

(2) Towards Supportive Teams: The Role of Team's Design, Culture, and Leadership

*Anat Drach-Zahavy
Department of Nursing*

Aims: Team support at the team level of analysis was addressed, with exploration of the contextual factors that enhance or inhibit its occurrence within nursing teams. The study mainly examined the contributions of structural factors: job enrichment designs; cultural factors: individualism-collectivism and power distance; the team leader's practices: acting as a source of support; and their interactions, which served as support carriers in teams .

Methods: 368 nurses from 56 nursing teams completed questionnaires that assessed enrichment practices, cultural variables, and team support available at the unit. In addition, the direct supervisor provided measures of supervisor's support, and parallel measure of enrichment practices .

Results: the findings demonstrated that leader's support was the most potent predictor of team support. Job enrichment designs were found to place constraints on the accessibility of support for team members. With regard to the cultural values, teams characterized by collectivism (as against individualism), and with low (as against high) power distance, demonstrated higher levels of team support. Finally, leader's support and low power distance were found to moderate the negative impact of job enrichment on team support .

Conclusions: The findings highlight some neglected dark sides of job enrichment practices, and attested that empowering nurses is not about letting them do their jobs on their own. Rather, the success of implementing enrichment practices critically depended on supportive values and management practices .

Key words: team support, leader's support, job enrichment, individualism-collectivism, power distance/ Health Administration