among nursing service man-

agers, to play a more effective and empowering role in their work settings.

References

- BARBIE, E & MOUTON, J 2001:** The practice of social research. Cape Town: Oxford University.
- BOOYENS, SW 1998:** Leadership in Dimensions of nursing management, edited by Booyens, S.W. 2nd edition. Cape Town: Juta.
- BURNS, N & GROVE, SK 1993:** The practice in nursing research. 2nd edition. Philadelphia: Saunders.
- CRESWELL, JW 1994:** Research design. London: Sage Publications.

DAFT, RL 1999: Leadership. Theory and practice. Orlando: Dryden.

DEMOCRATIC NURSING ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH AFRICA 1998: Ethical standards for nurse researchers. Pretoria: DENOSA.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH 1997: National patients' rights charter. Pretoria: South Africa.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH 2001: Health summit 2001. Background papers: Quality of care, public-private interactions, HIV/AIDS, STI's and TB & Human resources.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICE AND ADMINISTRATION 1997: White paper on transforming public service delivery (Batho Pele White Paper). Government Gazette No 18340. Notice 1459 of 1997. Pretoria: South Africa.

DIENEMANN, JA 1998: Nursing administration. Managing patient care. 2nd edition. London: Appleton and Lange.

FLAREY, DL 1997: Management and leadership: is there a difference? Seminars for nurse managers, 5(1): 8-9.

GADOW, S 1996: Ethical narratives in practice. Nursing Science Quarterly, 9(1):8-9.

HORNBY, AS 1986: Oxford advanced learner's dictionary of current English. Great Britain: University of Oxford.

KERFOOT, K 1998: On leadership: management is taught, leadership is learned. Medsurg Nursing, June, 7(3):173-174.

MULLER, M 1998: Nursing dynamics. 2nd edition. Cape Town: Heinemann.

Table 1: A self-evaluation instrument with examples of attributes needed to be an effective nursing service manager

SCALE: 1=FULLY AGREE 2=AGREE 3=DISAGREE 4=FULLY DISAGREE

ATTRIBUTES	1	2	3	4
A PLANNER - I as the nursing service manager				
1. believe that planning is the first cornerstone of running a service effectively				
2. am involved in the planning of activities for the service				
3. focus on the economical welfare of the service				
4. am an active member of the budget committee of the institution				
5. believe planning should be purposeful				
6. run the service through management by objectives				
7. usually put a plan into action by first identifying problems and then making decisions				
8. ensure that planning efforts are consistent with the vision of the service				
9. plan work to give subordinates direction				
10. participate actively in setting the goals of the organization				
AN ORGANISER - I as the nursing service manager	1	2	3	4
11. am able to organize my own work activities effectively				
12. coordinate activities with other members of the multi-disciplinary team				
13. utilize resources effectively				
14. am knowledgeable of the organizational structure				
15. am obliged to delegate tasks to staff members according to their scope of practice				
16. am able to utilize time effectively				
17. am able to complete managerial tasks in time				
18. give all individuals equal opportunities in everything, for example promotion, performance of tasks				
19. am able to handle conflict without taking anyone's side				
20. defuse stressful situations before they become conflict situations				
21. am able to work with different personalities effectively				
22. give subordinates the opportunity to solve their own problems				
23. listen to both parties when solving a problem				
24. experience it that staff come to me with their problems and concerns				
25. am able to handle stress in my daily tasks				
A HUMAN RESOURCE OFFICER - I as the nursing service manager	1	2	3	4
26. utilize staff effectively				
27. promote harmony in the unit				
28. promote staff development opportunities in the institution				
29. am involved in active recruitment of nursing staff				
30. act as a motivator for retainment of staff				
AN ORGANISER - I as the nursing service manager	1	2	3	4
31. give support to staff members when needed				
32. am able to advice staff on important contemporary issues				
33. guide staff in regard to their job expectations				
A CONTROLLER - I as the nursing service manager	1	2	3	4
34. evaluate whether objectives of plans were met in the service				
35. am able to exercise authority over staff and equipment				
36. am in control of infection control in the institution				
37. set rules and all nursing staff obey them				
38. am strict and firm when needed				
39. life up to the expectations of subordinates				
40. am punctual when expecting that certain documents should be handed in on certain times				
41. ensure that staff members obtain feedback on a monthly basis with regard to their ward performances".				

NAUDE, M, MEYER, S & VAN NIEKERK, S 2001: The nursing unit manager. A comprehensive guide. Kwazulu-Natal: Heinemann.

QUIBLE, ZK 2001: Administrative office management. An introduction. 7th edition. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

SWANSBURG, RC 1996: Management and leadership for nurse managers. 2nd edition. Boston: Jones and Bartlett.

