

HOSTED BY



Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

International Journal of Nursing Sciences

journal homepage: <http://www.elsevier.com/journals/international-journal-of-nursing-sciences/2352-0132>

The impact of task characteristics on the performance of nursing teams

Azlyn Ahmad Zawawi, PhD^{a,*}, Azzat Mohd. Nasurdin, PhD^b^a Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia^b Universiti Sains Malaysia, Malaysia

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 2 November 2016

Accepted 31 March 2017

Available online xxx

Keywords:

Nursing

Team

Task performance and analysis

ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study sought to examine the relationship between team task features and team task performance. Team task performance revolved around the team's technical knowledge and the technical core activities of the organization. On the other hand, team task characteristics include task identity, task significance, and task interdependence.

Methods: This study involved a total of 300 nursing teams (1436 individual nurses) from seven state hospitals in Peninsular Malaysia. Data were collected using two sets of questionnaires which were initially distributed to 320 teams. One set was given to the team members and another set was given to the team leaders. Of the 320 sets sent out, 300 sets were returned. Responses were then combined and aggregated to the team level to get the team's final score. Analyses of the hypotheses were done using Partial Least Squares (PLS) through assessment of the measurement and structural model.

Results: Results from the path analysis revealed that of the three dimensions of team task attributes, only task significance was positively and significantly related to team task performance ($\beta = 0.076, P > 0.05$), while task identity ($\beta = 0.076, P > 0.05$) and task interdependence ($\beta = -0.037, P > 0.05$) were found unrelated to team task performance.

Conclusions: This study demonstrated that task significance is important to predict team task performance. Task significance reflects meaningfulness and nobility of tasks, thus elevate the desire to perform better in each assigned task.

© 2017 Chinese Nursing Association. Production and hosting by Elsevier B.V. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>).

1. Introduction

Nursing teams are important in ensuring positive health outcomes of patients. The utilization of teams, especially among nurses is advantageous as their tasks are becoming highly interdependent and unpredictable. Effective nursing teams produce greater quality of care, fewer errors, and more satisfied patients. In teams, nurses deliver safe care that affects not only patients' health but also patients' emotions. To ensure smooth operation of everyday tasks, nursing teams must always respond effectively to recurring tasks and situations among which are medication administration, patients' documentation, patients' health assessment, and team supervisions. Effective accomplishments of nursing tasks will impact

the overall quality of care, the well-being of patients and the continuous achievement of the teams' task performance.

This paper analyzes the relationship between team task characteristics and team task performance among nursing teams in Malaysia. Team task performance is conceptualized as the team's technical knowledge and the technical core activities of the organization. Team task characteristics are operationalized as task identity, task significance, and task interdependence.

1.1. The imperatives of team task performance

Team task performance is established through the team's technical knowledge and learning orientation [1]. It deals with activities that contribute to an organization's technical core which are technological process, provision of materials, or provision services. Team task performance varies across jobs and it is role-prescribed. Its antecedents are more likely to involve cognitive ability than personality variables [1]. There are two classes of behavior included in task performance at an individual level [2].

* Corresponding author. Faculty of Administrative Science and Policy Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA, 40450, Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia.

E-mail address: azlyn@kedah.uitm.edu.my (A. Ahmad Zawawi).

Peer review under responsibility of Chinese Nursing Association.

The first class characterizes the activities that directly transform raw materials to goods and services that an organization produces. The second class contains activities that service and maintain the technical core by furnishing the supply of raw materials; distribute end products; and provide planning, coordination, and staffing functions (including supervising) to enable effective functioning of the technical core [2].

Team task performance is established by accomplishing a team's technical knowledge and learning orientation [3]. Although it does not necessarily require interdependent interactions between the team members [4], the teammates must still be aware of each other's technical capabilities to facilitate achieving the team's mission. Salas, Sims, and Burke [5] posited that team task performance requires an effective coordination between team tasks, tools, machines, and systems involved, suggesting that in achieving greater performance, the skills of the team members must be effectively coordinated with tasks at hand.

In nursing teams, team task performance is reflected through the full understanding of patients' clinical information [6]. High understanding of clinical and technical knowledge will influence how the team reacts during critical incidents [6]. With sufficient knowledge on assigned tasks, high performance teams will have less duplication of work and are able to locate resources efficiently [7]. In definition, a good management of task will reflect a high pursuit of task performance among nursing teams.

1.2. The impact of team task characteristics on team task performance

Many earlier studies have documented the positive influence of team task characteristics on team performance. The way team tasks are designed affect the performance of a team and team tasks not only positively navigate the team towards greater performance, but also bring notable impact on how teams execute their missions. The following sub section discusses the three main task characteristics focused in this paper.

1.2.1. Task identity

Task identity allows team members to take charge of their tasks because they are allowed to finish a task from beginning to its end [8]. Although one study found a relation between this component and team performance [9], other studies found otherwise [10]. Identity is important because members who identify with a team are more likely to perform better than those who do not [11]. Task identity is illustrated through the accomplishment of a whole piece of work. The team's sense of worth is achieved through completing a whole task rather than through contributing selective efforts to certain parts of an assigned task [10]. To successfully complete a whole piece of work, members' knowledge and expertise need to be fully utilized. Team task identity is achieved when team members collectively finish a specific duty. Based on the aforementioned discussion, a positive relationship between task identity and task performance can be expected. Thus, the following hypothesis is put forth:

Hypothesis 1. *Task identity has a positive relationship with task performance.*

1.2.2. Task significance

Besides task identity, task significance has been found to affect team performance. Task significance creates meanings to team tasks and will in turn increase performance. Specifically, the extent of significance created by a task will induce a sense of "experienced meaningfulness", which in turn, will encourage high internal work motivation, high quality work performance, high satisfaction with

work, low absenteeism, and low turnover [8]. Campion et al. [10] revealed that task significance positively relates to team performance because the tasks carried out by a team will have an impact onto other people's life. Task significance will motivate members to successfully perform tasks and thus, will create higher passion for performance. In addition, Grant [12] advocated that task significance has a strong influence on team performance because it increases employees' perception that their jobs are meaningful to others. In particular, this particular component shapes the behaviors of team members and will eventually increase team performance following a successful team decision-making process [12,13].

Nursing, being an organized skilled activity [14], requires nurses to work together in teams to deliver quality care [15]. Nursing care is said to have quality when it is holistic and carried out in a consistent manner and that it meets the individual needs of patients [15]. Nursing team members have an impact on the quality of healthcare because they deal with patients on a regular basis. Through task significance, nurses will feel that their tasks give meaning to others when it is appreciated. In fact, the tasks of a nursing team are not only significant to the patients, but also to the hospital and public at large.

In a nutshell, the positive impression that team members have with regards to their significance will provide the essential psychological cues that what they do is important and meaningful. This will trigger greater energy to achieve team performance [12]. Team tasks that have significance will lead to higher members' satisfaction and stronger sense of teamwork. Campion et al. [16] discovered that tasks significance relates positively with multiple team performance criteria such as productivity and satisfaction. In light of these findings, it is proposed that task significance will have a positive relationship with task performance. Thus, it is posited that:

Hypothesis 2. *Task significance has a positive relationship with task performance.*

1.2.3. Task interdependence

Task interdependence, which is a component of team task, is a group-level construct that increases along with members' dependence on the team [16]. In most cases, high task interdependence has a significant influence on team performance because there is a need for team members to coordinate and interact during missions. In addition, high task interdependence will also increase teamwork that is needed to complete a task. In nursing teams, this clearly indicates the synchronization of work flow and communication in delivering safe care to patients. When task interdependence is high, the success of the team will be dependent upon the smooth flow of team resources, materials, and information, and dependability of the teammates to work together [16].

Task interdependence is very important in nursing teams as the way members share and rely on each other to complete tasks will enable the team to achieve greater performance. Nursing tasks such as administering medications, wounds, and interpretation of patient information often requires nurses to work with others in order to coordinate care [17]. Therefore, as frontliners of healthcare, nursing members are responsible to not only understand their own scope of practice but must also be well-informed of other members' nature of duties [18]. Nursing team members must be aware of the responsibilities of others, while also having enough reliance on other nursing members, as this will ensure that nursing tasks are delivered effectively. Hence, we suggest the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3. *Task interdependence has a positive relationship with task performance.*

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/5568324>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/5568324>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)