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Exploring the Buurtzorg model : A paradigm shift in global homecare

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Abstract

Buurtzorg Nederland, a self-managed homecare organization founded in 2006, has transformed homecare services by emphasizing humanity over bureaucracy. Led by Jos de Blok, this pioneering non-profit organization has drastically changed the older, ineffective ways of delivering home care services. In his 2015 TEDx Talk, Jos de Blok explained the mission of Buurtzorg, which is to provide holistic patient-centered care without the constraints of rigid bureaucratic structures that often block efficiency and compassion in healthcare. Buurtzorg's groundbreaking success is rooted in its unique care model, which entrusts caregivers with

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substantial autonomy and responsibility. These highly skilled professionals are chosen for their clinical expertise, proactive approach, and dedication to delivering compassionate care. By creating self-managed, close-knit teams across the Netherlands, these nurses have been able to address critical healthcare needs, particularly for elderly patients, effectively. They aptly mesh together medical and auxiliary care for holistic care outside the hospital setting. Unlike any conventional organization marred by layers of, at times, unnecessary processes emboldened by red-tapism, Buurtzorg avoids the overhead time and costs spent in bureaucratic processes in homecare management that allows the nurse to spend less time at the desk and more with the patient. The model is quite striking and has created an enormous impact: As of 2014, Buurtzorg grew exponentially, with a turnover of €280 million. It grew to over 850 self-managed teams and had over 10,000 caregivers on its payroll. This success was not limited to the Netherlands; Buurtzorg spread its influence worldwide and established a foothold in India in 2018. The expansion reflects the organization's ambition to bring the patient-first approach to diverse healthcare environments and adapt it to the needs of local settings. The Buurtzorg model raises critical questions about the future of homecare globally. Can self-managed homecare become the industry standard, with its proven efficiency and high levels of patient satisfaction? The recruitment process of this organization, emphasizing skill, teamwork, and compassion, also invites reflection on whether such an approach to staffing challenges might be effective and how others might replicate success in different contexts. This question seeks to consider the appropriateness and feasibility of the Buurtzorg model within India's healthcare landscape. Socio-economic diversity and healthcare infrastructure pose a challenge in India, and adapting the self-managed homecare model could revolutionize the sector with the growing demand for quality elder care. However, several factors need to be considered, such as cultural and logistical differences and potential barriers like resource limitations and bureaucratic inefficiencies. Moreover, the success of self-managed teams raises the question of performance measurement. Patient outcomes and satisfaction are essential metrics, but staff well-being and operational efficiency are equally important to measure. Finding and implementing such metrics would be a helpful exercise in exploring the broader applicability of this model. Buurtzorg Nederland is the epitome of the transformation that can be made by putting humanity at the center of healthcare. The model's success will call for research into how the same model can be applied to other countries, such as India, with specific challenges like recruitment, performance assessment, and cultural compatibility.

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1. Introduction

Jos de Blok advocates for the need to rethink the role of bureaucracy in healthcare, especially in homecare services. According to him, while bureaucracy has long been seen as an effective organizational tool, it has always stifled creativity, reduced efficiency, and obstructed patient-centered care. With that in mind, he began investigating and establishing

innovative, non-profit, and all-inclusive organization with alternative organization models for more effective homecare delivery. It was in 2006 when, together with Ard Leferink and Gonnie Kronenberg, they founded Buurtzorg Nederland [1]. The founders of this highly innovative organization came up with this concept inspired by teal organizations or decentralized, self-managed systems that are client-centric to achieve the growing homecare needs.

Buurtzorg's philosophy fundamentally changed how patients were seen and treated. The organization uses the term "clients" for patients, a subtle yet profoundly positive change in the way the elderly, people with chronic conditions, and those with terminal illnesses are treated [2]. This respectful terminology promoted dignity and autonomy among care recipients, especially in geriatric populations. De Blok's focus on geriatric care stemmed from the Netherlands' demographic challenges, such as declining birth rates and increasing life expectancy, leading to a growing demand for elderly care services. WHO defines health as more than merely the absence of illness or infirmity but a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being [3]. Jos de Blok and his founders embraced this definition and emphasized a holistic perception of well-being, considering how emotional, social, and physical conditions are intertwined. Buurtzorg Nederland applied these principles by developing a new care delivery model that empowered self-managed teams of nurses to concentrate their care efforts on personalized and holistic care [4]. It worked in partnership with clients to provide appropriate services in terms of physical as well as psychological needs by fostering a community and allowing support. This has effectively addressed present health issues and kept populations healthier and better, accomplishing the organization's mission of redefining healthcare.

Buurtzorg presented a groundbreaking alternative to traditional homecare models by focusing on humanity over bureaucracy [5]. It was focused on dignity, autonomy, and holistic care, meeting clients' physical and emotional needs. In this manner, Jos de Blok and his team transformed the homecare landscape in the Netherlands and set a global example for healthcare systems looking to balance efficiency with compassion [6].

Equipping clients and teams with autonomy and networks

The founding members adopted the "Buurtzorg onion model" that represented a client-centric approach as it had the following features-

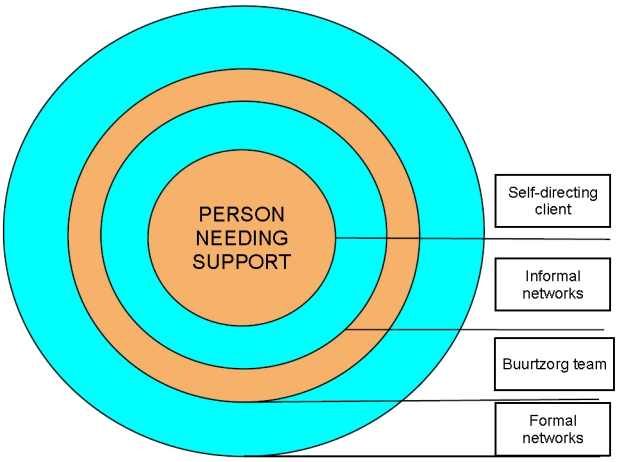

Figure 1

Buurtzorg Onion Model

Figure 1 shows the following features of the Buurzorg Onion Model:

Self-Directed Clients

As seen, the approach followed by Buurtzorg seeks to build upon clients' potential to guide their care delivery in the ways they deem fit. Using the two channels- the formal as provided by profession-based relationships and family and neighborhood- furthers an amalgamation of comfortable, convenient, and effective management structures into care activities.

Self-Directed Teams

Buurtzorg began its activities with self-governing teams of 12 members each. They work autonomously, selecting and leasing facilities in their area of operation and determining how best to optimize care delivery within available resources. This delicate balance of autonomy and accountability forms the very essence of the organization. Each region has a mentor assigned to approximately 30 teams to provide support when needed. However, the mentor's role enables the teams to find solutions rather than impose directives. The success of these self-managed teams is reflected in their ability to adapt and respond to operational challenges independently.

As one respondent noted:

"Team-level accountability ensures that the team understands its client base, identifies opportunities, and manages resources effectively. If productivity targets aren't met, the team recognizes the best strategies to attract clients and improve outcomes." (Respondent 1)

Use of Formal and Informal Networks

Buurtzorg maximizes the clients' networks to improve the delivery of homecare. The formal networks involve professional or corporate contacts, while the informal networks involve neighbors, friends, and relatives who can assist the care teams. Such connections are fundamental to maintaining a caring, supportive, collaborative environment.

One respondent explained the significance of social networks:

"We assess the client's social network to determine who can help them solve their problems. Even something as simple as a neighbor checking in periodically makes a meaningful difference." (Respondent 2)

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

Buurtzorg has integrated ICT into its operations to reduce bureaucracy, enhance professional communication, and streamline operations. The organization has adopted the OMAHA system, a standardized healthcare taxonomy, and has linked it to the Buurtzorg Web, a platform intended to store clients' health records and monitor services. Instead of using records for management oversight, Buurtzorg maintains them for future reference, ensuring continuity and quality in client care. Jos De Blok explains:

"Our records are not for managerial control but to enhance the healthcare provided to clients."

Through innovative use of networks, self-managed teams, and technology, Buurtzorg has redefined the delivery of homecare services: efficient, client-centered care rooted in trust and collaboration.

Decentralization as the foundation for holistic homecare

Decentralization of Buurtzorg has become crucial in achieving high efficiency and effectiveness in minimizing the wastage of resources on unnecessary operations. This contrasts directly with hierarchical, bureaucratic management systems prioritizing bureaucratic rigidness above all else. Success for this organization is anchored in the entrepreneurial nature of its people, empowered through an appropriate

dispersion of decision-making structures. This decentralized model encourages a subscriber-centric approach and challenges the staff to deliver the best services suited to individual needs. Instead of following a one-size-fits-all, bureaucratic approach, Buurtzorg nurses use entrepreneurial thinking to utilize neighborhood resources to their fullest extent [6]. This allows them to provide efficient and effective care to each client. Granting employees more independence has resulted in a tremendous rise in creativity and innovation compared to the usual bureaucratic organizations. Buurtzorg has improved the model by allowing employees' skills to align better with organizational resources. It enhances mutual trust within the organization, which continues to deliver exemplary care while sustaining a healthy, collaborative organizational culture.

Fostering trust at buurtzorg

The foundation of healthy employee-organization interrelations at Buurtzorg was based on trust. Founders realized that among self-managed homecare organizations, trust in the staff and care providers would be best fostered through personal responsibility and an actual desire to serve others without selfish motives. Over-control in bureaucratic organizations has made the employees and those holding functional positions become immune and insensitive to consistent pressure. Consequently, job performance declined significantly because it damaged the total effectiveness of bureaucratic organizations. Applying strong motivators and learning strategies significantly contributed to client orientation at Buurtzorg. Trust arose between the trustor and trustee, thus properly aligning demand-abilities and needs-supplies fit. Trust indirectly promotes the organization by improving employee motivation and effectiveness [7]. Through this, the employees were more motivated to perform their jobs well and develop trust with various stakeholders, especially the subscribers at Buurtzorg. As a business manager, it is essential to foster a sense of self-motivation and personal responsibility among employees [8]. This can be seen in self-managed organizations like Buurtzorg, where employees are driven by their sense of righteousness and apply their conscience to their work daily. The employees at Buurtzorg would work hard towards delivering excellent homecare to the clients, and while doing so, they would go beyond just the assigned duties and focus instead on delivering prime service. A business manager did the same at Buurtzorg, aligning

organizational and nurses' values and creating a deep connection and sense of commitment to nursing.

An employee stated, *"It is important that you comprehend the necessary requirements to fulfill the assigned duties. Occasionally, this entails being flexible; on other occasions, it involves meeting a deadline. You must ascertain the necessary requirements for accomplishing the project with success. Authorization is unnecessary. We are entrusted with a significant amount of confidence and responsibility. Proficiency in implementing these frameworks is required." (Respondent 3)*

"Our clients are typically referred to us by their primary care physicians or through personal recommendations. We must establish trust with them to ensure their positive comprehension of our operational methods. I have observed a need for more trust among specific clients; occasionally, it takes them considerable time to become accustomed to our approach." (Respondent 4)

A client expresses: "The crucial aspect of Buurtzorg is their unwavering knowledge and absolute trustworthiness. Typically, when an individual, such as myself, reaches old age and falls unwell, it is necessary to have reliable individuals upon whom one may depend. Following the demise of my spouse, I find myself lacking the presence of sons and daughters who can provide me with care and support. I have developed a firm reliance on what I refer to as these 'secondary institutions.' In light of my encounters with several nurses from other homecare organizations, I can confidently assert that they exhibit a complete lack of concern for the welfare of their clients. They dehumanize you, treating you merely as a numerical entity or a discarded object. Due to the absence of neighbors or relatives, I require assistance with household tasks. I have a preference for cultivating warm and compassionate relationships with the individuals who provide care for me. I discovered that Buurtzorg is the optimal alternative to these preexisting institutions. Considering the experience of being cared for by nurses who fail to regard you as a person. What is the purpose of maintaining one's existence?" (Respondent 4)

Training at buurtzorg: an essential pillar of excellence

Training in Buurtzorg involves developing employees' skills, technical knowledge, managerial competencies, and other capabilities to enhance their performance, job satisfaction, and bonding with the organization [9]. Training activities in Buurtzorg empower the employees to make prudent decisions to maximize the value of their resources. As a result, organizational productivity improves. Strategic orientation focuses on independent clients, as this is ensured by equipping the nurses with self-

care support and voluntary services from informal and formal neighborhood networks. Its founder, Jos De Blok, drew attention in 2015 to the fact that more than 70% of its nurses have postgraduate qualifications. Many others will have done up to three years of nursing school. Buurtzorg decides the salaries and allowances based on how much education or training its nurses have, mirroring business manager compensations. More importantly, promotions every year reflect experience. Buurtzorg has greatly emphasized self-led training activities and reinvests the surplus funds in education, signifying continuous learning [10]. Training budgets are decided locally by teams and, therefore, managed to fit their needs. Profit is often put back into the organization through innovative projects and education for the staff, ensuring responsibility and growth. The Buurtzorg Academy, an online learning platform on the organization's website, provides aspiring nurses with resources to advance their education and prepare for graduation. This initiative reinforces alignment with Buurtzorg's vision and goals, enhancing the person-organization fit [11].

Training at Buurtzorg has a holistic impact, reflected in the better satisfaction of employees, positive feedback from clients, and roles aligned with the individual's capabilities. Nurses reap personal and professional benefits through the opportunities for higher pay, regular bonuses, and recognition for excellent performance, thus adding to the profitability of the team and organizational success. Buurtzorg invests in employees' high-quality training and promotes a culture of continuous development that ensures its employees are equipped to deliver excellent care while advancing their careers.

The following statement reflects the point of view of the clients:

"The greater a nurse's professional expertise, the greater their autonomy, and the more they can function as generalists." (Respondent 5)

One of the respondents on team role rotation:

"Job advancement at Buurtzorg is limited due to our flat organizational structure. Thus, the enrichment stems from the diverse range of tasks, the interactions with customers, and the different roles within the team. At Buurtzorg, the focus is on valuing the expertise and experience with delivering homecare services to the clients rather than merely prioritizing competence or experience with management." (Respondent 6)

Motivation : A cornerstone of buurtzorg's success

The company, Buurtzorg, viewed motivation as a psychological driver crucial in inspiring employees toward organizational goals and vision. It

helped generate outcomes such as market expansion, increased productivity and efficiency, and profitability. The company understood the importance of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to achieve sustainable growth [12]. Even though extrinsic motivation is prevalent in bureaucratic organizations, where employees are motivated to avoid penalties or obtain rewards, Buurtzorg focused on intrinsic motivation [13]. Here, joy and satisfaction with performing the assigned task emerged as motivational agents rather than depending on extrinsic ones. Buurtzorg built organizational culture by making motivation stay high, which improved job quality and ensured more synchronization of workers and organization [14]. The nurses, guided by a shared vision and a sense of purpose, demonstrated a significant commitment to work. Their intrinsic motivation was independence, skill development, and a strong desire to provide compassionate and personalized care to clients [15].

Buurtzorg fostered an organizational culture that allowed nurses to perform beyond their potential and more closely align with their personal aspirations. The organization encouraged autonomy, so nurses self-managed their care while providing quality care [4]. Motivation was also enhanced by client feedback and verbal acknowledgment, which acted as a reinforcing factor for the commitment and morale of the nurses. Buurtzorg's motivational tactics also addressed an environment of operating in volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity[1]. Buurtzorg encouraged mindfulness or critical thinking within its nurses for dynamic needs assessments, re-assessment of circumstances, and following through with correct action- the belief that resonated with Nandram's theory of Integrating Simplification for 2017 [6].

This strategy enabled Buurtzorg nurses to design specific care plans for clients based on their health improvement, which reduced their dependence on nursing [16]. The organization filled the gap between the skills of nurses and the demands of the profession, thus ensuring that the nurses were strongly aligned with the organizational requirements. The motivational strategies adopted by Buurtzorg significantly contributed to its success [17]. By linking team targets to the larger organizational goals, the organization saved on care delivery costs without compromising its service delivery standards. The realization of surpluses among teams increased their motivation and morale. Before the end of 2013, Buurtzorg recorded annual turnover figures above €200 million, as evidence of success in its motivational strategy. In Buurtzorg, motivation is not a tool but a key foundation that makes the employees powerful and improves client satisfaction, bringing overall success to the organization [17].

Experiencing meaningfulness is similar to the sub-concept of Freedom and Lifestyle discussed by Nandram et al. in 2019 [18]. In a role resembling a business manager, individuals can enjoy themselves, find pleasure in their work, and thrive in an engaging environment. They have the privilege of working for an organization they can take pride in, one that adds significance to their job. This sense of purpose empowers them to stay motivated and committed, ultimately leading to a stronger focus on serving their clients, a crucial aspect of their role. Emphasizing the importance of enjoying work is highly valued within the Buurtzorg organization [2]. Individuals find a sense of purpose through the intrinsic rewards they receive.

"True client-centricity and genuine caring in a service business require a holistic vision and intrinsic motivation, as evidenced by the Buurtzorg." (Respondent 7)

"Since there is no upward career progression at Buurtzorg, employees are mostly intrinsically motivated: they build feelings of job pride, get recognition for their techniques, and demonstrate devotion to the goal." (Respondent 8)

They do a great deal for us at Headquarters so that we can focus on our clients. Working for Buurtzorg is practical and provides perspective. Realizing how much they aid us and the accessibility of the owners motivates me to go the additional mile and helps me act with passion (Respondent 9).

Job performance : How caregivers at buurtzorg excel

The nurses at Buurtzorg always showed remarkable commitment by surpassing their assigned tasks. This was achieved through trust, decentralization of decision-making, breaking away from traditional norms, and taking a holistic approach that considered the needs of all stakeholders. Trust was the basis of Buurtzorg's operations, as it played a crucial role in creating a self-management culture that drove innovation and profitability. Buurtzorg focused on deconditioning conventional mindsets, introducing absolute trust, and acting holistically. Consequently, job contentment and performance greatly improved among nurses in the Buurtzorg organization. It minimized many management layers that could increase time use in managerial roles rather than direct care, promoting job performance among the nurses [19]. Performance metrics were measured via the Buurtzorg Web, with a minimum of 60% productivity requirement to achieve a set organizational goal.

Caregivers in Buurtzorg demonstrated exceptional devotion, which had intrinsic motivation toward performing their nursing tasks. This devotional behavior made their service better than traditional bureaucratic counterparts. The nurses nurtured good rapport within their neighborhoods during their off-work hours while increasing their networks for informal communication to improve the delivery of home care.

The nurses became familiar with the local resources and involved neighbors to improve the quality of care while keeping the costs reasonable. Their flexibility in assuming flexible roles helped them prioritize customer feedback and respect and understand clients' emotional and physical needs. Buurtzorg's nurses went beyond just caregiving by motivating clients to increase their activity levels and fulfill their social and recreational needs [20]. They considered support from various sources, such as neighbors, relatives, or volunteers, to ensure all aspects of home care. The cooperative model allowed clients to be satisfied and helped the nurses improve their job performance throughout the organization. Through trust-building, innovative practices, and community cooperation, caregivers at Buurtzorg achieved high performance, confirming the effectiveness of its unique organizational approach.

The following statements throw light on the job performance of members at Buurtzorg:

Trust at Buurtzorg plays a vital role in the better job performance of the employees. It is what leads the organization's members to take up extra roles. (Respondent 8)

"The nurses being intrinsically motivated to keep an eye on how well they perform as an organizational member, and were they contributing enough to the organization's goals." (Respondent 1).

Collaborative team dynamics and recruitment at buurtzorg nederland

Buurtzorg Nederland formed nursing teams based on shared values and geographic proximity. Instead of hiring individuals directly into a team, the founder empowered existing employees to recruit new team members who align with Buurtzorg's ethos. These self-managed teams operated with consensus-based decision-making authority. Regional coaches were available to support about 45 teams in specific areas, addressing issues in day-to-day operations. Conflicts were resolved through mediation involving team members, coaches, and staff, and the termination of employees was considered a last resort when disputes

could not be resolved. The recruitment and resignation processes at Buurtzorg emphasized a strong person-job fit [21, 22], favoring candidates who embodied the organization's culture and values. Some key traits of individuals suited to Buurtzorg included:

- Practicing problem-solvers who are committed to the client's needs.
- Independent professionals, responsible and motivated.
- Creative, pragmatic, with a sense of humor and good sense.
- Proactive and flexible team player who actively looks for ways of improving work
- Explorers and innovators who thrive on the culture of freedom and experimentation.
- On the other hand, Buurtzorg was unsuitable for people who wanted hierarchical power over others. Teams worked in plain sight concerning anyone else's strengths and weaknesses while establishing equal and collegiate relationships.
- Buurtzorg's strategy regarding team dynamics and recruitment is just one example of how it takes its commitment to creating a harmonious, efficient workplace toward shared values, mutual respect, and emotional responsiveness to its mission.

The following statements help us understand the P-J Fit at Buurtzorg:

"Integration is when employees feel included at their workplaces and clients feel satisfied with the services they receive, aligning with their beliefs. At Buurtzorg, nurses are well-suited for this type of work." (Respondent 10)

"When it comes to professional tasks, we are all well-trained and equipped to handle them. However, working as a community nurse or nurse assistant at Buurtzorg demands an extra level of skill - the ability to be aware of reality and provide an honest reflection rather than trying to force a predetermined approach onto the situation. The nurses here are highly qualified and well-suited for their roles." (Respondent 11)

Buurtzorg : Embracing disruption with a human-centered approach to homecare

The clients of homecare services usually depend on homecare services to deal with critical or sub-critical health conditions. In most cases, the family members of such clients lack specialized nursing expertise and become uncertain about the use of required medical equipment for

homecare. Moreover, family members are often burdened with professional and personal commitments, making it difficult to provide continuous care. As disruptive and rapidly advancing technologies prevailed in the era, organizations like Buurtzorg had to walk through unclear, complex issues that required maintenance of perfection, mainly when it came to sectors such as homecare. Jos De Blok started Buurtzorg as a self-managed organization in homecare. As the nature of challenges facing human beings continuously evolves, there's a need to have flexibility while maintaining humanity, an element Buurtzorg avowedly managed through decentralization and multiple points of view for proper decision-making for stakeholders [23].

A key tenet that framed Buurtzorg's approach to self-management was the "swadharma" - the idea of taking context-appropriate action. Adhering to this tenet, Buurtzorg embraced disruptive events - such as SARS-CoV-2. It focused on trust, autonomy, and flexibility, which shaped the organization by creating strong interpersonal relationships between workers and the organization. Buurtzorg's strength in unifying a diverse workforce and motivating employees was based on its self-management and trust. The organization also adopted the "Integrating Simplification" model, which streamlined operations and focused on its clients' needs. The theory encompasses three guiding principles: needing, rethinking, and common sensing, all of which contributed to Buurtzorg's innovative and efficient homecare services during times of uncertainty.

Buurtzorg's adaptation to the covid-19 crisis: a people-centered strategy

Buurtzorg adopted a holistic strategy embodied by the Buurtzorg S-model with principles of self-responsibility, self-interest within context, self-reliance, and self-freedom. During the disruptive COVID-19 pandemic, Buurtzorg's mission was to empower clients and their families, offer in-depth training, and provide compassionate care to critically ill patients in India. During this challenging time, Buurtzorg still remained committed to improving the lives of its clients through exceptional homecare services. The principle of Swaartha was applied to identify clients' needs in their specific context, which became especially critical during the pandemic [24]. During this time, assessing the care requirements of sub-critically ill patients became essential, and family members were trained in fundamental nursing services to ensure proper care.

In Buurtzorg India, self-managed nursing teams of two members ensured that clients received high-quality care. These dedicated teams stayed at clients' homes, preventing cross-infections and maintaining consistent service levels despite frequent lockdowns. From a business management perspective, Buurtzorg assessed the impact of the pandemic on India's homecare sector, ensuring that the organization's goals were met efficiently. The teams' actions were streamlined for optimal cost and time management. Buurtzorg India, as an efficient manager, opted for surgical masks rather than N-95 masks, thus showing resourcefulness amid the crisis. Buurtzorg's approach, exemplified by its core principle of Swavalamban or standard sensing, enabled it to wade through the dynamic and turbulent changes of the pandemic. Its first concern was that of clients. Buurtzorg's leadership promoted authenticity, human-centered care, and trust in self-directed teams to manage the situation. Core to Buurtzorg was prioritizing client needs over bureaucracy [25].

In the wake of the lockdown and necessary safety measures, the Buurtzorg India leadership, comprised of experienced nurses and senior staff, developed a complete plan to maintain homecare services during the pandemic [26]. During the continued crisis, the mutual anxiety and fear experienced by nursing staff and homecare clients in India created uncertainty in the environment [27]. Even with this atmosphere, 30% of those who could not serve were still paid and contacted via Zoom. Other nurses continued caring for critically ill patients, providing medical assistance and emotional support to motivate them. Nurses who opted out of their duties faced no professional or financial repercussions. This is how Buurtzorg India improved its overall care approach while ensuring clients' security and well-being through reduced family dependency on the nursing staff. The successful implementation of Buurtzorg's strategies led to effective homecare solutions for critically ill clients in their own homes.

Evaluating the feasibility and sustainability of self-management in the indian homecare sector

Buurtzorg Edugreen Neighbourhood India Care Private Limited, a subsidiary of Buurtzorg Nederland, was established in 2018 as India's first self-managed homecare organization. This organization employs a Dutch homecare model that incorporates self-management practices. To assess how self-management could be successfully applied to the Indian homecare industry, an evaluation of several key metrics was necessary.

This assessment focused on the nurses' ability to adapt to a non-bureaucratic work environment, their competency in making decisions within self-managed teams, and how well these teams interacted and cared for clients.

Critical factors for the success of self-management in the Indian homecare industry

The success of self-management in India's homecare industry relies on several crucial factors. These are the level of interest and retention among nurses within self-managed organizations, the affordability and accessibility of the services provided through homecare, the nurses' capacity for effective decision-making, and the variety of services offered by organizations embracing self-management. All these factors collectively determine how well self-management can be integrated into the Indian context to ensure a sustainable and efficient homecare model.

INSTRUCTOR'S MANUAL

Buurtzorg Nederland : elucidating an elusive homecare model

1. Case Synopsis

Jos De Blok, a community nurse from the Netherlands, founded Buurtzorg Nederland in 2006. This self-managed non-profit home care organization aimed to provide an alternative to the traditional home care model. De Blok's motto, "Humanity above bureaucracy," reflects his commitment to prioritizing people over administrative processes. He referenced this motto during his 2015 TEDx Talk. He carefully selected nurses with the necessary skills, experience, and a proactive mindset to serve as carers at Buurtzorg. Carers worked together in small teams consisting of ten to twelve members. The teams were spread out throughout the Netherlands. The carers at Buurtzorg Nederland offered care services to individuals with critical and sub-critical health conditions and those in the local community experiencing memory loss. At Buurtzorg Nederland, the nurses offered medical and support services in a manner that differed from their bureaucratic counterparts. A tiny fraction of the staff served as the formal support staff. The rest of the staff, including the founder, had extensive experience as community nurses. In 2014, Buurtzorg Nederland achieved an annual turnover of 280 million euros. By 2016, Buurtzorg Nederland had expanded its operations to include over 850 teams and 10,000 carers throughout the Netherlands. Additionally, it has successfully

established a presence in 24 countries. As business managers, the nurses at Buurtzorg were encouraged to question the meaningfulness of their daily tasks and explore more efficient ways to perform them, all while understanding the organization's operations.

Is self-managed homecare the future of the homecare industry? Could the innovative Human Resource Management practices at Buurtzorg solve recruitment inconsistencies? Do self-managed homecare organizations have relevance in the Indian context, considering the establishment of Buurtzorg Nederland's subsidiary in India in 2018? What are the metrics of success and applicability of self-managed homecare organizations in the Indian context?

2. Case Learning Objectives

This case applies highly to undergraduate, graduate, and research coursework in Macro Organisational Behaviour, Entrepreneurship, and Human Resource Management. Prospective students can effectively grasp and utilize the essence of case studies as they develop their understanding of academic courses throughout their academic journey.

a. **Macro Organizational Behavior courses** - Students can explore the self-managed organizational structure, an unconventional and highly efficient way of organizing. This structure is holistic, client-focused, and well-prepared to handle the challenges of a VUCA environment (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, and Ambiguity). One possible approach is to consider new ways of organizing and shaping an organization's culture to enhance productivity and foster a more comprehensive approach. It is essential to recognize that the well-being of all individuals within a given context is interconnected and impacts one another.

b. **Entrepreneurship courses (An innovative mind is a valued treasure) -** As a business manager, Buurtzorg, a disruptive Dutch homecare model, offers the potential for positive outcomes and encourages innovative thinking for aspiring entrepreneurs. Exploring an unconventional approach to self-management can be a motivating way for future entrepreneurs to develop better organizational models and solutions. When faced with unconventional and effective organizational practices, human thinking capabilities generate innovative solutions with great potential for the future.

c. **Human Resource Management (The blindspot of the effective recruitment, retention, and firing illuminated) -** The innovative

recruitment and retention practices at Buurtzorg could provide valuable insights for current and future Human Resource Management students. Approaching this case study from a unique perspective can assist potential students in discovering innovative and highly efficient human resource management practices previously unexplored.

3. Discussion Questions

1. In the wake of advances in artificial intelligence, electronic machines could efficiently and reliably measure nurses' performance. How will nurses exercise the autonomy provided by self-management in their daily tasks?
2. If the nurses' ethnicity is different from the clients' in any case encountered in the near future at Buurtzorg. What could be the impact on the motivation and performance of the caregivers? What kind of additional training would the caregivers need in such a case?
3. If the demographics of the clients of Buurtzorg change as it does, it depends upon the country, climate changes, economic shifts, and other possible factors. What changes in the Buurtzorg model would you suggest?
4. What are the applicability metrics of the Buurtzorg homecare model in your country?
5. What are the possible metrics of success of the Buurtzorg homecare model in your country?

4. Research Method

The case was meticulously crafted through thorough telephone conversations and interviews with the carers and the core team members at Buurtzorg India. Visits to Buurtzorg India, publicly available newsletters, and information on the Buurtzorg website were essential sources of information. Conducting a literature review on Self-Managed Organisations and Person-Environment Fit significantly contributed to the development of this case. The author has no affiliation with Buurtzorg India whatsoever. Names have not been revealed due to privacy concerns of the individuals involved.

5. Conceptual Analysis

Buurtzorg Onion Model - The case study provides a clear explanation of the self-managed organizational structure at Buurtzorg, showcasing the Buurtzorg Onion model. At Buurtzorg, clients are at the organization's heart, as we prioritize a client-centric approach. With focuses on empowering clients, Buurtzorg helps them become more self-reliant, enhancing their morale and overall well-being. Utilizing the clients' and carers' formal and informal networks, Buurtzorg effectively delivers care by leveraging voluntary assistance. Utilizing the support of formal and informal networks expands the reach of a reliable group of individuals capable of offering client care. Self-managed teams of carers operate in a location of their choosing.

Integrating Simplification Theory - In 2017, Nandram proposed the theory of Integrating Simplification, which outlines a three-phase process for deconditioning employees. This process involves assessing the needs of the context, dynamically re-evaluating the situation, and taking necessary actions.

Buurtzorg S model - The holistic approach adopted by Buurtzorg is represented through the Buurtzorg S-model that carries the concepts of "Swadharma (self-responsibility), Swaartha (self-interest in the adopted context), Swavalamban (self-reliance), and Swaraaj (self-freedom)."

Swadharma - Empower clients by making them self-reliant and striving to improve the homecare services constantly for clients' well-being.

Swartha - Process of identifying and systematically assessing what is needed by the clients.

Swaraaj - Continuously contemplating and reconstructing one's reality in terms of whether the right actions are being taken or what could be the simpler ways of performing a job.

Swavalamban - Performing a job and finding new ways of performing a job according to changing circumstances and contexts.

7. Possible Answers to Discussion Questions

1. In such a situation, nurses could follow the "Buurtzorg S model" explained in the conceptual analysis. They will chiefly have to employ the "Swadharma" (self-responsibility) tenet of the Buurtzorg S model and direct their actions in the direction they think befits their job and responsibility in a particular situation. If the caregivers

are self-righteous, then it will not matter if they are being watched over unintentionally by Artificial Intelligence gadgets. Human consciousness has an irreplaceable job to play on various fronts while performing nursing. One must remember, "If I am right, surveillance is irrelevant."

2. Various religious texts suggest that all humans and the universe are interconnected. Impact on one entity in the universe affects, subtly or significantly, the other entities as well. If the caregivers are trained to realize this interconnectedness and oneness of existence, then ethnicity variations will be rendered irrelevant. Caregivers and clients will be able to see the oneness of existence and, therefore, will cooperate in care delivery. Nurses must follow the Buurtzorg S model for constant motivation and better performance at their nursing job, which extends beyond just physical well-being at Buurtzorg. At Buurtzorg, emotional and psychological well-being also have a great significance in its holistic approach.
3. The tenet of the oneness of all beings and interconnectedness works in such a scenario as well, as explained in answer to the second question if it's about ethnicity, religion, or nationality. If it is about a shift in the age groups seeking homecare, then Integrating Simplification Theory must be employed by using its following principles:
    a. Needing (assessing what's needed in the context)
    b. Re-Thinking (dynamically assessing the context)
    c. Common Sensing (doing that is necessary).
4. I am a citizen of India. The possible metrics of applicability of the Buurtzorg homecare model in India are the nurses' capability of de-conceptualizing themselves of prevalent bureaucratic set-up in a regular bureaucratic organization, nurses' capability of conceptualizing themselves of working and decision-making in a self-managed team, decision-making caliber of the nurses in day-to-day situations, and behavior/treatment met by the clients through the self-managed team members.
5. I am a citizen of India. The possible metrics of success of self-management in the Indian homecare industry are the level of interest of the nurses to join self-managed organizations, level of retention of nurses at a self-managed organization, affordability of homecare services provided by self-managed organizations, decision-making

capacity of the nurses at the self-managed organizations, and the paraphernalia of services availed by a given homecare organization that adopted self-management.

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