Creating Healthy Work Environments 2019

Structural Empowerment, Burnout, and Perceived Quality of Care Among Psychiatric Registered Nurses

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Purpose: The purpose of this study is to examine the effects of structurally empowering work environments on burnout and subsequent quality of patient care among psychiatric registered nurses.

Background & Rationale: Burnout is a well-known phenomenon in healthcare and has been a hot topic in the literature for over 20 years. Current research on burnout in nursing has looked at this phenomenon among new graduate and experienced nurses. However, despite the unique characteristics and stressors of working in psychiatry, few studies have examined burnout in the psychiatry/mental health field, and work to date has focused on psychiatrists. Research is needed about psychiatric registered nurses, as their working environment has unique stressors that differentiate the psychiatric registered nurse’s role from that of other specialty areas. These stressors often include challenging situations such as suicidality or aggression, requiring intense one-on-one interactions with patients which can lead to emotional exhaustion. The proposed study will therefore address an important gap in knowledge about job burnout among psychiatric nurses.

Theoretical model: This research will test a theoretical model embedded within the Job Demands-Resources model. Specifically, the effects of structural empowerment (a job resource) on job burnout and subsequent perceptions of patient care quality among psychiatric nurses will be tested. Structural empowerment refers to workplace conditions that give employees the power to accomplish their work effectively. It has been consistently identified as an essential characteristic of a healthy nursing environment and has been linked with lower levels of burnout and higher quality of patient care. It is logical to expect that psychiatric nurses who perceive their work environments to be structurally empowering experience lower levels of burnout because they have adequate resources to meet the demands of their work. Consequently, structural empowerment will also enable psychiatric nurses to deliver high quality of care to their patients. Finally, burnout is also hypothesized to mediate the effect of structural empowerment on patient care quality, such that high levels of structural empowerment lead to lower burnout, which in turn have a reduced negative effect on patient care quality.

Methods:

Study Design: After obtaining REB approval (September 2018) a cross-sectional mail survey will be conducted.

Sample: Approximately 400 registered nurses currently work in psychiatry/mental health in New Brunswick. To optimize response rates, all potential participants identified by the provincial nursing regulatory body (NANB) using their registry database will be included in the study. To be eligible for the study, registered nurses must be currently registered to work in New Brunswick, have self-identified as working in psychiatry/mental health, be working in a direct patient care role, and have given NANB permission to be contacted about opportunities to participate in research.

Measures: Demographic questions and validated self-report questionnaires will be used to measure the key study variables. Structural empowerment will be assessed using the Conditions for Work Effectiveness Questionnaire-II. Burnout will be measured using the Maslach Burnout Inventory – General Survey. Perceived quality of care will be measured using....
Data Collection: A survey package with a letter of information, survey, and addressed, stamped return envelope will be mailed to the home address of potential participants. As recommended by Dillman et al. to improve survey response rates, a reminder letter will be sent out to non-responders 4 weeks after the initial survey, followed by a second survey package 4 weeks after that.

Statistical Analysis: Once data collection has been completed (January, 2019), the validity and reliability of the study questionnaires will be examined using confirmatory factor analysis in Mplus and Cronbach’s alpha in SPSS. Descriptive statistics and linear regression analysis using the PROCESS macro will be used to test the hypothesized mediation model in SPSS.

Anticipated results: The results will show whether the proposed relationships in the hypothesized model are significant, and if so, to what degree.

Anticipated implications: This study will contribute to nursing research and practice in several ways. First, it will fill an important gap in our knowledge about structural empowerment, burnout, and quality of care among psychiatric registered nurses. Second, this research will add to the evidence base that formal nurse leaders in psychiatry settings can use to inform their leadership and management practices to create healthy, structurally empowering work environments, mitigate job burnout, and support high quality care. Lastly, this research will provide a foundation for further research, such as longitudinal and/or national/international studies, investigating the impact of work environment factors on psychiatric registered nurse and patient outcomes.

Title:
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Keywords:
Burnout, Quality of Care and Structural Empowerment

References:


Abstract Summary:

Psychiatric registered nurses experience unique workplace stressors. Yet, little is known about job burnout in this population. The proposed research addresses this gap in knowledge by testing a model examining the impact of structurally empowering work environments on job burnout and subsequent patient care quality among psychiatric registered nurses.

Content Outline:

Overview of information that will be included on my poster. Point form, diagrams and charts, where applicable, will be used for easy-reading and visual representation:

Purpose: The aim of this research is to explore the relationship between structural empowerment and burnout in psychiatric registered nurses, and the subsequent quality of care delivered to patients.

Background: Psychiatric nurses face unique stressors in their role due to the nature of the patient population with which they work. These stressors, such as suicidality, aggression, and challenging behaviours require intense interactions that can leave a nurse emotionally exhausted. Despite this knowledge, burnout in this population remains under-studied and research is needed to address this gap.

Theoretical Model: The Job Demands-Resources Model outlines how continued strain from job demands can lead a worker down a path of health impairment, such as with emotional exhaustion, as well as how resources can lead to the path of motivation and worker engagement. In this study, it is hypothesized that the job resource of structural empowerment can alleviate the effect of burnout on the job demands of patient care.

Hypotheses: It is hypothesized, based on the Job Demands-Resources Model, that structural empowerment will have a negative relationship with burnout, and burnout will have a negative relationship with quality of patient care. Therefore, structural empowerment will have a positive relationship with quality of patient care. (Diagrammatic representation to be included).

Methods: A quantitative cross-sectional survey will be distributed to psychiatric registered nurses across New Brunswick, Canada, consisting of demographic questions, the CWEQ-II, Maslach’s Burnout Inventory, and a single-item question regarding nurse perceived quality of patient care.
Potential Implications: Nurses with access to empowerment structures are more productive and have less burnout, leading to better quality of patient care. Less burnout can also lead to higher retention through job satisfaction and further motivation to meet organizational and professional goals.

Anticipated results: Results to date may be presented as survey distribution is planned for September 2018 and collection in December 2018, based on the Dillman Method.

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Professional Experience: Professional experience includes three years of mental health nursing in the inpatient acute care field as well as full-time Master’s studies in nursing research, with course work completed and a focus on thesis development.

Author Summary: Rebecca has worked as a registered nurse on an acute inpatient psychiatric unit for the past three years, following one year in cardiology. She was driven to seek full-time Master’s studies in September of 2017 by her passions of education and research, and her desire to be a change agent in the face of the Canadian Healthcare System. Rebecca is currently completing her thesis work in empowering work environments leading to better quality of care.

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Professional Experience: 2016-Present- Assistant Professor- University of New Brunswick Classroom education to undergraduate and graduate nurses, as well as clinical teaching. Supervision of master's, doctoral, and post-doctoral students. 12 years of experience working as a teaching and lab assistance within kinesiology and nursing courses. Over 15 publications related to health work places, leadership, empowerment, social capital, and burnout. Education: Bachelor of Kinesiology with Honours, Acadia University Master of Science in Kinesiology, The University of Western Ontario Bachelor of Nursing Science, The University of Western Ontario Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing, The University of Western Ontario

Author Summary: Dr. Emily Read is an Assistant Professor at the University of New Brunswick. She teaches both undergraduate and graduate level courses, including nursing leadership, ethics, and health policy. She also teaches clinical courses based on her background in geriatric rehabilitation as a registered nurse, as well as supervises master's, doctoral, and post-doctoral students. She has an interest in leadership, employee health and well being, and health promotion, and has numerous publications within these topics.