

**University of Southern Queensland**



***Exploring Nurses' Views on Effective  
Leadership in Iraq:  
Developing a Framework for Professional  
Nursing Leadership Education***

A Dissertation submitted by

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## **ABSTRACT**

The healthcare services in Iraq currently face many challenges. The most noted is the lack of effective nursing leaders to meet the growing needs of the healthcare services. Effective nursing leadership is critical to the healthcare system, affecting work performance, quality of care and staff satisfaction. The literature suggests that nursing leaders in Iraq are not adequately trained to provide leadership to improve the nursing profession and have limited involvement in decision-making.

The main aim of this study is to explore the views of nurses on what they believe constitutes effective leadership in Iraq. These views are used to inform the development of an effective framework for nursing leadership education. A mixed methods approach is employed involving a qualitative Phase (20 semi-structured interviews of senior nurses) followed by a quantitative Phase (survey to 210 ward nurses). The sample of nurses came from two large general hospitals in Iraq.

The study results indicated that effective nurse leaders need to have a set of characteristics and high personal qualities. Moreover, the results indicated that there were factors that influence the performance, effective leadership behaviour, and professional learning of nurse leader. Test results show that there were significant differences in views of the nurses toward effective leadership behaviour and professional learning of the nurse leader when level of education, gender, and work experience were considered. The qualitative data was thematically analysed and used to develop questions for the survey. Descriptive statistics were used to analyse and interpret the quantitative data.

This research concludes that there are three considerations that need to be taken into account for effective nursing leadership. First, key characteristics and a set of essential personal qualities are required for an effective nurse leader. Second, nurse leader performance is affected by professional development and the recognition of nursing as a well-respected profession. Third, personal and motivational behaviours of nurse leaders influence other nurses to become leaders'.

The findings from this study have particular significance for the Iraqi context. Lack of previous research and knowledge of nursing leadership education in Iraq makes this study significant as it provides empirical evidence regarding effective leadership styles suggests new strategies to improve healthcare policy and provides a framework for professional nursing leadership education.

## **CERTIFICATION OF DISSERTATION**

I certify that the ideas, findings, analyses, and conclusions reported in this dissertation are entirely my own effort, except where otherwise acknowledged. I also certify that the work is original and has not been previously submitted for any other award, except where otherwise acknowledged.

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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS**

HN -	Head Nurse
IENLF -	Iraq Effective Nursing Leadership Framework
IMOH -	Iraq Ministry of Health
INS -	Interview Nursing Staff
NUM -	Nursing Unit Manager
SWN -	Survey of Ward Nurses
WHO -	World Health Organisation
WN -	Ward Nurse

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