

Chapter 4

Factors Influencing Interprofessional Collaboration in Healthcare Environment: An Empirical Analysis

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ABSTRACT

The increases in complexity of patient care, healthcare costs, and technological advancements shifted the healthcare delivery to interprofessional collaborative care. The study aims for identifying factors influencing the quality of team collaboration. The study examines the impact of trust and technology orientation on collaboration with the mediating effects of communication, coordination, and cooperation. The results of the study validate that (1) collaboration has positive and significant relationship with coordination, and cooperation; (2) trust has positive and significant relationship with communication, coordination, and cooperation; and (3) technology orientation has positive and significant relationship with cooperation but not with communication and coordination. The research and managerial implications of these factors are given in the discussion. The results can be used by healthcare professionals and managers to advance their understanding on the impact of trust and technology on collaboration mediating communication, coordination, and cooperation practices.

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INTRODUCTION

In the modern healthcare system, interprofessional collaboration has become a vital component of an effectively-functioning healthcare system (Karam, Brault, Van Durme, & Macq, 2018). The healthcare provision has shifted from that of autonomous practice to interprofessional team based approach which involves multiple professionals with different educational background, training and expertise, working on behalf of patients, sharing a common goal (Woods, Jackson, Ziglar, & Alston, 2011). In most of the cases, collaborative care is required for a patient care, as there is no single professional can fulfill all the needs of a patient (Matziou, Vlahioti, Perdikaris, Matziou, Megapanou, & Petsios, 2014). Interprofessional team approach enhances healthcare access, efficiency of services, resource utilization, health knowledge, skills and more satisfaction for the patients (Barrett, Curran, Glynn, & Godwin, 2007; Safran, 2003).

Patients receive safer and higher-quality care when healthcare professionals work as a team and collaborate effectively while they practice. The increases in complexity of patient care, healthcare costs for medical specialization and technological advancements shifted the way the healthcare is delivered to interprofessional collaborative care (Gaboury, Bujold, Boon, & Moher, 2009; Smith, Greene, & Meeker., 2002; Welton, Kantner, & Moriber, 1997). The increasing complexity of health problems inevitably makes professionals interdependent in a collaborative manner foregoing a competitive approach (D'Amour, 1999). In the complex healthcare environment, poor collaboration among health professionals significantly increases the possibilities of mistakes occurring in the delivery of patient-care, medication-error-related deaths, wrong-site surgeries and increased staff turnover (Woods et al., 2011). Interprofessional collaborative practice meets current demands of the healthcare system reducing errors and costs and thereby improving quality of patient care (Canadian Health Services Research Foundation, 2006; Lemieux-Charles & McGuire, 2006).

High degree of interprofessional collaboration is essential for team success. The task of improving interprofessional collaboration has received considerable attention as it is a key factor to increase the effectiveness of healthcare services. Nonetheless, effective team functioning in a collaborative manner is challenging and difficult to achieve (Bailey, Jones, & Way, 2006; Sicotte, D'Amour, & Moreault, 2002). The literature provides conceptual definitions and frameworks of interprofessional collaboration and indicates about limited knowledge of this complex phenomenon. Specifically, the vast majority of published work on the influence of determinants of interprofessional collaboration relies on conceptual approaches rather than empirical data (Rodriguez, Beaulieu, D'Amour, & Ferrada-Videla, 2005). The knowledge on the factors influencing quality of team collaboration and the linkages between the elements in the complex interprofessional relationships is limited (Gocan, Laplante, & Woodend, 2014; Baerg, Lake, & Paslawski, 2012; D'Amour, Ferrada-Videla, Rodriguez, & Beaulieu, 2005; Zwarenstein, Reeves & Perrier, 2004). As effective collaboration does not emerge merely by grouping the professionals together, very few studies have investigated the influence of interactional determinants for effective collaboration.

Based on a qualitative study, communication, coordination, cooperation, and trust were found to be the factors for communication-based-collaborative practice (Palanisamy & Verville, 2015). In a review of qualitative articles, the factors such as communication, trust, coordination, and cooperation were found to be commonly influencing interprofessional collaboration (Karam et al., 2018). In general, successful collaborative practice in healthcare requires coordination and cooperation (Williams, Lasky, Dannemiller, Andrei, & Thomas, 2010; Apker, Kathleen, Wendy, & Hofmeister, 2006; Way, Jones, & Busing, 2000). Way et al. (2000) emphasize on communication and coordination mechanisms as they play a key role for developing collaborative relationship among team members. The quality and effec-

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