

The Effect of Work Environment as it Relates to Quality within Healthcare Organizations: Intent to Stay of Nurses due to Manager Support

Sherry F. Abernathy, PhD, MBA
Linda Thompson Adams, DrPH, RN, FAAN

Oakland University, Rochester, MI (USA)
(Detroit Metropolitan Area)



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Background

- Leadership is a critical function in promoting high quality, safe health care (Joint Commission, 2009).
- Nurse work environments contribute to nurses intent to stay, which ultimately leads to turn-over (Joint Commission, 2002).
- Nursing shortage is speculated to be 260,000 fewer nurses for patients by 2025 (AACN, 2009).
- Baby boomers are reaching a time when they will demand more complex procedures for acute illnesses (Holkin-Eakin, 2003).
- There are studies that show there are differences in work environments as it relates to job satisfaction (IOM, 2004).
- Turnover had been over 30% for new nursing graduates
- Not just a problem in the US but in Africa and other parts of the world (Nwinda, 1995; AIHW, 2000).

Review of Literature

- Nurse Work Environment

Nurses work in different hospital settings, providing quality of care to patients with the goal of positive patient outcomes. These hospital settings are considered work environments in which nurses perform the necessary job to care for patients. The nurses' perception of their environment has been demonstrated to have an impact on their intent to stay in that work environment. There are various hospital settings: hospital unit settings, hospital location settings, and hospital type settings. There have been studies conducted within these setting to determine job satisfaction and work environment perception (Boyle, Miller, Gajewski, Hart & Dunton, 2006; Hall, Doran, Sidani & Pink, 2006; Kelly, 2003; Ndiwane, 2003; Schmidt-Hoffman, 1995; Faubion, Palmer & Andrew, 2001). This study examined hospital location settings.

Continued

- Nurse Management

Nursing management has been one of the most referenced factors in linking job satisfaction among nurses (Kovner, Brewer, Wu, Cheng & Suzuki, 2006; Kleiman, 2004; Loke, 2001; Andrews & Dziegielewski, 2005; Timmreck, 2001; Joshua-Amadi, 2002; Cline, Reilly, Moore, 2003). Leadership has been defined as the process of persuading and influencing others toward a goal and is composed of many roles (Marquis & Huston, 2003). Managers have an awesome responsibility in planning, organizing, staffing, directing, and controlling the work environment (Marquis & Huston, 2003). Kleinman (2005) indicated that nurse managers perceived that they demonstrated a high frequency of transformational leadership behaviors, however the nursing staff did not concur. Transformational leadership is a leadership style that conveys vision and is able to empower others to action (Marquis & Huston, 2003). Even in the midst of a nursing shortage nurse managers must be able to slow down and be cognizant of the style of leadership behavior that is being presented to their followers. In this same study, limited interaction with their nurse manager was associated with staff nurse turnover.

Research Questions

- Are there any significant differences between urban and suburban hospital nurse perception of their work environment?
- Is nurse's perception in urban and suburban hospitals intent to stay in their organization for at least one year?

Study Participants

- Staff nurses working in urban and suburban hospitals
- Did not include managers, supervisors, advanced practice nurses, or directors.
- Nurses were all ages, academically prepared, gender, and experience.

Methodology Overview

- Research Design
 - Quantitative Analysis
 - T-Tests and multiple linear regression to test hypotheses.
 - Individual Workload Perception Scale – Revised instrument
 - Assessed secondary data
 - Variables: Management Support, Peer Support, Unit Support, Work Load.

Descriptive Statistics

- In this study more than 50% had more than 15 years of experience in the nursing field. Over 20% had been working in the same department.
- Peer support average score was the highest in work perceptions. Manager support was the lowest.

Hypotheses/Results

- There is a difference in perceived intent to stay between urban and suburban hospital settings.
 - Cannot conclude there is a difference
- There is a difference in perceived manager support between urban and suburban hospital settings.
 - There is a difference
- Manager support, peer support, unit support, and workload predict intent to stay.
 - Collective interpretation predicts the outcome. Peer support and Satisfaction with Workload predicted individually.
- The difference between urban and suburban hospital settings in intent to stay is significant, even after controlling for workload, age, and gender.
 - Only Satisfaction with workload and age between 1946-1964 were significant predictors.

Findings

- Management Support indicated there was a difference in urban and suburban nurses work environment perception and in the aggregate there was a link to manager support and intent to stay.

Conclusion

Since management support has been deemed one the highest areas in this study to indicate there is a difference in the two hospital settings, the plan of action should be to devise a plan to increase the nurse work environment perception in the suburban hospital setting. The demographics in this area for minorities have increased by 8% according to the Census 2000 (Frey, 2001). This implies that the face of the community and the nurses is changing and that leadership needs to be sensitive to this issue. Nurse managers can begin to have a dialogue with their nurses to understand what motivates them intrinsically and extrinsically as a start.

Recommendations

- Management Initiatives:
 - Creativity and Innovation
 - Lean Principles Training – Quality Improvement Processes
 - Mentoring and Coaching
 - Cultural Sensitivity
 - Management theory of establishing a quality exchange with nurse employees
 - Process to provide a smooth transition for nurse graduates from an academic setting to a professional setting.