Creating Healthy Work Environments 2019

Nurse Work Engagement and Nurse Manager Emotional Intelligence: A Developmental Intervention

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Despite ongoing and impending nursing shortages and the growing body of evidence linking nurses’ work performance to clinical and organizational outcomes, there remains a gap in understanding the emotional and motivational factors that engage nurses. The lack of a clear conceptual definition of engagement has led to confusion about theoretical underpinnings and improvement strategies. Definitions found in the literature included employee engagement, personal engagement, work engagement and job satisfaction. Much of the research antithetically addresses engagement through exploration and measurement of burnout or from a job demands-to-resources framework. In-depth review of the literature specifically focused on work engagement indicated the predominance of a positive psychology approach to understanding the concept as manifested in the key attributes of vigor, dedication and absorption at work. Studies have shown that the phenomenon is amenable to interventions that impact both organizational factors and nurse within-person characteristics. Organizational factors include job resources such as leader and co-worker support, fairness, performance feedback, coaching, decision power, recognition, training, and manageable workload. Within-person factors include emotional intelligence, physical and emotional energy, optimism, resilience, hardy personality, and supportive personal relationships. The focus of this pilot project was leader supportive behaviors as an antecedent to nurse work engagement. Evidence supports the efficacy of leadership development training on emotional intelligence development and of leader emotional intelligence and supportive behaviors but many of these studies have not been respective to nursing (Momeni, 2009; Sadri, 2012). The objective of this project was to determine if an emotional intelligence development program for nurse managers translated into supportive behaviors sufficiently to improve staff nurse work engagement as measured by the Utrecht Work Engagement 9-item Survey and to determine if correlations existed between the demographic variables of shift worked and years of experience in nursing. Findings indicated no significant change in staff nurse work engagement scores from pre-intervention to post-intervention. Although scores were higher for nurses working day shift and for those with greater than 10 years of experience, significance was achieved only for shift worked and in the pre-intervention group only.

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Abstract Summary:

An emotional intelligence developmental intervention to improve nurse manager leadership behaviors was tested to determine its effect on nurse work engagement as defined by the attributes of vigor, dedication, and absorption at work.

Content Outline:

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II. Review of the Literature

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