Predictors of Work Engagement Among Doctorally-Prepared Nursing Faculty

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CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model can be used to explain stress and work engagement of those working in academia (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). The model links job resources and job demands to work engagement, so that when work engagement is present, positive organizational outcomes such as decreased turnover and job satisfaction, and career satisfaction occur (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004).

There are three job resources of specific interest when studying work engagement of the academic job, namely supervisor management relations, role clarity and the intrinsic characteristics of the academic job (Barkhuizen, Rothmann & van de Vijver, 2014).

Faculty who experience greater demands on their time, attention and energy, while receiving fewer rewards and less recognition, run a higher risk of becoming burned out and alienated from their work lives (Bis, Crais, Mitchell, & Bly, 1994; Lackéit, 2004). As such, workload is one of the most significant job demands to address in faculty (Barkhuizen, Rothmann & van de Vijver, 2014).

INTRODUCTION

The shortage of nursing faculty has prompted research to look at ways we can recruit and retain nursing faculty members and concepts such as the work engagement are one such way we can do so.

The most recent data shows the vacancy rate continues to be high at 7.9%, with over 1300 unfilled faculty positions nationally (AACN, 2017).

Work engagement has been shown to decrease turnover, increase organizational commitment and increase career satisfaction (Bakker, Demerouti & Schaufeli, 2005). Bakker, Demerouti & Schaufeli (2005).

In addition, work engagement among faculty has been shown to have a positive correlation to student outcomes as well (Mancz, 2013, Hamilton, 2017; Parker et al, 2012).

BACKGROUND/SIGNIFICANCE

The overarching idea of work engagement is not a new concept, nor is it a concept that is new to the field of education.

The most prominently discussed definition of work engagement is defined as a “positive, fulfilling, affective-motivational state of work-related well-being” that is “characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption” (Bakker, Schaufeli, & Taris, 2008).

Employees with high levels of work engagement have higher productivity compared to their counterparts without work engagement (Yeh, 2012).

A positive correlation with organizational commitment and a negative relationship with intention to quit have also been associated with work engagement (Saks, 2006).

Researchers have shown a positive correlation between employee engagement and an organization’s financial performance by such outcomes as turnover rate, customer satisfaction, productivity and profit (Cassio & Bouchaux, 2011; Huter et al, 2002; Marks & Stredle, 2010; Wellard & Shuck, 2011).

PROPOSED STUDY

A descriptive, correlational study will be performed.

Doctorally-prepared nursing faculty members will be recruited from Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) accredited baccalaureate nursing schools (n=736).

A demographic survey will be created and will include such variables as age, gender, years in practice, type of terminal degree held, and length of employment at current institution.

The revised Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES-9) will be used to assess the work engagement of the doctorally-prepared, baccalaureate, nursing faculty. The tool assesses the three components of work engagement—vigor, dedication and absorption and the 9-item survey is scored on a seven point Likert scale, with a total score ranging from 0-54.

The Job Demands-Resources Scale-revised (JDRS) will be used to assess organizational support, goal opportunities, overload, job insecurity and advancement via 40 items scored on a 4 point Likert scale with a total score ranging from 40-160.

The surveys will be self-administered and analyzed using descriptive statistics and multiple regression.

CONCLUSION

After reviewing the current policy statements, standards of practice and other leading nursing educational organization statements, it is clear that there is a call for quality, engaged faculty.

• A standardized and reliable tool is needed to first measure the job demands and job resources nursing faculty have. Therefore, we first must examine the correlation between job demands and job resources and work engagement amongst nursing faculty.

• With the added consideration of the nursing faculty shortage, a study is needed that looks at the predictors of work engagement in doctorally-prepared nursing faculty so that the deans and directors of nursing programs can develop and implement strategies that will encourage the retention of the quality faculty members.

Finally, there is an increasing recognition of the potential and actual return on investment with regards to work engagement.

• Work engagement has been shown to have a positive relationship with daily financial returns (Xanthopoulos & Shuck, 2013).

• Even small improvements in work engagement are shown to have significant improvements in business outcomes (Ketegen, 2016).

SELECTED REFERENCES


Schaufeli, W. B., & Bakker, A. (2004) Job demands, job resources and work engagement would be another way to measure and track the trending of faculty specific measures.

IMPILATIONS FOR PRACTICE

Several nursing, and nursing faculty-focused organizations have addressed aspects of work engagement in their standards, tool kits, and position statements. The proposed study can provide outcome measurements for these.