

The relationship between the knowledge management infrastructure and processes, managerial competence of nurse managers, and job performance of nursing staff in Kosovo

Keywords: Knowledge Management; Managerial Competence; Job Performance; Knowledge-Based View; Quantitative Study.

Abstract

Introduction: Nursing staff are the key to patient care, yet Kosovo's public healthcare system continues to face persistent challenges, including underdeveloped knowledge management systems and limited managerial support, which hamper nursing performance. This doctoral study explores the intricate relationships between these phenomena across public healthcare system. The study addresses a critical empirical gap in a transitional healthcare context. The Knowledge-Based View, Dynamic Capabilities Theory, Nursing Theory, and Organizational Capability Theory served as its theoretical frameworks.

Methods: A multi-stage stratified sample of 987 nurses, and nurse heads, and nurse directors was collected across primary, secondary, and tertiary care. Four validated instruments measured knowledge management processes, knowledge management infrastructure, managerial competence, and job performance. Data were analysed in STATA 17 using descriptive statistics, reliability tests, regression diagnostics, multiple regressions, and care-level-specific moderation models. Participants were licensed nurses aged 22–65 employed in Kosovo's public healthcare system.

Results: Main-effects analyses showed that among nurses, knowledge management infrastructure was the strongest predictor of performance in primary and secondary care, while knowledge management processes were significant only in secondary care. At the dimension level, information technology infrastructure, knowledge-sharing structures, and knowledge identification process consistently contributed nursing performance, namely its dimensions of task performance and conscientiousness.

Among nurse managers, knowledge management processes were significantly associated with lower performance only at the primary care level. At the dimensional level, knowledge measurement emerged as the strongest predictor of cooperation and contextual performance, while knowledge management infrastructure emerged as an insignificant predictor.

Moderation analyses revealed that both the composite and specific dimensions of managerial competence, particularly leadership, staff development, and financial management, amplified the relationship between knowledge management processes and job performance for nurses exclusively in tertiary care. Conversely, among nurse managers, their managerial competence and dimensions of communication, leadership, and staff development weakened the relationship between knowledge management processes and job performance at the same healthcare level.

For the relationship between knowledge management infrastructure and job performance of nurse managers, managerial competence and its dimensions of Staff Development, Planning & Organization, and Problem-Solving & Decision-Making strengthened performance in primary care but weakened it in secondary care through leadership, staff development, and problem-solving and decision-making dimensions. Distinctively, no significant moderation effects were observed for nurses in the relationship between knowledge management infrastructure and job performance.

Discussion and conclusion: The findings demonstrate that knowledge management plays a pivotal role in strengthening nursing performance across Kosovo's public healthcare institutions. Yet, its effectiveness is highly dependent on care-level context, work title, and the managerial competence of nurse managers. The managerial competence of nurse managers acts as a multiplicative, context and dimension-specific moderator of knowledge management effectiveness. Hence, strengthening specific knowledge management (sub) components, improving knowledge-sharing cultures, and developing targeted managerial competencies emerge as critical strategies for enhancing performance within resource-constrained, transitional healthcare systems.