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Research Article

ORGANIZATIONAL ROLE IN NURSING EMPOWERMENT

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ABSTRACT

A higher turnover rate was identified in staff nurses and it was highly correlated with lower commitment. Empowering work environments that support professional practice have been positively related to nurse outcomes. Professional practice environments partially mediated the relationship between empowerment and organizational commitment. Managers must value the traits of, trust worthiness and trust, empowerment and delegation, consistency and mentorship. Top management is committed to supporting an employee for providing empowered culture. Employee empowerment is centered on the needs of the customer so that she can make a right decision. Mentors should support employees in this process, higher empowerment facilitates the professional practice environments and commitment of these nurses.

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INTRODUCTION

The new millennium is upon us. Many advances in technology and health care indeed make this a brave new world. However, relatively little has changed in nursing, where almost 95% of all nurses are still women. Even now, years after the feminist movement, many nurses do not feel empowered, and what we do "as nurses does not seem to be working". An examination of the state of the science on power and empowerment in nursing is warranted, to garner power for the profession as well as for patient care.

Definition

Empowerment is defined as "the giving or delegation of power or authority; authorization; the giving of an ability; enablement or permission"

Rosabeth Moss Kanter developed the Theory of Organizational Empowerment in the 1970s.

It is essential that management provide its employees

- with adequate information
- and resources necessary to do a job,
- effective support system and
- opportunity to learn and grow.

When these elements are intact, an increased sense of autonomy and self worth exists, thereby improving productivity and organizational commitment

Managerial traits

Managers must value the traits of

- ❖ Trustworthiness and trust,
- ❖ Empowerment and delegation,
- ❖ Consistency and mentorship.

These are the building blocks of any flourishing organization. Managers must put support systems and other mechanisms in to place that allow employees the opportunity to empower themselves and to flourish, thus increasing their own effectiveness as well as that of the organization. It is the responsibility of all levels of management to facilitate a positive workplace environment.

Trustworthiness and trust

Trustworthiness is more than integrity; it also connotes competence. While trustworthiness is a result of character and competence, trust is the actual act of believing in someone and having confidence in them.

Empowerment

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Delegation

Delegation is yet another form of empowerment that managers can provide to their employees. McCormack (1984) states: People often delegate – or fail to delegate – for all the wrong reasons. Delegation and empowerment are essential skills for effective managers. Delegation is assigning tasks to the employees whereas empowerment gives authority to the employee so that it will improve the employee;s commitment, enthusiasm and expertise, while encouraging innovation that will benefit the organization over time. Empowerment necessarily requires some level of delegation, but not all instances of delegation will produce an empowered employee

Consistency

A flexible, responsive management virtually guarantees consistency .Effective empowerment involves planning and a long-term commitment

Mentorship

During this time of orientation that the organization’s values and principles can be communicated and instilled into the behaviour of new employees. Mentoring will definitely improve the confidence of nurses and promote the self identity.

Kanter (1977, 1993) maintains that having access to opportunities for learning, growth and advancement in the organization plays a key role in employees work satisfaction and productivity

- Empowered nurses will have higher job satisfaction
- foster better health outcomes for patients
- Effective work practices will bring positive patient outcomes
- Higher level of performance
- Positive work environment
- Lower turnover

Characteristics of an Empowered culture

Top management is committed to supporting an employee for providing empowered culture. Employee empowerment is centered on the needs of the customer so that she can make a right decision. Mentors should support employees in this process

Barriers of staff Empowerment

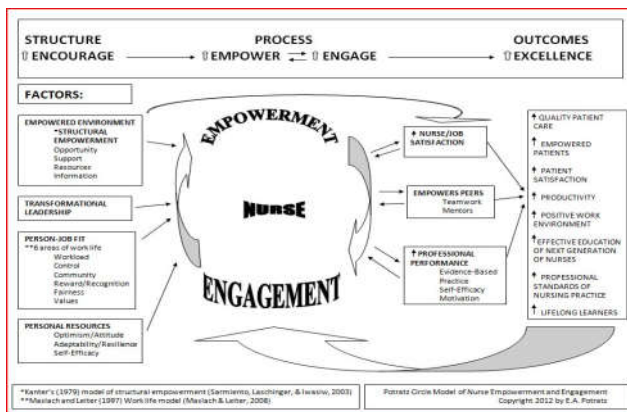
- Lack of Mentorship
- Lack of resources
- Poor teamwork and support
- Staff turnover
- Punitive response to error

CONCLUSION

Theodore Roosevelt said “the best executive is the one who has sense enough to pick good men to do what he wants done, and self-restraint enough to keep from meddling with them while they do it.” Building high-performing teams is crucial to building a great company. Empowerment of staff contributes to lower staff turnover and high job satisfaction, which increase resident satisfaction and safety. In a healthy organizational culture, employees of all levels, needs to be encouraged to work in collaboration and should get opportunities for training, new learning, growth, and promotion also have positive impacts on patient outcome.

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Staff Empowerment

“Belief that one has control over decision making”

Importance of nursing staff empowerment

- Front line providers
- Increased flow of information
- Resident advocates
