

THE ROLE OF ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT ON NURSING DEVELOPMENT IN SAUDI ARABIAN: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the impact of organizational support on the professional development of nurses in Saudi Arabia, with a particular focus on how training programs and leadership styles enhance nurses' self-efficacy and innovation. The goal is to highlight strategies that strengthen nursing practices and improve patient outcomes through organizational and training support. This review aims to systematically explore the impact of organizational support on nursing development within healthcare settings in Saudi Arabia. By examining existing studies, this review seeks to identify specific forms of organizational support that enhance nursing competencies, professional growth, and overall job satisfaction among nurses in the region. This systematic review examines the impact of organizational support and training self-efficacy on the development of nursing professionals in Saudi Arabia's healthcare sector. A comprehensive analysis was conducted using the PRISMA flowchart and an integrative approach, evaluating 117 studies published since 2010. The review highlights how training programs, leadership styles, and perceived organizational support influence nurses' self-efficacy, creativity, and overall professional development. Key findings reveal that training positively impacts knowledge, attitudes, and skill development, but challenges persist in translating this training into practice. In Saudi Arabia, there is a growing focus on improving healthcare quality through continuous professional development and support, although barriers such as overwork and limited opportunities for skill application remain significant. The review underscores the importance of tailored training programs and leadership initiatives that foster creativity, self-efficacy, and innovative behaviors among nurses. Ultimately, the study calls for enhanced organizational support mechanisms to better facilitate the integration of skills into daily nursing practices and improve patient outcomes.

Keywords: Organizational support, Self-efficacy, Nursing development, Creativity, Saudi healthcare, Training programs

1. Introduction

The present study conducts systematic reviews of the existing works connected to organizational support's role in nursing development in Saudi Arabia. This could not come more timely, as the professional development of nurses bears considerable implications for healthcare quality and patient outcomes in regions of rapidly evolving healthcare needs such as Saudi Arabia. This training program, combined with supportive leadership styles, has been an organizational springboard toward enhancing nursing staff's self-efficacy, creativity, job satisfaction organizational commitment for better workplace support. In the context of Saudi Arabia, with continuously improving healthcare standards and escalating patients' expectations, comprehension of how organizational support mechanisms contribute to growth and competency in nurses becomes all the more significant and improves delivering high service quality. This systematic review identifies specific forms of organizational support that have helped in nursing development, after which the impact on knowledge, skills, and professional fulfillment of nurses in Saudi healthcare settings is discussed. This review thus systematically evaluates the literature on record to provide an overview of how organizational support influences nursing professional development in Saudi Arabia. Using the PRISMA flowchart and an integrative approach, the research screened 117 relevant studies published since 2010. Thematic analysis results indicate that organizational support through training initiatives and leadership involvement amplifies self-efficacy in nurses and innovative behaviors that are crucial in dealing with complex patient needs. This further elucidates a number of challenges faced, such as overworking and lack of opportunities concerning the application of newly acquired skills, which may prevent them from achieving full potential from these initiatives in development. Finally, this review advocates for tailor-made training and leadership strategies that would help in continuous professional development among nurses for effective health service delivery within the borders of Saudi Arabia.

2. Systematic literature review approach

This systematic literature review covers the literature on the role of organizational support on nursing development in Saudi Arabian. by using Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) flowchart.

The terms used in the literature search include “organizational support”, “nursing development”. Though, other important terms were used to broaden the analysis and notify the requirements for inclusion and exclusion.

1.1 Inclusion Criteria

The articles included in this review were selected based on their publication date (2010 or later) and adherence to two specific criteria:

1. The literature must offer insights into the focus on organizational support and its influence on nursing development within Saudi Arabia.
2. The studies must utilize one or more research methods: systematic reviews, intervention studies (such as randomized controlled trials), descriptive studies, or qualitative research designs. Furthermore, eligible studies should have been conducted in hospital environments and published in English.

3 Exclusion Criteria

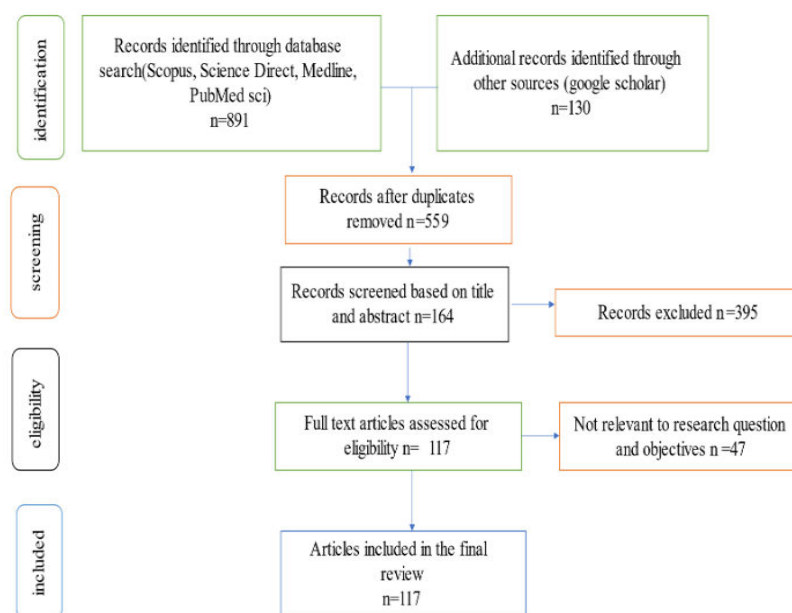
If articles are review papers/essays, editorial reviews, interviews, commentaries, or narrative reviews, they were excluded. Studies published in non-hospital settings regarding training and self-efficacy and studies done in any language apart from the English are not included.

4 Literature Search and Outcomes

The search initially found 891 researches, 559 duplicates of which were discarded. The titles and abstracts of the remaining studies have been reviewed and 395 have been excluded because the inclusion requirements have not been met. This analyzed the full texts of 164 studies and omitted 47 studies. Therefore, a total of 117 articles are reviewed in this study. Searching the selected papers reference list did not produce further studies. The flow diagram depicted in Figure 1.1 adheres to the guidelines set forth by the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA).

1.1 below summarizes the Stages by which the process of selection is passed.

4.1 Figures and tables



(Developed by the authors) Figure 1.1 : Prisma diagram of selection of the study literature

Table Fehler! Kein Text mit angegebener Formatvorlage im Dokument..1 : Aspects which included in quality appraisal tools

Qualitative studies	
└ Purpose and the discourse of the study.	Purpose of the study.
└ Sample techniques	Organization of the study and sample characteristics.
└ Data collection process.	Analyzing the data and Findings.
└ Data analysis process.	Conclusion.
└ Research reflexivity.	
└ Conclusion.	

Following the early assessment, the literature review papers are graded as providing little to no description of the methodology (score of 1), inadequate description of the methodology that raised research rigor concerns (score of 2), or a

thorough clarification of the methodology used (score of 3). Regarding the degree to which the articles were important for research purposes, the papers are rated and graded based on whether the articles concern: the effect of training in general (score of 1); developed countries' effect of training and organizational support (score of 2); in developing countries effect of training and organizational support (score of 3); and in Arabic countries effect of training, self-efficacy, and organizational support (score of 4). (Whittemore and Knafl, 2005). The rigor and significance scores were applied, yielding a total combined score of seven. See Table 1.2.

Table 1.2: Critical appraisal of literature adapted from Whittemore and Knafl (2005)

Methodological Rigour	Score	Data Relevance
Researches that have minor Rigour method.	1	Secondary emphasis on effect of training and organizational support.
Research with unfinished technique evidence and/or some focus on rigour.	2	Primary emphasis on reports in developed nations.
Researches that have complete information on methodology.	3	Studies emphasis on effect of leadership and organizational support in nations that are developing.
	4	Effect of training and organization support researches with emphasis in Arab nations

Whittemore and Knafl's (2005) constant comparison approach was used to evaluate the papers chosen for the literature review, creating groups and distinguishing between themes, correlations, and variations. Following a difficult trial and error process, themes were picked that were appropriately labelled, discrete and accurate, and strong enough to withstand closer examination. After identifying any irregularities and deciding how to proceed, the researcher established the categories, confirmed them with the supervisory committee, and clearly presented the final themes (Aveyard, 2007). Based on searching literature on effect of training and organization support research, the main themes of the study extracted (54) are commonly used to examine the effect of training and organization support. These focused on the themes of: training; organizational commitment; and trust. The literature review chapter structure should basically revolve around these themes. Besides the empirical studies described from the integrative analysis, numerous argument papers have been suggested to in which it contribute valuably to the discussion

4.1 Overview of nursing training and development in Saudi Arabia

In 1958, the collaborative efforts and strong partnership between the Ministry of Health (MOH) and the World Health Organization (WHO) led to the establishment of the first nurse training program in Riyadh. This initiative was initially limited to male participants, as women were barred from entering professional roles at the time. The inaugural cohort comprised 15 male students. It wasn't until 1964 that women were allowed to enroll in nursing programs within the Kingdom. Subsequently, two Health Institute Programs were launched, one based in Riyadh and the other in Jeddah, specifically for Saudi women. At that time, graduates from these health institutes, both male and female, were referred to as "nurses' aides."

In the year 1976, The Ministry of Higher Education brought into existence the first Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) In 1977, similar programs were introduced at King Abdul-Aziz University in Jeddah, while a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program was established in 1987 at both King Saud University in Riyadh and King Faisal University in Dammam. These BSN and MSN programs were exclusively available to female students, whereas diploma programs remained open to both men and women.

Currently, nursing schools have proliferated across both private health sectors and government-owned hospitals to support the Saudization initiative (Sana et al., 2012). This initiative, spearheaded by the Saudi government, aims to localize jobs, thereby reducing dependence on foreign workers and minimizing their employment in line with the Saudization policy. Originally introduced as a one-year nursing program in 1964, it was later expanded to three years, accompanied by the establishment of additional institutes. By the end of the 1990s, the number of female health institutes in Saudi Arabia had grown to 17, while male institutes totaled 16, all dedicated to providing nursing education. As a result, the number of nursing graduates experienced significant growth; female graduates rose from 13 in 1965 to 476 by 1990, while male graduates reached a total of 915 in 1990 (Shamsudin et al., 2013).

Around 1994, the primary goal behind establishing nursing colleges in Saudi Arabia was to elevate both the academic and cultural standards of nurses and to offer training for qualified high school graduates. This development was marked by the Ministry of Health's decision to permit the concurrent operation of junior colleges and health institutes, representing the available tiers of nursing education at the time (Fatma, 2014). Graduates from these programs were awarded a Diploma in Nursing and classified as technical nurses.

In 1996, a PhD scholarship program and a domestic scholarship initiative were introduced, providing Saudi nurses the opportunity to pursue education abroad. A pivotal change occurred in 1998 when the healthcare colleges were transitioned from the Ministry of Health's jurisdiction to that of the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE), and the degree title was modified from a diploma to a bachelor's degree (Abdullah, Shamsudin et al., 2013). Over time, professional titles within the Saudi nursing field have evolved, with bachelor's degree holders recognized as 'Specialist Nurses,' those with a Master of Science in Nursing referred to as 'Senior Specialists,' and individuals holding a doctorate in nursing designated as 'Consultants.'

The standards for accrediting nursing programs require that cultural competency training be part of their curriculum. With growing immigration rates, many countries view cultural competence as an essential aspect for any profession or society (Bhopal, 2014). Cultural diversity acts as a driver for creativity and innovation, encouraging diverse leadership styles, the growth of new professional skills, and ongoing cultural learning (Oikarainen et al., 2019; Mikkonen et al., 2017). Additionally, embracing cross-cultural values is crucial for breaking down global barriers to practice and fostering a more cross-cultural world (Collins and Hewer, 2014). Nursing students often encounter greater challenges in clinical settings compared to academic ones (Mikkonen et al., 2017).

The sense of achievement and fulfillment from learning outcomes is often linked to the positive relationship between the instructor and the student (Mikkonen et al., 2016), as well as the emphasis on maintaining patient safety. Effective nursing practice requires a solid understanding, a positive attitude, and a willingness to both teach and learn from others. Students can excel in their profession when they have a strong grasp of and practice in intercultural communication skills. Initially, it was found that instructors sometimes feel uneasy when working with CALD (Culturally and Linguistically Diverse) students, and often express frustration in their communication with instructors during clinical practice (Oikarainen et al., 2018; Mikkonen et al., 2016).

Regarding cultural diversity, Oikarainen et al. (2018) noted that while instructors generally assessed their competence in teaching cultural diversity fairly, there were still tendencies to stereotype CALD nursing students. Instructors observed that language barriers created gaps in communication, limiting effective interaction with CALD students (Oikarainen et al., 2018). In the analysis of nursing students' experiences through clinical assessments, language and relationships emerged as key factors contributing to the cultural stigmatization and the restriction of learning opportunities in clinical settings (Mikkonen et al., 2017). Previous research indicates the importance of addressing challenges in intercultural communication by exploring instructors' perspectives on CALD nursing students.

Nursing degree programs are primarily offered at universities or universities of applied sciences, with a curriculum designed to be completed in three to three and a half years. Upon finishing the program, students are awarded a bachelor's degree and are eligible to practice nursing professionally (Pinto, 2015). According to the European Union Council Directive (Directive 2013/55/EU), at least 50% of the nursing education program must be dedicated to clinical practice. For example, in European Union countries, clinical training typically lasts between 4 and 5 weeks (Pitkänen et al., 2018).

Clinical practice, which is integrated into clinical learning environments and supported by mentoring, helps nursing students achieve their learning goals and enrich their experiences through ongoing practice (Pitkänen et al., 2018; Tuomikoski et al., 2019). Nursing students in EU countries also have the opportunity to participate in exchange programs, allowing them to study in another EU country or even outside the EU for a period of three to six months. In countries where the primary language is not English, nursing students from various backgrounds are offered the chance to pursue their nursing degree in English-taught programs. Finland, for instance, provides such programs, enabling both international and domestic students to study together. In addition to offering nursing programs in English, students are required to complete nearly half of their education through clinical exercises with patients who do not speak English but instead speak Finnish or Swedish (Mikkonen et al., 2017).

In the context of training future nurses, nurse instructors play a crucial role in expanding nursing curricula to align with global standards and in preparing competent nurses who are culturally aware (Parcells and Baernholdt, 2014; Tella et al., 2015). Given that clinical practice comprises up to half of nursing education, instructors significantly influence nursing students' practical skills and knowledge (Pitkänen et al., 2018). Previous research has shown that many instructors, although registered nurses, often lack formal training in teaching (Tuomikoski et al., 2019). Effective mentorship during clinical training has been shown to greatly enhance nursing students' learning capabilities and help them develop their professional identity as qualified nurses (Jokelainen et al., 2011; McSharry and Lathlean, 2017).

The growing diversity in developed nations, including Australia, has led to a rising number of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) students in educational institutions (Juntunen et al., 2024). Health professional programs often see a higher proportion of CALD students around one-third of their total enrolment compared to other university courses (O'Reilly & Milner, 2015). Unfortunately, many of these students face an increased risk of not completing their studies or achieving lower academic outcomes due to factors like social isolation, the need to balance paid work during school terms, stereotype-related pressures, and language barriers. These challenges are particularly significant in clinical practice environments, where it is crucial for educators to create inclusive and supportive learning spaces to foster the success of CALD students (Abu-Arab & Parry, 2015).

While existing research highlights these challenges, particularly within the fields of medicine and nursing, there is limited evidence addressing the broader spectrum of disciplines of health professionals. There is a pressing need to develop and recognize active approaches to help CALD students thrive in reasonable experimental knowledge

environments across various settings (O'Reilly & Milner, 2015). Additionally, a disconnect remains between experimental instructors and CALD students regarding the effectiveness of these proposed strategies. Many educators feel that universities do not provide sufficient support for fostering cultural awareness and competency in learning environments. This issue is further reflected in the continued academic struggles of a disproportionate number of CALD students in health-related programs (Juntunen et al., 2024). This suggests a gap between the identified problems and the solutions being offered, raising concerns about whether they truly meet the needs of all involved parties.

According to Arasaratnam (2012), multicultural communication reveals gaps in understanding that are shaped by cultural differences, which might not be apparent in homogeneous groups. When individuals from similar cultural backgrounds interact, their shared values and beliefs facilitate smooth communication. However, when people from different cultural backgrounds connect, the differences in their perspectives significantly influence their relationship dynamics. This concept is captured in the Integrated Model of Intercultural Communication Competence (IMICC) (Arasaratnam et al., 2010), which includes ideals such as empathy, motivation, global mindset, intercultural experiences, and interaction. Intercultural communication competence can be defined as the integration of these elements. Empathy, in particular, refers to the ability to understand the thoughts and motivations of another person.

Fernández-Muñoz et al. (2017) highlight that both private and public healthcare organizations recognize leadership as a driving force behind organizational efficiency, performance, and the ability to overcome emerging challenges, attracting global interest in leadership dynamics. Numerous studies and systematic literature reviews have identified transformational leadership as a critical factor in fostering creativity among nursing staff, resolving conflicts effectively, improving nurse satisfaction, reducing medication errors, decreasing patient fall rates, lowering infection rates, and reducing mortality rates. Molnar et al. (2019) found that the Magnet Recognition Program, recognized as the gold standard in nursing excellence and managed by the American Nurses Credentialing Center of the American Nurses Association, considers transformational leadership to be one of the five key components in its Magnet Model.

Mitchell et al. (2016) suggest that transformational leadership is strongly associated with performance, effectiveness, and job satisfaction. The highest-performing hospitals tend to emphasize leadership, empowerment, and substantial staff involvement in the management process. Higher levels of job satisfaction and opportunities for participation in leadership roles are linked to greater job achievement and stronger organizational commitment. Successful nurse leaders foster teamwork, exhibit flexibility and encouragement, demonstrate high emotional intelligence, adhere to ethical standards, and promote high-quality practices. Wong et al. (2017) emphasize the positive relationship between effective nurse management and job satisfaction, retention, and staff engagement. Furthermore, Wong et al. (2020) found that staff well-being and job satisfaction are directly correlated with better patient outcomes, as reflected in reduced mortality rates and fewer medical errors.

Team members exchange ideas, offer mutual support, and assist each other as the situation requires. They celebrate their collective achievements, such as by hosting an employee-of-the-quarter award event where staff, rather than managers, select the winners. The employee retention rate has remained steady at 2%. Additionally, Wong et al. (2020) suggested that employee well-being is linked to the quality of care and patient satisfaction. In this case, patient satisfaction surveys conducted at discharge have consistently shown an average of 95% satisfaction annually. Survey results typically indicate that patients are "extremely satisfied" and often recommend the healthcare system to others.

An organization can be defined as a group of individuals working together to achieve specific objectives. It is often seen as a social structure that formalizes human relationships (Al-refaei et al., 2024). A healthcare organization is a system where responsibilities are divided among employees, such as doctors and nurses, with tasks assigned to help achieve the overall goals of the healthcare facility. It can also be viewed as a critical managerial function that organizes the work of nursing staff, secures necessary resources, and integrates both to work towards the hospital's objectives (Khrais, Higazee et al., 2018).

4.2 Result

The systematic review of 117 studies highlights several key findings regarding organizational support's role in the professional development of nurses in Saudi Arabia. Training programs were found to have a substantial positive impact on nurses' knowledge, attitudes, and skills, particularly in areas of clinical decision-making and patient care quality. Leadership styles, specifically transformational and supportive leadership, emerged as critical in fostering higher self-efficacy and promoting creativity among nursing staff.

The data revealed that employee who perceived stronger organizational support reported higher job satisfaction, increased motivation, and a greater commitment to career advancement (Al-refaei et al., 2024). However, despite the positive effects of training and supportive leadership, significant barriers were identified, including high workload, limited time for skill application, and restricted access to ongoing professional development opportunities. These factors were found to limit the integration of new skills into daily practices, suggesting a need for more structured support mechanisms.

The findings emphasize the value of tailored training and leadership initiatives that not only enhance professional competencies but also support innovation in nursing practices, ultimately contributing to improved patient outcomes. The review calls for organizational strategies that address workload challenges and create environments conducive to continuous professional growth and skill application.

The systematic review process, illustrated in the PRISMA flow diagram, began with a comprehensive search of relevant

databases, identifying a total of 1,021 records (891 from databases and 130 from other sources). After removing duplicates, 559 unique records remained for initial screening. Of these, 395 records were excluded based on title and abstract review due to a lack of relevance to the research question.

The remaining 164 records were assessed for eligibility through full-text review. Following this assessment, 47 articles were excluded for not meeting the specific research criteria. Ultimately, 117 articles were included in the final analysis. These articles provided valuable insights into the impact of organizational support on nursing development in Saudi Arabia, focusing on training programs, leadership styles, and the promotion of self-efficacy and innovation among nursing professionals. The data highlighted both the benefits of organizational support and the challenges in implementing effective training and development strategies within the healthcare sector.

5.0 Conclusion

The study reveals that training programs and organizational support in Saudi Arabia's healthcare sector contribute positively to nursing professionals' self-efficacy, creativity, and skill application. However, practical barriers such as workload and resource limitations affect the full realization of these benefits. In alignment with similar studies in different contexts, this research underscores the critical role of organizational support and transformational leadership in enhancing healthcare workers' performance and morale. Compared to global findings, the unique cultural dynamics of Saudi Arabia require tailored approaches to fully integrate supportive leadership and training. This study's findings highlight the need for ongoing support structures within healthcare organizations to sustain nursing development. Specifically, it emphasizes the role of targeted leadership and continuous training in fostering a more innovative, efficient, and resilient healthcare workforce.

5.1 General Outcomes of Current Study

This systematic review aimed to explore the impact of organizational support-such as training programs or leadership styles-on Saudi nurses' professional development. From an initial 1,021 records, 117 studies met the selection criteria and provided evidence that the higher the effective organizational support, the greater the level of nurses' self-efficacy, creativity, and job satisfaction. Their clinical decision-making skills improved with training programs and resulted in higher quality patient care. Supportive leadership motivated them and encouraged professional growth among nurses.

5.2 Comparison with Other Studies

The finding of this review is consistent with studies previously conducted in other healthcare contexts, also indicating that organizational support is crucial for professional development and improving patient outcome. Training programs and supportive leadership demonstrate similar effects on nursing performance, self-efficacy, and job satisfaction in the Western healthcare setting. This review identifies some unique challenges for Saudi Arabia's healthcare sector, including high workloads and few opportunities for ongoing development that are probably lower in many parts of the world due to different health structures.

5.3 Implications

These findings suggest that the stimulation of a competent and innovative nursing workforce is highly significant in Saudi Arabia through tailored organizational support. Health care institutions will be able to enhance not only nursing practices but also overall patient care by structuring appropriate training programs which enhance self-efficacy and professional growth along with supportive leadership initiatives. Barriers such as high workload, lack of time to utilize skills, should be reduced to a minimum to have maximum use of these support mechanisms.

5.4 Recommendations and Future Research

This study highly recommends that health organizations in Saudi Arabia invest seriously in structured mechanisms of support, which provide regular training, mentorship, and leadership development. The future research should be focused on what kind of organizational support works best for different nursing roles and specialties in Saudi Arabia's contexts. Longitudinal studies might reveal some valuable insights into how sustained organizational support affects the careers of nurses and patient outcomes over time.

5.5 Recommendations and Future Research:

To further improve nursing development in Saudi Arabia, future research should investigate specific interventions that address workload and resource challenges. Additional studies exploring the long-term impact of various leadership styles on nursing outcomes would provide further insights into sustainable practices for enhancing healthcare quality.

Declarations

Author contributions

Conceptualization of the study was carried out by and; led the methodology design, performed software tasks, and conducted the formal analysis, investigation, and data curation; Validation was performed by, and;..... provided resources, prepared the original draft, reviewed and edited the manuscript, handled visualization, supervised the project, and managed project administration; funding acquisition was facilitated by All authors have reviewed and approved the published version of the manuscript.

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Institutional Review Board Statement:

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