



Factors Related to Effective Teamwork Performance in Nursing: Narrative Literature Review

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Abstract

Introduction. The importance of teamwork in nursing has gained an increased attention in recent years due to the complexity of the healthcare delivery system, and a shortage of nurses, which has resulted in increased workloads which may result in work errors, thus impacting patient, nurse, and organizational outcomes. Effective nursing teamwork is vital for the provision of high-quality healthcare.

Aim. This review examines current research on teamwork in nursing with a focus on factors related to effective teamwork performance.

Methods. A narrative review of articles regarding the factors which influence effective teamwork in nursing was carried out between December 2023 and January 2024. An electronic search of the PubMed database was applied to select relevant articles using the keywords *teamwork among nurses, effective teamwork, and nursing*.

Results. The online search resulted in 854 articles. Twenty-one articles were then selected for a full-text review. Five articles met the inclusion criteria. Factors related to effective teamwork performance in different domains have been identified and described in the present research. Those factors are: trust among team members, team motivation, effective working environment, effective communication, effective team management, education about teamwork, measurement of teamwork, knowledge sharing among team members, and interventions for enhancing nurses' teamwork.

Conclusion. It has been proven that effective teamwork is key to ensuring quality of care, better healthcare outcomes, and patient and healthcare worker safety. Therefore, facilitating and supporting effective teamwork should be one of the priorities of healthcare organizations. To achieve this, it is necessary to take into account the factors related to effective teamwork performance. The emphasis should be on strengthening the effective teamwork of nurses for the benefit of quality patient care.

Introduction

The nursing workforce is the largest group of professionals in healthcare worldwide (1). According to the International Council of Nurses, "Nursing encompasses autonomous and collaborative care of individuals of all ages, families, groups and communities, sick or well and in all settings" (2). Today, modern healthcare is complex and rapidly changing and it is therefore important for nursing staff to work together as a team to secure quality of care (3). A nursing team is defined by authors Kalisch, Weaver, and Salas (2009) as "two or more members of nursing staff who work together to provide care and administrative tasks for a group of patients" (4). The importance of nurses' teamwork in healthcare has gained increased attention in recent years due to the complexity of the healthcare delivery system, and a shortage of nurses, which has increased workloads which may result in work errors, thus impacting patient, nurse, and organizational outcomes (5). The literature states that teamwork plays a crucial role in addressing the shortage of nurses (3). Organizations such as the World Health Organization and the Institute of Medicine have identified teamwork and team-based care as the key contributors to patient safety (3). Recent evidence from the literature stated that the nursing care team plays a pivotal role in patient and staff outcomes and proficient teamwork is identified as one of the premises of a healthy work environment in nursing (3). Effective teams are those in which both leaders and members make a conscious effort to unify a group of people into a well-functioning work unit (6). Thus, effective teamwork has a positive effect on job satisfaction, staffing efficiencies, retention, and care

delivery (7). It supports the optimal use of the knowledge and skills of nurses and their co-workers and reflects an individual's sense of belonging to a team and their willingness to work in a team (8). It has been identified as one of the cornerstones of nursing education. Evidence from the literature stated that having a supportive and trustworthy nursing team is a key factor in fostering effective teamwork and that healthcare organizations should recognize the value of teamwork and emphasize approaches which maintain and improve teamwork for the benefit of their patients (8,9). Therefore, understanding which factors foster effective teamwork ensures teamwork qualities (10,11).

Aim

This review examines current research on teamwork in nursing with a focus on factors related to effective teamwork performance.

Methods

A narrative review of articles regarding the factors influencing effective teamwork in nursing was carried out.

Inclusion and exclusion criteria

We included full-text articles which focused on factors contributing to effective teamwork performance in nursing. Studies conducted only among nurses were included. The inclusion criteria were also the articles written in the English language. There were no restrictions regarding the publication date.

Exclusion criteria were studies without analysis of teamwork-related factors or studies not written in English. Studies conducted among other healthcare professionals were excluded. Articles not available in full-text (i.e. title or abstracts only) were excluded.

Search strategy

A literature search was carried out between December 2023 and January 2024. An electronic search of the PubMed database was applied to select relevant articles using the keywords teamwork among nurses, effective teamwork, and nursing. Two reviewers independently screened titles and abstracts from articles yielded in the search. Afterward, full texts of all relevant articles were obtained and screened by the same two reviewers. Full-text articles were retrieved when both reviewers agreed that inclusion criteria were met.

Results

The online search resulted in 854 articles. Twenty-one articles were then selected for a full-text review. Five articles met the inclusion criteria. Table 1 describes the selected articles.

Factors related to effective teamwork performance in different domains have been identified and described in the present research. Those factors are: trust among team members, team motivation, effective working environment, effective communication, effective team management, education about teamwork, measurement of teamwork, knowledge sharing among team members, and interventions for enhancing nurses' teamwork (Table 1).

Discussion

Effective nursing teamwork is vital for the provision of high-quality healthcare (16). The current study's findings suggest the following factors which are related to effective teamwork performance: trust among team members, team motivation, effective working environment, effective communication, effective team management, education about teamwork, measurement of teamwork, knowledge sharing

among team members, and interventions for enhancing nurses' teamwork.

Trust among team members

A trusting atmosphere in nursing teamwork can enhance job satisfaction, productivity of the employees, organizational commitment, cooperation, and effective communication. Trust is a positive expectation resulting from roles, relationships, experiences, and interdependence with others (13). A study which investigated the impact of organizational justice, trust, and identification and their impact on nurses gave us positive examples from practice. The results of the study showed that the maximization of organizational justice, trust, and identification by hospital managers positively changes the attitude of nurses toward work, but also improves the quality of work. Nurses were motivated to provide feedback to the attention and care provided by the hospital management, facilitating teamwork among colleagues, boosting the morale of the nursing faculty, and reducing resignations and career changes. Trust in the team also affects the members' satisfaction with the team (17). Evidence from the literature stated that when team members feel valued, it will help them overcome their fear associated with taking interpersonal risks, making them feel safe to speak openly and overall to engage in their work. Feeling trusted by the team leader facilitates a sense of psychological safety, but their absence can cause team members to relapse to natural behavior patterns (18).

Team motivation

Motivation is an extremely relevant factor which affects the quality and content of work outcomes in healthcare (19). In general, motivation can be extrinsic or intrinsic. The quality and quantity of work is better when employees are highly motivated. The ability to motivate employees to not only meet their individual goals, but also achieve organizational goals is an important leadership skill. Team members do not have to be motivated only by money and rewards, but it would be good if they are highly intrinsically motivated and if their motives are in line with the motives of the organization (20). These individuals tend to perform well without the need for constant supervision and can even motivate other employees to work harder.

Table 1. Overview of the studies finally included

| Authors/year of publication | Findings about factors influencing effective teamwork in nursing | Recommendations |
|---|--|---|
| Baek H, Han K, Cho H, Ju J. (2023) (12) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> education about teamwork from the undergraduate level interventions for enhancing nurses' teamwork | Enhancing nurses' teamwork can serve as an effective strategy for promoting patient-centered care. Education through awareness and knowledge starting from the undergraduate level (e.g., TeamSTEPPS) will provide basic skills for better teamwork, as well as organizational training such as virtual simulation and train-the-trainer interventions aimed at improving teamwork skills (12). |
| Chen SY, Wu WC, Chang CS, Lin CT, Kung JY, Weng HC, Lin YT, Lee SI. (2015) (13) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> implementation measures to increase the trust among employees | Organizations must actively seek an improved understanding of trust and must implement measures to increase the trust of their employees (13). |
| Farley, MJ (1991) (14) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> team members must be valued, supported, and trusted communication among team members must be open and honest team goals must be clear effective team management effective working environment team norms must enhance team roles must be assumed appropriately motivation of team members evaluation of the team effectiveness | Development of a team does not take place automatically and inevitably. It is a result of the efforts of the team leader and the team members (14). |
| Anselmann V, Brouwer J, Mulder RH. (2023) (8) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the accomplishment of individual learning activities knowledge sharing | In order to improve team performance, team leaders and managers in nursing need to foster the engagement of both individual and team learning activities by providing opportunities for these activities. Team leaders should pay attention to team members' work preferences, psychological empowerment, and the team's overall boundedness (8). |
| Mabona JF, van Rooyen D, Ten Ham-Baloyi W. (2022) (15) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> collaborative leadership good communication effective team management establishing trust among team members | Nurse leaders play a significant role in facilitating effective or authentic leadership through effective communication. Also, nurse leaders play a significant role in enhancing teamwork by staying in tune with the needs of the team, as well as promoting autonomy of nurses in their team, establishing trust between team members (15). |

Effective working environment

A healthy nurse work environment is a workplace which is satisfying, safe, and empowering (21). The results of previous studies demonstrated that a supportive environment for the nurses, motivation from the management, opportunities for professional de-

velopment, education about communication skills and ways of improving professional relationships and resolving conflict, as well as smaller unit sizes, are all ways to improve nurses' working environment (22, 23). Likewise, a good organization of the work environment contributes to job satisfaction and better patient care (23).

Effective communication

Successful teamwork is essential in high-risk environments such as hospitals. Communication, along with effective teamwork, is necessary to achieve patient safety (14). Patient care is entrusted to different professions, so communication failures are almost inevitable. There are different communication styles used by different members of the team, which can occasionally lead to communication failures. In order to improve collaboration in a team, it is necessary to improve communication. Evidence from the literature states that in order to achieve effective teamwork, communication among team members must be open and honest (14). The findings from previous studies have shown that education is the key to improving team communication (24).

Effective team management

The ability of team leaders to develop others' trust in them is critical to leadership effectiveness. An experienced leader has to know the qualities and performances of their team members to encourage certain team members to achieve the best work outcome and, ultimately, better outcomes for the patient. The leader contributes to trust and security among team members by good examples of managing crises which is necessary for a sense of community. The findings from the previous studies have shown that emotional intelligence has made a significant contribution to effective leadership, becoming one of the key characteristics of leaders. It is important for achieving effective leadership in healthcare organizations and it contributes decisively to their good functioning and successful operation (15). As regards nurses, at every level, the above need is considered imperative because of the particular nature of the nursing profession, which places the healthy or weak person at its center. By implementing social and emotional learning programs, nurses can acquire knowledge, attitudes, and skills which are necessary for understanding and managing emotions, achieving positive goals, and maintaining positive relations and accountable decisions (25).

Education about teamwork

The findings from the previous studies have shown that education changes the culture, improves communication, increases professional understanding, and emphasizes the need to use effective communication strategies and team-building techniques dur-

ing the formative period of professional learning (12, 14). Education through Team Strategies and Tools to Enhance Performance and Patient Safety program (TeamSTEPPS program), which is an evidenced-based communication-training toolkit created with the purpose of improving teamwork and communication, as well as various organizational trainings such as virtual simulation and train-the-trainer interventions aimed at improving teamwork skills are important for the acquisition of knowledge and skills for effective teamwork (12). Gillespie et al. (2010) suggested that education about teamwork should be included in the curriculum of undergraduate studies in medicine and nursing (26). van Diggele et al. (2020) suggested that effective team management is a complex and highly valued component of health education, increasingly recognized as essential to the delivery of high standards of education, research, and clinical practice. In order to meet the healthcare needs of the twenty-first century, competent leaders will be increasingly important in all healthcare professions. Consequently, the inclusion of leadership training and development should be part of all healthcare professionals' curricula (27). Thus, it is critical to recognize that nurse leaders not only have the role and responsibility of leading teams, but they also must see to it that nursing staff receive the education and training needed for practicing effective teamwork (3).

Measurement of teamwork

The importance of teamwork measurement has grown significantly over the last few years. When researching the tools used to measure teamwork in nursing, we found Hackman's model of team effectiveness, Salas's "Big Five", Nursing teamwork survey (NTS). The Nursing Teamwork Survey measures overall teamwork and five factors of teamwork: trust, team orientation, backup, shared mental models, and team leadership (28). Different authors used the NTS survey where they showed that effective teamwork does not only improve efficiency but tends to lead to a healthier and happier workplace (29). Also, a higher level of teamwork and adequate staffing tends to lead to greater job satisfaction with current position and occupation, resulting in better patient care (30). According to Costello et al. (2021), introducing team-building strategies and acting on the results of NTS may provide effective support to help improve communication and teamwork which will ultimately improve the quality of nursing care and patient outcomes (29).

Knowledge sharing among team members

When it comes to nursing, learning, and knowledge are some of the most important aspects of good teamwork criteria. According to Anselmann et al. (2023), team learning activities, such as reflection and knowledge sharing, are cognitive intergroup processes which influence cognitive structures and thought patterns, affecting behavior (8). Also, knowledge sharing results in team members' creativity (31). Evidence from the literature on the importance of knowledge sharing shows that informal learning and individual learning activities do not show equally good results as knowledge sharing between team members. Having that in mind, one can't go without the other, therefore individual, informal, and team learning contribute to the aspects of knowledge sharing, hence, to team effectiveness (8).

Interventions for enhancing nurses' teamwork

Evidence from the literature stated that in health-care settings, teams have become necessary to ensure effective functioning within organizations (32) and interventions which improve teamwork improve clinical outcomes (33). The results of previous studies emphasize several types of interventions such as individual-focused, structural or organizational, and combined interventions. Interventions focused on individuals encompass self-care workshops, stress management skill development, and communication skills training. Additional practices like yoga, massage, mindfulness, and meditation may be incorporated. Structural or organizational interventions involve workload or schedule rotation, stress management training programs delivered in group face-to-face sessions, teamwork/transitions, and the implementation of focus groups. Combined individual-focused and structural interventions include stress management and resilience training, stress management workshops, and improving interaction with colleagues through personal training. Training and follow-up are carried out face-to-face, by phone, e-mail, video, or online (34). Hughes et al. (2016) indicated that healthcare team training is effective because it surpasses employees' pretraining utility, induces learning, transfers learned material to the job, and leads to improved organizational and patient results (32). According to Buljac-Samardzic (2020), key interventions for team improvement are train-

ing (principle-based, method-based, and general), tools (such as SBAR and (de)briefing checklists), organizational (re)design, and programs. Crew resource management (CRM) training incorporates information, demonstration, and practice-based methods. Also, TeamSTEPPS emphasizes competencies and standardized tools across teamwork domains. Simulation-based training enhances real patient experiences. Briefings and debriefings enable systematic communication, while organizational (re)design targets structural enhancements. Programs are organized in a manner which integrates learning sessions, simulation training, and structural interventions (35). According to Weaver et al. (2010), simulation and classroom-based team-training interventions can improve teamwork processes (e.g., communication, coordination, and cooperation), and implementation has been associated with improvements in patient safety outcomes (36).

Conclusion

Teamwork has always been important in nursing. It has been proven that effective teamwork is key to ensuring quality of care, better healthcare outcomes, and patient and health care worker safety. Therefore, facilitating and supporting effective teamwork should be one of the priorities of healthcare organizations. In order to achieve that, it is necessary to take into account the factors related to effective teamwork performance. The emphasis should be on strengthening the effective teamwork of nurses for the benefit of quality patient care and the creation of a healthy working environment, and therefore greater teamwork cohesion. The present research is intended for all nurses, at all levels of health care, to apply the mentioned factors in their daily work environment and thereby increase the functionality and management of the team.

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FAKTORI POVEZANI S UČINKOVITIM TIMSKIM RADOM U SESTRINSTVU: NARATIVNI PREGLED LITERATURE

Sažetak

Uvod. Važnost timskog rada u sestrinstvu posljednjih je godina privukla sve veću pozornost zbog složenosti sustava pružanja zdravstvene njege i nedostatka medicinskih sestara, što je povećalo opterećenje posla koje može rezultirati pogreškama u radu, što utječe na pacijenta, medicinsku sestru i organizacijske rezultate. Učinkovit timski rad medicinskih sestara ključan je za pružanje visokokvalitetne zdravstvene skrbi.

Cilj. Ovaj rad ispituje aktualna istraživanja o timskom radu u sestrinstvu s fokusom na čimbenike koji se odnose na učinkovit timski rad.

Metode. Narativni pregled objavljenih radova o čimbenicima koji utječu na učinkovit timski rad u sestrinstvu proveden je od prosinca 2023. do siječnja 2024. Elektroničkom pretragom baze podataka PubMed odabrani su relevantni radovi s pomoću ključnih riječi timski rad među medicinskim sestrama, učinkovit timski rad, sestrinstvo.

Rezultati. Online pretragom pronađena su 854 članka. Zatim je odabran 21 članak za cjeloviti pregled teksta. Pet članaka zadovoljilo je kriterije za uključivanje u rad. Faktori koji se odnose na učinkovit timski rad u različitim domenama identificirani su i opisani u ovom istraživanju. Ti su faktori: povjerenje među članovima tima, motivacija tima, učinkovito radno okruženje, učinkovita komunikacija, učinkovito upravljanje timom, edukacija o timskom radu, mjerenje timskog rada, dijeljenje znanja među članovima tima i intervencije za poboljšanje timskog rada medicinskih sestara/tehničara.

Zaključak. Dokazano je da je učinkovit timski rad ključan za osiguranje kvalitetne skrbi, boljih ishoda te sigurnosti pacijenata i zdravstvenih djelatnika. Stoga bi omogućavanje i podržavanje učinkovita timskog rada trebao biti jedan od prioriteta zdravstvenih organizacija. Kako bi se to postiglo, potrebno je uzeti u obzir čimbenike koji se odnose na učinkoviti timski rad. Naglasak bi trebao biti na jačanju učinkovita timskog rada medicinskih sestara/tehničara za dobiti kvalitetne skrbi za pacijenta.

Ključne riječi: timski rad, učinkovit timski rad, sestrinstvo, faktori