Trust and Nurses’ Work Relationships With Supervisors, Subordinates, Nursing Peers, and Non-Nursing Colleagues: A Global Systematic Review

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INTRODUCTION

Delivering value-based care is the current focus of the healthcare industry. Research on the impact of nursing on value-based care has demonstrated that when trust is present in nurses’ work relationships, quality of care and patient outcomes improve.

- Nurses’ trust in nursing leadership was associated with lower frequencies of adverse patient outcomes (Wong & Giallonardo, 2015).
- Nurses’ trust in nursing leadership was negatively correlated with emotional exhaustion, burnout, and cynicism among nurses (Bobbio & Manganelli, 2015).
- Nurses’ trust in co-workers significantly predicted nurse well-being and team commitment (Lehmann-Willeinbrook et al., 2012).
- Respect and trust had a positive effect on physician-nurse collaboration (Tang et al., 2013).
- Staff on units with low levels of missed nursing care trusted each other more than staff on units with high levels of missed nursing care (Kalisch et al., 2012).

RATIONALE & PURPOSE

A preliminary review of scientific research databases revealed no systematic reviews or meta-analyses pertaining to trust and nurses’ work relationships. If nursing is going to continue to expose the importance of trust in promoting positive work relationships and favorable clinical outcomes, then research framed around theory and theory development needs to be conducted and what is known about evidence-based practice pertaining to trust, nurses’ work relationships, and patient outcomes needs to be identified, disseminated, and applied to practice.

Based on the findings of the systematic review, an emergent process model of trust as it pertains to nurses’ work relationships will be developed.

- Identifying and developing an evidence-based theoretical framework will enable nurses to understand the theory behind trust, nurses’ work relationships, and favorable outcomes.
- This, in turn, will help nursing researchers plan studies that build on what is currently known, and thereby advance nursing science. Identifying, disseminating, and applying evidence-based practices pertaining to trust and nurses’ work relationships will increase the likelihood that favorable outcomes will be realized.

AIM

As illustrated in Figure 1, the aim of this systematic review is to identify what the current research literature has found regarding trust as it relates to:

- nurses’ work relationships with supervisors, subordinates, nursing peers, or non-nursing colleagues
- advanced practice nurses’ work relationships with non-nursing colleagues

METHOD

For our literature searches, trust was defined as indexed in the Medical Subject Headings (MeSH) database in PubMed (MeSH Unique ID: D035502) as “confidence in or reliance on a person or thing.”

Database search strategy:

1. To identify published, relevant research literature (systematic reviews and meta-analyses included), a preliminary search of PubMed Health with the search string “nurs” and “trust” was conducted in November 2016.
2. Peer-reviewed published literature identification was done by searching PubMed, Scopus, and Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature (CINAHL) databases. Medical Subject Headings (MeSH) terms related to nursing and trust were reviewed and combined to develop a comprehensive list of search terms for the PubMed searches. A review of the MeSH terms formed the basis for the development of the search strings. All three databases were searched using a combination of “nursing, health personnel, interpersonal relation, and trust.” Searches were limited to literature published in English from January 1, 2012 to June 3, 2017 (see Figure 2).

Inclusion criteria:

- Global qualitative, quantitative or mixed design studies, systematic reviews, or meta-analyses
- Full text available in English
- Relevant to interpersonal trust and (a) nurses’ work relationships with supervisors, subordinates, nursing peers, or non-nursing colleagues, or (b) advanced practice nurses’ work relationships with non-nursing colleagues
- Published between January 1, 2012 and June 3, 2017

Exclusion criteria:

- Case studies
- Did not include nurses or nurse practitioners
- Did not report findings with nurses or nurse practitioners separated out
- Included students in the study population

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

- The preliminary search of PubMed Health identified approximately 450 publications
- A review of the titles and abstracts did not identify any systematic reviews or meta-analyses that looked at trust and nurses’ work relationships
- Theoretical or conceptual frameworks are essentially absent in the research literature published in the last five years that pertains to trust and nurses’ work relationships
- Trust as an antecedent to nurses’ or advanced practice nurses’ work relationships was at times an antecedent, attribute, mediator, moderator, or outcome variable

NEXT STEPS

- Grey literature will be identified using Google Scholar
- Additional articles that meet the inclusion criteria will be identified from the reference lists of included studies
- After finalizing the articles included in the review:
  - Relevant data will be abstracted from each study
  - A narrative synthesis will be conducted
  - A model will be built from the study findings that depicts trust as an antecedent, attribute, mediator, moderator, and outcome variable

REFERENCES