Sustaining the Role of Social Work in Hospice: Perceptions of Job Satisfaction, Interdisciplinary Collaboration and Organizational Leadership

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Study Aims

1. Describe level of job satisfaction of hospice social workers
2. Examine whether each of the following are associated with job satisfaction of hospice SWer:
   a. Relationships with co-workers
   b. Perceptions of the Executive Director
   c. Characteristics of the SWer
   d. Hospice characteristics
Background
Job Satisfaction

Hospice social workers:
lowest job satisfaction
compared with other disciplines on the hospice interdisciplinary team

Lower job satisfaction of hospice SWer may be due to:

- High volume of crisis intervention work
- Lower # of visits per patient
- Higher caseloads:
  - Over time
  - Than other disciplines
- Cumulative effect of patient deaths

NHPCO, 2012; Reese & Raymer, 2004
Job Satisfaction is Important

Higher job satisfaction is seen with:

• Higher productivity
• Strength and stability of the organization
• Increased tenure & lower turnover
• Increased interdisciplinary communication and cooperation
• Improved patient care outcomes

Clark, 2007; Damis, 2005; Farr & Ringseis, 2002; Fritzsche & Parrish, 2005; Monroe & DeLoach, 2004; Parker-Oliver, Bronstein, & Kurzejeski, 2005; Shier & Graham, 2013
Interdisciplinary Collaboration

When compared to other team members, hospice social workers more likely to report feeling:

- Lower perceptions of being valued on team
- Lower connection to team

SWers less likely to use language expressing teamwork and collaboration than nurses and physicians during interdisciplinary team meetings

Kobayashi & McCallister 2013; Parker-Oliver, Bronstein, & Kurzejjeski, 2005; Wittenberg-Lyles, et al., 2010)
Perceived Leadership Style of Hospice Director

Association between perceived leadership style of Executive Director and job satisfaction:

- There was an association for hospice nurses
- Has not been studied with social workers

(Longnecker, 2006; 2008; Swearington, 2004)
STUDY METHODS
STUDY DESIGN

Cross-sectional

Online questionnaire

Anonymous
3 sampling strategies:

1. Certified Hospices in 3 States
   - New York
   - New Jersey
   - Connecticut

2. Professional Organization Social Media & Listservs

3. Known Associates
DV: Job Satisfaction
Job satisfaction understood as:

Reciprocal relationship or correspondence of workers and the work environment

“Goodness of fit” between worker and work environment

Process-oriented

Dawis & Lofquist 1984; Farr & Ringseis, 2002; Fritzsche & Parrish, 2005
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Intrinsic</strong></th>
<th><strong>Extrinsic</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Interesting and challenging work</td>
<td>• High pay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Feelings of accomplishment</td>
<td>• Job security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Learning new things</td>
<td>• Job benefits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Making important contributions</td>
<td>• Chances for advancement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Responsibility and autonomy</td>
<td>• Praise from leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Being creative</td>
<td>• Fair employment policies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ)

**Intrinsic Job Satisfaction**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The chance to do things for other people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The feeling of accomplishment I get from the job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The freedom to use my own judgment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being able to keep busy all the time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The chance to work alone on the job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The chance to do different things from time to time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The chance to be “somebody in the community”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The chance to tell people what to do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The chance to do something that makes use of my abilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The chance to use my own methods of doing the job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being able to do things that don’t go against my conscience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The way my job provides for steady employment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Extrinsic Job Satisfaction**

- My pay and the amount of work I do
- The chance for advancement on this job
- The way my boss handles his/her workers
- The way company policies are put into practice
- The praise I get for doing a good job
- The competence of my supervisor in making decisions
Perception of Executive Director

Theory of Servant Leadership

• Similar to transformational leadership
• A leadership philosophy & a description of behaviors
• Dimension of Servant Leadership:
  – Values People
  – Develops People
  – Shares Leadership
  – Builds Community
  – Displays Authenticity
Perception of Executive Director

Essential Servant Leadership Scale

Please describe how much you feel that your hospice organization’s top executive:

1. Sees serving as a mission of responsibility to others
2. Understands that serving others is most important
3. Seeks to instill trust rather than fear or insecurity
4. Serves people without regard to their nationality, gender, or race
5. Willing to make sacrifices to help others
6. Genuinely interested in employees as people
7. Is always honest
8. Is driven by a sense of higher calling
9. Practices what he/she preaches
10. Promotes values that transcend self-interest and material success
Relationship with Co-workers

Interdependence in Interdisciplinary Collaboration Subscale

- 13 items
  - Relationship with co-workers
  - Mutual dependence approach to patient care

- Example of items
  - Teamwork with professionals from other disciplines is important in my ability to help clients.
  - I view part of my professional role as supporting the role of others with whom I work.

Bronstein, 2002
Perception of Being Valued by Co-workers

Nurses
Physicians
Chaplains
Other social workers
Social Worker Characteristics

Age
Gender
Ethnicity
Years employed at hospice
SW degree type
Salary or per diem
Hospice Characteristics

# of social workers

Average caseload

Profit status of hospice

% of time in
  - direct practice
  - administration
  - bereavement
  - marketing
RESULTS
N = 203
Sociodemographic Characteristics

92% female

Age
- 18 – 34: 18.4%
- 35 – 44: 21.5%
- 45 – 54: 23.6%
- 55 – 64: 31.3%
- 65+: 5.1%

Ethnicity
- Non-Hispanic white: 87%
- Hispanic: 5.2%
- Non-Hispanic black: 2.6%
Professional Characteristics

97% MSW degree

Mean years at hospice: 5.6 years (SD=5.4)

86% salaried
Hospice Characteristics

# of social workers at hospice
mean 10.5 (SD=11.1)
median 6.0

Caseload
mean 28.8 (SD = 14.1)
median 30.0

29% for profit
Social Worker Role

Percent of time spent on:

Direct practice: 54% (SD = 27%)

Administration: 17% (SD=17%)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage dissatisfied with aspects of the job as measured by the MSQ</th>
<th>% dissatisfied</th>
<th>Job Satisfaction Scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My pay and the amount of work I do.</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>Extrinsic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The chance for advancement on this job</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>Extrinsic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The way company policies are put into practice</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>Extrinsic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The way my boss handles his/her workers</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Extrinsic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The competence of my supervisor in making decisions</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Extrinsic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The praise I get for doing a good job</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Extrinsic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The chance to tell people what to do</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Intrinsic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being able to do things that don’t go against my conscience</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Intrinsic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The way my job provides for steady employment.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Intrinsic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The chance to use my own methods of doing the job</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Intrinsic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The freedom to use my own judgment</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Intrinsic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The chance to be “somebody in the community”</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Intrinsic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The chance to work alone on the job.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Intrinsic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being able to keep busy all the time</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Intrinsic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The feeling of accomplishment I get from the job</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Intrinsic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The chance to do something that makes use of my abilities</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Intrinsic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Perception of Executive Director

Most had positive perception of Director

48% - 93% items answered as yes or definitely yes to Director having servant leadership behaviors
Bivariate Analyses

Servant Leadership Scale correlation with:
  extrinsic satisfaction:  \( r = .63 \)
  intrinsic satisfaction:  \( r = .39 \)

Interdependence in Interdisciplinary Collaboration correlation with:
  extrinsic satisfaction:  \( r = .41 \)
  intrinsic satisfaction:  \( r = .62 \)
### Feeling valued by core team members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perception of Value by Discipline</th>
<th>% strongly agree</th>
<th>% agree</th>
<th>% disagree or strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other Social Workers</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chaplains</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurses</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctors</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most likely to report they felt valued by other social workers
Correlation between Job Satisfaction and Perception of Value by Co-workers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perception of Value by:</th>
<th>Intrinsic Job Satisfaction</th>
<th>Extrinsic Job Satisfaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Doctors</td>
<td>$r = .49$</td>
<td>$r = .32$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurses</td>
<td>$r = .46$</td>
<td>$r = .30$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chaplains</td>
<td>$r = .43$</td>
<td>$r = .22$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other SW</td>
<td>$r = .37$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Profit Status of Hospice

## Caseload**
- For Profit: Mean = 35 (sd = 16)
- Not-for-Profit: Mean = 26 (sd = 12)

## Number of SWers at the hospice**
- For Profit: Mean = 5 (sd = 5)
- Not-for-Profit: Mean = 13 (sd = 12)

## Years at Current Hospice**
- For Profit: Mean = 4 (sd = 4)
- Not-for-Profit: Mean = 6 (sd = 6)

## Strongly Agree valued by Nurses*
- For Profit: 57.4%
- Not-for-Profit: 39.6%

*p < .05, **p < .001
Profit status NOT associated with Job Satisfaction
### Regression Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Intrinsic $\beta$</th>
<th>Extrinsic $\beta$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Servant Leadership</td>
<td>.15**</td>
<td>.34**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interdependence in Interdisciplinary Collaboration</td>
<td>.42**</td>
<td>.13*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profit Status</td>
<td>-1.04</td>
<td>.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Social Workers</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.11**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception of Value by Doctors</td>
<td>2.38**</td>
<td>1.52*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05, **p < .01
Summary of regression analysis

Higher score on:
• Servant Leadership Scale
• Interdependence in Interdisciplinary Collaboration Scale

Feeling valued by hospice doctors

Higher # of SWers

Higher score on
Job Satisfaction intrinsic & extrinsic

Higher score on
Job Satisfaction extrinsic only
Job Satisfaction

NOT associated with

Profit status
Caseload
Years of employment at hospice
Age
Salary status
Percent of time doing direct practice
Perception of value by nurses, chaplains, other SWs
DISCUSSION
Comparison with previous research

Job satisfaction for SWers in this study:

- higher than hospice SWers in an earlier study
  - But earlier study used very weak measure
- Lower than hospice nurses in earlier study (esp. Intrinsic)
  - Using same measure
- Higher on intrinsic and lower on extrinsic lower compared with dialysis health care professional

Coopman, 2001; Miller, 2008; Ross et al., 2009
INTRINSIC VS. EXTRINSIC

Stronger perception of Executive Director as servant leader associated with higher extrinsic satisfaction

Stronger team connection and relationships seen with higher intrinsic satisfaction
Relationships with co-workers matter

Finding support recent research:

- positive relationships with co-workers associated with higher job satisfaction

- WHO recommendations for effective Pall Care and use of interdisciplinary teams

Kobayashi & McCallister 2013; Mulqueen, 2005; National Business Research Institute, 2015; World Health Organization, 2002
Perception of value by hospice doctors was significant in the regression analysis

- NOT: Nurses, chaplains, other SWers

Yet:

fewer participants strongly agreed that they were valued by hospice doctors than they did for nurses, chaplains, other social workers

Indicates the disproportionate influence of the doctor on the interdisciplinary team
Perception of being valued by nurses was higher at for-profit hospices than at not-for-profit hospices.

Need to replicate and investigate this finding.
NOT associated with job satisfaction

As in previous studies, profit status was associated with:

- caseload size
- number of social workers employed
- years of employment

Carlson et al., 2012; Carlson, Gallo & Bradley, 2004, Cherlin et al., 2010
Caseload Size

Caseload size was NOT associated with job satisfaction

• Previous research: caseload size negatively associated with job satisfaction
• But, as in a previous study with mental health and child protective social workers, support within the organization could override the stress associated with caseload size
• Caseload may not be most salient factor.

SW policy institute, 2010; Thomas Kholi & Choi, 2014
Study Limitations

Selection bias

Lack of diversity:
- Ethnicity
- Gender
- SW degree (MSW, BSW, PhD)
Strengths

Adequate sample size
Representation from at least 32 states
Two measures of job satisfaction
Measured:

- Relationships with co-workers
- Perception of executive director
- SWer personal characteristics
- SWer professional characteristics
- Hospice characteristics
Future Research

Sample:

- Replicate in a larger, representative sample
- Include hospice executive directors to assess congruence in perceptions of leadership
- Include nurses, doctors, and chaplains for comparison
Future Research

Measures:

- More measures of interdisciplinary collaboration, e.g., flexibility
- More (sensitive) measures of workload
- Measure quality of relationship with patient
  - Number of visits
  - Frequency of visits
- Measure intention to stay
- Patient and family outcomes
  - Examine relationship to SWer job satisfaction and work conditions
Thank you.

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