



Review Article

Soft skills the matchless traits and skills in nursing practice: An integrative review

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ABSTRACT

Background & Aim: While hard skills refer to the technical ability and factual knowledge needed to do a job, soft skills allow you to use your technical abilities and knowledge more effectively. These two skills are complementary, but soft skills are prerequisites in every profession where human interaction and teamwork are needed to succeed. This integrative review examined the research on soft skills in nursing and made recommendations based on its findings.

Methods & Materials: Whittemore and Knafel's five-step integrative review framework was carried out using four electronic databases. These databases are the Cumulative Index to Nursing & Allied Health Literature (CINAHL), PubMed, Medline on EBSCOhost, and Scopus. Searches were conducted using keywords: soft skills, non-technical skills, nursing skills, nursing art, and aesthetics. The literature search explored no date ranges, and only the English language was considered. Full texts of relevant studies in both qualitative and quantitative research were retrieved. Critical appraisal was undertaken, and the findings of the relevant studies were analyzed using thematic analysis.

Results: Seventeen studies were included, and the findings suggest an urgent need for soft skills in the nursing domain. Five themes emerged: the meaning of soft skills in nursing, the benefits of soft skills in nursing; the need for soft skills in nursing; the incorporation of soft skills into nursing practice; and the relationship between hard and soft skills. Findings show soft skills are the cognitive and social capabilities that complete the technical skills of the nurse.

Conclusion: Incorporating soft skills into the nursing curriculum should be a resuscitative call that requires immediate attention.

Introduction

Soft skills are intrapersonal traits and interpersonal skills (1) that one possesses that make one a preferred service provider. It is essential for personal development, social participation, and workplace success (2). Soft skills, also known as non-technical skills, are gradually becoming desirable in today's job market. While soft skills are self-developed, interactive, communication, human, and transferable skills, hard skills are individual academic skills, experience, and level of expertise. According to Wats and Wats (2009), hard skills account for only 15% of

job retention success, with soft skills accounting for the remaining 85% (3).

Many societies' attitudes toward soft skills have shifted dramatically in recent decades. Previously, hard mastering skills were ranked first, with soft skills regarded as "nice to have," but this is no longer the case (4). Soft skills have become important in nursing because, even though educating nurses takes years, the client who completes the nurses' job cycle is still concerned about the nurse's soft skills. According to Laari and Dube (5), the quality of nursing care and the amount of time spent with patients listening



to and explaining their conditions are declining significantly. They argued that the therapeutic touch and the listening ear of the nurse are no longer accessible to the patient. Their point of view is the same as Barbara Carper's (6), which is that nurses should worry about the decline of the therapeutic touch if they still believe that nursing is both scientific and artistic.

With the advent of globalization and technological upheaval in the health care industry, the future nurse will need fundamental training in multiple fields. This will include the development of soft skills necessary for therapeutic nurse-patient relationships (7, 8). Consideration of soft skills in nursing is necessary because patient and client complaints about the responses they receive from healthcare providers, particularly nurses, in the healthcare setting are deafening (9). As argued by Carper (6) and Peplau (10), nursing appears to be losing its grasp on quality nursing care as aesthetics give way to only empirics.

From patients' own perspective of quality, open communication and information flow are seen to prominently feature in their definition of quality care. Patients prefer individuals with good interpersonal communication skills, such as listening carefully and attentively and explaining complex technical information clearly (11). Patients also insist that nice health care workers are necessary to lessen vulnerability and worry. Patients like courtesy and emotional support, as well as seeing healthcare personnel demonstrate sensitivity and kindness, including expressions of compassion and concern (11). A review by Vogus and McClelland (12) showed that patients are both more fulfilled and rate their care more highly when they encounter care providers and support staff treating them with politeness and addressing their problems seriously. The findings show that caring for the whole person needs caregivers to focus on

physical problems and provide emotional support (12). Even though these characteristics can be inculcated through instruction, friendliness, courtesy, and providing emotional support are certainly somewhat natural, there appears to be a gap in healthcare education, which must be addressed to satisfy clients and patients in the healthcare setting.

Globally, nurses are criticized the way they care for patients. Although nurses have been the most trusted professionals in the United States for more than a decade (13), there are pockets of research indicating that most nurses describe themselves as being more authoritative in their interpersonal style and less facilitative in performing their jobs (7, 14). This highlights the necessity for training future nurses in intrapersonal reorientation skills regarding how to interact with patients, as interpersonal skills are fundamental to the nurse-patient relationship. Even if the question of whether soft skills can be measured has a central place in many healthcare education programs (2), it is unquestionable that training in soft skills would assist the introduction of a new era in nursing practice worldwide (5). Soft skills can be described as the aesthetics, the art of nursing, the innately creative aspect that elevates nursing to a noble, caring vocation (6).

With the changing educational trends, versatility in educational courses, and availability of qualified nursing personnel globally, job acquisition and job sustainability competition is becoming tougher (3). Students have no choice but to supplement their hard skills with soft skills to demonstrate their genuine potential and make them the preferred candidates to gain a competitive advantage. There is also increasing consumer demand for quality healthcare in the health industry globally (3, 15). As such, nurse educators have a special responsibility regarding soft skills because

they have a major role in imparting the development of soft skills to students (4); however, the current state of the literature on soft skills in nursing is unknown. This review, therefore, wishes to answer the question: what are soft skills, and of what value are soft skills in nursing practice to the nurse in the literature?

Methods

This integrative literature review design summarises past empirical literature to comprehensively understand soft skills (16). Integrative literature reviews have the potential to advance nursing science by informing future research, clinical practice, and policy initiatives and allowing for the inclusion of diverse methodologies with direct applicability to practice and policy. The methods employed are based on the five stages of Whittemore and Knafl (17), which are problem identification, literature search, data evaluation, data analysis, and presentation.

Problem identification

The research problem originated from a study by Laari and Dube (5). In their article, Nursing students' perceptions of soft skills training in Ghana, they identified that most of their respondents agreed that training nurses in soft skills would facilitate how they care for their patients. As such, the authors perused the nursing literature with this guiding question: what are soft skills, and of what value are soft skills in nursing practice to the nurse?

Literature search

The search was conducted using the Cumulative Index to Nursing & Allied Health Literature (CINAHL), PubMed, Medline on EBSCOhost, and Scopus. Keywords used included: soft skills, non-technical skills, nursing skills, nursing art,

and aesthetics. The review used both qualitative and quantitative research, with no date ranges for the literature to capture enough data from the databases. We included (1) soft skills in nursing articles published entirely in English and (2) articles that provided an in-depth discussion of soft skills in nursing rather than simply mentioning soft skills. These articles were primary sources and peer-reviewed reports on soft skills. We exclude (1) soft skills articles published in English but not in nursing and (2) all soft skills articles that were not written in English. Peer-reviewed research was targeted to ensure integrity of the findings because this already has a level of scrutiny. However, the review also added a search of grey literature and extended consultation with experts to identify relevant sources essential for this review. The process of the integrative review is presented in figure 1.

Data evaluation

Records were evaluated for their authenticity, methodological quality, and informational value. Structured data extraction and a quality appraisal checklist were utilized on each record for information extraction based on the Critical Appraisal Skills Program Checklist using google forms. Initially, records were selected based on their titles, and abstracts of the selected titles were analyzed to assess their importance to the study question. Only abstracts relevant to soft skills training in nursing were used for a full-text review. Full-text records that did not meet the appraisal process were excluded from the review. Relevant bibliographies from the identified records were also reviewed.

Data analysis

Thematic analysis by Braun and Clarke (18) was inductively conducted. This means that the authors allowed the data to develop themes, as will be detailed shortly.

The authors separately analyzed articles in accordance with the six steps of thematic analysis: familiarisation, coding, generating themes, reviewing themes, defining and labeling themes, and writing up. Before analysis, the writers initially read through all the included publications. Second, the authors highlighted passages from the texts that described their content. The pattern of the codes detected in the literature was then utilized to develop themes. Fourthly, the writers examined the correctness of the themes to ensure that they accurately represent the research that was included. The authors labeled each theme in the fifth step, which was followed by the sixth step of writing. Five themes emerged: (1) the meaning of soft skills in nursing; (2) the benefits of soft skills in nursing; (3) the need for soft skills in nursing; (4) the incorporation of soft skills into nursing practice; and (5) the relationship between hard and soft skills. An iterative process of examining the data displayed to facilitate the difference in patterns, themes, and the relationships that existed within them using a comparative method was ensured, and conclusions were drawn from the data.

Results

After removing duplicates, a total of 754 records were obtained from the electronic databases searched. Title and abstract screening excluded 710 studies. Forty-four (44) studies went through the full article screening. Out of the 44 that were selected for the full article screening, only 17 were included in this study because these articles contained findings necessary to the research question. Twenty-seven (27) were excluded from the study either because those studies did not address soft skills in nursing or were not in English. Figure 1 shows the PRISMA flowchart showing the literature search and selection of studies.

These 17 included studies (shown in Table 1) were from Portugal (n= 3), whereas Indonesia, Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America all reported two studies each. Ghana, Egypt, Cyprus, Singapore, Sri Lanka, and Finland reported one study each. Even though date ranges were not considered, the studies retrieved spanned from 2012 to 2020.

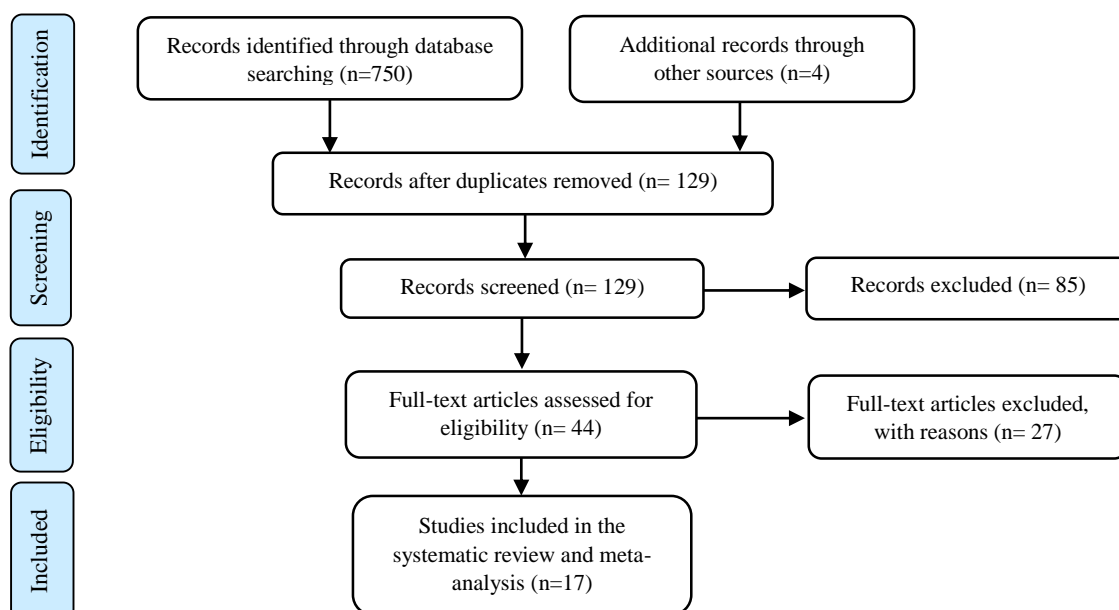


Figure 1. PRISMA flowchart demonstrating literature search and

Table 1. Summary of records reviewed

Author(s)	Year	Country	Study title	Study design	Main idea of the literature
Elmohmady, Abo Gad (19)	2020	Egypt	Contribution of Non-Technical Skills on Nurses' Performance Efficiency of Nursing Care Process in Intensive Care Units	Descriptive correlation research	Soft skills are the cognitive social capability that completes the technical skills of the nurse.
Hariti and Rejeki (20)	2020	Indonesia	Strengthening soft skills as the character of student nurses through the preceptorship management model	Action research	Experience improves and strengthens the soft skills of the nurse
Kusmiran and Tohri (21)	2016	Indonesia	Effect of Soft Skills Caring Training on Carative Factors of Nurses in Nursing Service	A quasi-experimental, pretest-posttest design without a control group	Soft skills improve nurses caring abilities
Laari and Dube (5)	2017	Ghana	Nursing students' perceptions of soft skills training in Ghana	Quantitative descriptive design	Soft skills would improve nursing care and performance
Large and Aldridge (22)	2018	United Kingdom	Non-technical skills required to recognise and escalate patient deterioration in acute hospital settings	Systematic review	Soft skills provide multiple data source opportunity for the nurse to care
Lewis, Strachan (23)	2012	United Kingdom	Is high fidelity simulation the most effective method for the development of non-technical skills in nursing? A review of the current evidence	Systematic review	Nurses who lack soft skills lack effective communication abilities
Maria and Rania (24)	2017	Cyprus	Nursing (self) assessment of soft skills in Cyprus: Training and educational issues	Survey design	Both nurses and nurse managers understand the contribution and the necessity of soft skills
Morrell, Eukel (25)	2020	USA	Soft skills and implications for future professional practice: Qualitative findings of a nursing education escape room	Basic interpretive qualitative methodology design	Soft skills are important but challenging to impart to students
Ng (26)	2020	Singapore	The perceived importance of soft (service) skills in nursing care: A research study	Quantitative explorative design	Patients rate soft skills as more important than hard skills
Pathiratne (27)	2015	Sri Lanka	Emotional Intelligence, Soft Skills and Nursing Performance: A Study of Nursing in Medical and Surgical Wards of a Private Tertiary Care Hospital in Sri Lanka	Cross-sectional survey design, using qualitative and quantitative approaches	Soft skills and emotional intelligence are related
Peddle, Bearman (28)	2019	Australia	Exploring undergraduate nursing student interactions with virtual patients to develop 'non-technical skills' through case study methodology	Case study design, with focus groups and individual interviews	Soft skills improve the confidence of the nurse
Peddle, Mckenna (29)	2019	Australia	Development of non-technical skills through virtual patients for undergraduate nursing students: an exploratory study	Case study design	Communication is the most important among the soft skills
Peltonen, Peltonen (30)	2020	Finland	An observational study of technical and non-technical skills in advanced life support in the clinical setting	prospective observational study design	Good soft skills show good technical performance
Pires, Monteiro (31)	2017	Portugal	Non-technical skills assessment for prelicensure nursing students: An integrative review	An integrative review design	Assessing soft skills is important
Pires, Monteiro (32)	2018	Portugal	Non-technical skills assessment scale in nursing: construction, development and validation	Multiphase research design	Incorporate soft skills into graduate curricula for all health professionals
Piresa, Monteiroa (33)	2016	Portugal	Non-technical Skills in undergraduate nursing education: Consideration for a Training Course Development	Literature review	Poor soft skills contribute to 80% of health care errors
Sills (34)	2015	USA	Meaningful recognition: Recognizing the "soft skills" of nursing	Discussion	Soft skills are the arts of nursing the element of the soul, mind and the imagination of the very foundation of nursing care

Meaning of soft skills in nursing

Soft skills are the non-technical skills, the cognitive and social capabilities that complete the technical skills of the nurse (19). The review found a number of meanings of soft skills in nursing. These meanings were reported to denote what soft skills are in nursing. Non-technical skills, caring skills, ways of knowing such as intuition, tacit knowledge or sixth sense of the nurse, effective communication skills, the art of nursing, and team-building skills are among the terms reported (19, 21, 22, 27, 29, 34). Soft skills were reported as the 'caring skills' in nursing because training in soft skills saw improvement in creative factors of nurses' caring ability (21). Fifty-five percent (55%) of students in a sample of 110 agreed that teaching soft skills in the classroom will help enhance their knowledge of patients and facilitate their ability to care well. They believe this will consequently enhance their nursing care (5). Based on this, the authors recommended the incorporation of soft skills into the nursing curriculum, suggesting that this will improve care standards in nursing (26).

Some authors reported soft skills as a way of knowing, where they related it to intuition, tacit knowing, or the sixth sense of the nurse (22). Tacit knowledge, they said, is acquired through practice and experience, difficult to communicate, specific to circumstance, and the individual is often unaware of its existence. The study reported that soft skills are linked to intuition, also known as gut feeling, and interconnected with the nurse's sixth sense (22).

Effective communication skills were the most reported subset of soft skills in nursing, the most referenced non-technical skill most participants took for granted, thinking they had already mastered it (29). Communication in nursing, as reported by Morrell, Eukel (25), involves a collaborative dialogue, encouragement, and team consensus

in the working healthcare environment. According to Laari and Dube (5), soft skill training will improve nurses' communication skills because nurses who lack soft skills lack effective communication skills. Therefore their communication is haphazard and non-prioritized (22). Large and Aldridge (22) reported that some nurses had difficulty communicating subtle changes that were not always quantifiable. Communication failure is one of the leading causes of inadvertent patient harm worldwide (23). So, Lewis and Strachan (23) reported that formal training for effective communication has historically been largely ignored, yet the clinical environment in which healthcare takes place is becoming a progressively more complex 'socio-technical system, and the intrinsic limitations of human performance mean that communication must be a significant facet of healthcare education. Communication is key because providing care mostly entails interpersonal interactions, such as speaking with family members and reassuring patients (26).

Further, some studies reported soft skills in nursing as the art of nursing which is interconnected with knowledge and experience. Nursing is defined as both an art and a science (34). The science part is clear, as it seems the primary emphasis has always been on the scientific aspects, with little consideration given to the art (34). Soft skills allowed nurses to use subjective data and past experiences and knowledge that aided them in recognition of patient's needs and provided multiple data source opportunities for the nurse to care (22). Large and Aldridge (22) reported that art in nursing helped the nurses to identify when to disregard normal vital signs and take actions using subjective data. Nurses are central to making decisions leading to appropriate interventions following patient assessment, and the nurse's art and experience allow him/her to act beyond medical direction (22). Sills (34) crowns this section with reports that

nursing is not only a series of skills and techniques but a process that assimilates elements of the soul, mind, and imagination. And soft skills lie in the sensitive spirit and creative imagination, the very foundation of nursing care (34).

Soft skills are also reported as the ability of a nurse to work in a team successfully. Successful teamwork was reported as the link between the internal environment of the nurse and the professional world (27). Effective teams were seen as social entities that use shared knowledge, skills, attitudes, goals, and monitoring of their own and others' performance to achieve high-quality teamwork (23). Morrell and Eukel (25) reported that healthcare teams are often unpredictable, such that a group of competent individual professionals can combine to create an incompetent team. Teamwork in healthcare is further complicated by the fact that some individuals who have probably not previously worked with each other and might not even be familiar with each other have to collaborate. This is for the patient's benefit in this complex and dynamic clinical environment; working together as a team, being open to others' ideas and thoughts, and using them as resources call for soft skills (25). The development of soft skills facilitated efficient performance and a high level of harmonious human interactions in the workplace (27).

Benefits of soft skills in nursing

Several benefits were reported from soft skills. The review findings reported that soft skills are needed for success because they are important tools for performing at work and people with strong non-technical skills were mostly successful in their careers (19). It was also noted that it enhances career progression. Laari and Dube (5) reported that 89% of their respondents strongly agreed that the acquisition of soft skills could make a career, while the absence of soft skills can

break a career. These authors also reported the students interviewed contend that soft skills were necessary skills which the nursing profession needs.

Soft skills are beneficial in the workplace as they facilitate communication, create enthusiasm, enhance attitude, teamwork, networking, problem-solving, and critical thinking, and promote professionalism (25). Since soft skills and emotional intelligence are not innate abilities and could be developed, employers who achieved a higher level of productivity in organizations were those who ensured the development of soft skills of their employees (27). Another benefit of soft skills reported was its ability to enhance the development of self-confidence. Students interacting with virtual patients to inculcate soft skills reportedly developed confidence in their abilities to respond and manage practice situations. As one of the students noted, 'I feel more confident in how to handle situations now. I feel a lot more prepared to handle a patient (28).

Additionally, soft skills improve the performance and confidence of students. Pires and Monteiro (32) reported a significant improvement in performance, confidence, and self-efficacy of nursing students, and that soft skill was an added value, as it helped students to better adjust to the complex clinical context and ultimately contributed to the safety and well-being of patients (32). Similarly, improving these skills is becoming a strategic priority within healthcare institutions at the international level (33).

Need for soft skills in nursing

As soft skills are important tools for performing at work and people with strong soft skills are those who are successful in their careers (19), teaching soft skills in the classroom will help enhance the care rendered to clients. Laari and Dube (5) reported that their participants perceived soft skills training as an impetus for nursing staff

to give better care to their clients. The study results further indicate that there is a need for nursing students to be educated in soft skills and that this will enhance their job performance in the clinical environment and improve the way they communicate with their clients. Soft skills were seen as a required tool to recognize patient needs (22) effectively. Maria and Rania (24) reported that managers and nurses understand the contribution and need for soft skills in performing nursing work; as such, both agreed on its significance and its contribution.

In another study, patients and family members rated the soft skills of reliability and responsiveness as highly important for nursing care. All nine service items, such as reliability, promptness in helping, communication, willingness to help, sensitivity to others' feelings, courtesy, confidence in speech, going the extra mile for care, and grooming standards, were rated highly (26). Ng reported of a patient commenting that the nurse "sat by me and held my hands when I felt weakest and in pain" and that among 56 positive comments from patients and families, only two mentioned hard skills. Patients, however, complained of the absence of soft skills in nursing, with a patient commenting that "when my mother requested water, the nurse just ignored my mother." The study found that soft skills are very important and might be more important than hard skills. Unlike the few comments on hard skills, the comments on soft skills were often descriptive and emotional, showing that nursing care was seen as being focused on people (26). In the same vein, Pathiratne (27) reported that poor soft skills contributed to up to 80% of healthcare errors. Developing soft skills would facilitate performance efficiency and a high level of harmonious human interactions in the workplace.

Incorporation of soft skills into nursing practice

Some study findings (5, 20, 24, 30, 33) advocated the incorporation of soft skills into the nursing care process of the undergraduate nursing curriculum. Incorporation would improve nursing practice (19), because continuous exposure to soft skills issues during an individual's formal education is suggestive of soft skills strengthening (20). Hariti and Rejeki (20) reported that nurses' soft skills were influenced by the difficulties faced during learning, and these skills were improved with increased experiences. The years of service also contributed to the development of soft skills of the on-duty nurses (20). Laari and Dube (5) reported further that the educational curriculum should include soft skills modules, and it should be assessed practically before registration for practice (5) because soft skills were perceived to be required to effectively recognize and help patients meet their health needs (22). Therefore, integrating soft skills into the nursing curriculum to enhance care standards should be prominent and explicit, not situational and incidental. Besides knowledge acquisition and technical competency, the nursing curriculum could explicitly incorporate more soft skills to enhance the care standard (26). Therefore, Peltonen, Peltonen (30), reporting on soft and hard skills, emphasized that a premium should be placed on both soft and hard skills in health professional education and in-service training (30). Developing a tool to measure non-technical skills, they (32) reported that soft skills should be incorporated in both undergraduate and postgraduate training curricula as it will ascertain needs and improve care in healthcare contexts (32). With regards to patient's safety, undergraduate nursing students saw soft skills as beneficial to patient safety goals and to improve clinical performance; hence, consideration of its

incorporation into the curriculum ought to be prioritized (33).

Relationship between hard and soft skills

Some authors reported a relationship between hard and soft skills (19, 29, 30, 32). Elmohmady, Abo Gad (19) findings revealed a statistically significant positive relationship between nurses' soft skills and all other nurse characteristics. This relationship had the highest mean score for decision-making skills, followed by communication competence skills, and dynamic team skills, while the lowest mean score was for leadership behavior skills. Peddle and Mckenna (29) reported that some students identified how hard and soft skills complement each other and the important role each plays in professional practice and patient safety (29). An association between hard and soft skills performance in real-life in-hospital ALS situations suggested that the resuscitation teams that showed good soft skills performance also performed better in the hard skills aspects of ALS. In a similar direction, the resuscitation teams with poorer soft skills showed inferior hard skills performance during ALS (30). Similarly, Pires, and Monteiro (32), reported a significant and positive relationship, which suggests that the higher their soft skills competency in one dimension, the higher it will also be in the other dimension, and vice-versa (32).

Discussion

This analysis was driven by the inquiry, "What are soft skills?" Moreover, "what value do soft skills have in nursing practice?" Soft skills were described as intrapersonal and interpersonal competencies that distinguish people as desirable service providers (1). Literature highlights soft skills as being vital to nursing practice, although they appear neglected in nurse education.

Current research has identified "pediatric attention" as nursing scholars sacrificing art for science. Many professionals have not focused on addressing this problem, and this, among others, has had a significant detrimental impact on care skills, communication skills, the leadership aspect of nursing, and the art of nursing.

This review identified that soft skills are essential to the professional tasks of nurses. The meaning of soft skills in nursing reveals this. The relevance of soft skills in nursing is indicated by the variety of terms used to describe them. As some authors regarded soft skills as the caring in nursing and the cognitive brain of nursing, others saw it as the key to effective communication skills, the hinge to essential leadership traits, and abilities required for interpersonal teamwork in the health care setting. Sills (34) argues that despite these substantial contributions, the scientific community has viewed soft skills, which Florence Nightingale called "the pinnacle of art," as having less significance in the workplace. The notion that soft skills are of lesser value appears to contribute to the poor development of communication skills, a subset of soft skills. As a result, the research found that some nurses had difficulty conveying small patient changes to their professional colleagues (22, 35). Rani and Mangala (36) posit that, apart from developing attitudes and attributes, fine-tuning communication skills to express attitudes, ideas, and thoughts is key to soft skills. Moreover, soft skills play an important role in the development of the individual's overall personality, thereby enhancing their career prospects. It gives a strong focus on the real world and helps build and improve relationships (36-38).

The benefits and need for soft skills in nursing are flawless from the findings. Patients in rating procedures and services that nurses render to them, out of 56 items, only two were included, classified as hard skills

(26). Patient found it very necessary to report that a nurse sat by her during her pain, holding her hand. As it will require no technical or hard skills to hold a patient's hand during pain, it, however, takes a nurse with soft skills to be this empathetic. According to Peddle and Mckenna (29), empathy is key in nursing and is developed as a subset of soft skills. As technology generates its influence on individuals and organizations, the gap between humans continues to stretch, and it is not enough for a nurse to only have an excellent Intelligent Quotient (IQ) (36).

The recommendation to add soft skills to either the undergraduate or postgraduate nursing programs traversed many authors (5, 19, 26, 30, 32, 33, 39). Most of these authors recommended the integration of soft skills in both undergraduates and postgraduates due to its significance in the nursing domain. The primary focus of the nursing curriculum has always been on the scientific aspects of skills and procedures. Nursing needs more than technical skills; it carries out interactions with diverse groups of individuals and families and therefore requires training that will start with the interactions in mind (40). Instilling these critical skills in future nurses may not be easy, as some authors claim that assessing these skills is difficult due to their innate nature (27). Others (31) argue that it is important and that several instruments have been developed to be used in various domains of soft skills to meet the need for assessment.

Peddle and Mckenna (29) supported Pires et al. that it can and should be assessed. They have even gone so far as to suggest, with proof, how soft skills can be taught and tested. They say that virtual patients are the answer because mistakes can be made and fixed without hurting the real client.

Conclusion

The findings suggest soft skills are key skills for performing at work, and people with strong soft skills are mostly those who are successful in their careers. It further indicates that integrating soft skills into the nursing curriculum to enhance care standards should be prominent and explicit, not situational and incidental. A professional with technical expertise in a discipline that lacks soft skills, are unable to get along with others, has a poor sense of adaptation, and has inadequate time management skills will perform poorly. Soft skills in nursing would improve teamwork and enhance collaboration for desired client outcomes. It is a matchless trait and skill in nursing practice. Globally, the impact of technology is felt heavily in the healthcare industry. The world has gone high-tech, and robots are confiscating jobs at an unprecedented speed. The software can diagnose and suggest drugs when one keys in signs and symptoms. This might soon reduce the function of those who do this. Nursing is on the threshold of losing some functions, such as serving bedpans and lifting patients to robots. The only roles that can never be taken away are the handshake, the hug, the pat on the back, and the hello that comes with a smile, indicating I hold you in high esteem in my heart.

When it comes to soft skills, one thing is certain: technology cannot completely replace the nursing touch and the subtle human smile that comes with a soothing fragrance. It is the transformative art and acts; it is the heart of nursing and the patient's desire, and it is referred to as soft skills.

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Not applicable.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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