ROLE AND PLACE OF HEALTH CARE MANAGERS IN MANAGING NURSE TURNOVER

Mariana Dimitrova

Department of Nursing Care, Faculty of Public Health, Medical University of Varna

ABSTRACT

INTRODUCTION: An indisputable fact is that the role of the supervisor in managing the turnover is complex and multifaceted. The health care managers need to combine both leadership and management skills to motivate and prevent nurses from leaving.

AIM: The aim of this paper is to examine the relationship between level of satisfaction with supervisors and attitudes towards nurse turnover.

MATERIALS AND METHODS: For the purpose of the empirical research on the attitudes to changing the workplace, a direct individual anonymous survey was held during the months of February to April 2014. The opinion of nurses and health care managers from university hospitals and hospitals in the North region was studied. It amounted to a total of 11 specialized wards and clinics, characterized by intensive workflow.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION: The analysis of the empirical research shows that managers who provide an opportunity for autonomy at work, delegate authorities and provide the necessary support in difficult moments retain staff at the workplace. At the same time, the lack of support from the supervisor has a strong impact on their decision to leave. Similar to the current results, authors from similar studies also show that leaders who support and encourage participation not only in routine decisions but also discuss with the staff relevant to the organization management decisions, succeed to retain staff in the organization.

CONCLUSION: The statistically significant results from the correlations are indicators that effective management creates a positive working environment, increases satisfaction, and provides an opportunity to attract and retain highly qualified personnel. This outlines the need for a change in the role, responsibilities and functions of today's leaders.

Keywords: turnover, leaders in health care, nursing, management, satisfaction

Address for correspondence:

Mariana Dimitrova
Department of Nursing Care
Medical University of Varna
55 Marin Drinov St
9002 Varna
e-mail: mariana.nikolova@bad.bg

INTRODUCTION

The problem with turnover is especially relevant in modern conditions due to the growing tendency towards a permanent reduction in the number of nurses in the country. All medical institutions (MIs) in the country reported turnover in nurs-

es. For those with a low rate of turnover the process is manageable, but for those with a high percentage it is a challenge. Often managers are asking themselves how to attract, motivate and retain staff, only when the issue has gone out of control and turnover increases. One way to solve the problem is to implement policy changes in human resource management (1).

Management of nursing care is a complex process and involves leadership and management positions at various levels. Undoubtedly, the role of the supervisor in management is complex and multifaceted. Successful managers must combine both leadership and management skills to organize and motivate others (2). If the supervisor has leadership qualities, competence and professionalism, the employees have extra incentive to work in the organization ignoring other negative factors (3). Health care managers are required to know the moods and desires, to support creative initiative, encourage good performance, and be good psychologists (4).

An important condition for effective management is creating a positive work environment in which nurses realize their full creative potential. Providing support and encouragement to participate not only in routine decisions, but also having discussions with the staff about the organization and when making significant management decisions increases job satisfaction and motivates the health professionals (3,5).

The delegation of powers is necessary not only to achieve a democratic style of management, but also to improve the effectiveness of the management process. The heads of management teams must have the ability to delegate specific rights and responsibilities to each team member. Research in this direction shows that delegating roles is well perceived by staff and applied effectively more in ward management than at general hospitals (6).

AIM

The purpose of this paper is to examine the relationship between the level of satisfaction with supervisors and attitudes towards turnover in nurses.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

For the purpose of the empirical research on the satisfaction from the management skills of health

care managers and the turnover of nurses, a direct anonymous survey was held during the months of February to April 2014. The opinion of 413 nurses from university and district general hospitals for active treatment in Northeastern Bulgaria was studied. It amounted to a total of 11 specialized wards and clinics, characterized by intensive workflow. The questionnaire included 25 questions divided into 7 sections - demographic indicators, turnover, satisfaction, organizational capabilities, role conflict and degree of ambiguity, workload and stress. Statistical data processing was carried out with the statistical program SPSS v.20.0 which includes variation, comparative, correlation and multiple regression analysis.

RESULTS

The aim of the analysis in this paper is to determine the impact of organizational and management activities, and satisfaction with supervisors on turnover of nurses.

Analysis of the results on the opinion of nurses for organizational management skills of health care managers showed a low level of satisfaction. Among all aspects offered by the survey the highest assessed statement was "I can count on my supervisor when experiencing operational difficulties" (47.70%). Opportunities for self-organization of the workflow "always" was indicated by 23.20% of the respondents, while only 12.60% had the opportunity to participate in discussions on decisions related to the organization of work. There was a significantly higher proportion of nurses who have "almost never" and "never" had the opportunity to participate in decision-making (39.70%), (Fig. 1).

Fig. 1. Views of nurses on the management skills of health care managers

The results of the comparative analysis showed that good attitude and support from the supervisor

have emerged as important factors influencing attitudes to change in the workplace ($\chi^2=59.82$; $p<0.001$). A big proportion of nurses who would still prefer the same hospital “very often” and “always” received the necessary assistance and support (80.00%). Among those who would choose the same MI almost no nurse had negative responses (3.60%). The impact of this indicator was confirmed in the group nurses who would not make the same choice as 35.70% of them have “never” and “almost never” received the necessary support in difficult times. The established correlation showed that with the increasing positive assessment of the support of the supervisor the proportion of nurses willing to re-elect the same hospital grew ($r=0.261$; $p<0.001$), (Fig. 2).

Fig. 2. Correlation and influence between the ability to rely on the supervisor when experiencing difficulties during work and attitudes to work in the same hospital

The readiness of the supervisor to assist and support at critical moments impacted the duration of the work in the same hospital ($\chi^2=54.52$; $p<0.001$). Highest was the proportion of nurses who were “almost never” and “never” able to rely on the help and support of their supervisor and intended to leave the MI within one year (39.10%). Among nurses intending to work “until they can” there was a higher proportion of those who could “very often” and “always” count on the necessary support. A weak to moderate dependence was established ($r=0.295$; $p<0.001$), (Fig. 3).

Data from the comparative analysis demonstrated a higher share in nurses who had “very often” and “always” an opportunity to participate in organizational tasks which motivated them to choose the same MI again (42.60%). On the other hand, the lack of opportunity to participate in decision-making was a prerequisite for 64.30% of the nurses, who

Fig. 3. Ability to rely on the supervisor in cases of difficulties in their work and duration of work at the same hospital

have responded negatively, to seek another opportunity for development ($\chi^2=62.53$; $p<0.001$). A correlation showed that by reducing the possibilities of taking part in decision-making the turnover rate increased ($r=0.208$; $p<0.001$), (Fig. 4).

Fig. 4. Relationship and influence between the opportunity to participate in decision-making and willingness to work at the same hospital

Differences in opinions among nurses also depended on the availability of autonomy in the work process. The delegation of powers for self-organization of work motivated health care professionals to a varying degree ($\chi^2=71.81$; $p<0.001$). The more they were limited in their self-organization of the tasks, the greater the desire to change MI was (35.70%), ($r=0.241$; $p<0.001$).

Significant fluctuations in opinions were established in terms of satisfaction with the supervisor's work and attitudes to work at the same hospital ($\chi^2=67.19$; $p<0.001$). Effective management created a positive working environment and increases satisfaction that motivated 71.80% of the participants to choose the same hospital again. Outlined was the need for a change in the role, responsibilities and

functions of modern managers, as nurses who would not make the same choice in 53.60% of the cases were dissatisfied with the management skills of their leaders. The results demonstrated proportional and weak to moderate dependencies ($r=0.284$; $p<0.001$), which proves that the increase of dissatisfaction with the work of the supervisor reduces the desire to work at the same MI (Fig. 5).

Fig. 5. The impact of work satisfaction with the supervisor on the choice of hospital

Satisfaction with the work performance of the supervisors influences attitudes to work in another structure at the same hospital ($\chi^2=30.82$; $p<0.05$). Nurses who declared readiness for a change, were dissatisfied in 40.90% of cases with the performance and behavior of their supervisor. A weak correlation was established indicating that with increased frustration, the desire for change grew ($r=-0.162$; $p<0.001$).

This trend continued in terms of satisfaction with the supervisor and attitudes to work in another hospital ($\chi^2=41.99$; $p<0.001$). A significant part of nurses who would not leave their current job expressed a high satisfaction rate with the managerial skills of the health care manager (40.00%). At the same time, among the nurses who indicated that they were clearly ready for change only 11.30% percent were experiencing a higher satisfaction with the work of the supervisor ($r=-0.141$; $p<0.01$).

The survey data showed that satisfaction with the work of the supervisor did not affect the decision of health care professionals to emigrate ($p>0.05$).

Almost half of those who expressed a categorical desire to leave the MI within a year, were dissatisfied with the work of the supervisor (47.80%). On the other

hand, those nurses who have expressed readiness to work "until they can" had a higher proportion of satisfaction with their managers (66.50%), ($\chi^2=53.24$; $p<0.001$). The conducted correlation analysis showed that with the increase in performance satisfaction with the supervisor's work lead to increased desire to work in the same MI ($r=0.278$; $p<0.001$), (Fig. 6).

Classical multiple regression analysis was used

Fig. 6. Comparative analysis between the expected turnover and satisfaction with the supervisor

to determine the leading predictors of turnover of nurses. Compared were different aspects of organizational management levels and satisfaction with the supervisor and then attributed to different types of turnover. The results indicate that leading determinants of turnover of nurses are:

- ✧ The attitude of **choosing the same hospital** was influenced by *the ability to rely on their supervisor in case of difficulties at work* ($\beta=0.153$; $p<0.004$); *satisfaction with the supervisor* ($\beta=0.051$; $p<0.001$);
- ✧ On **internal turnover** - *self-organization at work* ($\beta=0.197$; $p<0.001$);
- ✧ On **practicing the profession abroad** - *self-organization at work* ($\beta=0.139$; $p<0.011$);
- ✧ On the **desire to practice in the future** - *the opportunity to participate in decision-making* ($\beta=0.270$; $p<0.001$); *satisfaction with the supervisor* ($\beta=0.158$; $p<0.004$);
- ✧ On the **length of the time working in this hospital** - *the ability to rely on the supervisor in operational difficulties* ($\beta=0.215$; $p<0.001$); *satisfaction with the supervisor* ($\beta=0.170$; $p<0.007$).

DISCUSSION

Human resources management is a complex, and extensive activity that involves applying basic management skills in planning, organizing, directing and controlling activities. Limiting turnover requires not only and not so much a momentary solution to a specific problem, but a comprehensive and systematic strategic approach. Collecting and analyzing information on the reasons leading to the decision to leave the workplace enables managers to take approaches for effective management of personnel. In its heart turnover is influenced by factors that are under the control of the management, which makes it susceptible to manipulation.

Multiple authors show in their studies that dissatisfaction with the organizational and professional skills of the managers is a prerequisite for nurses to pursue employment opportunities outside the structures of the hospital.

These statements are largely confirmed by the results of the study. The analysis of the impact of organizational and management activities on turnover shows statistically significant correlations for all of the studied aspects. One of the highly assessed factors is the credibility of the supervisor and their ability to manage human resources. Good attitude and support by the supervisor in difficult times would retain highly qualified staff at the workplace. Consequently, the lack of support has a strong direct impact on their readiness to leave.

Similar to the current results, authors also show in their studies that leaders who support and encourage participation of the staff not only in routine decisions but also in management decisions for the organization, retain staff in the facility. The delegation of powers to engage in the discussion and adoption of important decisions, allows subordinates to take personal responsibility, which will improve the quality and performance of the decisions being made. Furthermore, it will encourage health care professionals to express their attentiveness and responsibility in the process of providing care. However, the results are proof that there are leaders who cannot delegate powers and do not realize that in doing so they would promote the professional development of specialists and their loyalty to the organization.

Survey data show that the delegation of powers in the performance of professional duties and autonomy in the work is a factor in staff retention. Skillful gradation and allocation of tasks, delegating more powers to the members of the team give way to creativity, create a sense of significance, commitment and confidence. The results are a ground for adopting the view that medical personnel not provided with sufficient opportunity for independence at work, will seek another job to satisfy this need.

Satisfaction with the supervisor has a major influence on the attitudes of nurses to seek alternative employment opportunities. The established correlation is evidence that effective management creates a positive working environment, increases satisfaction and provides an opportunity to attract and retain highly qualified personnel. Particular emphasis is placed on the multiple stepwise regression analysis which establishes the guiding influential factors for turnover. The results highlight the need for change in the role, responsibilities and functions of the current leaders, since almost half of those who expressed a categorical desire to leave the hospital within a year are dissatisfied with the work of their supervisors.

CONCLUSION

The statistically significant correlations have indicated that effective management creates a positive working environment, increases satisfaction and provides an opportunity to attract and retain highly qualified personnel. A definite need for a change in the role, responsibilities and functions of today's leaders is established. Managers who allow autonomy at the workplace, include staff in making important decisions and provide the necessary support in difficult moments, retain staff at the workplace. The presented synthesized information indicating causality and factor determination for turnover, outlines the necessity of applying mechanisms involving a number of activities, the implementation of which will allow attracting and retaining highly qualified staff.

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