

Breaking Barriers: Nurse Managers Leading a Multigenerational Team

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BACKGROUND & PURPOSE

- Currently, five generations occupy the nursing workforce
- Each generation brings distinct values and characteristics to the workplace
- Such diversity can enrich a workforce with shared attributes and contributions or cause discord with differences that complicate the workplace
- Nurse leaders have a key role in integrating these groups into harmonious teams
- Understanding the advantages and challenges nurse leaders face in managing a multigenerational workforce is an essential first step in developing focused strategies to promote strong nursing teams

Purpose: To provide a first-hand account into understanding nurse leader perceptions and experiences managing a multigenerational workforce

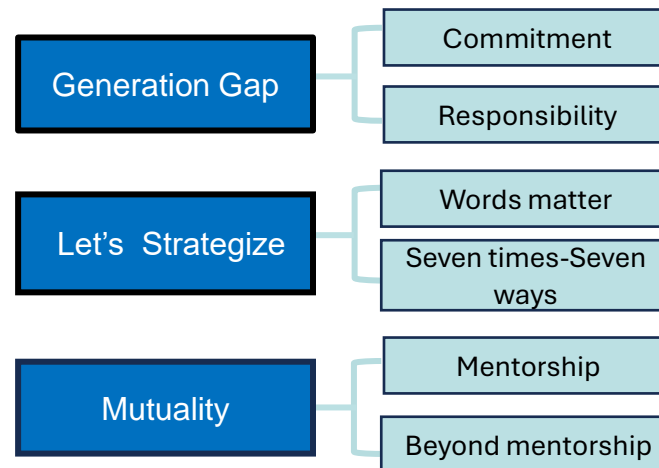
DESIGN & METHODS

- A descriptive qualitative design with focus group methodology framed this IRB exempt, multi-site study
- Purposive sampling was used to recruit three focus groups at the nurse manager level
- Focus groups were assigned by generation
- Face-to-face semi-structured interviews were video recorded using seven open-ended questions centered on nurse managers' perceptions and experiences leading a multigenerational nursing workforce
- Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data

FINDINGS

- The sample included 16 nurse managers (millennial: n=8, Generation X: n=5, baby boomers: n=3)
- Most of the sample identified as white (60%) females (87.5%)
- The average worked experience was 19-years with a 9-year average of time worked as a nurse leader
- The majority held a Masters degree or higher (93.7%)

Three themes and six subthemes were identified:



RESULTS

- Results confirmed that a **generation gap** exists within this nursing workforce, revealing itself through generational behaviors focused on nurses' *commitment* to the profession and *responsibility* to the job.
- Managers **strategized** different methods of communication for their multigenerational teams, including methods such as *Seven times, seven ways* and *words matter*.
- Translated through *mentorship*, different generations leverage each other's strengths as **mutuality** described the support shown between generations.

DISCUSSION & IMPLICATIONS

Few studies have explored nurse leaders' perceptions and experiences managing a multigenerational workforce. This study showed that generational differences can be harnessed in a positive way using strategies to build cohesive and productive teams. Best practices should include recruiting across generations, fostering intergenerational mentorship, and sharing communication strategies.

REFERENCES

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