

THE COST OF EXCELLENCE: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF TALL POPPY SYNDROME AND ITS IMPACT ON NURSING LEADERSHIP AND PATIENT CARE

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Tall Poppy Syndrome (TPS) leads to two main negative effects which hinder healthcare systems worldwide because it creates a culture that mocks people who achieve high levels of success. The study investigates how TPS affects nursing departments because "horizontal violence" targets exceptional performers. The research employed a phenomenological research method to study how Oppression Theory explains why healthcare workers use hierarchical power to disable their peers who show clinical expertise and leadership skills. The research shows that TPS appears in different ways throughout professional life because fresh nurses experience competence "gaslighting" while experienced nurses face character attacks which block their ability to implement evidence-based practices. The organization suffers severe psychological damage which produces high turnover rates and "quiet quitting" behavior and damages patient care standards through measurable effects. This paper recommends a three-part approach that includes ethical leadership principles and zero-tolerance enforcement as well as special rules for bystander intervention. The study finds that healthcare organizations need to eliminate TPS because it protects patient safety and creates better operating environments for medical staff.
