

Peer Review File

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Reviewer A

The lack of a framework, weak structure, and subjective tone are significant issues that undermine the credibility of this review article. This article reads more like a blog than an academic article - a review article must be rooted in evidence and offer a high-level synthesis of the current state of knowledge. Here are five specific issues and suggestions for improvement:

Comment #1: Clarify the Contribution to the Field:

The paper doesn't clearly define its goal or contribution. Review articles should either synthesize existing knowledge in a new way or provide a comprehensive summary that highlights trends and gaps in the literature. The current version REITERATES known ideas about mentorship and teamwork without offering a fresh perspective or critical analysis.

Comment #2: Absence of Rigorous Literature Synthesis:

The paper should systematically present a well-researched synthesis of studies on teamwork and mentorship in pediatric cardiac surgery, identifying patterns, contradictions, and trends across different contexts. There is no clear methods and results distinction to showcase how the review will synthesize the key findings from the literature. The paper is far more generic in discussion than analytical.

#3: Balance Between Theory and Practice:

The paper might be trying to strike a balance between practical insights (e.g., the role of mentorship in low-income countries) and theoretical discussion (e.g., the concepts of teamwork). However, it seems to lean too much on general descriptions without diving into the complexities of each. For instance, when discussing mentorship in low-income countries, the challenges are mentioned, but no detailed CASE STUDIES/EVIDENCE from specific regions are explored. Real-world examples of where specific teamwork/mentorship worked or failed, supported by empirical data or quotes from experts in the field.

#4: Methodological Weakness:

Without a clear methodology (whether a scoping review, systematic review, or even meta-analysis), the review risks appearing more like a narrative with unclear scope and SELECTIVE inclusion of studies. The authors should provide a section detailing the methods of article selection, such as databases used, keywords, inclusion/exclusion criteria, and the number of studies analyzed. This would improve transparency and give the paper academic rigor.

#5: Opportunities for Visual Data Presentation:

The paper misses an opportunity to visualize the results of the literature review. Tables or figures summarizing key studies (e.g., country, type of mentorship, outcomes, etc.) could

provide clarity and enhance the reader's understanding.

At this point, this paper reads as a opinion piece rather than a true academic review article. Significant edits are needed to enhance the value to the literature.

Reply and changes in text: Thank you for the thoughtful feedback. We have made significant revisions to address the concerns regarding the structure, content, and methodology of the article. First, we have clarified the paper's main contribution by explicitly defining its goal in synthesising existing knowledge on mentorship and teamwork in pediatric and congenital cardiac surgery. The revised manuscript emphasises the unique challenges faced by surgeons, especially in low-income countries, offering a more critical analysis of the existing literature, including gaps and trends that highlight the global disparities in mentorship and teamwork. This addresses the concern that the previous version reiterated well-known ideas without adding new insight.

To enhance the rigor of our literature synthesis, we have included a more detailed methodology section, which outlines our systematic approach to the literature search, article selection, and the criteria used for inclusion. Additionally, we have integrated more empirical evidence, including case studies and real-world examples to balance theory with practice.

Reviewer B

This is a nice overview article. No new data. No new concepts. Not a study but it does state and support the concept that outcomes ultimately require collaboration and permission to learn (with mentors encouraging a learning culture). It is worth having in the literature.