Innovativeness, Risk Taking, Focusing on Opportunity Attitudes on Nurse Managers and Nurses·

Melek Kalkan, Hatice Odacı, and Hatice Epli Koç

Abstract—The aim of this study is to compare the innovativeness, risk taking, and focusing on opportunity of the nurse managers and nurses. The data are collected from nurse managers and nurses in Ondokuz Mayıs University, Faculty of Medicine Hospital and Karadeniz Technical University, Faculty of Medicine Hospital. The study sample consisted of 151 participants, 76 nurse managers (50.3%) and 75 nurses (49.7%). All participants have been assessed by Participant Information Form and Corporate Entrepreneurship Scale. In data analysis, independent t-test has applied. The results show that there are significant differences between nurse managers and nurses on innovativeness ($t = 2.42$, $p < 0.05$), risk taking ($t = 3.62$, $p < 0.01$), and focusing on opportunity ($t = 2.16$, $p < 0.05$). Consequently, it can be said that nurse managers have more innovativeness than nurses and tend to take more risks and focus more on opportunities.

Keywords—Focusing on Opportunity Attitudes, Innovativeness, Risk Taking, Nurse.

I. INTRODUCTION

HEALTH services are perceived to be more important than many other services because of their significance in human life. Naturally, health service workers have an indispensable role and responsibility in these services. The effectiveness and efficiency of nursing services that comprise the majority of health service workforce seem to be related to the effectiveness of nursing management.

Responsible for the planning, organization, supervision, and evaluation of nursing services, nurse managers have a strategic position [1]. Nurse managers have a role in change management, staff behavior management, and goal setting in health services. To be able to follow and apply innovations, identify changing needs, and initiate change, nurse managers need some characteristics [2, 3] that include innovativeness, risk taking, perceiving problems as opportunities, being opportunity oriented, initiating change, and entrepreneurship.

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Innovativeness is one of the most important characteristics of entrepreneurs [4, 5, 6]. Although the concepts of creativity and innovativeness are mostly used together, they are not the same thing. The difference between them is embodied in the difference between thinking of doing something and actually doing it. In this context, creativity may be defined as spending mental energy on new things, whereas innovativeness is doing and applying new things [7]. In innovativeness, new thoughts are used to produce new resources and to satisfy needs [8]. Emerging with change and improvement, innovativeness is closely related to mental processes, such as problem solving, constructive thinking, or invention [9]. "Initiating change" means offering people innovation with new thoughts, new methods, and new tools. Innovation behavior is the practical application of new ideas in an effective manner and in conjunction with the objectives of a health organization [10].

However, not every new innovation ends in success; sometimes, new things lead to problems. In this case, risk taking is the prerequisite for innovativeness [11]. Results of studies on the topic show that risk-taking individuals have higher entrepreneurship and leadership qualities [12, 13]. Risk taking is a necessary element for the desire to produce something and the success of individuals [14]. Seen from this perspective, it is important that a nurse manager who uses initiative within the organization encourages other employees to do the same, supports their decisions, and encourages them. In such an environment, individuals can openly and freely share their thoughts about how to improve things, develop creative solutions, be proactive, and take steps. At the same time, the ability to take risks is thought to make them more successful at seizing opportunities.

Although risk taking and focusing on opportunities may seem different, they are actually known to be related. Focusing constantly on opportunities may sometimes force entrepreneur managers to take calculated risks. However, not all innovations result in success; they may even lead to worse situations sometimes. In these circumstances, taking risks to some extent and seizing opportunities are almost like a prerequisite for innovativeness [15].

Employees with innovativeness, risk taking and focus on opportunities play a critical role in the change and development of organizations. Managers with these qualities are important to both private companies and public

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institutions. By using these qualities, managers can take calculated risks and produce creative and innovative solutions to problems, whereas their organizations can become change oriented and have room for development. However, organizational change cannot be achieved with the willingness, effort, and courage not only of the managers in the way of innovativeness but also of the junior staff [11].

The circumstances are similar in health services too. As changes occur worldwide in health care, nurses also need to keep up with these changes. They should follow innovations and adapt to the changing circumstances. Being open to innovations and producing new strategies is a must to be able to meet the demands of new nursing applications [9]. Studies have shown that orienting nurses to the right goals is related to the leadership qualities of nurse managers that include innovativeness, risk taking, and focusing on opportunities. These characteristics should therefore be supported and rewarded [16, 17, 18, 19]. However, an effective team service and a supportive leadership style is necessary for top quality health services [20, 21], which can be ensured by similar attitudes and characteristics in both nurse managers and nurses.

Starting from the theoretical framework previously mentioned, this study aims to compare nurse manager and nurses' innovativeness, risk taking, and focusing on opportunity attitudes. The study thus seeks the answer to the question: are there significant differences between nurse managers and nurses in terms of innovativeness, risk taking, and focusing on opportunity?

II. MATERIAL AND METHODS

A. Participants

The data are collected from nurse managers and nurses in Ondokuz Mayıs University, Faculty of Medicine Hospital and Karadeniz Technical University, Faculty of Medicine Hospital. The study sample consisted of 151 participants, 76 nurse managers (50.3%) and 75 nurses (49.7%). The participants ranged from 20 to 48 years old (32.65±6.51). 63.6% of the participants were married, and 36.4% of them were single.

B. Instruments

The instruments used in this study were described below. Corporate Entrepreneurship Scale: The scale was developed by Korkmazyürek, Tokat and Basım. It consists of three subscales—innovativeness, risk taking, and focusing on opportunity—with a total of 15 items. The Cronbach alpha internal consistency coefficient was .86 for innovativeness subscale, .79 for the risk-taking subscale, and .71 for the focusing-on-opportunity subscale. The construct validity of the scale was investigated through factor analysis. In the analysis of that investigation, three factors, accounting for 59.75% of the total variance was observed. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value of the scale was found as .88, Barlett's test was determined significantly ($p < 0.005$) [16].

Participant Information Form: Participants provided demographic information including age, marital status, work duration, and educational level.

C. Procedure

The data collection instruments were distributed to nurse managers and nurses in their workplaces. It took approximately 10 minutes to complete the questionnaires. In data analysis, t-test was applied by using the SPSS program, and $p < 0.05$ was accepted as a reference point to be statistically significant.

III. RESULTS

The t-test was applied to determine the significance differences between nurse managers and nurses in terms of innovativeness, risk taking, and focusing on opportunity (Table 1).

TABLE I
COMPARISONS OF INOVATIVENESS, RISK TAKING AND FOCUSING ON OPPORTUNITY SCORES BETWEEN NURSE MANAGERS AND NURSES

Variable		Mean	t
Innovativeness	Nurse managers (N= 76)	27.74±4.17	2.42 p<0.05
	Nurses (N= 75)	26.08±4.24	
Risk Taking	Nurse managers (N= 76)	24.12±4.33	3.62 p<0.01
	Nurses (N= 75)	21.69±3.89	
Focusing on opportunity	Nurse managers (N= 76)	14.74±4.05	2.16 p<0.05
	Nurses (N= 75)	13.41±3.45	

In the study, it was determined that innovativeness, risk taking, and focusing on opportunity levels vary significantly between nurse managers and nurses. The results showed that nurse managers demonstrated significantly more innovativeness ($t = 2.42$, $p < 0.05$), risk taking ($t = 3.62$, $p < 0.01$), and focusing on opportunity ($t = 2.16$, $p < 0.05$) than nurses did.

IV. DISCUSSION

In this study, nurse manager and nurses' innovativeness, risk taking, and focusing on opportunity attitudes were compared. To this end, nurse managers and nurses working at the chosen university hospitals were included in the study. The findings have shown that nurse managers have meaningfully higher innovativeness, risk taking, and focusing on opportunity attitudes than nurses. Similar results were obtained in a study by Korkmazyürek, Tokat and Basım conducted on managers and other employees in the public sector, and it was found that managers had higher innovativeness and risk-taking levels than other workers [16].

It may be thought that having more authority than nurses increases nurse managers' innovativeness attitudes that include the formation of new thoughts and resources as well

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as creating change. It is obvious that nurses with less authority define themselves as less innovative. This is in line with the thought of Daft (2005) that "as authority increases, so does an individual's power to initiate change and innovate" [22] (Qtd. in Korkmazyürek, Tokat & Basım 2008). Another reason for higher innovativeness attitude in nurse managers may be that university hospitals are, in essence, education and research hospitals, are based on specialization, and require critical questioning and creative thinking. Similarly, the tendency for risk taking is also higher in nurse managers than in nurses. University hospitals are not managed in a traditional and centralized way. Such a view encourages nurse managers to support different opinions of other workers and thus take risks. Finally, the study showed that nurse managers have a higher focus on opportunities than nurses. This may be attributed to the fact that the job description of nurse managers is not as specific as other nurses, and this uncertainty may be perceived as an opportunity to take action.

In health services where threats and problems are many, creative thinking is necessary to see opportunities and find valid answers. Nurses who think creatively do not stay limited by traditional methods. The complexities of the nursing profession require nurses to have strong creative problem-solving skills [23, 24]. Nursing students at undergraduate and graduate levels can be offered extensive coursework in leadership, communication, conflict resolution, and decision-making [25]. Educators have a responsibility here. They need to include in their syllabi activities to support creative thinking and problem solving through theoretical and practical activities. It is important to offer scenarios to the students to encourage them to use their creative-thinking skills encourage and reward students who display examples of creative thinking, and use creativity techniques such as brainstorming. Also, educator attitudes that discourage students and make them feel insecure need to be abandoned, along with all destructive criticism, apathy, and attitudes that suppress autonomy. To offer psychological help to nursing students, goals to increase their self-esteem, self-efficacy, and self-confidence levels need to be identified. Psychological help for nurses should take into consideration that sometimes individuals stay stuck on past problems and can therefore not see or focus on present opportunities. Therefore, completing past "unfinished situations" may facilitate focusing on opportunities and reinforce creativity and spontaneity.

Nurse managers have a critical role in encouraging nurses to be innovative and to take risks and focus on opportunities. To begin with, a nurse manager who trusts other nurses to perform their tasks skillfully does not refrain from handing authority to others. In turn, nurses who have more authority may become a part of innovations and even start changes themselves [26]. Needless to say, this new situation will not be without its risks. However, for nurses to be creative and innovative risk takers, nurse managers also need to take risks [27]. In some situations, nurse managers may have an obstructive attitude toward nurses, which can be explained with the following psychological variables: fear of losing control, believing that no one else can perform as well as oneself, and perfectionism. Such attitudes may hold nurse managers back from encouraging or supporting nurses. Also, people with an intense feeling of deficiency need circumstances that will make them feel important. What worries them is not ignorance in other people but knowledge and the possibility that they will outperform them. The belief that other people's high performance will reveal their deficiencies makes them avert new and creative thoughts within the organization. Psychological support may be provided to nurse managers with these characteristics to help them cope with their personal problems.

Effective and efficient running of work is related to having a healthy communication between workers. Communication skills training, including listening, speaking, and understanding skills may be offered to nurses and nurse managers to create a peaceful and calm work environment where employees can express their thoughts and behave without fear, embarrassment, or worry. Additionally, training in cooperation skills and conflict resolution will also create a healthy work environment. In a study conducted in health centers, reported on the importance of managers' innovativeness, cooperation, commitment, autonomy, resource building, and entrepreneurship qualities [28, 29, 30, 31].

The study has some limitations. The sample being drawn from a university hospital makes it impossible to generalize the results to other public and private hospitals. Future studies may include nurses and nurse managers from public and private hospitals for more reliable results. Also, more detailed information may be gathered in the future by taking into consideration how junior workers perceive their seniors and vice versa, rather than only focusing on the self-evaluation of participants.

Consequently, it can be said that nurse managers have more innovativeness than nurses and tend to take more risks and focus more on opportunities.

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