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VOLUME I

A STUDY OF INDIVIDUAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL  
VARIABLES IN RELATION TO CHARGE  
NURSE BEHAVIOUR

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the  
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy  
at Massey University

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the impact of new ideas in the context of two hospitals. Concepts derived from systems theory have been used as a framework for the study which proposes that the innovative behaviour and characteristics of charge nurses are modified by individual and organizational factors. This proposition is also examined over time and a training intervention.

In the empirical section of this research, the statistical analysis yielded nine distinct clusters of variables. Examination of these clusters, and of the relationships between particular variables, led to the identification of important combinations. In particular, it was established that there is a positive relationship between measures of self assurance and interpersonal adequacy, as measured by the CPI, and judgements made by nurses in the ward Kardex. These judgements are influenced by the charge nurses' perception of the organization. A positive relationship was also demonstrated between the general and specific measures of innovative behaviour, and the perception by charge nurses of the climate of the organization.

In the propositional extension of the study, the effects of training and time on psychological characteristics and innovative behaviour were quantitatively and qualitatively examined. The planned training intervention devised for the study did result in significant shifts in psychological mindedness, social presence

and socialization as measured by the CPI. The POI measures for inner directedness, existentiality and capacity for intimate contact showed significant differences over time, but not training.

There was also evidence of innovative behaviour by charge nurses at both hospitals over the seven month period of the study.

It appears, therefore, that levels of general and specific innovativeness vary with the extent to which the organization is seen as facilitating or restrictive. Innovativeness is a relative concept, linked with social factors which influence perception. There is evidence in this study that training aimed at increasing knowledge and self confidence, can cause significant changes in these social factors.