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Organisational reform readiness and psychosocial outcomes among assistant nurses

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Background: Many healthcare systems face shortages of qualified care workers, prompting efforts to formalise frontline care roles. In Sweden, the introduction of a protected occupational title for assistant nurses represents a major reform in eldercare. Organisational conditions shaping psychosocial work environments during occupational transitions may influence employee well-being, yet little is known about whether perceived organisational preparedness for reform is associated with psychosocial work outcomes.

Objectives: To examine whether perceived organisational preparedness for a major occupational reform predicts psychosocial outcomes among assistant nurses over one year.

Methods: A longitudinal survey was conducted among Swedish assistant nurses at two time points a year apart (T1, N = 617; T2, N = 404). Linear mixed-effects models with repeated measures examined associations between baseline perceived organisational preparedness (prepared vs unprepared) and psychosocial outcomes, including job satisfaction, pride, meaningfulness, and self-rated health.

Results: Perceived organisational unpreparedness was consistently associated with poorer psychosocial outcomes. Participants reporting unprepared organisations had significantly lower job satisfaction, pride, meaningfulness, and self-rated health compared with those reporting readiness. Main effects of preparedness were significant across several models, while preparedness × time interactions were generally non-significant, indicating stable group differences over one year. Time effects were minimal.

Conclusions: Perceived organisational preparedness for occupational reform was linked to sustained differences in psychosocial work outcomes during occupational change. Organisational readiness may represent an important workplace factor influencing employee well-being and work-related health during occupational change. These findings may inform organisational strategies in healthcare.

Key messages:

- Perceived organisational readiness for occupational reform was associated with better psychosocial work outcomes among assistant nurses over one year.
- Organisational preparedness during occupational change may influence employee well-being and support healthier work environments in healthcare.

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