

TITLE The Impact of Leadership Behavioral Practices on Employee Engagement in a Rural Hospital

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Unpublished doctoral dissertation: September 2017

OBJECTIVE The purpose of this study was to investigate if and to what extent there is a statistically significant positive relationship between a rural hospital's leadership practices and engagement of employees.

METHODOLOGY

The target population of the study was designated as leaders in a rural hospital setting in eastern Washington who have the responsibility of supervising more than one subordinate. Forty-two (response rate = 74%) completed the Leadership Practices Inventory and the Strategic Management Decisions' employee engagement survey (Strategic Management Decisions, 2015). Each leader had about 10 people complete the LPI-Observer (N = 375). Sixty-four percent of the leaders were female, with a mean age of 51 years, and 86 percent representing Non-Hispanic Whites.

KEY FINDINGS

Leaders reported that Enable was the most frequently used leadership practice, followed by Model, and then Encourage and Challenge, and then Inspire; and this rank order was the same as that reported by their observers. None of the leadership practices, for either leaders or observers, were significantly correlated with employee engagement.

Multiple regression analysis showed that leadership was not a significant predictor of employee engagement, with Challenge being the only significant predictor. From the perspective of observers, multiple regression analysis did not show leadership as a significant predictor of employee engagement.

The author notes:

Though there was not a statistically significant relationship between any of the five practices and employee engagement. High mean scores from the observer's responses indicated that Rural healthcare leaders that inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, and encourage the heart, are most likely able to improve employee engagement in their organizations" (p. 143).