

Manager Leadership, Nursing Workforce Satisfaction, and Patient Outcomes: From Quality Improvement Initiative to Exploratory Study

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Abstract

Our Department of Nursing strategic goal to develop recruitment and retention plans for nurse managers is foundational to this project. Laschinger's (2007) framework of empowerment, self-evaluation, and manager job satisfaction provides the framework for understanding factors in recruiting and retaining managers and establishing associations to outcomes. Results from 25 managers responding to the Conditions of Work Effectiveness and Organizational Description Questionnaires are presented. Results are explored in context of Laschinger's framework that posits situational and personal factors shape work environments. Manager perceptions of work conditions and organizational supports are discussed. Lessons learned from our Institutional Review Board approved exploratory study are shared to provide practical strategies and better understanding for nurse manager recruitment and retention.

Objectives

1. Describe the conceptual basis of manager influence on nursing workforce satisfaction.
2. Recognize potential relationships among managers' work conditions, staff nurse satisfaction, and patient satisfaction .



References

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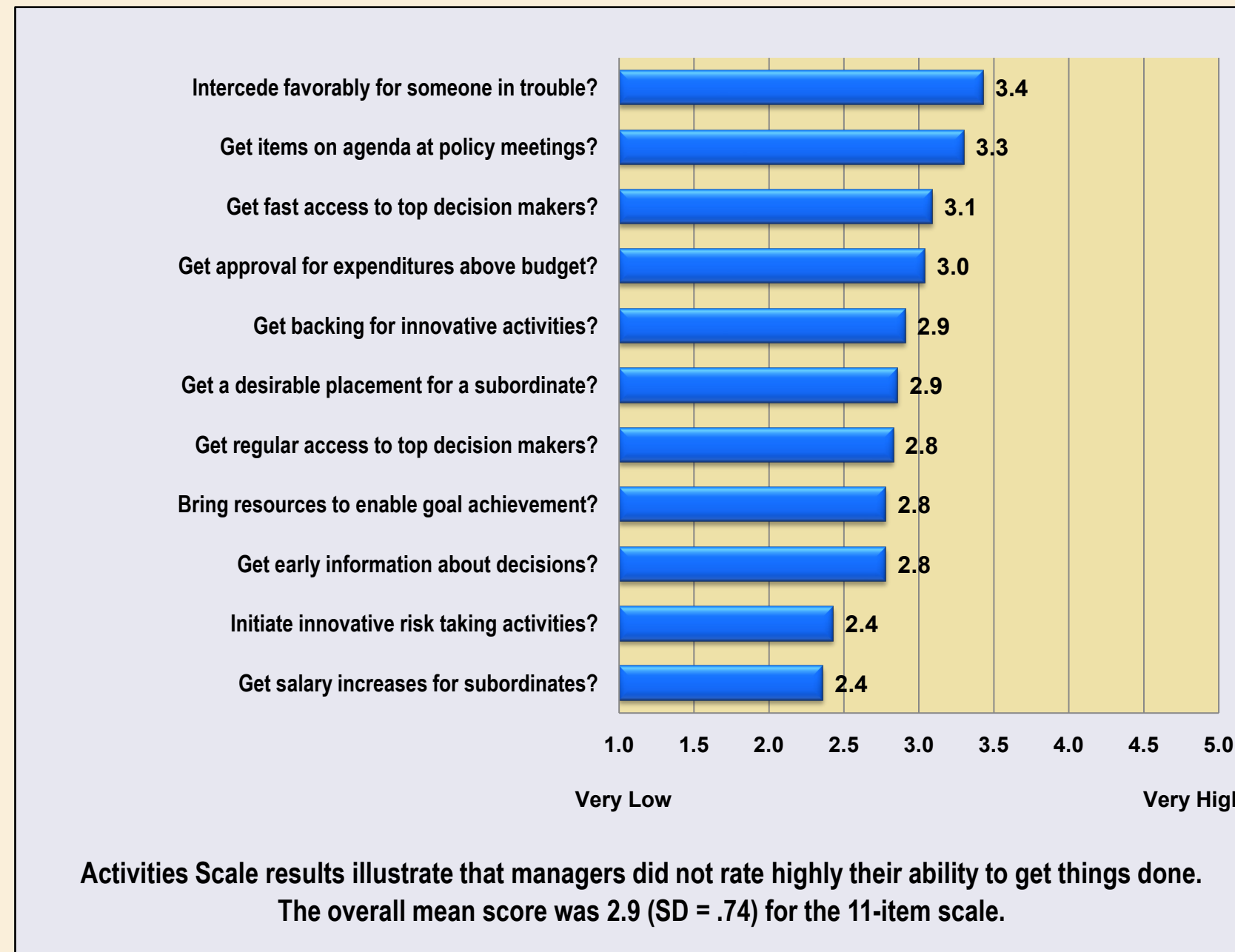
Results

Manager Perceptions of Work Effectiveness and Empowerment

The Conditions of Work Effectiveness Questionnaire (CWEQ) assessed 6-components of empowerment. Managers felt they had many job opportunities to gain skills and knowledge; that they made use of their abilities and information; and that they are engaged in challenging work. In contrast, access to resources was viewed less favorably. They expressed there was not enough time available to do the job and that acquiring temporary help was difficult. Overall, empowerment scores show values at the mid range. Managers total structural empowerment scores were positively correlated with global empowerment (ability to accomplish work effectively and the workplace is empowering [Spearman's rho = .575, p = .006])

Item	Mean	SD
Opportunity in Job	4.26	.79
Access to Support	3.57	.77
Access to Information	3.41	.78
Organizational Relationships	3.32	.66
Job Activities	3.24	.70
Access to Resources	2.54	.78
Global Empowerment	3.10	.97
Total Structural Empowerment	3.41	.53
Scores range from 1 (low) to 5, high perceived empowerment		

Extent Managers are Able to Mobilize Resources



Lessons Learned

Results suggest that Nurse Managers need ways to promote work effectiveness as well as control and influence within the organization. Discussions at Nurse Executive Council (NEC) addressed actions for practice. At monthly focus group meetings, the Chief Nurse Officer strategized with managers on prioritizing and balancing time and assisting them to find ways to request needed resources. NEC collected additional data on current time commitments to organization and department committees and task forces.

- Time is a primary resource concern. Competing demands result in less time spent on clinical units. Strategic planning time and critical thinking time are minimal.
- Work expectations vary by division. Managers had differences in their understanding of organizational context, accountabilities, and the clarity of direction.
- Decisions made by other departments greatly impact nurse managers work flow processes.
- Economic downturn and constrained financial resources resulted in nurse managers not asking for what they need to improve operations on their unit.

Conclusions/Recommendations

- NEC continues to work with other departments to include nursing in redesign processes that directly impact manager efficiency and effectiveness in the work environment.
- Attention has been given to enhancing current work environment practices such as hiring procedures; performance evaluations; and time, attendance, and payroll related issues. Further efforts include identifying roles that can assist managers to accomplish administrative tasks.
- Scheduled time for strategic planning and problem solving would be one means to address managers low perceived ability to innovate, take risks, and gain access to decision-makers.
- Another area that offers opportunity to promote empowerment of nurse managers is to capitalize on their positive perceptions of job situations that make use of skills and knowledge in a challenging work environment.