

Influence of Flexible Work Arrangements on Performance of Nurses in Regional Hospitals in Tanzania

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ABSTRACT

Nurses' performance level is cornerstone for better performance of health care organizations. Nurses' performance remains long standing determinates of quality service rendered for patients admitted to hospitals. In similar vein nurses are commonly exposed to fixed shift work and long work hours with limited opportunity to pursue more flexible work options. These demanding schedules can lead to difficulties related health impairment and decreased performance. Therefore, flexible work scheduling is a particularly important issue in nursing, which is characterized by a highly feminized workforce and widespread workforce shortages. This thesis examined the influence of flexible work arrangements and performance of nurses in regional hospitals in Tanzania. The specific objectives were five and included: to examine the influence of work scheduling; to establish the influence of job location; to determine the influence of work load; to evaluate the influence of job continuity and to articulate the moderating effect of supervisor support on the influence of flexible working arrangements on performance of nurses in regional hospitals in Tanzania. The researcher presented a broad literature review including review of Job Demand-Resource theory, Spillover theory, Social Exchange theory, Expectancy theory and Path-Goal Leadership theory. The study adopted explanatory research design using both quantitative and qualitative approaches. A target population of 1347 from 8 regional hospitals which a sample size of 404 was randomly selected. The questionnaire was pilot tested on 40 respondents drawn from two regional hospitals. Reliability of the questions was done by use of Cronbach's alpha. Normality test was done for dependent variable in order to aid subsequent analysis. The study conducted various tests including normality test, multi collinearity, heteroscedasticity and autocorrelation tests. Factor analysis was carried out among corresponding questions to allow formation of factors with the highest Eigen values. The data obtained was analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative analysis. Qualitative data were entered, coded and analyzed using summative content analysis and presented in percentages, in tables, figures and charts. Correlation analysis was used to test the direction of relationship between the independent variables and dependent variable. Multiple regressions were used to test whether work scheduling, workload,

job location and work continuity had any influence on nurses' performance. The study established that work scheduling, workload, job location and work continuity contributed positively to nurses' performance. Furthermore, supervisor support was found to have a significant moderating relationship between the influence of flexible work arrangements and performance of nurses in regional hospitals in Tanzania. Based on the findings, the study concluded that work scheduling, job location, workload, job have a positive and significant effect on nurses' performance. Moreover, the study concluded leadership support had a significant moderating effect on the relationship between flexible work arrangements and performance of nurses in regional hospitals in Tanzania. The study recommended that hospital leaders should embrace flexible work arrangements and lead by example to promote nurses' performance. Also, the study recommended that government should enforce labour laws and regulations related to work place flexibility.