

Factors Affecting Nursing Productivity: Lessons for Managers

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Abstract: It is recognized that nurses constitute a significant percentage of the labour force. Nursing productivity has been associated with measuring input/output ratios in terms of hours spent in nursing care, supply and demand ratios, what is negotiated with the client, and the provision of high quality care in a cost effective manner. The study examines factors that affect nurses' productivity, with reference to working processes/conditions and organizational climate. Quantitative and qualitative approaches were used in this study to determine factors affecting nurses' productivity as perceived by nurses within an accident service of a premier teaching hospital in Sri Lanka. Sixty-four nurses voluntarily participated in this study from diverse nursing professional, and educational backgrounds, and with varying lengths of experience. Data was gathered through Likert-type questionnaires, focus group discussions, interviews, direct observations, maintaining a reflective journal, and taking photographs, and analysis, using SPSS version 10, and narrative analytical techniques. The study revealed that factors at unit level and organisation level affect nurses' productivity, which cannot be isolated from socio-cultural, historical, economical, and political contexts. These factors range from increased patient numbers, shortages of human resources, lack of resources for nurses, and a lack of recognition of nurses' contributions to decision making. Further, a positive correlation between nursing productivity and organisation climate was found, where the organisation climate was more bureaucratic and less innovative and supportive. The more bureaucratic approaches adopted has led to low job satisfaction and frustration among nurses.

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