

**SCHOOL OF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY
COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES
UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON**



**STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT PRACTICES OF NURSE MANAGERS
AT THE GREATER ACCRA REGIONAL HOSPITAL.**

BY

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**THIS THESIS IS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA,
LEGON IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR
THE AWARD OF A MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY DEGREE IN
NURSING**

DECEMBER, 2022

DECLARATION

This is to certify that, this thesis is the result of a research undertaken towards the award of a Master of Philosophy Degree in Nursing at the school of Nursing and Midwifery, University of Ghana, Legon. All references have been dully acknowledged.

This thesis has not been submitted either in whole or part to any institution for any degree.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my family and friends, for the great support throughout the entire period of this project.



ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I express my profound gratitude to God for giving me good health, strength and the ability to complete this programme successfully. My sincere appreciation goes to my supervisors Prof. Adelaide M. Ansah-Ofei and Dr. Atswei Adzo Kwashie for the guidance, constructive suggestions and encouragement. I am most grateful.

I am most grateful to every member of the Department of Research, Education and Administration of the School of Nursing and Midwifery for the amazing support given to me. Thank you.

Very special gratitude goes to my family for their enormous support and encouragement throughout the programme. My heartfelt appreciation to all the participants who voluntarily decided to share their experiences to enrich this research.

To my friends, Mariam Adam Al-Hassan, Magdalene Boamah, and Yennuten Paarima, thank you and God richly bless you for your encouragement.

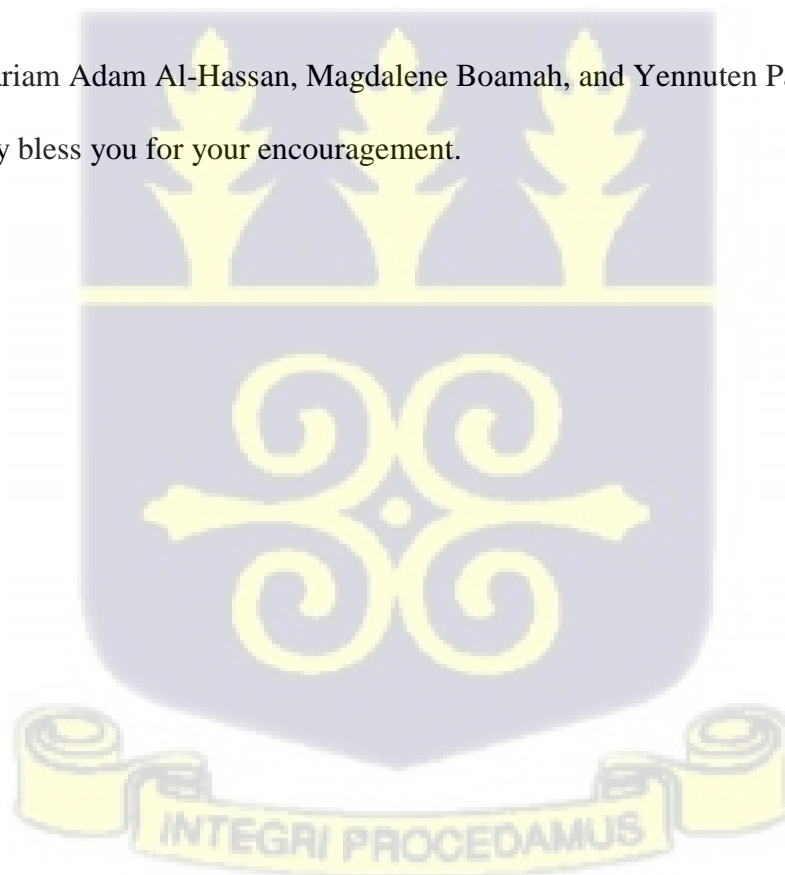


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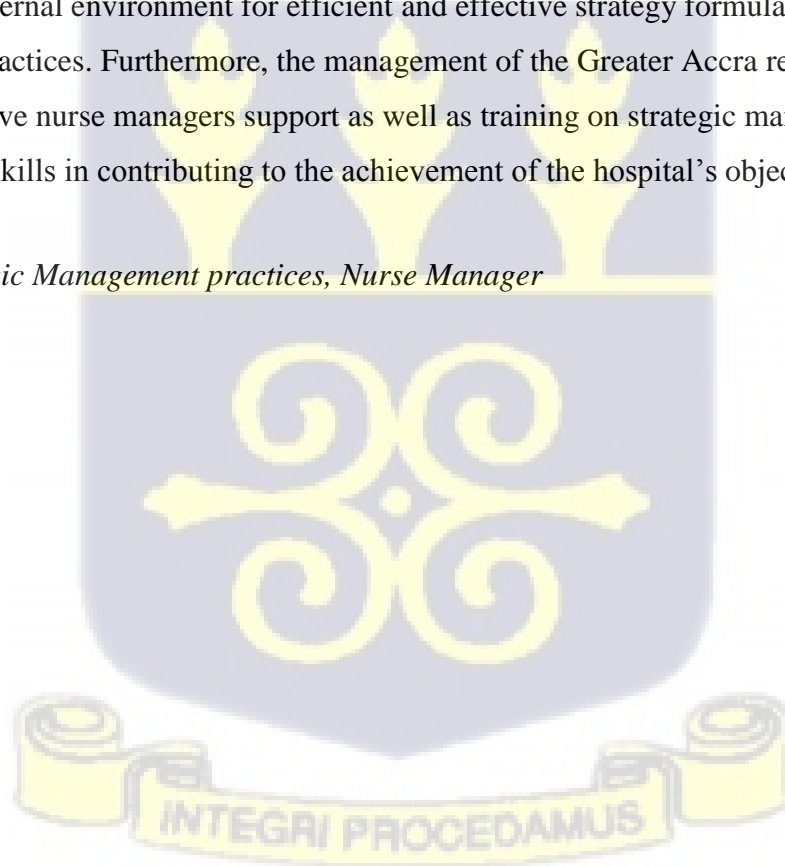
SM	=	Strategic Management
NM	=	Nurse Manager
GARH	=	Greater Accra Regional Hospital
HONM	=	Head of Nursing and Midwifery
DDNS	=	Deputy Director of Nursing Services
PNO	=	Principal Nursing Officer
SNO	=	Senior Nursing Officer



ABSTRACT

Strategic management practice is essential in the health care system especially, among nurse managers, since nurses are front liners in health care delivery. The study sought to explore the strategic management practices of nurse managers. A conceptual framework of the strategic management process was used to guide the study. A qualitative exploratory, descriptive design was utilized. Twelve (12) participants were purposively sampled from the Greater Accra Regional Hospital (GARH). A semi-structured interview guide was used to collect data from the participants, and thematic analysis was used to analyse data. Five themes were identified from the data: environmental scanning practices, strategy formulation practices, strategy implementation practices, strategy evaluation and control practices, and challenges encountered in Strategic Management. The study's results showed that nurse managers scanned their internal environment using methods like observation, round checks, and supervision, as well as SWOT analysis as the tool, but the external environment received little attention, so opportunities were not maximized and threats were not reduced. The study recommends that nurse managers should give as much attention to external environmental scanning as the internal environment for efficient and effective strategy formulation and implementation practices. Furthermore, the management of the Greater Accra regional hospital, should give nurse managers support as well as training on strategic management to better equip their skills in contributing to the achievement of the hospital's objectives.

Keywords: *Strategic Management practices, Nurse Manager*



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The contemporary healthcare industry is transitioning due to constantly changing disease patterns, budgetary cuts, the rising cost of healthcare, and inadequate staffing levels of critical staff (Odhiambo et al., 2021). The industry is increasingly becoming uncertain and unpredictable (Issack & Muathe, 2017). Given this, healthcare institutions are looking for strategies to enable them to remain competitive and relevant in business. Therefore, health care institutions have been encouraged to adopt strategic management to meet their clients' and policymakers' demands.

Strategic management (SM) is a set of actions and decisions that lead to the formulation and implementation of plans designed to accomplish an organisation's goal (Maroa & Muturi, 2015). SM has become a subject of global interest and consists of environmental scanning, strategic formulation, implementation, and evaluations and control, which influence the organisation's competitive positioning, thus, determining its performance (Maroa & Hunger, 2015). It is from these four key elements SM is manifested.

Strategic Management (SM) involves leaders responding to change, setting direction, and focusing on an organisation's mission and vision (Ginter et al., 2018). As a result, organisational leaders have adopted the art of strategic management to deal with both existing and unpredictable futuristic situations. Furthermore, SM practices permit leaders to maintain continuous improvement by assessing the organisational environment in which they operate, evaluating competitors, setting goals and strategies to overcome challenges, and then re-examining each strategy regularly to determine whether it fits or needs to be amended to meet the current state of affairs (Ginter & Duncan, 2018). Hence,

all organisations should institute strategic management practices to ensure they fit within their competitive environment (Nkemchor & Ezeanolue, 2021).

Proper SM practices offer a bridge between an organisation and its environment. It equips organisations to avoid a mismatch with their environment. Also, it must be consistent with its objectives, goals, values, internal and external environment, resources, organisational structures, and systems (Asongu & Odhiambo, 2021; Issack & Muathe, 2017). Using strategic management practices enable health facilities to outline their strategies, providing the essential purpose and direction to staff and customers (Issack & Muathe, 2017). Abraham and Leavy (2007) argued that the success of the concepts and tools in the practice of strategic management is demonstrated in scrutiny of the healthcare industry and competitive conditions, behaviour, and how managers handle the responsibility of formulating and implementing strategies as opposed to using high powered quantitative techniques.

In advanced countries, the explicit adoption of strategic management systems and organizing frameworks has invariably instigated the linkage between internal hospital processes and resolving inconsistencies (Devitt et al., 2015). These may encourage behaviours that are consistent with the values identified with the organisation in their operating culture, the day -to -day activities, and structure for success. Furthermore, strategic management is an important and necessary tool to get a competitive advantage over competitors, improve performance, and ultimately, organisational development (Razali et al., 2016).

In the Middle East, implementing SM practices increased hospital performance; however, fear of change led to hospital executives clinging to traditional methods of management by hospital executives (Alomran, 2019). However, SM is crucial in removing uncertainty and change resistance (Madzimure & Mashishi, 2021).

In Africa, SM may enable hospitals to achieve their goals since it helps focus on their strategic advantages. Prentice et al. (2020) formed a framework that supports the creation of strategies for validating positive communication between strategic implementation through measurable strategic management practices in Africa. Although these do not significantly outline any conclusive impact of strategic management in Africa, it cannot be denied that adopting SM in healthcare organisations in Africa may positively impact change resistance and care delivery. Gachugu et al. (2019) proposed that strategic leadership and the external environment have a moderating effect on the relationship between strategies implemented and organisational performance. Hence, they recommended the adoption of strategic measures in most African organisations. Despite the difficulty in embracing change, it is imperative to implement strategies to achieve the health system's goals.

The impact of strategic management has enormous positive effects. Hunger and Wheelen (1996) established that 89% of companies that practiced SM had a competitive edge over companies that did not. Furthermore, companies that do not use strategic management have less chance of survival (Capon, 1994). Carney (2009) acknowledges that the strategic action of managers may positively or negatively influence healthcare delivery, and these actions may be related to the relationship they developed, both externally and internally, with the organisation. The significance of these relationships and the strategic decisions of managers impact organisational performance through how they position the organisation in its specific sector (Hoskisson et al. 1999). For instance, in the healthcare sector, if hospitals are perceived as facilities of excellence in a specific area, such as gynaecology or plastic surgery, strategic decisions made by the hospital executives will be forged toward maintaining the hospital's reputation in that field (Carney, 2020).

Again, Porter (2004) states that organisational performance is determined by the ability of the institute to find its unique position, and strategic management practice is the

tool to enable the organisation to acquire that strategic position. Harrington and Ottenbacher (2011) explained that healthcare managers have restricted decision control regarding professional bureaucracies, unpredictability, and instability. This makes the healthcare industry a fascinating study platform for implementing strategic management practices.

Carney (2009) however, explained that nurse managers tend to have little control over the strategic viewpoints that drive operational management in organisations, yet, as the largest group (nurses and midwives) within the health-care organisation, it is arguable that the success or failure of managerial approaches within the healthcare facility is largely dependent on them. Nurse Managers are, therefore, in a powerful position to ensure that the underpinning values, beliefs, and philosophies of managerial strategy are coherent with both the context and culture of nursing and the expected quality of care and patient outcome (Carney, 2020). Consequently, the need to utilise SM practices for their units.

Nonetheless, strategic management practices are lacking, particularly in this study area. Hence, the need to carry out this study. This study, therefore, seeks to explore the strategic management practices of nurse managers at the Greater Accra Regional Hospital. To understand the strategic management practices of nurse managers, this study will be guided by the Wheelen and Hunger strategic mode

1.2 Problem Statement

The competitive landscape of today's healthcare industry calls for the involvement of inspiring and engaging managers to meet the demands and expectations of policy makers and consumers (Fuentes et al., 2020). Nonetheless, achieving these expectations demand effective strategic management practices among healthcare managers. Though much has been written about the importance and benefit of strategic management practices for organisations especially, for the sustainability of healthcare organisations in the 21st century

(Suriyankietkaew & Kungwanpongpun, 2021), the concepts, strategy and strategic management do not appear to have taken hold among nurse managers and the nursing profession in general (Crossan & Jasper, 2012).

Indeed, the nurse manager's position is increasingly becoming visible within the healthcare institution as a vital link between the larger vision and the unit-based delivery of effective patient care and staff job satisfaction (Orovioigoicoechea, 1996). The role of nurse manager's role is complex, it involves two sets of values, that is, those values traditionally associated with nursing and values conventionally linked with management. These may cause tension and potential conflict, especially, if one is not adequately prepared for managerial positions (Jasper & Crossan, 2012). In healthcare systems such as in Ghana, the appointment of nurses into leadership and managerial positions is often based on clinical expertise and year of service entry with little and no consideration for leadership or managerial competence and performance (Ofei, 2015), thus, nurses are mostly not well equipped in management values to efficiently function in that position..

Consequently, it is worth noting that nurse managers are key stakeholders in healthcare because they control the largest human resource and translate organisational goals into action at the unit level (Ansah Ofei & Paarima, 2021). Nevertheless, nurse managers do not recognize their position as critical in achieving hospital goals. The nurse manager role and responsibilities, they fell short of examining their SM practices, which is critical to maintaining competitive advantage in the healthcare industry. For instance, previous studies have reported on nurse managers' governance practice financial management skills (Paarima et al., 2021), coordination practices (Ofei & Paarima, 2021); leadership competencies (Ofei & Paarima, 2022; Paarima et al., 2022) and planning practices (Ofei et al., 2021).

Contemporary research on strategic management in this part of Ghanaian-origin

focuses more on the perspective of managing HIV /AIDS and Malaria (Afi et al., 2018.; Ofei, 2007). Therefore, it is important to examine the SM practice of nurse managers given their pivotal role in Ghana's healthcare system. At the Greater Accra Regional Hospital, where this study was conducted, SM is often seen as a core management activity for the executive level managers (Medical director, Head of Nursing Services, Chief Accountant, Chief Administrator, Head of Pharmacy and Head of Records) despite its critical role at the departmental level. This may be the reason nurse managers are unable to function in their position, resulting in lack of direction, misuse or underutilisation of resources leading to inefficiencies and waste. Again, strategic management is a grey area and to initiate business orientation in the nursing management, this concept needs to be explored. In the recent performance review of the hospital, data depicted limited or no SM practices among nurse managers. Hence this study was carried out to explore the strategic management practices of nurse managers in the hospital.

1.3 The Purpose of the Study

The study aimed to explore the strategic management practices of nurse managers at the Greater Accra Regional Hospital.

1.3.1 Objectives of the study

The specific objectives are to;

1. Describe nurse managers' environmental scanning practices at GARH
2. Describe nurse managers' strategy formulation practices at GARH
3. Describe nurse managers' strategy implementation practices at GARH
4. Describe strategy evaluation and control practices of nurse managers in GARH
5. Describe challenges encountered by nurse managers in the practice of Strategic Management at GARH

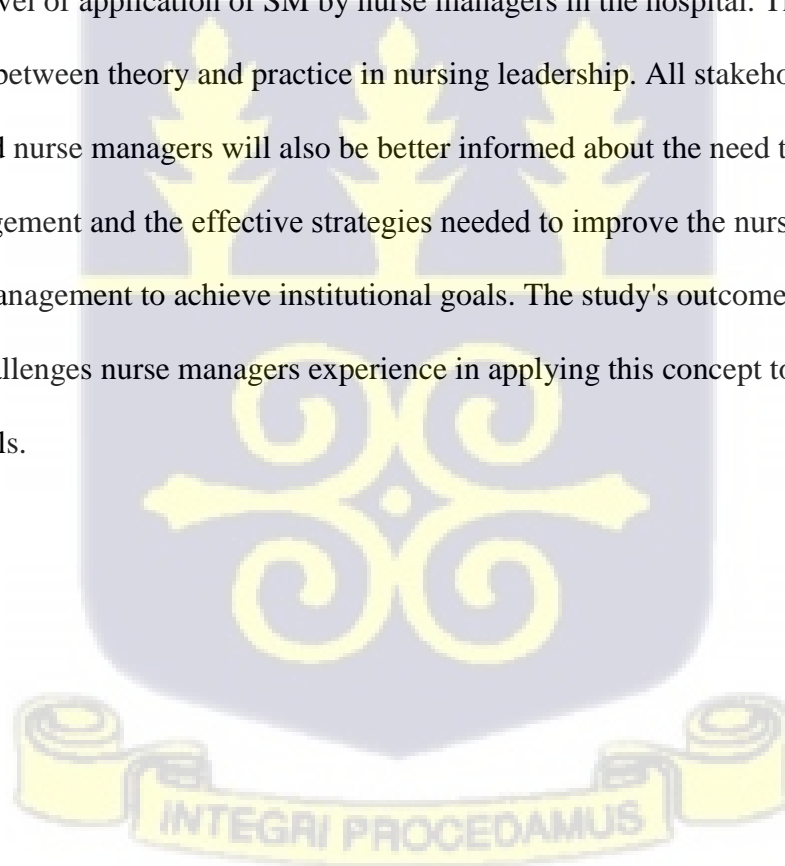
1.4 Research questions

The research questions for the study were:

1. How do nurse managers conduct environmental scanning?
2. How do nurse managers formulate strategies?
3. How do nurse managers implement strategies?
4. What strategy evaluation and control practices do nurse managers employ?
5. What challenges confront nurse managers in the practice of strategic management?

1.5 Significance of the study

The practice of SM by nurse managers is vital in improving client satisfaction and achieving hospital goals. Studies have shown that organisations that practice SM have a greater chance of achieving their goals than those that do not. The knowledge generated will demonstrate the level of application of SM by nurse managers in the hospital. This will help to bridge any gap between theory and practice in nursing leadership. All stakeholders in training nurses and nurse managers will also be better informed about the need to train nurses on strategic management and the effective strategies needed to improve the nurse managers' role in strategic management to achieve institutional goals. The study's outcome will help understand the challenges nurse managers experience in applying this concept to achieving organisational goals.



1.6 Operational definition of terms

Variable	Conceptual Definition	Operational Definition
Strategic Management Practices	A set of managerial decisions and actions that determines the long-run performance of an organisation (Wheelen & Hunger, 2012)	A set of managerial decisions and actions that determine the long-run performance of an organisation
Nurse Manager	A registered nurse in leadership role responsible for managing nursing department and having direct supervision of staff nurses in a healthcare organisation (Penconek et al., 2021)	A registered nurse who has been officially appointed to lead and manage a nursing unit in the hospital.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews literature on strategic management practices of nurse managers at the department level. It also provides a conceptual understanding of the strategic management practices in relation to their day-to-day activities, management of organisational culture, management of strategy, and challenges experienced or perceived to be experienced in practicing strategic management. The literature review highlights current research on the subject and identifies gaps in the literature.

A thorough search of peer-reviewed research articles was conducted from various databases, including Google scholar, PubMed, Science direct, journal of nursing administration (JONA), journal of clinical nursing, CINAHL and SAGE. The keywords used in the search of literature included strategic management practices, nurse manager, and organisational culture. Apart from a few milestone studies and theoretical literature, the articles reviewed were from 2010 to date.

2.2 Conceptual Framework for the Study

Three different theoretical frameworks were considered appropriate for the conceptual framework of the study. Namely, Fred David's Strategic Model (2007), Wheelen's and Hunger's Model of Strategic Management (2011), and Robbin's and Cutler's Model (2017).

David (2007) defines strategic management as the "art and science of formulating, implementing, and evaluating cross-functional decisions that enable an organisation to achieve its objectives." The three stages of the strategic management process, according to

David (2007), are strategy formulation, strategy implementation, and strategy evaluation.

Developing a vision, mission statement, evaluating the internal and external environment, and long-term objectives are all considered components of strategy formulation. Strategy implementation, the second stage, entails establishing annual goals, creating policies for each business function, and allocating resources for organisational goals. According to David (2007), strategy evaluation is the last phase. This stage aims to correct strategy-related actions while measuring and assessing performance (Shujhat et al. 2016). Though this model is relevant to the study objective, it was however not adopted because it tends to favour quantitative approach in examining correlations among variables. With this current study's purpose of exploring the strategic management practices of nurse managers using the qualitative approach, David's strategic model becomes inappropriate.

According to Robbin and Coulter (2017), strategic management is a set of managerial decisions and actions that determine an organisation's long-term performance. Strategic management, according to the authors, is crucial because it enables managers and organisations to respond quickly to environmental changes, perform better, and coordinate varied organisational units to concentrate on a single set of objectives. The components of Robbin and Coulter's model include determining organisational goals, performing analysis, formulating strategies, implementing strategies, and evaluating the outcomes. The Robbins and Coulter model begin by generating missions and resources, followed by analysis. According to Robbin and Coulter, organisations should first identify their mission and goals while taking into account both internal and external customers as well as the market, and then move on to analysis, formulation, implementation, and evaluation of outcomes. This model was considered unsuitable as it did not start with environmental scanning, which serves as a foundation for the other constructs to build on and is not in line with the study's objectives.

The Wheelen and Hunger (2011) strategic management model depicts a systematic process of gathering data, planning, implementing, and evaluating results. It outlines four stages in the strategic management process: environmental scanning, strategy formulation, strategy implementation, and evaluation and control. This leads to a repetition of the whole process. These four steps make the model constructs and have served as a successful guide for managers carrying out strategic management studies. The Wheelen and Hunger (2011) model of strategic management was chosen as the most appropriate model amongst the reviewed three models for the study because its construct fits into the study's objectives. In this regard, the Wheelen and Hunger (2011) strategic management model has been considered the most appropriate conceptual framework for this study.

Wheelen and Hunger (2011) explained environmental scanning as the monitoring, evaluating, and dissemination of information from the external and internal environments to key players within the organisation. The easiest way to carry out environmental scanning is through strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) that strategically affect the organisation. Once these variables are identified, managers can determine the organisation's mission, fitting itself properly into the environment (Wheelen and Hunger, 2011). How environmental scanning is performed, and the data gathered forms an important feature of SM.

The development of long-term strategies for the successful management of environmental opportunities and threats in light of an organisation's strengths and limitations is referred to as strategy formulation (Joeliaty et al., 2020; Wheelen & Hunger, 2012). It includes defining the business mission, defining feasible goals, devising strategies, and establishing policy standards. This stage is more beneficial when a good environmental scan has been carried out. Strategy formulation helps managers conceive a good mission, which

sets the organisation apart from similar ones. With a well-conceived mission, specific objectives, strategies, and policies are formulated (Wheelen & Hunger, 2011).

According to Wheelen and Hunger (2012), strategy implementation is the process of putting defined plans and policies into action via establishing programs, budgets, and processes. This process includes modifications to the organisation's culture, structure, and management system. Middle and lower-level managers under the direction of upper management often implement these techniques. Day-to-day resource allocation choices are frequently involved in strategy execution.

The evaluation and control phase of SM is described as the process of monitoring organisational activities and performance results so that actual and intended performance may be compared. The information gathered by managers at all levels is used to take corrective action and fix problems. Although evaluation and control are the final significant component of strategic management, they may also identify flaws in previously executed strategic plans, prompting the process to restart.

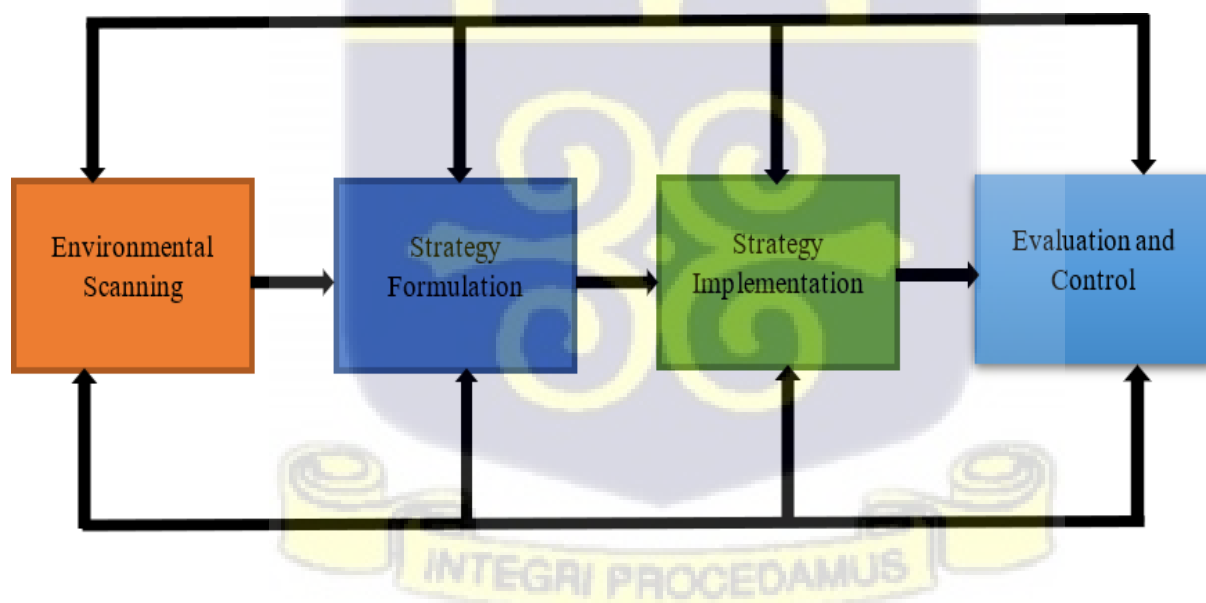


Figure 2.1: Wheelen and Hunger's Model of Strategic Management (2011)

2.2.1 Application of Wheelen and Hunger's model of Strategic Management

This study explored the Strategic Management practices of nurse managers using the Wheelen and Hunger strategic management model (Wheelen & Hunger, 2011) as the conceptual framework. The first objective was how nurse managers scan their environment for information. This has become necessary because in exploring the SM practices of nurse managers, the processes used for environmental scanning by NMs is elicited to enable the researcher to build upon the concept's description.

The second objective is to illuminate how strategies are formulated by nurse managers using the data gathered from environmental scanning. Under this objective, participants are asked to describe how they develop objectives to achieve organisational goals and communicate them to their units.

The third objective of the study describes how strategies formulated are implemented to achieve goals. This objective aligns with the third construct of the study model. Under this construct, the participants are asked to explain how the strategies are implemented for achieving goals at GARH, their challenges, and coping mechanisms to ensure positive results.

The fourth objective explores how nurse managers evaluate and control the strategies formulated and implemented. Under this construct, participants are asked to describe ways to ensure strategies are working or not, how feedback are given, and control mechanisms used for challenges faced during the process.

2.3 Review of Related Literature

In this study, literature review was based on the constructs of the conceptual framework and objectives of the study. Also, the literature review centres on nurse managers'

practices of strategic management and the challenges they encounter in practicing Strategic Management.

2.3.1 Environmental Scanning

Globally, with the constant changes in the healthcare system, scanning the environment has become a vital tool organisation use to gain competitive advantage. An organisation can stay relevant by operating within the framework of forces that constitute its environment. Any organisation unaware of its surroundings is doomed to encounter difficulties brought on by the environment's rising complexity (Topalli, 2015).

Environmental scanning as defined by Babatunde, and Adebisi (2012) is a process of gathering, analysing, and dispensing information for tactical purposes. Gathering data from the environment aids organisations in knowing the environment in which they operate and competitors so as to create a good fit and competitive advantage.

In the view of Ginter, Duncan, and Swayne, (2018), environmental scanning is the ongoing tracking of trends and occurrences in an organisation's internal and external environment that bear on its current and future success. Environmental scanning is concerned with identifying emerging issues, situations, and pitfalls that may impact an organisation's future. The information gathered, including external events, trends, and relationships, is provided to key managers (in this case Nurse Managers) within the organisation and used to guide management in plans (Ginter, Duncan, & Swayne, 2018). It is also used to assess an organisation's strengths and weaknesses in the face of external threats and opportunities. Environmental scanning is a method of identifying, collecting, and translating information about external influences into useful plans and decisions (Helms & Nixon, 2010). As part of the environmental scanning process, the organisation collects and analyses information about its environment to forecast environmental changes' impact. This

ultimately allows the management team to make more informed decisions (Schaltegger & Burritt, 2017).

In their study, Demir and Ugurluoglu (2019) determined whether public and private hospital executives have knowledge of strategic management tools, what strategic management (SM) tools they use, to what extent they are satisfied with these tools and what tools they considered using in the future. The research data were collected via a survey. Results revealed that the hospital executives in the study did not have sufficient knowledge of the SM tools that constituted the basis of strategic management practices. It further indicated that private hospitals used many more strategic management tools than public hospitals. Strategic management tools mostly used by hospital executives, according to the research study, were total quality management, social media programs, strategic planning, and the mission and vision statements. The least used strategic management tool was business process reengineering. Also, most SM tools were used more by top executives who had received training in SM and those who perceived themselves to compete (Demir and Ugurluoglu, 2019). Aside SM being used extensively by top executives in the business field, little attention is placed on it when it comes to public health facilities (Mintzberg, 2017). Therefore, this study delves into strategic management in the health sector with a special focus on nurse managers.

Akbarov, Hajiyeva and Akbarova (2021) reviewed different approaches to the strategic management of healthcare organisations in a paper titled strategic management for healthcare organisations in the Azerbaijan Republic. The review was conducted to meet persistent barriers in health care system as well as the applicability and feasibility of business analysis tools such as Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) and Balanced Scorecard (BSC). Data were collected through patient satisfaction questionnaires

filled by 218 people. Findings of the study revealed that, the combined SWOT-BSC methodology was powerful for creating a strategic map allowing healthcare organisations perform strategies more effectively in achieving goals. The SWOT-BSC methodology had the advantage of being flexible to market changes and ensuring adaptability of healthcare organisations. Also, the findings of Akbarov, Hajiyeva and Akbarova (2021) affirm Wheelen and Hunger, (2011) framework of which SWOT analysis is embedded in environmental scanning and strategy formulation.

Iranian Public Hospitals were the subject of a research by Pourmohammadi et al., (2020) using a comprehensive environmental scanning methodology. To keep up with the constantly changing environment, the researchers updated their dynamic method of environmental scanning every three to four years. The macro and micro surroundings of the hospitals were the focus of the environmental scan. Based on the PESTLE (political, economic, social, technical, legal, and environmental) and Douglas West framework, an in-depth interview and survey were utilized as part of mixed-method research to identify important environmental elements. The researchers were able to discover the major problems affecting hospitals at the macro and micro levels by using environmental scanning to discover changes in illness patterns, bed allocation management, improper hospital budgeting, and economic punishments. The findings highlight the relevance of strategic management adoption in a health organisation.

In a study conducted by Graham, Evitts, and Thomas-Maclean (2008) in Canada to examine the use of environmental scanning for primary care research, it emerged that the passive and active approaches were the modes of environmental scanning employed by health organisations. The passive approach involves “casual and opportunistic” data collection from already established external contacts or more focused data collection from

well-respected existing sources, such as industry databases or published documents (Choo, 2001). Active approach on the other hand involves an organisation taking action, analysing reactions, and creating data-collection tools to obtain “rigorous and objective” data. In both cases, the active approach is accompanied by a willingness to “revise or update existing knowledge.”

According to McCallin and Franklin, (2010) as cited in Ofei (2015), nurse managers are expected to identify challenges, design and implement innovations to help their unit achieve patient outcome targets while reducing costs to increase efficiency. This, therefore, suggests that the ideal environmental scanning approach for nurse managers is the active approach. However, implementing environment scanning by nurse managers has become an issue of great concern because of the paucity of scholarly attention given to it and the rapidly changing terrain and emergence of public health issues.

Furthermore, the relative complexity of the environment, the perceived availability of information, and the organisation's willingness to "intrude" on the environment to gather data all played a role in selecting either an active or passive approach. There are instances where both approaches are adopted (Heavey, Mowday, Kelly & Roche, 2009). A classic example is Rowel et al. (2005), whose study revealed the use of both active and passive approaches by the management of some selected health facilities in addressing the rise in cancer in African Americans.

Additionally, COVID-19 and its effects on nursing and regulation were examined by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) in 2021. The study employed the passive approach by relying on workforce databases at the state and federal levels to help send nurses to emergencies. The passive approach was adopted due to the perceived availability of information and the high risk of COVID spread if an active strategy had been

taken (NCSBN, 2021).

Birinci and Eren (2013) conducted a study among universities and discovered that internal environmental analyses were given more importance while external environmental analyses were not conducted properly, hence, possible external opportunities and threats are not well known. These findings added that the Universities generally exhibited an inward-oriented concept of management, thus, unable to create a competitive environment within themselves and compete with other Universities globally. Lastly, Birinci and Eren (2013) concluded that, since strategic management processes were not discussed as a whole, institutional performance of universities in Turkey are not up to the mark and not positively affected. This implies that institutions will benefit massively if both internal and external environments are given equal attention; thus, complete strategic management processes positively affect institutions. The study used the survey method with a questionnaire for data collection.

Furthermore, Babatunde, Adebola, and Adebisi (2012) looked at the connection between environmental scanning and organisational effectiveness. According to the report, organisations do environmental scanning in three different ways: ad-hoc, routine, and continuous. Ad-hoc scanning is a brief examination that occurs frequently and is typically started by a crisis. This is carried out to determine whether the issue is internal or external. The regular scanning mode employs a routine, program-like process (for instance twice a year). During environmental scanning, routine scanning uses primary data. Continuous scanning is the collection and processing of structured data on a variety of environmental parameters continuously. Businesses typically use the continuous scanning strategy with a central unit tasked with broad environmental scanning and qualitative and quantitative forecasting of specific variables. The results showed that strategic environmental scanning

and organisational success are strongly correlated. The study's results further confirmed that firms that focus more on environmental scanning exhibit improved organisational performance. Additionally, the study's findings showed that organisations' profitability and market share could benefit from monitoring the surroundings for external environmental forces. The study concluded that continuous scanning or routine scanning is the best method for limiting the effects of environmental instability.

Amuna, Al Shobaki, and Naser, (2017) conducted a study on strategic environmental scanning methodology for managing crises in the United Nations Relief Works Agency (UNRWA) Gaza Strip field in Palestine. The study utilized several descriptive-analytical methods with 235 UNRWA managers from a community population. The findings indicated that UNRWA's ad-hoc scanning mode was insufficient to manage the crisis. Thus, there was a weak relationship between environmental scanning and crisis management. Furthermore, the findings highlighted that scanning was only conducted during crisis which is not helpful; hence, a permanent schedule of environmental scanning for external and internal factors is essential for proper planning to deal with future potential crises (Amuna, Al Shobaki, & Naser, 2017).

Additionally, research on environmental scanning and organisational future orientation was conducted by Rohrbeck and Bade (2012). The study analysed literature on four research areas: corporate or strategic planning, environmental scanning, futures research, and peripheral vision. Two hundred and fifty (250) publications from 1980 to 2011 were analysed to produce a robust integration and linking study on environmental scanning. According to the study findings, multiple papers have emphasized the correlation between an organisation's environmental scanning efforts and the amount of uncertainty felt by its top management. To react to external change, top management is seen to scan the surroundings.

Furthermore, it was shown that all forms of businesses, big and small, may profit from environmental scanning. Through environmental scanning, large businesses can manage the increasing complexity of their internal and external environments.

An investigation of environmental scanning practices was done by Mohd Said, Ishak and Siddiq (2018) in Malaysia. The study objective was to understand how this activity is conducted, the processes involved, who is responsible for conducting it, when it is conducted, why the processes are conducted, and what types of information were collected. The research utilized the qualitative approach using a semi-structured interview guide. The study identified that the most important environmental information for hotel organisations is task environment, such as information on competitors, consumers, and suppliers. This information is required for operational and tactical decisions made for daily hotel operations. Thus, the hotels had a slightly organized system to perform such activities regularly. The tools used for scanning the task environment were Online Travel Agent (OTA) reports, marketing research, published industry sources, Trends on the market, and personal networking.

In summary, ample empirical studies have considered environmental scanning as the cornerstone for strategy formulation and implementation. Intrinsicly, it involves gathering, analysing, and dispensing information for tactical purposes. However, the various approaches to environmental scanning vary among organisations. While some employ SWOT analysis as a tool in their environmental scanning practices, others segment the concept into two parts – active and passive approaches. In a quest to explore the strategic management practices of nurse managers at GARH, this study will describe the environmental scanning practices of nurse managers and other things pertaining to strategic management.

2.3.2 Strategy Formulation Practices

Strategy formulation is the process of establishing the organisation's mission and objectives, and choosing among alternative strategies (Suriyankietkaew & Kungwanpongpun, 2021). This process is essential to an organisation's success because it provides a framework for the actions that will lead to the anticipated result (Ofei, 2007). Furthermore, it forces an organisation to look at the changing environment carefully and be prepared for possible changes (Asamani et al., 2013). Formulation of a strategy also allows a company to assess its resources, allocate funds, and identify the best strategy for maximizing performance and increasing returns (Fuertes et al., 2020). The strategic formulation process entails identifying an organisation's mission, objectives, and goals, as well as choosing an effective approach. A strategic plan requires extensive research and decision-making (Ahmed, 2018).

Developing strategies and choosing the appropriate alternative can be difficult (Abdel-Basset et al., 2019). Decision-making by nurse managers is a multifaceted, multi-responsibility position, which requires the execution of alternative decisions to address a variety of situations in the clinical area (Chisengantambu-Winters et al., 2020). These decisions can be simple or complex, frequently influencing patient care and how hospitals are managed (Nawaz, 2015). The vision, mission, policy standards, knowledge, skills, procedures, and healthcare environment are just a few of the important human and situational aspects that may have an impact on nurse managers' capacity to create effective strategies (Chisengantambu-Winters et al., 2020; Sarabi Asiabar et al., 2020; Nawaz, 2015).

Formulating strategies is a major challenge within the health sector, especially by nurse managers (Carney, 2009), thus to ensure that hospitals meet their objectives, there is an increasing need for developing improved approaches to formulating strategies by nurse managers.

Wang, Shi and Gan, 2018 conducted a study with the main aim of developing a model to serve as a planning tool suitable for decision-makers in healthcare. Using a multi-objective decision support approach developed the model BLMOPSO to help decision-makers formulate better strategy options to improve healthcare delivery. The study was carried out in China using developing cities. The findings revealed the model is suitable for healthcare decision-makers. Again, the study stressed that involving all staff in the healthcare facility in formulating strategies ensures efficiency and effectiveness.

A qualitative study by Ofei et al. (2021) in the Greater Accra region that explored nurse managers planning practices using a sample of 15 nurse managers and 47 nurses from 19 primary, secondary hospital, and two specialty hospitals revealed that all units of the hospitals had satisfactory planning activities which were formal or informal, however, most of the plans were not implemented. Again, the study showed that the content of the plans was mainly about staff annual leave and not important topics such as training, staff supervision and logistics. It was reported further that, NM's hide away information and hardly involved colleagues in developing the unit vision. It was recommended that planning practices should be formal with full staff involvement to facilitate staff engagement. This implies that nurse managers require special practical training and supervision on developing and communicating achievable strategies.

Again, in a quantitative study on the planning practices of nurse managers in Ghana, it was indicated that all NM's plan at the unit, with 59.8% of the NM's having quarterly plans (Ofei et al.2019). In this study, 522 nurses from 19 healthcare facilities were recruited. The data was collected and analysed using descriptive and multiple regression analysis. The study established that NMs spend 60-70% of their time planning at the unit. Also, 2.6% of NM's planning practices was linked to socio-demographic characteristics; nonetheless,

experience of NM's contributed significantly to the regression model. This supports the claim that nurse managers with experience are key in formulating strategies to achieve goals.

Moreover, Wei et al., (2019) in their study "Nurse leaders' strategies to foster nurse resilience, "aimed to identify how nurse leaders find ways to promote nurse resilience and reduce nurse burnout in the United States of America. The study employed a qualitative descriptive method using 20 nurse managers. According to the findings, nurse managers identified seven strategies to cultivate nurse resilience: facilitating social connections, promoting positivity, capitalizing on nurses' strengths, nurturing nurses' growth, encouraging nurses' self-care, fostering mindfulness practice, and conveying altruism. Fostering nurse resilience is an ongoing effort. Nurse managers play an important role in developing a resilient nursing workforce, which results in favourable organisational outcomes (Wei et al., 2019). The strategies outlined to promote nurse resilience will have an influence not only on the nursing staff but also on patient outcomes. The strategies given are simple and may be simply adopted in any context. Nurse managers are committed to demonstrating and facilitating evidence-based measures to improve nurses' resilience (Wei et al., 2019).

Additionally, an investigation of the implementation of strategic management practices in Malaysian construction industry by Bakar et al. (2011), revealed that, most of the large construction companies claimed to have some form of written planning system that the managing director mostly formulates without the involvement of other employees. This study used a survey method for collecting data with responses from 78 large construction companies listed under G7 groups classified by Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB). Employees' involvement in formulating strategies promotes buy-in for effective implementation thus, it is essential to solicit employees' views and involve them in the process.

Furthermore, in a related study by Ongoto and Murugi (2018) on strategic management practices and change implementation in selected public universities in Kenya, the study delved into how strategic management strategies and change were implemented in Kenya's public institutions. The Kurt Lewis hypothesis and the McKinsey 7S Model laid the study's foundation. The study used a descriptive research design to examine the issue. A total of 309 workers from five chosen institutions made up the target population, 174 of them were chosen using a random selection approach. The University of Embu, Karatina University, Machakos University, Chuka University, and Kirinyaga University were among the institutions. Structured questionnaires with open-ended and closed-ended questions were used to gather primary data. By analysing significant themes and drawing deductions based on the tenets of the theories used, qualitative data was studied using the content analysis approach. The statistical association between the study's variables was ascertained using the correlation and regression analysis methods. Because of the limited resources, evaluating the tactics that had been used was difficult. Some employees believed that certain goals couldn't be achieved because senior leadership didn't support them. According to the survey, few public colleges consult their staff before making important choices.

Additionally, it was shown that leaders lacked the capacity to analyse developed strategies. As a result, the researchers advised universities to collaborate with consulting companies to develop, execute, and evaluate strategies. The study underpins the need to strategic management adoption in organisations. This has informed the researcher to investigate how strategic management at GARH understands prevailing strategies and how they can be improved to enhance healthcare delivery.

2.3.3 Implementation of Strategy

Strategy implementation is the process of putting plans and policies into practice by creating programs, budgets, and procedures. This process may entail modifications to the organisation's general culture, structure, and management system (Wheelen & Hunger, 2012). How to transform decisive plans into actionable drives is the epicentre of strategic implementation. Managers are essential in pushing toward the desired goals through benchmarked standards from which performance can be compared (Ofei et al., 2020). The process of putting a strategy into action is difficult and time-consuming. It is undeniably true that developing a sound action plan is far easier than making it happen. For a successful implementation process, managers and staff must be involved, and effective communication between all stakeholders (Ahmed, 2018). Successful implementation of effective strategies enhances the performance of organisations especially, in the nursing profession.

According to Blahová and Knápková (2011), developing a strategy is perceived as simpler than effectively putting one into practice. Ahmadi et al. (2012) looked into why many firms fail and discovered that lack of strategy implementation, not formulation, is the primary cause of most failures. Regardless of the plan itself, according to Gecikova and Papcunova (2014), the organisation's ability to stand out depends on how well it is implemented.

Varelas and Apostolopoulos (2020) explored the implementation of strategic management in the hospitality business in times of crisis in Greece. The study was performed on 131 tourism organisations. The study's findings revealed that the issues of implementation of strategic management in some hospitality businesses is the lack of concrete strategy for managing the business environment during economic crisis. Also, knowledge of implementing a strategy during an economic strategy was limited to big tourism businesses;

small tourism businesses were completely unaware of strategic management approaches to use. This could be because of inadequate skilled personnel in implementing a strategy to manage the business environment. Additionally, small tourism businesses require orientation on implementing strategies to enhance performance.

Again, Lawton & Parker, 1999, conducted a study in the United Kingdom titled Procedure and the Professional, the case of British NHS. The study revealed that the majority of nurses, doctors, midwives, and healthcare managers accepted the need for protocols to establish best practices and guide new staff. The study utilized the qualitative research approach using 24 focus groups. There was a general concern that flexibility in practice should be preserved.

Alomran (2019) conducted a study on implementing strategic management practices in the Healthcare Sector in Saudi Arabia. The objectives were to investigate the level of adopting strategic management practices and explore the barriers to their implementation based on the opinion of the top management. The questionnaire was used to collect data from senior management of public and private healthcare facilities. The authors found that despite the need for strategic management practices in both public and private healthcare facilities, the main reasons why top management fail to implement formulated strategies, are the fear of change, insufficient capabilities of employees, and poor understanding of the strategic concept. Thus, the researchers recommended that while adopting strategic management, top management and members of staff ought to be trained continuously to ensure a successful strategy implementation. The option of training staff before, during and after the strategy implementation is in line with the study of Terzic- Supic et al. (2015).

Terzic-Supic et al. (2015) conducted a quantitative study from 2006 to 2007 at the Centre School of Public Health and Management, Faculty of Medicine, University of

Belgrade. It included 107 management members from 20 Serbian general hospitals. The prospective study was conducted to determine the learning outcomes after a specific training program for hospital management teams on strategic planning and management. The findings of the study provided evidence that training for strategic planning and management enhanced the strategic decision-making of hospital management teams. This indicates that better performance of an organisation depends on effective strategic planning since strategic decisions will improve organisational performance. There is, therefore, a need to incorporate effective strategic planning to improve organisational performance. Also, training staff on strategic management contributes greatly to good outcomes.

Mwando and Muturi (2016) examined the role of strategic management practices in change implementation. The study concentrated on the influence of leadership styles, employee skills, and communication styles on change implementation in the government of Kenya Ministries. Data was collected from 95 respondents in 18 ministries. The study's results established that the ministries did not utilize strategic management practices to influence change implementation in their business. There was no allocation of resources to support the change process. The findings further described a lack of appropriate skills among workers as top management did not conduct employee training needs assessment before implementing the change. Thus, the researchers recommended that there is a need to introduce a strategic plan that will outline how change will be implemented gradually with minimal individual resistance.

In a qualitative study, Rajala, Ruokonen and Ruismäki (2013) found that well-developed systems can help overcome the resistance of strategy implementation within an organisation. Top management is involved in resolving the conflict by mediating between groups, and they are also involved in promoting project acceptance by building cooperation

between various stakeholders. The study concluded that even though organisational culture influences performance, there exists a difference between culture and change implementation.

Naranjo-Gil and Hartmann (2006) researched how top management teams (TMTs) implement strategies through the use of management accounting systems (MAS). The study tested 884 top management team members and 218 general hospitals in Spain. The findings revealed that the implementation of strategy varied among firms based on the differences between professional and administrative TMTs in their use of management accounting systems. Thus, the level of professionalism in the TMT is related to the importance attached to the performance evaluation function of management accounting systems and the resources allocation function of MAS. The researchers further concluded that managerial background is an important, factor in strategy implementation. Thus, the background of TMT members should be considered during strategic implementation.

Meyer, Pascucci, and Murphy (2012) studied the guide for implementing strategic management in complex organisational systems. The study was a qualitative case study conducted in two Brazilian hospitals: Hospital Universitário Cajuru (HUC) and Hospital Erasto Gaertne (HEG). The findings of the study established that the implementation of strategies in the hospitals concentrated on the practices and processes that are adopted and the strategists involved. The implementation of strategy in HEG hospital was viewed to be very successful compared to strategizing at HUC. The strategic implementation at HEG was performed by middle-level management with the support of employees at operational level. The system operated at the HEG hospital was decentralized, unlike that of HUC. At HUC, the findings indicated that only staff operating at top-level management were tasked to formulate a strategy. The scarcity of information available restricted the contributions of

middle and lower-level management. The responsibility of middle and lower-level managers are to follow the general guidance from the top without room for interpretation or improvisation. The outcome of this centralized management is that those who decide what to do are not at all involved with implementing the strategies, and those in charge of implementing the strategies are unaware of the overarching goals and objectives of the hospital. The researchers further concluded that HUC's top administration ought to understand that one pitfall of the strategic management process squarely resides in the implementation stage, not in the formulation stage, of strategy making.

El-Said and ElMakkawy (2017) evaluated the implementation of strategic management practices in Egypt. Based on a simple random sample technique, 48 five-star hotels in Egypt were surveyed. The study results indicated that most of the five-star hotels in Egypt apply the principles of strategic management in its different stages. The Pearson Correlation Coefficients was used in analysing the data collected. The findings proved that senior management support is the most important factor that affected the strategy implementation. This finding is in contrast to the findings of Meyer, Pascucci, and Murphy (2012), which placed more emphasis on the collaboration of middle and lower-level management in strategy implementation. The results also showed that external barriers have the greatest negative impact on the implementation process, in contrast to internal barriers with a limited impact. The results have proved that hotel chains are more in line with strategic management principles and more widely used for strategic management tools than independent hotels. Furthermore, hospitals are also key players in the service delivery, hence it is essential to understand how strategies are formulated and implemented, and also to evaluate the factors that impede the implementation of strategies.

Similarly, Mopeni, Sobi and Modi (2014) established that strategy implementation in

any organisation is determined by beliefs of workers. Employees should have a shared vision that fosters objectives addressing the critical actions needed for adopting strategies and reaching long-term goals. Lack of teamwork and communication between top-level managers and lower-level employees resulted in 71% failure of strategy implementation by state corporations. Top management plays a key role in building a supportive system that ensures strategy implementation.

Furthermore, in a quantitative study conducted in the Malaysian construction industry by Bakar et al. (2011), it was established that large construction companies that implemented written planning systems gained higher performance compared to those who did not practice strategic management. The implementation of a strategic plan by these large companies was instigated by management skills, organisational structure, image and reputation, client relationships and firm's profit. It was also found that most of the large construction companies claimed to have some form of written planning system that the managing director mostly formulates without the involvement of other employees. The study's objective was to examine the implementation of strategic management practices in the Malaysian construction industry. This study used survey method for collecting data with responses from 78 large construction companies listed under G7 groups classified by Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB).

Ongoto and Murugi (2018) conducted a study to look into how strategic management strategies and change were implemented in Kenya's public institutions. The Kurt Lewis hypothesis and the McKinsey 7S Model were the sturdy foundation. The study used a descriptive research design to examine the issue. Three hundred nine workers from 5 chosen institutions made up the target population, 174 of them were chosen using a random selection approach. The University of Embu, Karatina University, Machakos University, Chuka

University, and Kirinyaga University were among the institutions.

Structured questionnaires with open-ended and closed-ended questions were used to gather primary data. By analysing significant themes and drawing deductions based on the tenets of the theories used, qualitative data was studied using the content analysis approach. The statistical association between the study's variables was ascertained using the correlation and regression analysis methods. Because of the limited resources, evaluating the tactics that had been used was difficult. Some employees believed that certain goals couldn't be achieved because senior leadership didn't support them. According to the survey, few public colleges consult their staff before making important choices.

Altogether, it has been shown that leaders lacked the capacity to analyse developed strategies. As a result, the researchers advised universities to collaborate with consulting companies to develop, execute, and evaluate strategies. Support from management helps avoid resistance and promotes implementation to achieve goals.

2.3.4 Strategy Evaluation and Control Practices

According to Charumbira (2014), strategic evaluation and control is the process of monitoring planned strategic activities, comparing the outcomes to actual performance and projected performance, and using the knowledge obtained to make necessary corrections. Aspects of the environment of an organisation must be identified for monitoring, evaluating, and controlling to assess performance (Yambi, 2018).

Results assessment is viewed as a key component of strategic evaluation and control in healthcare facilities in order to be aware of the organisation's desirability for quality of performance. According to Pourmohammadi et al. (2020), effective evaluation systems consist of four separate elements: comprehensiveness, comparability with goals, the capacity to compare assessed results, and measurability of strategic plans. This aspect of evaluation

and monitoring is crucial in disseminating strategy by nurse managers.

According to the study of Akinbowale, Lourens, and Jinabhai (2013), performance evaluation policies influence organisational strategy and human resource policies. Per the study findings, many organisational units struggle to persuade their staff to adopt the mindset and practices intended to improve employee performance, which is why they constantly need to realign employee performance. For a business to successfully manage employee performance, training, and selection processes, its performance assessment policy must be effective. On a strategic level, personnel must constantly realign their performance with the changing aims and objectives of the business if quick and successful organisational changes are to be made in today's dynamic social, economic, and political environment.

Additionally, Ahmad et al. (2019) researched on strategic management utilising a target population of 54 respondents. The researchers reported that a firm's usage of strategic controls affected how well a strategic management strategy works. Strategic management plays a significant role in the many levels of oversight and regulation of organisational results. To take corrective action for organisational growth once a plan has been adopted, businesses purposefully ask employees for feedback. This is critical because businesses must manage the factors that might influence a strategic strategy from the planning stage to implementation.

Again, a qualitative study conducted in Uganda among 11 nurse managers with the objective of understanding the challenges experienced in healthcare revealed that ward managers make a timely work plan, like preparing duty rosters a week before the beginning of the following month in order to address any complaint from staff and to manage the staffing on the ward well (Kakyo & Xiao, 2019). The study concluded that it is important to prepare and improve the leadership, and management skills of nurse managers through

education to have greater impact in the healthcare sector.

Furthermore, a study conducted by Ofei et al (2021) on 522 nurses in 19 selected hospitals in Greater Accra revealed that nurse managers demonstrated moderate levels of governance practices by maintaining logbooks to check staff punctuality, effective appraisal, coaching, supervision, mentorship, and encouraging staff-directedness. Again, the study found that nurse managers using a little intimidation helped keep staff in check in order to achieve hospital goals. A quantitative cross-sectional design was used in the study. The study concluded that the position of nurse manager continues to evolve within the complex healthcare sector, necessitating the empowerment of nurse managers to effectively carry out this responsibility (Ofei et al. 2021). This implies that nurse managers should be assisted to gain experience in evaluation and control practices in order to ensure efficiency and quality unit and hospital outcomes.

2.3.5 Challenges Encountered by Nurse Managers in the Practice of Strategic Management

Strategic management is key for business and organisational growth (Ndunge *et al.* 2019). However, each stage of strategic management (environmental scanning, strategy formulation, implementation, evaluation and control) presents its challenges, it renders strategic management ineffective and negatively impacted. When not managed, it renders strategic management ineffective and negatively impacts the expected outcomes of strategic management (Ndunge et al.2019). Given these, Ndunge et al. (2019) argued that many routine challenges affect the use and application of strategic management in an organisation. Hence, challenges in applying strategic management can be grouped under institutional and operational challenges. Ndunge et al. (2019) conducted a case study to determine the challenges that affect the strategic plan implementation at Kenya Medical Training College

(KMTC). Ndunge used the census approach engaging all 28 KMTC campuses, which implemented strategic plans. The results showed that the main challenge experienced during the implementation of the plan is inadequate financing.

Muthoka, M'Mugambi, and Okeyo (2021) studied the role of strategic leadership style on compliance with public service ethics in Kenya. The sample of the study was 584 county employees. The findings indicated that strategic leadership was considered to be of moderate importance in the county of Kenya by employees across levels. The study also mentioned resistance to change, organisation structure and culture, reward mechanism, politics, and policy priorities for strategic leadership to service, as examples of challenges that impede strategy implementation when applying strategic management.

Benevene and Cortini (2010) explored the human resource strategic management in Non-Profit organisations. The study adopted a multiple research approach. A semi-structured interview was administered to 122 senior managers of non-profit organisations. The study's findings indicated that the organisations did not consider training as a tool for strategic management of HR. Thus, the senior managers were trained on-the-job or self-taught rather than having a plan for training on strategic management. This created the challenge of having a proper strategy for HR management to plan, implement and evaluate strategies in the organisations.

Through an organisational research perspective, Reay, Golden- Biddle, and Germann (2003), identified three major challenges for managers. These are, clarifying task reallocation, managing teamwork relationships, and constantly managing the evolving situation in teams. The authors suggested leadership strategies that managers may find useful in managing these challenges were encouraging team members to sort out 'who does what', ensuring that task reallocation sustains job motivating properties, considering tasks allocation

when issues of personal conflict are involved, paying attention to all aspects of team working relationships, facilitating encouraging relationships amongst staff members, lead from a ‘balcony’ perspective, work as a team in developing goals, and regularly sharing with other managers experiences and lessons learnt. Concluding that three managerial challenges needed to be addressed for managers to be most effective.

Also, managers can facilitate the introduction of a new role and improve sustainability in health organisations by employing precise leadership strategies (Reay et al., 2003).

Thompson and Strickland (1993) identify that organisational resources required for achieving desired organisational outcomes can be grouped into physical, financial, human, and technological resources. These resources are vital to any organisation; hence, lack of effective resource allocation can affect the application of strategic management, especially when the resources are not abundant (Ndunge et al., 2019). From the viewpoint of David (2003), factors that can cause ineffective resource allocation to include vague strategy targets, lack of sufficient knowledge about tasks and priorities, organisational politics and overprotection of resources.

Hajizadeh, Zamanzadeh, and Khodayari- Zarnaq (2021), explored the barriers and facilitators regarding nurse managers’ involvement in the health decision-making process. The study adopted a qualitative descriptive approach and purposive sampling was conducted. Semi-structured one-to-one interviews were conducted with 16 respondents. Findings revealed three levels of barriers to the participation of nurse managers in health policymaking. Firstly, the individual level consisted of weaknesses in the characteristics of the nurse manager. The second, the organisational level, comprised of inefficient structure, and the third, the environment-related level, embodied external barriers to the organisation. Finally, three facilitators were found to improve nurse managers’ participation in the

decision-making process. These were improving collaboration and communication, governmental and non-governmental organisational activities, and reforming the health policymaking process. They concluded that nurse managers needed to use the window of opportunity to participate in health decision making and be informed about health strategies to meet the demands of the changing healthcare environment.

2.3.6 Summary of the Literature

The literature review for this study concentrated on studies that discussed managers' use of the strategic management process in their strategic management practices, including environmental scanning, strategy formulation, strategy implementation, evaluation, and control, as well as the difficulties they encountered. The results of SM practices have also been examined in the literature, with findings published appropriately. Strategic management has been a crucial corporate approach for accomplishing organisational goals and preserving a competitive edge over rivals, according to the study of the literature that is now available. Several authors have discussed the benefit of integrating strategic management into routine tasks.

A SWOT analysis tool of strategic management was used to prepare for the long term of any firm. It is used to determine the advantages, disadvantages, opportunities, and threats facing a company. It aids managers of organisations in making plans while keeping in mind their working environment and how to blend in seamlessly. In formal and informal meetings where staff members participated in decision-making, effective planning was emphasized. A literature analysis on strategy implementation has shown many ways a manager can guarantee that strategies are used. These methods include delegation, management of organisational culture, incentive, training, supervision, recognizing excellent work, and providing feedback. The review has revealed that all these methods and more must be used for implementation to be successful. On evaluation and control, the literature

revealed four distinct components: comprehensiveness, ability to compare evaluated results, measurability of strategic policies, and comparability with goals.

Finally, a review on nurse managers' challenges in the practice of SM revealed that many challenges affect the application of SM. These challenges included change resistance, organisational culture, limited staff, and inadequate logistics.



CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter looks at the methods used to address the research objectives. It comprises the research design, research setting, target population, sample and sampling method used. Also, it describes the tools used, data collection procedure, data analysis and data management. Additionally, this chapter provides a presentation of how the ethical requirements and trustworthiness of the study were met.

3.2 Research design

A qualitative descriptive design was used for this study. According to Zainal (2007), exploratory descriptive design helps the researcher describe a phenomenon and provide a detailed account of its significance. Therefore, the focus lies on an exhaustive understanding of opinions and experiences rather than numbers. Qualitative research methods focus more on individual experiences than general ones (Hammarberg et al., 2016). It also helps a researcher to generate a picture of the world from the participants' perspective, as well as document and describe the phenomena of interest. The exploratory descriptive design was selected because, it efficiently allows researchers to fully understand a given phenomenon while enabling participants to contribute to developing new knowledge (Mccallum & Howes, 2018). Exploratory descriptive design was used since the researcher was interested in obtaining in-depth information from a participant on strategic management practices. Consequently, the study used open-ended questions to explore the SM practices of nurse managers instead of numbers. Previous authors have used the design in similar studies (Hunter et al., 2019; Rizvi & Nabi, 2021).

3.3 Research Setting

The study was conducted at the Greater Accra Regional Hospital (GARH), situated in the nation's capital Accra. It is located at North Ridge in the Korle-Klottey Sub-Metro of the Accra Metropolitan Area, occupying a total land area of about 15.65 acres and currently the regional hospital serving a population of about 4,671,363 (2016) projection based on the 2010 census by the Ghana Statistical Service). It was established in 1928 as the hospital for European expatriates, became a district hospital in 1957 and has now been renovated and transformed into an ultra-modern 470-bed capacity hospital with the full complement of specialist services that reflect the current social aspirations of the rapidly growing capital city of Ghana, Accra. The hospital reports an average bed occupancy of 75% and a daily OPD attendance of 374.

The hospital functions as a tertiary hospital drawing its mandate from Ghana Health Service (GHS). The daily administration of the hospital is conferred in the Medical Director, who is supported by 4 directors including the Deputy Director of Nursing Service (DDNS). The DDNS is the Head of the Nursing and Midwifery services (HoNM) in the hospital, GARH has a nursing and midwifery population of one thousand one hundred eighty-one (1,181) representing 60% of the work force of the hospital. Twenty Deputy Directors of Nursing Services support HoNM to oversee nursing departments in the hospital. These departments include Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Child Health, Internal Medicine, Department of Surgery, Emergency and Corporate, antenatal and paediatrics Out Patient Department, Maternity and Day Bays, Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and Recovery, Neonatal and Reproductive Health, Public Health, Allied Surgery, Family Health, Infection Prevention and Control (IPC), Central Sterile Supply Department (CSSD) and Customer Care unit, Health Promotion, Quality Insurance, In-service Training unit, Auditing Unit and main Out Patient Department (OPD). Each of the departments listed is headed by a DDNS who does

daily supervision and coordination of the department through the Principal Nursing Officer (PNO) and Senior Nursing Officers (SNO). The daily activities of the department are carried out by the nurses and midwives.

These nurse managers (DDNS and PNO) are responsible for providing leadership for nursing team, effective day-to-day management of the department, coordinating and supervising roster planning and monitoring and documentation of all leave for nurses and midwives in the department, and preparing and submitting monthly, quarterly and annually on nursing and midwifery activities. NMs are also responsible for promoting a positive image of their department and devising improved job methods to increase department efficiency and effectiveness. Greater Accra Regional Hospital was selected as the study site because, it is the regional hospital in the capital city of Ghana. Although GARH is a regional hospital, it is well structured with more specialty departments and a large number of nurse managers to recruit participants.

3.4 Target population

The study's target population were all nurse managers working at the Greater Accra Regional Hospital.

3.4.1 Inclusion criteria

- Nurse managers who are officially recognised as an administrator of a department.
- Nurse managers who have been in their current position for at least 6 months.

3.4.2 Exclusion criteria

- Nurse managers who did not consent to participate in the study.
- Nurses who are not nurse managers.

3.5 Sampling Technique

A purposive sampling technique was used to select participants for the study. The researcher adopted this sampling strategy because the population under study was preselected and had the ability to furnish the information needed. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique for the researcher to draw participant who understand the phenomenon of the study (Ishtiaq, 2019). The type of purposive sampling used was maximum variation sampling, which allowed the researcher to select a diverse range of perspectives relevant to the phenomenon (Sharma, 2017). The participants were purposely selected to be diverse in number of years in management, educational level, age and department. The researcher recruited participants by visiting the departments and informing the nurse managers about the study. All nurse managers who volunteered were noted, their contact numbers taken and an appropriate time and date to meet was established.

3.6 Sample size

The sample size for the study was determined by data saturation. The researcher reached data saturation by the 12th participant. Data saturation is reported at the point where no new information is discovered (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Consequently, the researcher recorded no new information or idea, and an in depth understanding of the strategic management practices of nurse managers at GARH had been attained. Therefore, 12 nurse managers were interviewed at the Greater Accra Regional hospital.

3.7 Data collection tool

This study used a semi-structured interview guide constructed in English and consisted of open-ended questions. For each question in the research tool, probing questions were asked to help the researcher gain in-depth information on the strategic management practices of nurse managers.

The interview guide (see appendix A) consisted of six (6) sections labelled A-F. Section A focused on the demographic characteristics of the participants, such as age, gender, educational background, rank in nursing, length of years in nursing and number of years served in management position. Section B focused on how nurse managers scanned their environment. Sections C, D, E and F focused on strategy formulation, strategy implementation, evaluation and control and challenges nurse managers face in practicing SM.

Using two nurse managers, the interview guide was piloted at the LEKMA hospital. Based on the responses attained during piloting, some questions were rephrased to improve the validity and reliability of the research tool. The tool was also scrutinized, reviewed and approved by the supervisor after piloting before it was used for the actual data collection.

3.8 Data collection procedure

Participants' recruitment began after ethical clearance (see appendix B) was granted by the Ethical Committee Board of Ghana Health Service (GHS-ERC: 023/04/22). Introductory letters from the Medical Director and DNS of the Greater Accra Regional hospital were obtained to access the list of nurse managers responsible for the departments. Twenty (20) nurse managers were contacted from the departments of Medicine, Surgery, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Paediatrics, Allied Surgery, and Intensive care unit of the Greater Accra Regional hospital. These departments were chosen because, of their role in achieving the hospital goals are enormous. The researcher visited the various departments and interacted with nurse managers concerning the study. Eligible nurse managers were taken through the details of the study and the part they would play.

Nurse Managers who consented to be part of the study were assured confidentiality and anonymity. Nurse managers were asked of a convenient time, date and venue for the

interview. All nurse managers agreed to have the interview in their office. On the day of the interview, a detailed explanation was given to participants and a consent form (see appendix C) was signed before the commencement of the interview. The researcher also sought for permission before audiotaping and taking field notes. The researcher personally conducted all interviews and each interview took about 60 minutes. Demographic data were collected off audio before the commencement of interview. Data was collected between April and June, 2022.

3.9 Data Management

Data management is concerned with the conversion of large quantities of data into smaller manageable sections (Polit & Beck, 2010). The recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim after every interview session onto a personal computer and stored with a pseudo name. The transcribed interviews were compared with the audio recordings and where there were inconsistencies, the nurse managers were contacted for clarification to ensure that accurate data was obtained. The printed transcripts were read severally to make corrections. The abbreviation “NM” was used to denote nurse managers and numbers 1 to 12 were used to denote the interviews; hence, participants were given pseudonyms, NM1, NM 2, etc.

The field notes, signed consent forms, transcribed data, and audio recordings are all stored securely using a simple sorting and filing technique. Only the researcher and her supervisors have access to the information. The demographic data of clients was separated from the general data to aid in maintaining anonymity. A soft copy of the data has also been stored as a backup in a secured folder. After five years, data will be deleted by formatting storage devices and discarding any printed material.

3.10 Data Analysis

Data analysis was done concurrently with data collection to adhere to the principle of qualitative study and ensure accurate data interpretation. Data analysis was done using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a method for detecting, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data (Polit & Beck, 2010).

After data collection, the recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim. The researcher read through each transcript three times before coding to familiarize and understand the content of each transcript. The coding process began with grouping the responses ascertained for each question in a Microsoft Excel Table for easy reading and coding. Therefore, after reading the set of responses for each question, codes were generated based on emerging issues that align with the study objectives. These codes were then grouped under themes and subthemes that reflect the study objectives. The analysis presentation makes use of codes and themes formulated. Some quotes from the respondents were anonymously used to buttress the findings.

3.11 Methodological Rigour (Trustworthiness)

Qualitative researchers strive to produce quality research findings. By this, the researcher employs strategies that will strengthen the integrity of the study. According to Amin et al. (2020), rigour is how strong a body of research is in terms of checking that all procedures have been followed carefully and that the reader judges conclusions to be trustworthy. For this study, the researcher employed the strategies such as credibility, dependability, confirmability and transferability (Simon & Goes, 2016).

Credibility is the honesty that can be placed in research findings (Simon & Goes, 2016). Credibility was achieved by using a semi-structured interview guide, tape recording of interviews, verbatim quotes of transcripts to ensure accurate description of participants'

points of view. Also, participants who met the inclusion criteria were recruited. Member checking, viewed as the most crucial technique for establishing credibility (Simon & Goes, 2016), was done to clarify ambiguous responses by participants. This confirmed the validity of the data, findings, and interpretations.

Dependability is the capability of research findings to remain stable over time (Simon & Goes, 2016). This was enhanced by conducting a logical research process, clear documentation for the audit trail so external reviewers can judge the study's dependability, review of transcription, and expert review of codes and themes. Pretesting was done on three (3) nurse managers before the actual data collection, and a few changes made to the semi-structured interview guide. Precise and clear questions were asked to induce the needed responses to the research questions. The interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim. Themes and sub-themes were produced from the data collected. The themes were supported with quotations from participants.

Confirmability is concerned with ensuring that data and interpretation of research findings are not imaginations of the researcher but derived from the data (Simon & Goes, 2016). This was ensured through an audit trail consisting of field notes, analysis, audio, and coding records. Also, bracketing was ensured by trusting in the data collected from the participants and not making my experience in the hospital influence the data collected.

Transferability is the degree to which the results of the research findings can be replicated in another contest or setting with other participants (Simon & Goes, 2016). This was achieved through a thick description of the participants' selection process, a thorough description of the study setting, and how the study was conducted to allow readers to determine the relevance of the findings to different populations.

3.12 Ethical Consideration

Ethical considerations are very important in any research; however, a qualitative study has a particular significance due to the in-depth nature of the study process (Roshaidai & Arifin, 2018). According to Bells and Bryman (2007), ethical consideration refers to the methods adopted to protect the participants from any undue harm and ensure the dignity of the research participants protect participants' undue harm and ensure that the research participants' dignity is prioritized. The researcher sought ethical clearance and approval from the Ethics Review Committee Board of Ghana Health Service. Participants volunteered for the study with good knowledge of the nature of the research. A consent form was given to every participant to assist them in making an informed decision.

Anonymity and confidentiality were considered in this study, with the researcher repeatedly reminding the participants not to say anything to reveal their identity.

Data gathered was handled solely by the researcher during data collection, transcribing the recorded data, discussion and analysis. The rights, safety and protection of the participants which are of importance was also assured. An introductory letter requesting permission to undertake the study was taken from the head of the Research, Education and Administration department of the University of Ghana to Greater Accra Regional hospital. Consent forms, audiotapes, field notes and typed transcripts are being kept confidential under lock with the researcher, and this will be for at least five years, after the completion of the study, whereafter data can be destroyed.

3.13 Summary

In summary, this section has presented information on the study's research methodology comprising of study approach, design, study setting, philosophical underpinnings of the study target population, sample size and technique, data gathering tools,

data management, data analysis, rigour, and ethical considerations.

An exploratory, descriptive design was used for this qualitative study. Twelve nurse managers working at the Greater Accra Regional hospital were recruited for the study. A semi-structured interview guide with two sections; demographic A. Sections B-F according to the construct of the theoretical framework. Thematic analysis was used for data analysis. Pseudo-names were used for participants to ensure confidentiality and anonymity.



CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from the interviews conducted. The interviews were transcribed and analysed using a thematic analytical approach. Hence, the study findings are organized under themes and sub-themes that align with the stipulated study objectives.

4.2 Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Twelve female nurse managers from the Greater Accra Regional hospital were interviewed. The ages of the participants ranged between 40 to 56 years. Participants had work experience as nurse managers for a period between 8 months to 20 years.

Seven (7) participants had master's qualifications in Nursing, one (1) with Master in Public Health, three (3) participants had Bachelor's qualification in Nursing, and one (1) participant had a Diploma in Nursing. On professional grading, seven out of the 12 participants were Deputy Directors of Nursing Service (DDNS), and five were Principal Nursing Officers (PNO). Details of the participants are presented in Table 4.1.

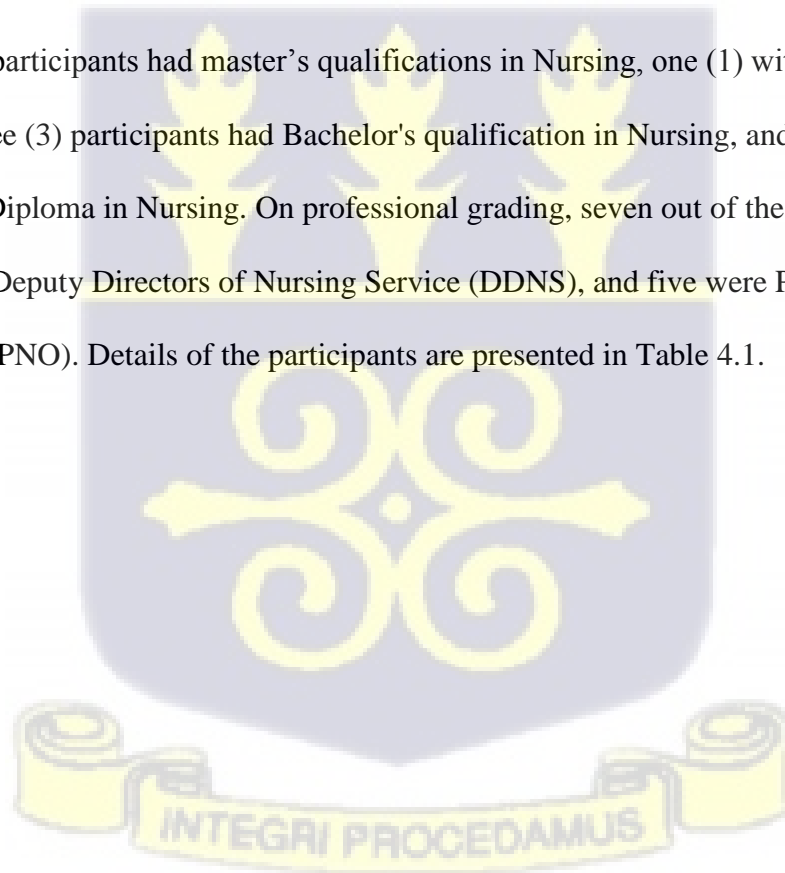


Table 4.1: Demographic information of study participants

Participant	Age	Gender F-female M-male	Educational background	Rank	Number of years as a nurse	Duration of appointment as the department's NM.
NM 1	46	F	MPH	DDNS	23	1 year
NM 2	53	F	MSc Nursing	DDNS	30	1year
NM 3	53	F	MSc Nursing	DDNS	32	20years
NM 4	55	F	BSc Nursing	DDNS	30	3years
NM 5	45	F	MSc Nursing	PNO	23	8years
NM 6	40	F	MPhil Nursing	PNO	15	5years
NM 7	48	F	MSc Nursing	DDNS	23	8months
NM 8	55	F	BSc Nursing	DDNS	32	20years
NM 9	40	F	MSc Nursing	PNO	18	6 years
NM 10	45	F	MPhil. Nursing	PNO	22	4 years
NM 11	40	F	BSc Nursing	PNO	17	1 year
NM 12	56	F	Diploma in Nursing	DDNS	30	6 years

Source: Field Data, 2022.

4.3 Organisation of Themes and Sub-themes

Five themes with their corresponding sub-themes were derived from the data gathered. The themes derived from the study are: 1) Environmental scanning practices, 2) Strategy formulation practices, 3) Strategy implementation practices, 4) Strategy evaluation and control practices, and 5) Challenges encountered in the practice of strategic

management. Data analysis generated thirty-four (34) sub-themes grouped under their respective themes. These subthemes are subsequently discussed and supported with verbatim quotations. These themes and subthemes are presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Identified themes and subthemes

Themes	Sub-themes
Environmental scanning Practices	Methods for environmental scanning Observation Round checks Supervision Tools for environmental scanning SWOT analysis
Strategy Formulation Practices	Meetings Deliberating and discussion of problems as a group Design of action plans Team agreement on better options Setting targets
Strategy Implementation Practices	Staff Involvement Assignment of responsibility Motivation Regular Training Supervision Interdepartmental Collaboration Feedback Use of different Leadership styles Management of organisational culture Use of protocol and standards Use of attendance books
Strategy evaluation and control practices	Comparison of targets Use of staff appraisal forms Management of logistics Use of Time-in and time-out book Use of position power Use of leave and duty roster Setting of guidelines Conflict resolution
Challenges faced	Limited number of staff Staff burnout Change resistance Inadequate logistics

Source: Field Data, 2022.

4.4 Environmental Scanning Practices

Environmental scanning refers to assessing the internal and external environment for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The theme environmental scanning sort to find out how nurse managers scan their environment for strength, weakness, opportunities and threats. Scanning the environment helps organisations maximize their strength and minimize weaknesses, grab opportunities and diffuse threats. The participants indicated that, in scanning the environment, methods such as observation, round checks and supervision are used to identify unit and staff' challenges, whereas SWOT analysis is used as a tool for scanning the environment. Participants, further indicated observing for factors that impact directly on the work and those that improve performance. Whiles observing and identifying these factors, NMs said support is provided.

4.4.1 Methods used for Environmental Scanning Practices Observation

Participants reported scanning the environment by adopting and using the method observation. NMs reported observing most of the time to identify staff strength and weaknesses while giving support. NMs also indicated identifying factors that directly impact work and improve performance. Strengths and weaknesses of staff are observed through observation and working together.

...so basically, the method I adopt is more of observation...I do a lot of observation whilst giving support... I identify staff strength and weaknesses and then observe other things that are going on...other things that I observe are practices that impact directly on the work we do and also practices that also help us improve on our performance (NM7)

NM 12 added that observing and working together helped her identify staff weaknesses and strengths. She shared an example:

... I try to look at our strengths and weakness through observation and working together. Through observation, I identified as a weakness that, some staff are not able to do effective handing over of emergency cases (NM12)

Round checks

Some participants mentioned scanning the environment through round checks. The participant stated that, round checks help to detect problems and find solutions before they escalate. This method participants help check and identify absenteeism and delay of patient review.

I usually do round checks and that is when I detect problems. Because if you sit in the office, you won't know unless it is a serious issue. For example, during my rounds, I am able to check attendance and question why some staff are absent or not at post (NM10)

...with the help of ground checks, I am able to know patients who have not been reviewed for 24hours and quickly find the team doctors to come review before patients complain (NM 12)

NM2 added that doing rounds checks every morning helps to identify problems for quick response

...I do round check every morning to identify problems and solve quickly before it gets big ...this helps (NM2)

Supervision

Another NM said she carried out environmental scanning through supervision while the staff worked. She further said, this gives her first hand idea of what the weaknesses and strength of the staffs are for discussion and improvement. This is expressed through the following response:

... As we are working, I supervise and pick up their problems at least daily. Then we sit together every week to discuss the problems. For example, if it is documentation that is not well done, we go over documentation (NM8)

4.4.2 Tools Used for Environmental Scanning

SWOT Analysis

Participants clarified that the SWOT analysis is the tool used to scan the environment in their departments. According to NMs, this tool is used to identify the strengths and

weaknesses of staff, after which actions are taken to strengthen the identified areas.

Participants had this to say:

I use SWOT analysis as a tool to scan for strength and weaknesses. When I identify the strength and weakness, I put in measures to strengthen the identified areas (NM 3)

...with the help of the SWOT analysis, I am able to pick the strength and weaknesses of my staff and the department generally, so I come up with measures to improve these areas...(NM7)

As demonstrated above, nurse managers at GARH conduct environmental scanning, and the preferred methods were observation, round checks and supervision and SWOT analysis as the tool. However, emphasis is placed on the internal environment rather than the external environment. As a result, opportunities and threats are not well known and cannot be exploited or avoided.

4.5 Strategy Formulation Practices

Strategy formulation is the action of creating guidelines to achieve a target.

Formulating strategies enables forward-looking plan, allowing organisations to carefully evaluate its priorities and come up with guidelines to help achieve the vision. This theme focused on how nurse managers plan to achieve targets for their departments and the hospital. Five (5) sub-themes were identified: meetings, deliberating and discussion of problems as a group, design action plans, team agreement on better options and setting of targets.

All the participants mentioned formulating strategies through meetings, which were either formal or informal. The formal meetings were planned, while the informal meetings were organized when there was a situation to be resolved immediately. During these meetings, NMs said, they discuss and deliberate on issues as a group to make decisions, set targets and design action plans. This method, participants stated, promote staff buy-in for achievement of objectives. Also, during these meetings, topics are discussed with staff

leading presentation on topics of interest.

4.5.1 Meetings

Participants revealed that meeting are scheduled with staff to discuss the vision, and issues emanating from the department, then plan or strategize on how to solve the issues. During these meetings, NMs and staff deliberate on issues as a group. This according to the participants helps to solicit staff buy-ins and deeper understanding of the goals and objectives to be achieved.

NM 12 for instance, acknowledged that:

.... I usually have meetings with my staff to discuss our vision and plan how to achieve it. Inputs from all staff are always welcomed. Through that everyone buys in and knows what to do. So, we agreed that at every Monday morning meetings, topics will be discussed, with staff leading some presentations on topics of interest (NM12)

Some NMs explained that they have planned meetings and informal meetings that happen when issues arise and need immediate attention.

We do have formal and informal meetings. The formal meetings are well planned, but the informal ones happen when the need arises. During both meetings we strategize on what to do and how to do it (NM 10)

The participants also indicated that many suggestions come up during the meetings for decision making and action plans are designed to achieve the objectives.

NM6 added that:

During the meeting, a lot of suggestions come up and we decide on which suggestion is better. The team agrees on options then we design an action plan based on the decisions taken (NM6)

4.5.2 Discussing and deliberating on problems as a group

Majority of the participants explained how coming together as a group and deliberating on issues affecting work during meetings help with the formulation and attainment of department and hospital goals. In the process, NM 8 explained how a team planned to

improve documentation in the department.

... we (NM and all staff) come together as a group to deliberate on the issues and with staff inputs you will achieve the set goals easily...as a department, we had issues with documentation so I called for a meeting and we deliberated on how to resolve it. At the end a solution was discovered and that has solved our documentation problem, though not completely (NM8)

Participants intimated that the group agreeing and selecting better options for planning to achieve goals promote easy implementation. NM3 articulated that:

...as a group, when we agree and select the plan that best suits the department, it's very easy to implement for good results... (NM3)

4.5.3 Setting Targets

Participants explained that, they set targets to meet specific goals and these targets are time bound. NM4, indicated that in setting targets, it has to be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time –bound (SMART). Targets are set to help achieve the things documented in the action plan.

We set our targets using the SMART. It should be simple, measurable, achievable, and reliable and time bound (NM4)

4.6 Strategy Implementation Practices

Strategy implementation is concerned with putting strategies into action. To achieve the organisation's mission and vision for the future, coordinated efforts of human, material and financial resources are required. The participants disclosed that staff involvement, management of organisational culture, supervision, regular training, motivation, interdepartmental collaboration, use of different leadership styles, assignment of responsibility, feedback, use of protocol and standards, use of attendance books, are used to ensure strategy implementation. The nurse managers asserted that with these strategies, they can implement the activities developed to achieve the organisational goals.

4.6.1 Staff Involvement

Most of the participants, relied on staff involvement. Participants asserted that if staff are not encouraged to get involved in implementing plans, they do not get involved. Hence, identifying individual capabilities and assigning them tasks to accomplish and holding them accountable for successes or failures positively affected implementation of strategies. NM 5 had this to say:

... If you don't get staff involved, they won't get involved. So, you identify those that are capable of doing the task and let them execute it, then you hold them accountable for successes or failures...this ensures implementation of our strategizes (NM5)

4.6.2 Assignment of Responsibilities

Most participants expressed assigning responsibilities to individual nurses to get work done. This is done using the assignment book, where everyone is assigned, task based on their competencies irrespective of their ranks. NM 6 narrated that:

...people are assigned the responsibility for task to be performed...I assign individual nurses to do different task (NM12)

Whereas NM 6 acknowledged that:

.... I use the assignment book where everyone is assigned based on competencies irrespective of their ranks (NM6)

4.6.3 Motivation

The use of unofficial offs, holiday offs, and acknowledgment of good job done and opportunities for attending workshops are ways participants motivated staff to get them committed and dedicated to implementing strategies. Participants asserted that implementation is made easier when staff is motivated. Participants had this to say:

... I usually use 'dot' and holiday offs, workshop opportunities, appreciating good job done to motivate my staff to give their best to the work. A happy internal customer sees to it that the hospital succeeds by ensuring set objectives are achieved (NM1).

...implementation of my strategizes are made easy when my nurses are

motivated... (NM7)

4.6.4 Regular Training

Participants mentioned that ensuring their staff are updated with information and have the pre-requisite skills and knowledge is one of the ways strategies are effectively implemented.

This was expressed in the quotation below:

... I frequently organize in-service training for my staff. I don't assume that staff know and forget training, I train regularly. No matter their level, when they come, I take them through training such as infection prevention, basic life support mechanisms and understanding the use of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) in situations (NM4)

... On regular basis I organize training on disease conditions that frequent my department to ensure staff are abreast and know how to give quality care to patients (NM7)

4.6.5 Supervision

Most participants revealed that, supervising staff and fully participating in the implementation process ensure that strategies are implemented in the department effectively.

I ensure that strategies are implemented properly by supervising and getting involved in the work myself. If you set plans for people and you don't get yourself involved, and do not supervise, the work will not go on (NM8)

In furtherance, NM6 lamented the laborious nature associated with supervision. She said supervision can be difficult since it needs team efforts of all members to achieve desired goals. This is contained in the following narrative:

Supervision is not an easy thing to do by only the managers. It is all about teamwork where efforts are complemented to achieve desired goals. So based on the hierarchies and workflow, supervision is done accordingly to ensure that things are going well in the department (NM6)

Some participants indicated using supportive supervision to ensure staff work according to protocols and standards. Participants did this with the help of a checklist and a superb supportive supervision team. NM 2 expressed:

I have a superb supportive supervision team... I assess whether staff are working according to protocols and standards. So, the team go round and check with a checklist... (NM 2)

4.6.6 Interdepartmental Collaboration

Most of the participants indicated that implementing strategies in their unit requires collaboration with other departments such as medical surgical teams, pharmacy, imaging, physiotherapy, dieticians, procurement, etc. to successfully implement strategies.

Therefore, interdepartmental collaborations are done to enable the organisation achieve its goals. NM4 stated that:

In the hospital environment, strategies cannot be implemented without interdepartmental collaboration. I contact other departments in order to achieve quality care for my patients. I collaborate with the dieticians, medical and surgical teams as well as the physiotherapist (NM4)

NM3 added that:

...Collaborating well with other departments helps get work done quickly (NM3)

NM3 further, emphasized that her good relationship with other managers made interdepartmental collaboration effective.

My good relationship with the manager at stores makes getting items to work with easier. I am able to get gloves and other logistics without requesting on the system first, whereas others can't (NM3)

4.6.7 Feedback

The use of feedback ensures that workflow is in the right direction and everyone performs their task according to expectation. NM6 acknowledged that:

At the end of the day, feedback is given and workflow is actually in the right direction because everyone knows their responsibilities and duties are accomplished (NM6)

4.6.8 Use of Different Leadership Styles

All the participants indicated that to get strategies implemented, they adopt different leadership styles such as transformational, democratic and autocratic style depending on the situation. For instance, NM6 stated that:

... application of a leadership style is important. Depending on the situation in the unit, I choose the style appropriate for everybody so that workflow goes on and so it's not about just using one leadership styles. Sometimes I am autocratic, other times democratic and sometimes I go the laissez faire way (NM 6)

Whereas NM1 acknowledged that:

I do not use one specific leadership style; however, I mostly use the autocratic leadership approach to get the implementation done...then I bring in the transformational approach (NM 1)

4.6.9 Management of Organisational Culture

NMs stated that culture is managed in their departments. Participants disclosed that the culture adopted in their departments is that people are not blamed whenever challenges or mistakes emerge. Processes and systems are used to get work done, hence, any challenge that comes up are not seen as an individual's fault. Participants further said, when mistakes occur, the gaps in the processes are corrected to avoid reoccurrence. This is done to encourage people to freely report mistakes so that they can be addressed. Participants had this to say:

The culture I adopt looks at the processes and systems we work with so that if there is any mistake or challenge anywhere, the individual involved is not blamed, but would rather look at the gap in the processes and try to correct it. So, with this, every worker is free to report any event adversity when rendering services because you know that when you report it, you will not be directly held responsible. This contributes a lot to our department (NM5)

Where there are errors, I try to ensure that people are not blamed. This makes the unit a more flexible area where people can easily report errors and then we can improve upon it. I try to reduce the occurrences of errors instead of blaming people to achieve our objectives of giving patient centred care (NM7)

NM6 bemoaned that it was not easy introducing new ways of doing things since it is difficult for people to accept change, causing resistance to implementation. She also indicated that

measures are used to reduce resistance to strategy implementation. She concluded with an example of a challenge and how the solution was implemented:

It's not easy to adopt cultures that people are not familiar with and this can bring about resistance...hence we put in measures to reduce this resistance. My ward had a lot of late comers, and this seemed like a normal situation for a while. To nip this attitude in the bud, I started allowing the few who came on time to close earlier than the late comers. There was a lot of anger and bad attitude from them, but at the long run they all conformed to coming to work early (NM 6)

Some participants narrated how positively working as a team easily facilitated work progress.

Participants were happy about the culture of working together in their respective department.

According to these participants, teamwork helps to get work done easily. NM10 asserted that:

We work as a team, which is the culture I use to get things done. So, I don't work alone. So, if there is an issue, usually I use our platforms. Issues are brought on board and then I see how best to tackle it. Together we achieve more when we work as a team (NM10)

4.6.10 Use Protocols and Standards

All participants stated that protocols and standards are followed to avoid medico-legal implications in implementing strategies. NM11 had this to say:

To successfully implement to our strategies, protocols and standards are followed to ensure procedures such as quality care, patient rights, etc. are followed well to avoid legal issues (NM11)

...nursing follows standards and protocols, so I ensure my staff follow the protocols and standards in carrying out procedures (NM1)

4.6.11 Use of attendance book

The use of attendance book helped NMs regulate staff regarding attendance and time of reporting to work. Additionally, the NMs indicated, this promoted strategy implementation.

With the help of an attendance book, I can keep track of what time and how regularly my staff come to work. Ensuring that staff come to work and on time is a good way of getting your strategies implemented since they are one of the biggest assets needed for it (NM3)

...I ensure my staff punctuality and being at post with the attendance book... (NM 5)

4.7 Strategy Evaluation and Control Practices

In terms of evaluation and control of strategies, participants revealed comparing past targets and new targets to know if results are being achieved. Participants also said evaluation and control was an ongoing process, not a once in a while activity. Participants further reported this stage helped to know how resources are managed to control wastage. Again, appraisal forms, use of leave and duty rosters and holding people accountable with control mechanisms help to evaluate and control strategies.

4.7.1 Comparison of Targets

Participants reported comparing past targets and results to new ones to know if strategies are being achieved. Participants continued with implementation if the goals are met, however, new strategies are developed and implemented when goals are not met.

Participants also, stated that this allows to determine whether the strategies are helping in meeting the set goals.

This was expressed according to NM 3:

I compare my last year's target to this year's target: was I able to achieve? If yes it means I did well, if no, new strategies are developed. You use your past records to compare with what you've been able to do then based on that you can know whether you are performing, or you are under performing (NM3)

4.7.2 Use of Appraisal forms

Participants revealed the use of appraisal forms to evaluate the performance of nurses. This was done through one-on-one interviews.

NM 9 stated having one-on-one interviews with staff to know if their individual objectives have been achieved.

I use appraisal forms to evaluate staff output. Usually, I have a one-on-one interview

with my staff with the appraisal form to know if their individual objectives have been achieved... (NM9)

NM1 also admitted using one-on-one interviews with the help of the appraisal form. Through this process, staff are applauded for good work and encouraged to improve upon their weakness.

The evaluation of strategies is through staff appraisals. I do one-on-one interviews and staff are applauded for good work and encouraged to improve on the areas of weakness (NM1)

4.7.3 Management of Logistics

According to some participants, evaluation and control help them to know how logistics for work are managed. NM 4 had this to say:

In evaluating and controlling, the management of resource is very necessary. I look at the number of consumables needed. For instance, if my ward uses three gloves per shift, then I only need to give 9boxes gloves for use in a day. So, I don't give out more than 9 boxes because that would be wasted. These are some of the things we do (NM4)

Two participants added that using the requisition book helped to know what logistics are available and how to utilize it without wastage. Participants further said that with the requisition book, they can check the cost of the logistics against how much the department is generating. This way, the department is able to determine whether it's gaining or loosing.

NM 8 stated using the requisition book to check what logistics are available and how to distribute for utilization.

...I use my requisition book to check the logistics I have and how to distribute for utilization... (NM8)

NM12 admitted, the use of the requisition book help to know the cost of the logistics as against how much the department makes. This way, loses and gains are easily detected.

.... with the requisition book, I know how much the things cost as against how much the ward is making, so I know if we are gaining or loosing (NM12)

4.7.4 Use of Time-in and Time-out Books

Participants explained that, staff are evaluated using attendance and time-in and time-out books. Staff are encouraged to write their names, the time they report to work and the time they close and sign against it. This measure is used to control late coming.

NM 9 explained that when a staff reports late to work, she ensures that the staff still works the number of hours expected of them. This help reduce late coming, NM 9 said.

...I use the time in and timeout book, work starts around 8:00 AM and you come to work around 10:00 AM and you are supposed to do 6 hours, then, I am going to count the six hours from 10:00AM and you wouldn't like that. So, the next time you will try to come early so you can close with your colleagues (NM 9)

4.7.5 Use of Position Power

The use of position power is also used to control late coming or punctuality. For instance, NM5 affirmed that:

.... I use my position power. If you are a habitual late comer and not performing as you should, I can take your off-days from you, or I will not give you any extra off days while other colleagues will be enjoying (NM5)

4.7.6 Use of Leave and Duty Rosters

The nurse managers posited using duty and leave roaster to ensure adequate staff working at every point in time.

I use the timetable and leave roster to ensure I have enough staff around all the time... (NM2)

NM3 confirmed preparing leave roster at the beginning of the year and the duty roster two weeks before a new month starts to ensure undue staff shortage.

I prepare the leave roster at the beginning of the year and the duty roster two weeks to the beginning of the month to mitigate staff shortages. (NM3)

4.7.7 Setting of Guidelines

A participant explained that as an evaluation and control practice, she helps set guidelines or orders for the unit and from time to time inspect whether the guideline is serving its purpose.

I have guidelines to ensure that the right thing is being done. For instance, the Oxygen cylinder mostly gets missing. But when we set the guidelines that when a patient finish using the Oxygen, the staff on duty should ensure it is returned to position and locked... For the past 2-3 weeks the cylinder is still there. This shows that the guideline is helping. (NM12)

4.7.8 Conflict Resolution

Participants mentioned that conflicts happen in every organisation but how well the manager manages these conflicts, to not affect work output, is very important. Participants further explained that, for a healthy relationship among staff, a peaceful conflict resolution approach is used to settle conflicts.

“In terms of conflict among staff, if you do something, I will call you individually to my office to find out what happened. Then, I engage the other person too, so we trash it out. I will not say it in the presence of all other people” (NM3)

4.8 Challenges encountered in Practicing Strategic Management

Participants mentioned limited number of staff, change resistance, inadequate logistics and staff burnout as challenges that affect strategic management practices in their departments.

4.8.1 Limited Number of Staff

Some participants mentioned limited number of staff as a challenge in the practice of strategic management. This, according to the participants, is because not having the required and qualified human capacity make it difficult to achieve set goals and objectives and navigate various processes that are key in strategic management. Participants stated that:

Working in the department is quite challenging due to limited staff and it is difficult to push people to work, especially when a lot of people are taking leave (in the middle of the year) when the numbers are not there. This makes reaching set goals very difficult (NM12)

For now, if you can get more professional staff to also support because there are just a few nurses in the department, and some are not permanent staff. So, it is a challenge here. (NM11)

4.8.2 Staff Burnout

Most participants complained of staff burnout as result of low staff strength as against the enormous workload. This burn out, NMs said, negatively affected work outputs.

For instance, NM6 intimated that

...when people are exhausted, there is burnout and you can see that in what they do. This affects their work output (NM6)

NM5 explained that the effect of the staff burnout is worsened due to staff absenteeism.

...staff absenteeism due to various kinds of reasons put a lot of stress on the few nurses who come to work since they have to take on more patients... (NM5)

4.8.3 Change Resistance

Four (4) participants revealed that change resistance from staff affect the application and use of strategic management. Participants explained that change is difficult and meets a lot of resistance, however, when there is a good understanding of the situation, people get involved.

NM 10 admitted that adhering to new things are difficult, however when people get to understand the situation, goals are achieved. She recounted that:

One of the challenges is the difficulty in adhering to new things. But with time when they get to know or understand the situation, they improve. Also, when you get people who are active and want changes to be implemented, it helps the situation

Again, NM 6 acknowledged that there is difficulty in staff coming to a consensus in decision making, thus, this retards performance.

One challenge is decision making and implementing them to ensure work goes on. It's not easy as it has ups and downs. There is resistance from some staff since change is difficult. But you make sure that appropriate measures are taken (NM 6)

Whereas, NM7 affirmed that there is a difficulty in adapting to changes by individuals since they are used to archaic ways of doing things.

One of the challenges has to do with the willingness of the people to change. We are used to a particular way of doing things and change is difficult hence people fight it with a lot of funny reasons. That way, you have a few who are always willing to commit and some not willing commit to the plan. It becomes a big problem (NM7)

4.8.4 Lack of Adequate Logistics

Participants explained that sometimes logistics which are needed for work to be done are not adequately available, thus, affect the practice of strategic management. NM11 for example, explained that, due to lack of computers in the unit, staff are unable to use the software technology in her unit to facilitate work and avoid delay of clients, which makes work quite difficult.

...we have all migrated to the computer era, but we are still using the manual registration and documentation. If you are tracing folders, you can't find it, but if it is the software, you just click, and the details will pop up. So sometimes you may use 15 minutes searching for a client folder. So, this is a major challenge to us as a unit (NM 11)

NM8 mentioned that logistics such as test kits are sometimes inaccessible making work tedious and complicated.

Getting access to logistics to work with is a challenge. Sometime, even our own test kits run short. So, from the national and facility level sometimes, we have issues with logistics (NM 8)

4.9 Summary of Findings

The study examined strategic management practices of nurse managers at the Greater Accra regional hospital engaging 12 nurse managers. Semi-structured interview was conducted and verbal transcription done. The responses from the participants were analysed using thematic

approach. Themes aligned with the study objectives were generated and emerging sub-themes from the participants' responses were produced. The findings from the study were supported with quotes from the participants. The study findings include;

- As a strategic management practice, nurse managers use observation, round checks and supervision as methods and SWOT analysis as a tool to identify strength and weakness of staff by way of environmental scanning. Again, it was discovered that nurse managers did not give the external environment as much attention as the internal environment, thus, they are unable to maximize opportunities and diffuse threats.
- In formulating achievable objectives, nurse managers had formal and informal meetings with staff. During these meetings, NMs discussed and deliberated on issues with staff as group to make decisions and choose the best alternative, set targets and design action plans. Again, it was revealed that, getting staff involved in planning and decision-making promoted staff buy-in for achievement of hospital goals.
- Strategy implementation practices included staff involvement, use of different leadership styles, providing supervision, interdepartmental collaboration and management of organisational cultures, use of protocols and standards, motivation, regular training, assigning responsibilities, feedback, and use of attendance books are employed to ensure strategy implementations. Again, teamwork and not being judgmental are departmental cultures practiced by nurse managers in ensuring that strategies are implemented effectively.
- Evaluation and control practices include comparing past and new targets to know if targets were achieving results. Nurse managers, also said evaluation and control was an ongoing process. Appraisal forms, leave and duty rosters, holding people accountable and peaceful conflict resolution with control mechanisms helped evaluate and control

strategies.

- Challenges of strategic management practices are limited staff, change resistance, inadequate logistics and staff burnout are some challenges nurse managers face when practicing strategic management.



CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings in relation to the objectives and the research questions raised for the study. Further, the discussion would consider findings from related studies by juxtaposing them with the current result obtained from this study. Also, the study explored environmental scanning practices, strategy formulation practices, strategy implementation, strategy evaluation and control practices, and the challenges faced in practicing strategic management.

5.2 Demographic characteristics of Participants

The result of the study showed that all participants were female nurses. This is in line with a finding which attested that nursing is a female-gendered profession (Hollup, 2014). This is not surprising because it is perceived that nursing is a female-dominated profession. The finding of female dominance in the nursing profession has been reported by studies conducted both in Ghana and outside Ghana. Though the sample was all females, it is worth noting that, there are a few male nurse managers in the hospital; however, those contacted did not consent to participate in the study.

Participants' age ranged between 40-56 years with an average age of 48 years depicting that the participants (i.e., nurse managers) are matured. This age distribution could be attributed to the extended years of experience required to attain the position of a nurse manager. The finding is consistent with previous studies that also established the advanced ages of nurse managers which is often as a result of their working experiences (Albagawi, 2019; Abdelhafiz, Alloubani, and Almatari, 2016; Dehaghi, and Sheikhtaheri, 2014).

Consistent with the justification for nurse managers' ages, the study revealed that all the

participants have been working as nurses for more than 10years. The average years of experience as a nurse among the participants is 24years. In terms of working experience as a nurse manager in the various departments at GARH, the study revealed that the majority of nurse managers have worked averagely for 6yrs in that position; hence majority of the participants have the requisite knowledge and experience to provide relevant information on strategic management practices employed by nurse managers at GARH.

Additionally, Luthans, Luthans, and Luthans, (2021) observed that the strength of every organisation is highly predicated on the level of education and experience of its employees. In the area of education, the findings revealed that, 67% of the participants have obtained either MPhil or MSc. in Nursing, whilst the rest acquired a bachelor's degree in nursing. It was only one participant who had diploma in nursing, however her years of experience is over 30yrs. This suggests that the current crop of nurses have relatively higher qualifications that can be used to the benefit of society. Nursing education has evolved significantly, from on-the-job training to formal education to obtain graduate and postgraduate academic qualifications (Ansah Ofei, 2015). With the certificate programme fading out, the average nurse can boast of a first degree. Training institutions are currently affiliated with universities in order to award degrees to successful candidates.

In brief, the participants' socio demographic information has indicated that they are well-educated and experienced in their field, hence they would be capable of providing relevant information on strategic management practices in their field of operation.

5.3 Environmental Scanning Practices

In exploring the environmental scanning practices of nurse managers, the study findings revealed that nurse managers had knowledge of the concept and practices. The key

methods of environmental scanning that are used in GARH as reported by the nurse managers are, observation, round checks, and supervision. These methods involve an extensive evaluation of the organisation's internal management processes and how it can be managed to improve activities or meet the goals of the organisation; whereas the external environmental scanning method takes into consideration external influences and factoring them into useful plans and decisions. However, majority of the participants disclosed that more attention was given to the internal environment rather than the external environment. This finding is consistent with that of Birinci and Eren (2013) who conducted a similar study among university hospitals and observed that internal environmental scanning analyses was given more importance compared to external environmental scanning.

The finding is, however in sharp contravention to that of Graham, Evitts, and Thomas-MacLean, (2008) who observed that the various methods of environmental scanning employed by health organisations are passive approach and active approach; however, more attention is often given to passive approach. Analogous to external methods, passive method encompasses the gathering of data from a reputable existing source, such as published journals or industrial statistics on key activities and operations in a health facility, and other external influences in the health sector. The active approach, however, comprises developing data-collection tools to gain data to revise or update existing knowledge in a health facility.

Vaishnavi *et al.* (2019), however opined that environmental scanning is an important practice that helps in informed decision-making and planning as it helps managers make quick decisions, and promote continuous monitoring of factors that improves the quality of service. Hence, healthcare managers must employ both internal and external environmental scanning methods in order to strategically manage both anticipated and unexpected issues that may befall the hospital. Amuna, Al Shobaki, and Naser, (2017) also stressed the need to

employ both internal and external environmental scanning methods for proper planning to deal with future potential crises.

In describing the observation method, nurse managers revealed conducting environmental scanning by observing the staff strengths and weaknesses, understand things that impact directly on the performance of the staffs and offering them support to enhance their performance. The finding corroborates that of Gordon, & Glenn, (2009) whose study relied extensively on observation in making judgment on staffs in an organisation and also for strategic planning processes. According to Gordon, & Glenn, (2009) observation is a major part of environmental scanning process; however, it should be augmented with a feedback effect in order to realise its fullest benefit.

Furthermore, rounds checks were identified as another method employed by NMs in environmental scanning practices. From the findings majority of the participants revealed that they do round checks in the facility in order to identify problems and general issues bordering on performance. The participants reiterate the need for round checks because NMs may not be privy to some essential information just by sitting in the office unless things escalate. Hence round checks are very paramount. Consistent with this finding is the literary work of Rubano, Kieffer, and Larson, (2022) whose work did not use the word round checks but monitoring. Rubano, Kieffer, & Larson, (2022) justifies the need for monitoring in identifying trends, strength and weaknesses in a managerial planning process.

The last method nurse managers use for environmental scanning that emerged from the findings is supervision. Nurse managers disclosed that they supervise the activities of subordinates and identify problems subordinates might be experiencing then find solutions to improve upon the challenges. Similarly, Chege, and Wang, (2020) also confirms the relevance for supervision for managers in their day-to-day managerial processes. Chege and

Wang, (2020) stress that, supervision is a major panacea to most of the issues that crop up at the workplace, hence it is an indispensable environmental scanning method or strategy.

Furthermore, the study also delved into the various tools used by nurse managers in environmental scanning. Results obtained from the nurse managers revealed that, the tool employed for environmental scanning at GARH is the SWOT analysis. The tool entails internal assessment (identification of strengths and weaknesses) and external assessment (identification of opportunities and threats). The finding is consistent with related studies such as Davis, Marino, Aaron, & Tolbert, (2011); and Pourmohammadi, Bastani, Shojaei, Hatam, & Salehi, (2020), who used similar tool in environmental scanning though they did not use the same name for the process. For instance, nurse managers in this particular study use SWOT analysis, whereas the aforementioned studies deemed their tool as internal and external assessment; nonetheless, the process is the same.

Again, Taylor (2011), and Demir and Ugurluoglu (2019) also used the SWOT analysis in environmental scanning. In Taylor (2011), SWOT analysis was used to determine the present Western Health strengths for health promotion and challenges, opportunities, and threats to the capacity and processes currently in place for health promotion. In examining whether public and private hospital executives have knowledge of strategic management tools, what strategic management tools they use, to what extent they are satisfied with these tools, and what tools they consider using in the future, Demir and Ugurluoglu (2019) observed that there is lack of sufficient knowledge in strategic management tools and practices in public health facilities compared to private ones; and SWOT analysis is one of the strategic management tools used in environmental scanning. The findings from this study and other related studies affirm the use of SWOT analysis as strategic management tools in environmental scanning. Hence SWOT analysis is a tool of environmental scanning and

strategy formulation, and it is paramount in strategic management implementation.

5.4 Strategy Formulation Practices

According to Wheelen and Hunger (2012) model, environmental scanning is followed by strategy formulation. Strategy formulation entails establishing annual goals, creating policies for each business function, and allocating resources for organisational goals. From the findings, the various strategy formulation practices consist of meetings, deliberating and discussion of problems, as a group, design of action plans, team agreement on better options, and the setting of targets.

In describing the sub-theme meetings, participants revealed that meetings are scheduled with staff to discuss the vision, and issues on the department, then plan on how to solve the issues. During these meetings, Nurse Managers and staff deliberated on issues as a group and agreed on decisions that best solved the issues. This according to the participants helps solicit staff buy-ins and deeper understanding of the goals and objectives to be achieved. The result corroborates that of Wang, Shi, & Gan (2018) where strategies are formulated by soliciting opinions from all relevant stakeholders in a healthcare organisation. The findings, however are in sharp contravention of Ongoto and Murugi (2018) who investigated strategy formulation among healthcare facilities in five (5) universities. Their outcome revealed that, strategy formulation is done at the top without the contributions of nurse managers, all that is required from them is the implementation of the strategies. The results were appalling in the five (5) facilities studied as they could not achieve the goals designed by a handful of people at the management level. The findings in the study and that of Wang, Shi, and Gan (2018) stress the need for health organisations to plan as a team and

make decisions by selecting the best attainable strategy out of a pool of strategies proposed during meetings. The approach of formulating strategies is often associated with transformational leadership.

Participants in this study asserted formulating strategies through meetings, which were either formal or informal. The formal meetings were planned, while the informal meetings were organised when there was a situation to be resolved immediately. This finding is in sync with a qualitative study conducted in Greater Accra region among nurse managers by Ofei et al. (2021) and a quantitative study among nurse managers in Ghana by Ofei et al. (2019). The study findings suggest that NMs have a meeting to plan, however, most plans were not implemented.

Aside meetings, deliberation and discussion of problems and action plans are designed to address the issues identified. From the findings, action plans are designed through collaborative planning, effective communication and demonstrations to formulate achievable goals and objectives for each department. The findings were accentuated by that of Asamani et al., (2013) whose study revealed that, utilizing different levels of support to help achieve goals, carefully reviewing the changing environment and preparing for possible changes that may occur necessitates a team approach and decision-making.

Additionally, another focus of nursing management and administration, which is evaluating and allocating resources, and determining the most effective plan for maximizing resources requires teamwork and clear judgment (Abdiwali, 2019). Thus, the team approach and decision making identified among nurse managers is a step in the right direction. However, formulating strategies is a major challenge within the health sector especially by nurse managers (Carney, 2009), thus, to ensure that hospitals meet their objectives, there is an increasing need for the development of improved approaches to formulating strategies

by nurse managers. From the findings, the participants revealed that, after designing action plans, a consensus is reached and timelines and targets are set for each unit or personnel.

5.5 Strategy Implementation Practices

Implementation practices are practices undertaken to bring strategies into fruition. Primary results from Nurse Managers at GARH revealed the implementation practices that are employed by NMs in the execution of strategies. These implementation practices are; staff involvement, assignment of responsibility, motivation, regular training, supervision, interdepartmental collaboration, feedback, use of different leadership styles, management of organisational culture, use of protocol and standards, and the use of attendance books.

Under staff involvement, the findings revealed that staffs are involved in the strategy implementation process. This is done by identifying and selecting staffs that are capable of executing the task and letting them do it. According to NMs, the rationale behind this strategy is to hold those selected accountable for the success or failure in the implementation of a strategy. The finding affirms the assertion of Mazzei, Flynn, & Haynie, (2016) whose study contends that staff involvement and the assignment of key roles to some selected staffs promote specialization and the opportunity to staff to broaden their horizon and capacity in the field of operation.

Al Karim, (2019) posited that training and motivation are lynchpins for enhancing employees' performance. Similarly, the participants acknowledged that training and motivation enable staff to implement planned strategies. Training and motivation are also complemented by stringent supervision to ensure discipline and dedication towards work, consistent with previous studies such as World Health Organisation. (2013); and Bugdol, (2018) who have all acknowledged supervision as a key determinant in the implementation of strategy. From the findings, motivation is given to NMs in the form of unofficial offs,

holiday offs, and acknowledgment of good job done and opportunities for attending workshops, etc. Based on the findings, it is evident that NMs in GARH oftentimes give non-financial motivation to their staffs. Furthermore, training is often organized in the form of in-service training to staffs in order to keep them abreast with the pre-requisite skills and knowledge on their work.

Again, supervision is one of the implementation practices used by NMs at GARH. The participants revealed that, it is a huge task supervising staff at all levels in order to ensure they deliver on their mandate. To this end, the participants disclosed that supervisors are selected at each hierarchy to ensure smooth implementation of strategies at all levels. According to Blecher, (2010) supervision keeps employees on their toes, and compels them to execute their responsibilities without depicting indolence.

Other implementation practices listed by the participants are interdepartmental collaboration, feedback, and use of different leadership styles. According to the participants, since the staff consists of different individuals with varied personality traits, they are often inclined to use different leadership styles, such as transformational, democratic, and autocratic, in their day-to-day operations. Again, varying situations or events is also another key motivation for adopting a different leadership style. Similarly, a study by Hansen, & Pihl-Thingvad, (2019) also suggests the need to combine transformational and transactional leadership styles to avoid the inherent weaknesses of using only one leadership style.

Additionally, the majority of the participants also revealed the use of protocols and standards in the implementation of strategies. They disclosed that this is often done by ensuring that all laid down protocols and standards pertaining to the profession are followed to avoid medico-legal implications which will stall the implementation of strategies. This finding concurs with a study in the United Kingdom which found out that the majority of

nurses, doctors, midwives, and health care managers accepted the need for protocols to establish best practices and guide new staff. There was a general concern that flexibility in practice should be preserved (Lawton & Parker, 1999). In the sphere of enhancing productivity, the participants noted that attendance books are used to track the time and how regularly staff come to work. This finding is in line with a study conducted in Nigeria by Olagunju et al., (2018) which revealed that staff attendance was monitored through the staff attendance system. According to their study, this software helped to manage the workforce and track employee time and attendance in an easier way. The software application managed the recordings, control and monitoring of staff absence and lateness. The significance of this attendance system was to make sure that staff members were punctual and did their jobs on time.

5.6 Strategy Evaluation and Control Practices

The theme strategy evaluation and control practices had nine (9) sub-themes namely: comparison of targets, management of resources, use of staff appraisal, use of position power, use of leave and duty rosters, setting of guidelines, use of requisition book, use of time-in and time-out books and conflict resolution. Strategy evaluation and control practices as a strategic management function involve comparing actual outcomes to targeted outcomes and the influence of employee behaviours that help achieve organisational vision and objectives (Ofei, 2015). This stage has been linked to improved patient and staff outcomes (Wong et al. 2015). The participants comparing past targets and new targets to know if results are being achieved helps to improve performance. Through, this strategy, participants are able to tell if strategies formulated and implemented were efficient or needs to be amended. Participants also said evaluation and control was an ongoing process, not a once in a while activity.

Furthermore, the findings also indicated that nurse managers make good use of duty and leave roster to ensure adequate staff working at every point in time. Participants explained that, staff are evaluated using attendance and time-in and time-out books. Staff are encouraged to write their names, the time staff report to work, and the time staff close and sign against it. This measure is used to control late coming. The study revealed further that when a staff reports late to work, nurse managers ensures that staff still worked the number of hours expected of them. This current finding concurs with a study in Uganda on ward managers' perceived challenges in healthcare setting which revealed that, ward managers make a timely work-plan; like making duty rosters a week before the beginning of the following month in order to address any complaint from staff and to manage the staffing on the ward well (Kakyo & Xiao, 2019).

Appraisal forms are also key tools used in evaluating strategies. According to the participants, appraisal forms are used to evaluate the performance of nurses. This is normally done through one-on-one interviews and the use of logbooks. Similarly, findings from the literary work of Maria et al. (2021), revealed that maintenance of the logbook (time book) is another fascinating issue in nursing. Logbooks are used essentially in assessing nurses' punctuality to work and in many instances, the book is kept at the nurses' station and is submitted weekly to the nursing administrator to maintain control. However, some individuals log in earlier than the actual arrival time to ensure that those who would come later would also be within the regular reporting time (Maria et al., 2021). This study further established that nurse managers moderately ensured professional control through coaching, supervision, mentorship, effective appraisal and encouraging self-directedness. The appraisal form is a requirement for promotion hence, nurses attach a lot of seriousness to it. Nurse managers using this as a strategy for evaluation and control practice, will go a long way to achieving positive results.

Other tools employed by NMs in GARH in evaluating strategy and control practices are; result assessment, and inspection of guidelines designed to be followed, and control mechanisms (i.e., behavioural control), etc. Consistent with the findings, (Cogin et al., 2016) also stressed that, the withholding of off days, query letters, holding people accountable and the use of logbooks are critical tools that can be used to as a control mechanism. However, low levels of investment in people and a concentration on transactional human resource activities may lead to negative job attitudes such as low morale and frustration among nurses. Therefore, reducing the plethora of behaviour control and increasing levels of input and output controls in the management of health workers is advised (Cogin et al., 2016; Khan, & Huda, 2016).

Additionally, conflict resolution is an essential control practices that is often used to ensure strategy implementation is not derailed. Participants mentioned that conflicts happen in every organisation but how well the manager manages these conflicts, to not affect work output, is very important. Participants further explained that, for a healthy relationship among staff, a peaceful conflict resolution approach is used to settle conflicts. This finding corroborates that of (Maria et al., 2021), where resolving conflicts are pertinent issues faced by nurse managers at the unit level because of the number of different professional groups engaged in patient-centred care. At the unit level, the nurse manager becomes the fulcrum around which the unit revolves. If given some experiential training on management and conflict resolution nurse managers will enhance and strengthen efficiency.

5.7 Challenges encountered in Practicing Strategic Management

Each stage of strategic management (environmental scanning, strategy formulation, implementation, evaluation, and control) presents its own challenges that, if not addressed, render strategic management ineffective and negatively impact strategic outcomes (Ndunge et

al.,2019). In light of these considerations, Ndunge et al. (2019) contended that numerous routine challenges affect the use and application of strategic management in an organisation.

Similarly, the implementation of strategy management practices at GARH was not without a challenge. Findings from the participants revealed the following challenges; limited number of staff at GARH, change resistance which serves as an impediment to the implementation of new strategies, inadequate logistics and staff burnout.

Again, nurse managers acknowledged that limited number of personnel was a challenge to the practice of strategic management. NMs reported that it makes the implementation of strategy tarry so long and eventually makes the strategy ineffective. Therefore, having adequate qualified human capacity will help expedite action on strategies and also help achieve the organisation's goals and objectives.

A weary staff cannot deliver to their utmost capacity. The participants revealed that staff burnout is as a result of limited number of staffs, and this causes the few available ones to be overburdened with responsibilities and this causes them to burnout or become stressed. This findings is in sync with a study conducted by (Bakhamis et al., 2019) where staff burnout in hospitals negatively affected the quality of care, patient safety, and the efficiency of staff workers in the hospital.

Aside lack of adequate human capacity, limited logistics was also stated as a major challenge that impede the realization and implementation of strategy. One of the participants noted that, due to lack of computers in the unit, staff are unable to use the software technology in her unit to facilitate work and avoid delay of clients, which makes work quite difficult. This finding is consistent with the findings of Ndunge et al. (2019) which showed that limited material and human resources can negatively affect the application of strategic

management in an organisation.

In a nutshell, change resistance was alluded to as a major challenge hindering the implementation of strategy. Some of the participants revealed that some staffs find it difficult to adhere to new things (direction, rules, strategies, etc.), and this oftentimes make it difficult to implement new strategic initiatives. These particular findings resonate with M’Mugambi, Okeyo, and Muthoka (2021), who investigated the role of strategic leadership style on compliance with public service ethics in the county governments of Kenya. Broadly, it emerged that resistance to change, organisation structure and culture, reward mechanism, politics, and policy priorities for strategic leadership to service as examples of challenges that impede strategy implementation when applying strategic management.

5.8 Summary of Discussion

In summary, the chapter discusses the findings that emerged from the study concerning other related empirical studies. The discussion was presented in line with the study objectives indicated in the first chapter. The key themes of the discussion border on the methods used in environmental scanning, formulation strategies, implementation of strategies, strategy evaluation and control practices, and the challenges in strategic management implementation.

Under the methods used in environmental scanning by Nurse Managers (NMs) at GARH, the finding revealed that NMs often use SWOT analysis as their foremost strategy when it comes to strategic management. Key components of SWOT analysis by NMs entail the identification of internal and external potential threats, opportunities and emerging critical issues in the social, political, regulatory, technological and economic environments; and assessing their effects on the performance of staff, and the overall operations in the hospital. It came to the fore that the findings are consistent with other related studies.

In the strategy formulation, the primary findings revealed that nurse managers normally deliberate on ideas and suggestions proposed by both management and nurses at meetings (either formal or informal) before drawing an action plan. The implementation of strategies however involve delegation, management of organisational culture, supportive supervision, training, motivation, collaboration, and the use of different leadership styles.

After implementing strategies, they are analysed using tools such as result assessment, staff appraisal, setting and inspection of guidelines, control mechanisms (i.e., behavioural control) etc. The findings again revealed that implementing strategies can be a herculean task, as the process is often befogged with challenges such as limited staff, change resistance, inadequate logistics, and staff burnout.

The next chapter presents a summary of the study, its conclusion, recommendations, and limitations.



CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, IMPLICATION, LIMITATIONS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the study and the implications of the study's findings to nursing administration, education, research and practice. It also presents the lessons learnt by the researcher from the study, the study's limitations, draws conclusions and offers recommendations.

6.2 Summary of the Study

Nurse managers play a pivotal role in achieving hospital objectives, that is, delivery of healthcare, ensuring both patient and staff satisfaction as well as serving as a liaison between the top management and staff, conveying information from the top management to the staff and vice versa. Their indispensable role requires a great deal of knowledge and skill to aid in achieving the health facility's objectives to ensure the healthcare system's long-term viability and competitiveness. Nurse managers need a set of guiding principles or cost-effective strategies, using organisational competencies to take advantage of the opportunities within the environment while avoiding environmental threats. Strategic management, therefore, becomes an essential tool in achieving this vision.

In Ghana, little is known about the strategic management practices of nurse managers. In GARH, although nurse managers practice strategic management, nonetheless, nurse managers hardly view it as their main function. Nurse managers are ill-prepared for the position and asserted that they did not have support from top management, which made the practice of SM difficult. Therefore, NMs must be trained

in management values upon appointment. The commitment of top management to SM practices is also crucial to the success of the process and the achievement of organisational goals.

The study employed an exploratory descriptive research design to explore the strategic management practices of nurse managers at the GARH. Before the commencement of data collection, ethical clearance was first obtained from Ghana Health Service Ethics Board, followed by an introductory letter to the departmental heads of GARH. A purposive sampling technique was used to recruit 12 nurse managers who have been in their position for at least 6 months. A semi-structured interview guide based on the study's objectives and constructs of the conceptual framework for the strategic management process by Wheelen and Hunger (2011), was designed to evoke responses from participants. The interview guide was pretested at LEKMA hospital. Participants gave their consent before interviews were conducted.

Data were manually analysed using Braun and Clarke's six phases of thematic analysis. The study's main themes were derived from the objectives and conceptual framework of the study. Data collected were based on; environmental scanning practices, how nurse managers formulate strategies, how nurse managers implement strategies, strategy evaluation and control practices of nurse managers, and challenges encountered by nurse managers in the practice of Strategic Management. The five (5) themes were divided into thirty-two (32) subthemes. The findings of the study revealed the strategic management practices of nurse managers.

The theme environmental scanning practices had two sub-themes: methods used for environmental scanning (observation, round checks and supervision) and tools used for environmental scanning (SWOT Analysis). Generally, the nurse managers asserted that they

carry out environmental scanning by using methods such as observation, round checks and supervision, whereas SWOT analysis is the preferred tool used in identifying weaknesses and strengths. The participants believed that Environmental Scanning helps organisations maximize their strengths, minimize weaknesses, grab opportunities, and diffuse threats, which allows hospitals to survive and grow in the competitive business world.

The theme formulation of Strategies had five sub-themes. These were: meetings, deliberating and discussing problems as a group, design of action plans, team agreement on better options and setting targets. The study revealed that NMs in formulating strategies had planning meetings with staff, either formal or informal. The formal meetings were planned, while the informal meetings were organised when there was a situation to be resolved immediately. During these meetings, NMs said, issues are discussed and deliberated on to make decisions, set targets, and design action plans. This way, participants stated, promotes staff buy-in for achieving objectives.

Strategy implementation had eleven (11) sub-themes. These were: staff involvement, management of organisational culture, supervision, regular training, motivation, interdepartmental collaboration, use of different leadership styles, assignment of responsibility, feedback, use of assignment books, use of protocol and standards, and use of attendance books. Strategy implementation is concerned with putting strategies into action. To achieve the organisation's mission and vision for the future, coordinated efforts of human material and financial resources are required. Participants further revealed these ways made strategy implementation easier.

The theme, strategy evaluation and control were described under nine (9) subthemes, namely; comparison of targets, management of resources, use of staff

appraisal, use of position power, use of leave and duty rosters, setting of guidelines, use of requisition books, use of time-in and time-out books and conflict resolution. Nurse Managers asserted that evaluating and controlling strategies goes a long way to help monitor whether strategies are working. Comparing actual targets to achieve targets, appraising staff and instituting measures to reduce or stop unproductive staff behaviours helps the organisation achieve its vision.

The theme, and challenges encountered in practices of SM were described under four subthemes. These subthemes were limited number of staff, staff burnout, inadequate logistics and change resistance and staff attitude. Limited staff were mentioned by all participants as a challenge in the practice of strategic management. They asserted that, not having the required and qualified human capacity makes it difficult to achieve set goals and objectives, as well as navigate various processes such as delegation and planning which are key in strategic management activities. Participants further explained that inadequate logistics needed for work, staff burnout and change resistance from staff affect the application and use of strategic management.

6.3 Implication of the Study

The study's findings have implications for nursing practice, nursing research and nursing education.

6.3.1 Implication for Nursing Practice

Findings of the study indicated that, Nurse Managers practice SM and could state activities carried out under the SM process, however nurse managers do not recognize and accept it as their role. Nurse Managers can play a bigger role in improving healthcare delivery and achieving healthcare goals if they understand, and accept their role in strategic management practice. Nurse Managers also asserted that they did not have support from top

management which stalled SM practice. Therefore, NMs must be trained in management values upon appointment. The commitment of top management to the SM practices is also crucial to the success of the process.

6.3.2 Implication for Nursing Research

The study highlights the need for additional research on SM practices in nursing. This will aid in a better understanding of strategic management practices in Nursing. The study revealed that, strategic management is a grey area in nursing, and research on it pertaining to nursing as a profession is quite limited. More research is needed on strategic management practices and its impact on the competencies of potential nurse managers. The strategic management process should also be researched to gain a better understanding of the process.

6.3.3 Implication for Nursing Education

Nursing education has been discovered to prepare nurses to be good clinicians rather than good managers (Fawaz et al., 2018). Leadership and management concepts relevant to nursing would thus, need to be incorporated into the nursing curriculum. The Ghana Health Service, in collaboration with accredited universities, can also run leadership programs for nurse managers in their various health facilities.

6.4 Insights Gained from the Study

This study provided the researcher with a thorough understanding of the research process, from identifying a problem to developing a proposal to the study's conclusion. Using a model as a foundation for conducting the study was also very helpful in setting objectives, reviewing the literature, and discussing findings. The researcher has also gained valuable experience in analysing and reporting qualitative data. Researching this grey area has given the researcher a new perspective on nurse manager's practices of strategic management.

6.5 Limitation of the Study

The findings of the study disclosed that nurse managers practice strategic management in the department to be efficient and effective in achieving the department and hospital goals. The study findings are limited to the setting and population used for the study due to the qualitative approach. However, a context with similar characteristics can employ the result of the study. Again, the researcher encountered delays in the date for interviews since the nurse managers were busy during work hours leading to postponements, consequently causing delay in data collection.

6.6 Conclusion

The study aimed to explore the strategic management practices at Greater Accra Regional Hospital. The objectives of the study were to describe: environmental scanning practices, strategy formulation practices, strategy implementation practices, evaluation and control practices and challenges encountered by nurse managers in the practice of strategic management. The study revealed that nurse managers practiced strategic management and could relate to its functions and benefits to nursing leadership and administration; however, they did not recognise and accept it as an important role in the day-to-day management of their departments.

The study indicated, nurse managers scanned the environment using methods such as observation, round checks and supervision, whereas SWOT analysis is used as the tool to scan the environment. In formulating strategies, it was discovered that nurse managers had formal and informal meetings with staff, where discussions and deliberation were carried out to solve problems and draw up action plans to achieve department and hospital goals. Furthermore, nurse managers acknowledged that in implementing formulated strategies a lot of strategies are employed for effectiveness. These strategies include staff involvement,

motivation, Interparental collaboration, management of organisational culture, training, use of different leadership styles, assignment of responsibilities, use of protocols and standards and attendance books.

Furthermore, participants in describing the evaluation and control practices posited the use of targets comparison, appraisal forms, use of position power, setting of guidelines, use of leave and duty rosters, use of time-in and time-out books and conflict resolution. Nurse Managers explained that evaluation and control was an ongoing process and not a one-time activity. Challenges encountered in the practice of strategic management as reported by nurse managers in this study are limited number of staff, change resistance, inadequate logistics and staff burnout. These challenges can be reduced with support from top management.

The study has given nurse managers the opportunity to bring out their experiences and practices of strategic management. The outcome of this study suggest that hospital management and nursing administration should train and prepare nurse managers to include strategic management practices in their day-to-day management of the department with full support. The study has therefore, brought to light the strategic management practices of nurse managers which can inform the decisions of Ghana Health Service and management of the hospital on training and career development to achieve efficiency and effectiveness.

6.7 Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study.

6.7.1 Recommendation for Ghana Health Service

1. Development of structured in-service training modules particularly in strategic management for training nurse managers.

6.7.2 Recommendation for Regional Health Directorate

1. Periodic training of nurse managers using the strategic modules.

6.7.3 Recommendations for Greater Accra Regional Hospital (GARH)

1. Scanning the external environment should be given as much attention as the internal environment to maximize opportunities and minimize threats.
2. Nurse Managers before appointment, should be trained to acquire management knowledge and skills to formulate and implement strategies for goal achievement.
3. Management should recognize and support nurse managers in practicing strategic management for the success of strategy implementation.

6.7.4 Recommendations for Nursing Administration

4. Nurse Managers should be encouraged to value strategic roles since this has a positive implication for the profession.
5. Nursing leadership should consider a guideline to ensure nurse managers come up with strategies at the beginning of every year and a road map of how those strategies would be achieved.
6. Provision of feedback from nurse managers on working and failed strategies should be communicated promptly for amendment.

6.7.5 Recommendation for Future Research

7. Quantitative studies of the role of nurse managers in strategic management practices in Ghana should be carried out to generalize the study findings.
8. A longitudinal study on nurse managers' perception of strategic management practices on performance should be conducted.

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APPENDIX

Appendix A: Research Instrument

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE OF A STUDY ON STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AMONG NURSE MANAGERS AT THE GREATER ACCRA REGIONAL HOSPITAL.

Interview Guide

Section A: Demographic data collected off tape

1. Age (years).....
2. Gender.....
- ...
3. Educational background.....
4. Rank.....
5. Length of years in nursing.....
6. Length of years working in the department.....

Section B: Environmental Scanning

1. How do you do environmental scanning/What methods do you use in environmental scanning?

Probes:

- How do you identify strength within the department?
- How do you identify weakness within the department?
- How do you identify opportunities from the external environment?
- How do you identify threats from the external environment?

Section C: Strategy formulation

2. How do you formulate strategies? Or Share the process used in coming up with achievable objectives for the department.

Probes:

- How are they aligned with the vision/mission of your department?
- Which people are involved when it comes to setting objectives for the department/unit
- What factors do you consider when formulating objectives for the unit?

Section D: Strategy Implementation

4. How do you implement strategies? How do you ensure your plans/strategies are put to action?

Probes:

- What factors affect the implementation of strategies in the department? Explain
- What do you do to ensure that staff implement the strategies/objectives that are set?

Section E: Strategy Evaluation and Control

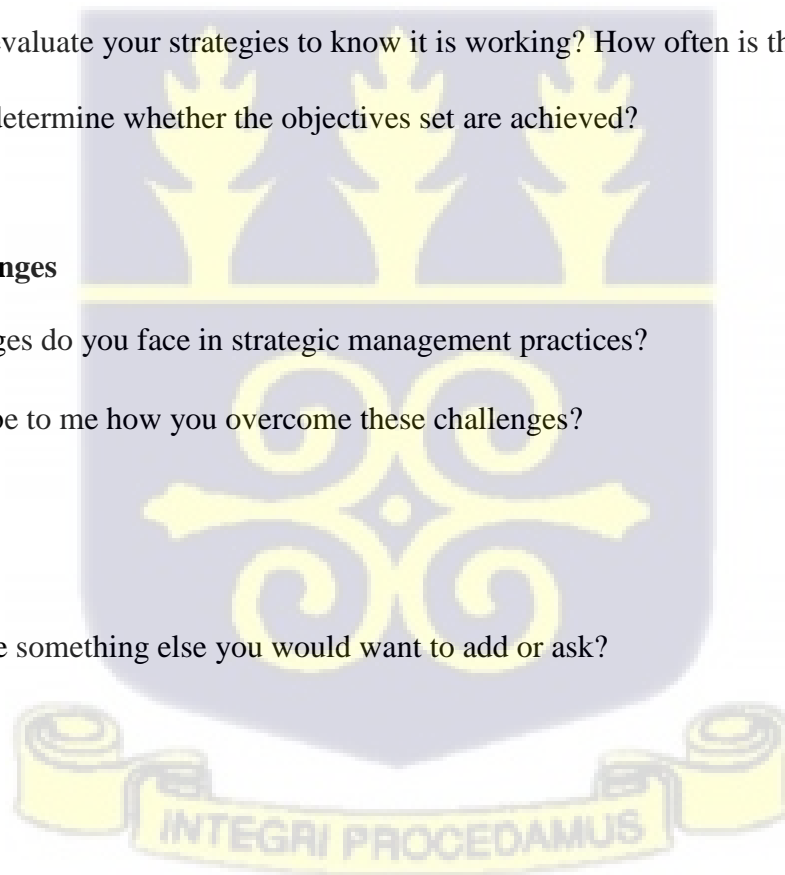
5. How do you evaluate your strategies to know it is working? How often is this done?
6. How do you determine whether the objectives set are achieved?

Section F: Challenges

7. What challenges do you face in strategic management practices?
- Please describe to me how you overcome these challenges?

Conclusion

Please do you have something else you would want to add or ask?



Appendix B: Ghana Health Service Ethics Committee

GHANA HEALTH SERVICE ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

In case of reply the number and date of this Letter should be quoted.



Research & Development Division
Ghana Health Service
P. O. Box MB 190
Accra
Digital Address: GA-050-3303
Mob: +233-50-3539896
Tel: +233-302-681109
Email: ethics.research@ghsmai.org
24th May, 2022

My Ref: GHS/RDD/ERC/Admin/App 102/185
Your Ref. No.

Ayishetu Ndeogo
Greater Accra Regional Hospital
Box 473
Accra

The Ghana Health Service Ethics Review Committee has reviewed and given approval for the implementation of your Study Protocol.

GHS-ERC Number	GHS-ERC: 023/04/22
Study Title	"Perception of Strategic Management Practices among Nurse Managers at the Greater Accra Regional Hospital."
Approval Date	24 th May, 2022
Expiry Date	23 rd May, 2023
GHS-ERC Decision	Approved

This approval requires the following from the Principal Investigator

- Submission of a yearly progress report of the study to the Ethics Review Committee (ERC)
- Renewal of ethical approval if the study lasts for more than 12 months,
- Reporting of all serious adverse events related to this study to the ERC within three days verbally and seven days in writing.
- Submission of a final report after completion of the study
- Informing ERC if study cannot be implemented or is discontinued and reasons why
- Informing the ERC and your sponsor (where applicable) before any publication of the research findings.

You are kindly advised to adhere to the national guidelines or protocols on the prevention of COVID -19

Please note that any modification of the study without ERC approval of the amendment is invalid.

The ERC may observe or cause to be observed procedures and records of the study during and after implementation.

Kindly quote the protocol identification number in all future correspondence in relation to this approved protocol

SIGNED.....

Kofi Wellington
Mr. Kofi Wellington
(GHS ERC Vice Chairperson)

Cc: The Director, Research & Development Division, Ghana Health Service, Accra

INTEGRI PROGEDAMUS

Appendix C: Consent Form

PARTICIPANT'S CONSENT FORM

The above document describing the benefits, risks and procedures for the research title **(Strategic Management Practices of Nurse Managers at Greater Accra Regional Hospital)** has been read and explained to me. I have been given an opportunity to have any questions about the research answered to my satisfaction.

I agree and volunteer to participate in the study.

Date


Name and Signature of Participant

I certify that the nature and purpose, the potential benefits, and possible risks associated with participating in this research have been explained to the above individual.

Ayishetu Ndeogo



Appendix D: Ethical Clearance



**UNIVERSITY
OF GHANA**

SCHOOL OF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY
COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES

ID: 10876887

23rd March, 2022

**The Chairperson
Ghana Health Service Ethics Review Committee
Accra.**

Dear Sir/Madam,

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION – ETHICAL CLEARANCE

I write to introduce to you **Ayishetu Ndeogo**, an MPhil Nursing student at the School of Nursing and Midwifery, University of Ghana, Legon.

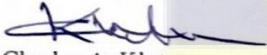
The Scientific Review Committee of the School has approved the thesis topic: **“Perception of Strategic Management Practices Among Nurse Managers at the Greater Accra Regional Hospital.”**

As part of the School’s requirement, the student is required to obtain ethical clearance before embarking on data collection.

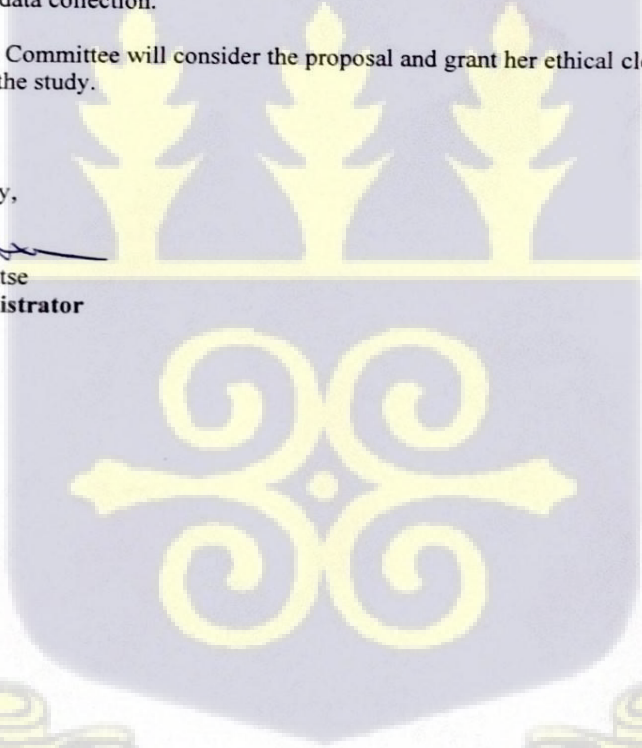
I hope that the Committee will consider the proposal and grant her ethical clearance to enable her undertake the study.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,




**Charles A. Klutse
School Administrator**



P. O. Box LG 43, Legon, Accra, Ghana | Tel: +233 (0) 303 970 801
Email: nursing@ug.edu.gh | Website: www.nursing.ug.edu.gh

INTEGRI PROCEDAMUS



Appendix E: Letter of Support



UNIVERSITY OF GHANA
DEPARTMENT OF RESEARCH, EDUCATION
AND ADMINISTRATION
SCHOOL OF NURSING

Ref. No.:.....10876887.....

23rd March, 2022

The Chairperson
Ghana Health Service Ethics Review Committee
Accra.

Dear Sir/Madam,

LETTER OF SUPPORT – ETHICAL CLEARANCE

This letter is to support the application for ethical clearance of **Ayishetu Ndeogo**, an MPhil Nursing student in the Department of Research, Education and Administration, School of Nursing and Midwifery, University of Ghana, Legon.

As part of the programme, she is to undertake a research on the topic **“Perception of Strategic Management Practices Among Nurse Managers at the Greater Accra Regional Hospital.”**

I hope that the Ethics Review Committee will consider the proposal to enable her collect data.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

Dr. Adelaide M. Ansah-Ofei
Primary Supervisor

COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES

• P. O. Box LG 43, Legon, Accra, Ghana. • Telephone: +233 (0) 302 513 250 / 0289 531 213
• Email: rea.son@chs.ug.edu.gh • Website: www.nursing.ug.edu.gh

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