

Communication satisfaction and job satisfaction among executive nurses and impact on burnout and turnover intention

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Background

Within a hospital, the main task of executive nurses is to manage their team and to organize associated processes as to provide high quality care to patients. Appropriate communication skills are, as such, a key success factor. Efficient communication ensures higher job satisfaction resulting in lower turnover intention and decreased burnout.

Aim

This study aimed to explore the relationship between communication satisfaction and job satisfaction and the impact on burnout and turnover intention among a cohort of executive nurses.

Method

In a multicentre study in three hospitals, data were collected on communication satisfaction and job satisfaction in a large sample of nurses (n = 1455). Data included (1) the Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire (Downs & Hazen, 1977) (translated in Dutch and subsequently validated and pilot tested), (2) the scale 'Turnover intention' of the Questionnaire on the Experience and Evaluation of Labour and (Van Veldhoven & Meijman, 1994), (3) the Maslach Burnout Inventory (Maslach et al., 1996). Job satisfaction was measured by means of a visual analogue scale. Within this large sample, executive nurses were selected and compared to nursing staff in general.

Results

Within the three participating hospitals, respectively 106 executive nurses and 1349 ward nurses completed the questionnaire; 68.9% (73/106) of the respondents are female. The executive nurses have an average age of 48 years. Their mean work experience is 26.0 years. The vast majority works on a fulltime basis (94.3%, 100/106). An average job satisfaction level of 7.59/10 was found. Only one person had a score ≤ 5 on job satisfaction (0.95%, 1/106). Concerning communication satisfaction, executives were found most satisfied with the trust received from their supervisor (90.6%) and least with their communication overload (45.3%). 57.5% (61/104) has a low, 36.8% (39/104) an average and only 3.8% (4/104) a high turnover intention. None of the respondents had a burnout profile. 12.3% (13/104) has a high emotional exhaustion, 11.3% (12/104) a high depersonalization and 12.3% (13/104) a low personal accomplishment. These data were comparable with ward nurses.

Conclusion

Levels of job satisfaction among executive nurses are comparable to those among ward nurses. Burnout indication and turnover intention are low. Nevertheless, there is still room for improvement with regard to communication satisfaction as nurse executives experience considerable communication overload. This can be a particular focus for management in order to increase job satisfaction and to decrease the incidence of burnout and turnover intention among key collaborators within the organization.