ICU Healthy Work Environments: A Concept Analysis
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History of Nurses’ Work Environments
1938 - Adams noted nurses should work 8-hour shifts instead of 10-12 hour shifts because of fatigue.
1958 - Elder noted a problem with retaining nurses due to pregnancy and marriage. Pay for nurses was noted as low compared with other hospital workers.
1974 - Lyon and Ivanicevich questioned whether the organizational climate would have an effect on esteem and job satisfaction similar to other disciplines in previous studies. Noted that nurses gained little esteem from tasks that required little thought.
1984 - Schull noted that Magnet hospitals were those who retained nurses longer related to visible leadership, quality orientation programs, flexible working hours, and good relationships with physicians.
1994 - First Magnet hospital designated (ANCC, 2012)
2000 - Interest in nurses’ work environments accelerated related to IOM’s To Err is Human and Transforming the Work Environment of Nurses (AACN, 2005).
2005 - AACN’s Healthy Work Environment Standards

Research Questions
Research Question: What is the definition of the concept healthy work environment based on the attributes, antecedents, and consequences presented in the literature and perceived by ICU staff nurses and frontline nurse managers?

Sub-question 1a: What are the attributes of healthy work environments presented in the literature sample?
Sub-question 1b: What are the antecedents and consequences of a healthy work environment presented in the literature?

Sub-question 1c: What are the predominant attributes, antecedents, and consequences of the concept of a healthy work environment based on interviews with ICU staff nurses and nurse managers?

Sub-question 1d: How do the attributes, antecedents, and consequences of the concept of healthy work environments as presented in the literature compare to the perceived attributes, antecedents, and consequences in practice based on interviews with ICU staff nurses and nurse managers?

Purpose
The purpose of this concept analysis was to develop an empirically based definition of a healthy work environment as conceptualized in the literature and perceived by staff nurses and frontline nurse managers in the ICU clinical setting.

Method
Rodgers and Knaff’s Evolutionary Concept Analysis Model (2000)
Phase 1 Data Collection
- Stratified random sample from four disciplines’ literature: nursing, business, psychology, and sociology published from 2008-2012.
- 140 articles, representing 60 journals were analyzed; 40 nursing articles, 37 business articles, 30 sociology articles, and 33 psychology articles.
- Interview questions were developed from the literature data analysis.

Phase 2 Data Collection
- Eleven ICU staff nurses and ten ICU nurse managers from three large hospitals in the Midwest were interviewed.
- Data collected from the interviews were analyzed in NVivo.
- Grouped according to themes.
- Results were compared between the literature sample, staff nurse, and manager interviews.

Attributes

Antecedents

Consequences

Empirically Based Definition
An ICU Healthy Work Environment is: an environment that is individually perceived to include positive work-group relationships and effective teamwork and that supports a nurse holistically by nurturing his or her physical, psychosocial, professional, and spiritual components of health.

Conclusions/Recommendations
- Leader: a) facilitate/define effective teamwork, b) work with staff to provide more holistic support, c) work with scholars for future research and theory development.
- Educator: incorporate teamwork and holistic support into curricula.
- Practitioner: a) evaluate self in relation to effective teamwork, b) participate in building a healthy work environment.

Committee
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