Review Article

Crisis leadership during the pandemic of COVID-19: various models of leadership styles and their impacts on response to the crisis

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Abstract:

The global outbreak of COVID-19 has had a substantial and adverse impact on the healthcare systems of a majority of nations. To address the epidemic, attention was directed towards various leadership styles. The objective of this specific study was to perform a literature review on the various forms of leadership employed during the outbreak. The prevalence of utilizing effective leadership as a more advanced manifestation of the transformational leadership style was observed. However, extensive research has been carried out on various other subjects pertaining to leadership, including the significance of proficient communication. The presence of effective crisis leadership is crucial for effectively addressing the challenges posed by the pandemic and facilitating community resilience in the aftermath.

Keywords: COVID-19; pandemic; crisis; leadership; crisis leadership.

Further, we analyzed the possible reasons for not integrating GI injury scores into SOFA and discussed how these reasons are no longer valid. We provided the rationale for including the GI injury score in the SOFA score. Thus, we emphasized that a scoring system that assesses gastrointestinal dysfunction is mandatory and should be incorporated into the widely used SOFA score to predict better the mortality of critically ill patients and other advantages.

1. Introduction

In reaction to COVID-19's widespread spread, the WHO declared a pandemic on March 11, 2020. The pathogen's global spread prompted the declaration (World Health Organization, 2020). The virus's fast multiplication threatens world health. Worldometers (2020) reports 580,000 deaths from 215 nations as of July 15. The largest death rate is among the elderly and weak demographic, according to Onder et al. (2020) and Shams et al. Ferguson et al. (2020) predict that COVID-19 case fatality rates range from 0.2% for people under 60 to 9.3% for those over 80.

The global COVID-19 pandemic has put individuals, institutions, and communities in an unprecedented situation (Allam et al., 2022). In this situation, leaders must guide, support, and inspire their employees and organizations. Leadership amid crises is crucial to overcoming the epidemic and ensuring the success of businesses and individuals (Dale Oen et al., 2022).

2. Effective Leadership Styles During a Pandemic:

Different leadership styles may work better in emergencies like pandemics. However, some leadership styles work well during uncertainty and change (Garretsen et al., 2022). The COVID-19 pandemic has created an extraordinary climate that has shaped governmental and private sector leadership (McLeod and Dulsky, 2021; Garrettsen et al., 2022). According to Yukl et al. (2002), effective leadership requires careful context adjustment. They argue that leadership success depends on adapting to key environmental circumstances (Osborn et al., 2002). A study of firm executives' crisis leadership during the COVID-19 epidemic examined "leadership in adversity" amid tough times. We examined their attitude to the situation. Hannah et al. (2009) define an extreme context as a situation where one or more severe events are occurring or expected to occur, perhaps beyond the organization's control. Organization members can suffer severe and intolerable bodily, psychological, and material harm immediately or in close proximity to these events. An extreme context is a situation where one or more extreme events are occurring or expected, potentially beyond the organization's control, causing severe and undesirable repercussions. An extreme environment is one where one or more extreme events are happening or likely to happen soon. These events may exceed the organization's control and have a widespread negative impact (Hannah et al., 2009).

3. Transformational Leadership:

Transformational leadership motivates and empowers team members to maximize their potential. The above leadership style can build trust, inspire team members, and foster a feeling of purpose and dedication during a pandemic (Steinmann et al., 2018). Performance in transformative leadership has been widely studied by Advani and Abbas (2015). A large section of the public supports leadership, which is gaining popularity in modern culture. It is commonly agreed that transformational leadership is the best model for today's dynamic environment and rapid technological advances (Markusson et al., 2012). Individual development is the focus of transformational leadership. Deschamps et al. (2016) describe "transformational leadership" as the ability to change and transform those under one's influence. Many studies have found that transformative leadership improves employee performance (Al-Amin, 2017). Literature shows that organizational commitment moderates the relationship between transformative leadership and employee performance (Almutairi, 2016). Thus, staff are essential to productivity. Thus, leaders must foster company loyalty (Laily, 2017).

4. Transactional Leadership:

Transactional leadership emphasizes using rewards and penalties to motivate team members. In a pandemic, this leadership style can set clear expectations and incentives that encourage organisational goals (Bass & Riggio, 2005). Transactional leadership focuses on maintaining the status quo rather than making changes. This leadership style praises or chastises followers based on their performance (Odumeru & Ogbonna, 2013). An organization's leadership's responsiveness to internal events may be due to a structured system of incentives and penalties. Transactional leaders closely watch employees. This allows leaders to quickly correct mistakes. Active management helps leaders comprehend their employees' struggles, according to Prasad and Junni (2016). Promote initiative-taking to increase the likelihood of meeting organizational goals and standards.

5. Servant Leadership:

Servant leadership focuses on meeting team members' needs and helping them succeed. In a pandemic, the above leadership style can build trust, encourage teamwork, and instill a sense of responsibility (Sendjaya et al., 2020). Through servant leadership, the healthcare sector can benefit greatly. Second Life's qualities, attributes, and basic behaviours are covered on this page. Jesus Christ demonstrated servant leadership by questioning the traditional leadership hierarchy, which places the leader at the top. Servant leadership promotes transparency, empowerment, openness, and fair responsibility in the workplace. A servant leader is sincere, open, responsible, and willing to learn. Servant leaders value listening, developing, and encouraging others, as well as teamwork and personal relationships. A desire to learn is another servant leader trait. The COVID-19 pandemic story of a staff nurse who became a servant leader is a striking example of servant leadership in patient care and professional teamwork. The above story illustrates servant leadership in healthcare (Simon et al., 2022).

According to Robert Greenleaf, Second Life is a lifestyle based on serving people rather than controlling them. Second Life was not designed for management (Lapointe & Vandenberghe, 2018). Greenleaf's philosophy emphasizes putting others' needs before one's own. Literature uses "human sanctity" (Greenleaf, 1977). Servant leadership (SL) emphasizes the leader's ethics and commitment to community well-being, unlike other leadership styles.

Many more servant leadership theories are based on Greenleaf's work. Analyzing the leader's qualities yields these concepts. Spears (1995) extended prior research to identify eleven servant leadership traits. SL was traditionally considered a philosophical construct rather than a set of verifiable structures. Barbuto and Wheeler (2002) used Greenleaf and Spears' study.

6. Effective Leadership Strategies During the Pandemic:

Leaders can use a variety of methods to help their teams and companies during a pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic is unprecedented and difficult in the current macroenvironment. Ahern and Loh (2020) say the COVID-19 pandemic is a global health calamity like 1918's Spanish influenza. The aforementioned scholars researched this information. Since the World Health Organization declared a global pandemic a year ago, the coronavirus has killed nearly 2.5 million people (Connor, 2021).

7. Effective Communication:

In a pandemic, effective communication builds trust, clarity, and a shared purpose (Reddy et al., 2020). Leaders must communicate

with their teams and organizations regularly to alert them of the problem, provide safety advice, and update them on the organization's response (Vaughan and Tinker, 2009).

Risk and hazard communication, which raises awareness of COVID-19's health concerns, is crucial to protecting vulnerable people. Pandemic strategies must include how living situations, cultural beliefs, and prior risk experiences affect decision-making. The principles of informational, instructive, and social marketing communication. Advances in technology and media often repeat themes. Lack of cultural, economic, psychological, and medical understanding can compromise communication at multiple levels. A familiarity gap may affect medical results. We covered the essentials of pandemic communication. Healthcare professionals, especially physicians, must learn and use many communication styles to build therapeutic rapport with COVID-19 patients. Long-term relationships are essential. An effective communication network is crucial to meeting people's psychological requirements during a pandemic. In the context of a global health crisis, such as a pandemic, poor communication may create information gaps among already disadvantaged people, making it harder to fight the COVID-19 pandemic (Reddy & Gupta, 2020).

Providing accurate information to the public is the best way to prevent COVID-19 spread. During the COVID-19 pandemic, knowledge abounds, creating a "infodemic." A COVID-19 information portal is needed since a lot of false information is spread during a pandemic. India has a dedicated and integrated COVID-19 pandemic webpage, a national and state hotline number, an authentic email address, and a government social media presence on WhatsApp, Twitter, Facebook, New Desk Telegram, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube. The Indian government created the Aarogya Setu mobile app to engage consumers and notify them on COVID-19 pandemic risks, guidelines, and alerts. Since its name means "health bridge," the Indian government funded its development (Reddy & Gupta, 2020).

8. Flexibility and Adaptability:

Leaders must be able to adapt their strategies and plans quickly during a pandemic. Effective leaders are open to feedback, adaptable, and flexible in their problem-solving, according to Heifetz and Linsky (2002).

People often resist change (Dent & Goldberg, 1999; Worley et al., 1996) and react conventionally to unusual and confusing issues. Thus, in unfamiliar situations, people use familiar methods. Leaders must overcome crisis situations' unfamiliarity and discomfort. Despite their sudden onset, crises are crucial to organisations and society (Celik, 2016). In times of disruption, leaders might adapt their approaches and behaviours based on past experiences. People can lessen the disruption and reestablish a sense of normalcy or stability (Celik et al., 2016; Hunt et al., 2009; Shufutinsky, 2020a). Companies, organizations, communities, and society must have leaders with honesty, integrity, sincerity, and impactful care during pandemics and related disasters. Leaders must give effective care to corporations, agencies, communities, and society during pandemics and other calamities. However, a

global pandemic like COVID-19 illustrates complex systems' complexities and provides an ideal environment for their evolution. Thus, organizational leaders must assume more duties. Organizational leaders must understand different leadership styles and how to apply them in the volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) context of pandemics to improve organization functioning, efficacy, longevity, and constituents. Organizational leaders must comprehend leadership styles' importance. Unfortunately, bad leadership by executives and managers in firms and teams might worsen viral pandemics (Shufutinsky et al., 2020a). During pandemics, firms and their employees are especially vulnerable to poor leadership. Lack of intervention, toxicity, abuse, detachment, dishonesty, coercion, narcissism, and destructiveness in leadership styles have been linked to lower performance, workplace deviance, stress, job satisfaction, engagement, and employee commitment. Dark leadership habits can hurt enterprises in general, but they're especially bad during large-scale epidemics that affect people and firms. Thus, in pandemic emergencies, firms across sectors must effectively use a variety of leadership styles and traits. This discussion will focus on Cavanaugh. (2018) Doe & Pumplampu Mariner et al. (2009) (Doe und Pumplampu, 2018)

9. Empathy and Compassion:

A pandemic can cause team members to struggle and stress out (Singer et al., 2020). Frontline medical staff are under extreme stress due to the COVID-19 pandemic (Tannenbaum et al., 2021). Due to the above obstacles, teamwork has become more important and harder to achieve. Organic cooperation in healthcare facilities worldwide is promising, as shown by several examples (Tannenbaum et al., 2021). These examples show people working together despite unfavourable conditions during a crisis. Crisis can motivate cooperation. They are willing to put aside past problems and work together to solve a collective problem (Tannenbaum et al., 2021). Even with a stated objective to collaborate, crisis stress makes it difficult for organizations to maintain coordinated performance over time. Teamwork is crucial (Dietz et al., 2017; Adams et al., 2020).

10. Effective Leadership Practices During a Pandemic:

Harrington et al. (2021) argue that leaders can help their teams and companies during a pandemic beyond leadership styles and approaches.The global COVID-19 epidemic has made healthcare communication unpredictable and ambiguous (Eldridge et al., 2020). Lack of clear recommendations in the developing awareness of safe caring activities during the COVID-19 pandemic has created urgency (Simonovich et al., 2021). This issue must be resolved quickly. The sense of urgency has forced companies to quickly adapt their operational strategies and processes to adopt capacity-building and safe care and communication efforts. The current sense of urgency has forced companies to prioritize tactics that improve their capabilities and promote effective communication (Simonovich et al., 2021). Crisis management requires timely, strategic, and unambiguous communication (Edmonson et al., 2016; Eldridge et al., 2020). Healthcare teams must communicate well to function well (Edmonson et al., 2016).

11. Lead by Example:

Leaders must model desired behaviours and attitudes for their teams during a pandemic, according to Bolt et al. (2021). The above acts include following safety rules, having a positive outlook, and being committed to the institution's goals (Waldrop et al., 2020).

Upheaval, disquietude, and complexity characterize our historical age. Revolutionary leaders must be able to present a compelling vision that inspires and attracts their audience. This ideology's followers should understand its ability to remind them of their ultimate goal and group goal, which is crucial for overcoming obstacles. Leaders must meet the requirements of their communities and each group member. Leaders may use the pandemic to alter their teams and companies and build trust. Leadership by example must always be remembered (The International Association of Chiefs of Police, 2020).

12. Prioritizing the Well-being of Team Members:

In times of a pandemic, it is imperative for leaders to prioritize the welfare of their team members. According to Søvold et al. (2021), it is imperative for leaders to furnish team members with the necessary resources and assistance to uphold their physical and emotional well-being. This includes facilitating access to healthcare services, mental health support, and any other resources that may be required.

The COVID-19 pandemic, which originated in late 2019, has had significant implications for global health systems. On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization officially declared it a global pandemic. Since then, many countries have faced challenges in maintaining the quality of healthcare services due to overwhelming demands and limited capacity and resources (Søvold et al., 2021). This has been a challenge for these systems in maintaining the provision of high-quality care. Despite the decline in infection rates across various regions globally and the ongoing rapid distribution of vaccines at the time of writing this article, it is anticipated that health systems will continue to encounter persistent challenges. This is primarily due to the emergence of a secondary pandemic of comparable severity, namely the mental health crisis (Boursier et al., 2020). The aforementioned issues are compounded by the advent of novel, highly transmissible strains of the virus (Boursier et al., 2020). The adverse impacts on mental health are pervasive within communities and have a broad scope. They encompass individuals who have experienced trauma due to nationwide or localized lockdowns, rendering them susceptible to substance abuse or feelings of isolation. Furthermore, they include those who have endured the loss of loved ones as a consequence of the pandemic, individuals who grapple with heightened anxieties surrounding their own health, and those who are grappling with the profound economic repercussions of the pandemic. During the current challenging period of recuperation from the pandemic, it is imperative to acknowledge the mental health requirements of healthcare professionals who are actively engaged in the frontline response to the pandemic (Horigian et al., 2020; Kola et al., 2021).

13. Conclusion:

The global community is presently confronted with an unprecedented problem stemming from the COVID-19 virus, leading to significant implications for individuals, organizations, and society worldwide. The presence of effective crisis leadership is crucial for effectively addressing the challenges posed by the pandemic and safeguarding the resilience of the community.

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