



Dialing In: A Comparative Study of Communication Platforms in Surgical Teams

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Introduction

Many forms of communication are utilized within surgical teams including face-to-face interaction, phone calls, texting, pagers, Epic chat, Microsoft Teams channels and more. Each communication tool comes with strengths and weaknesses. An academic surgical division created a Microsoft Teams channel to facilitate better communication and interdisciplinary collaboration between members of the patient care team.

Objectives:

1. Quantitatively and qualitatively describe the adoption of Microsoft Teams within an academic surgical division for communication and structure.
2. Assess preferred communication tools for different clinical scenarios involving non-urgent and urgent communication.

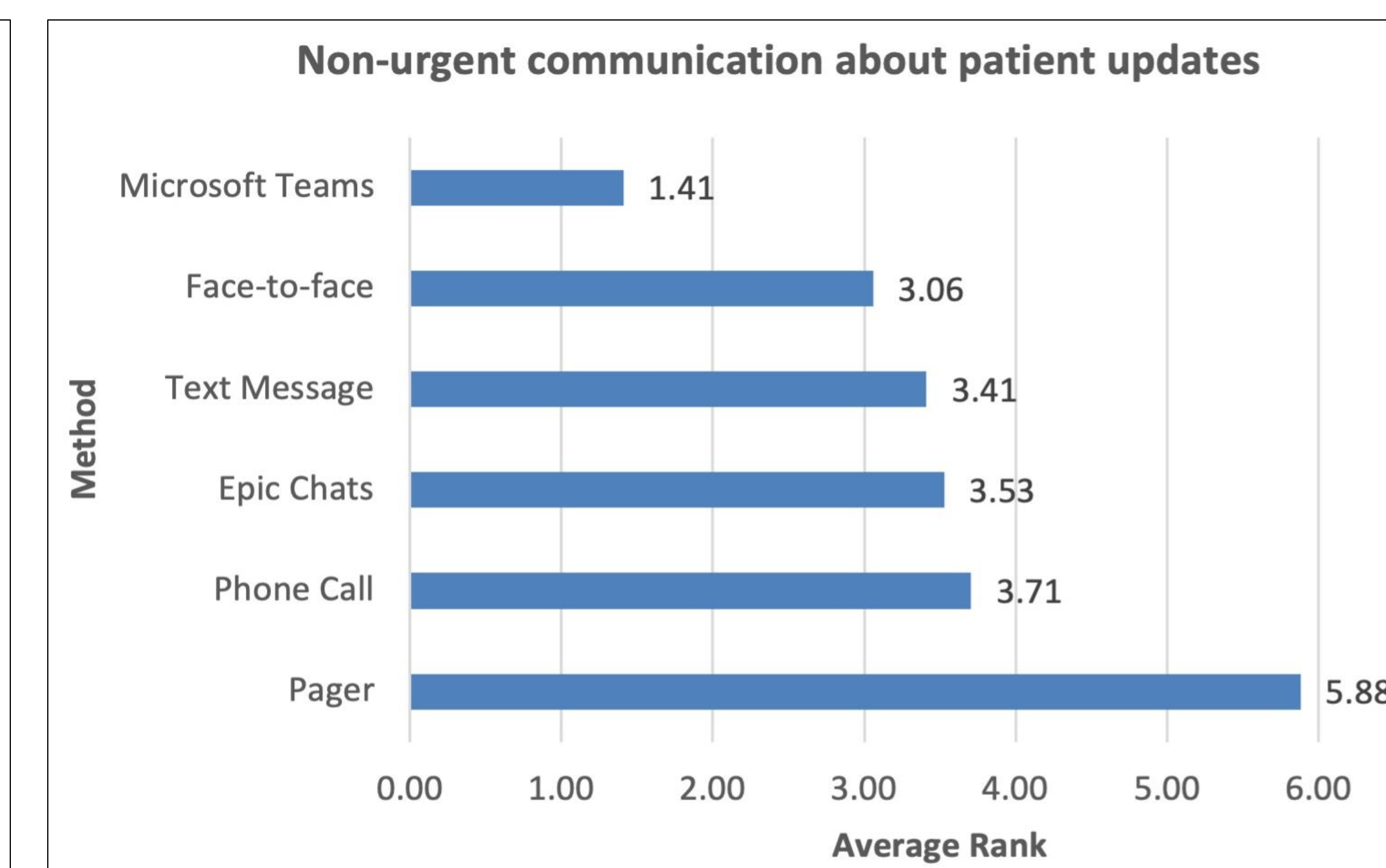
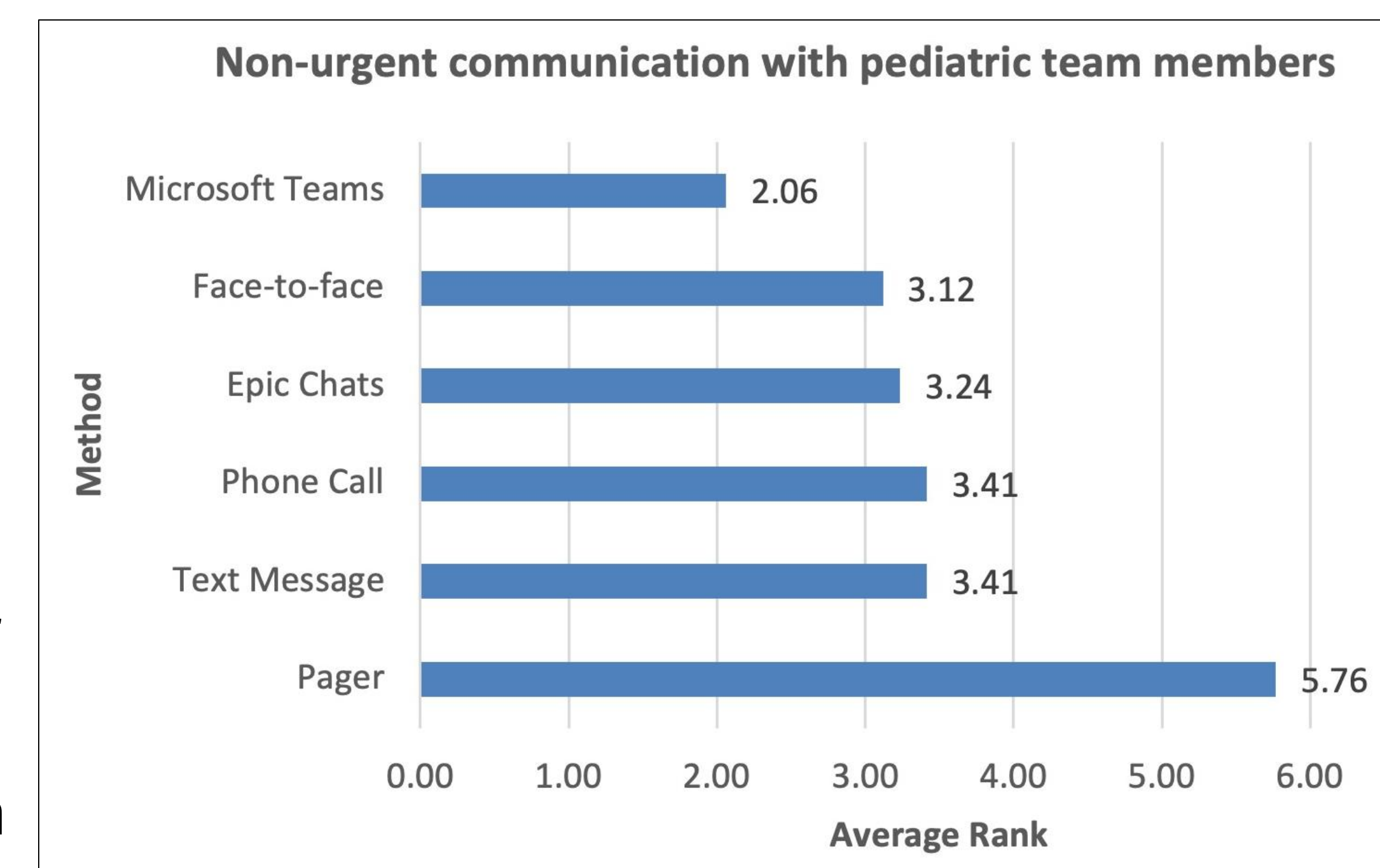
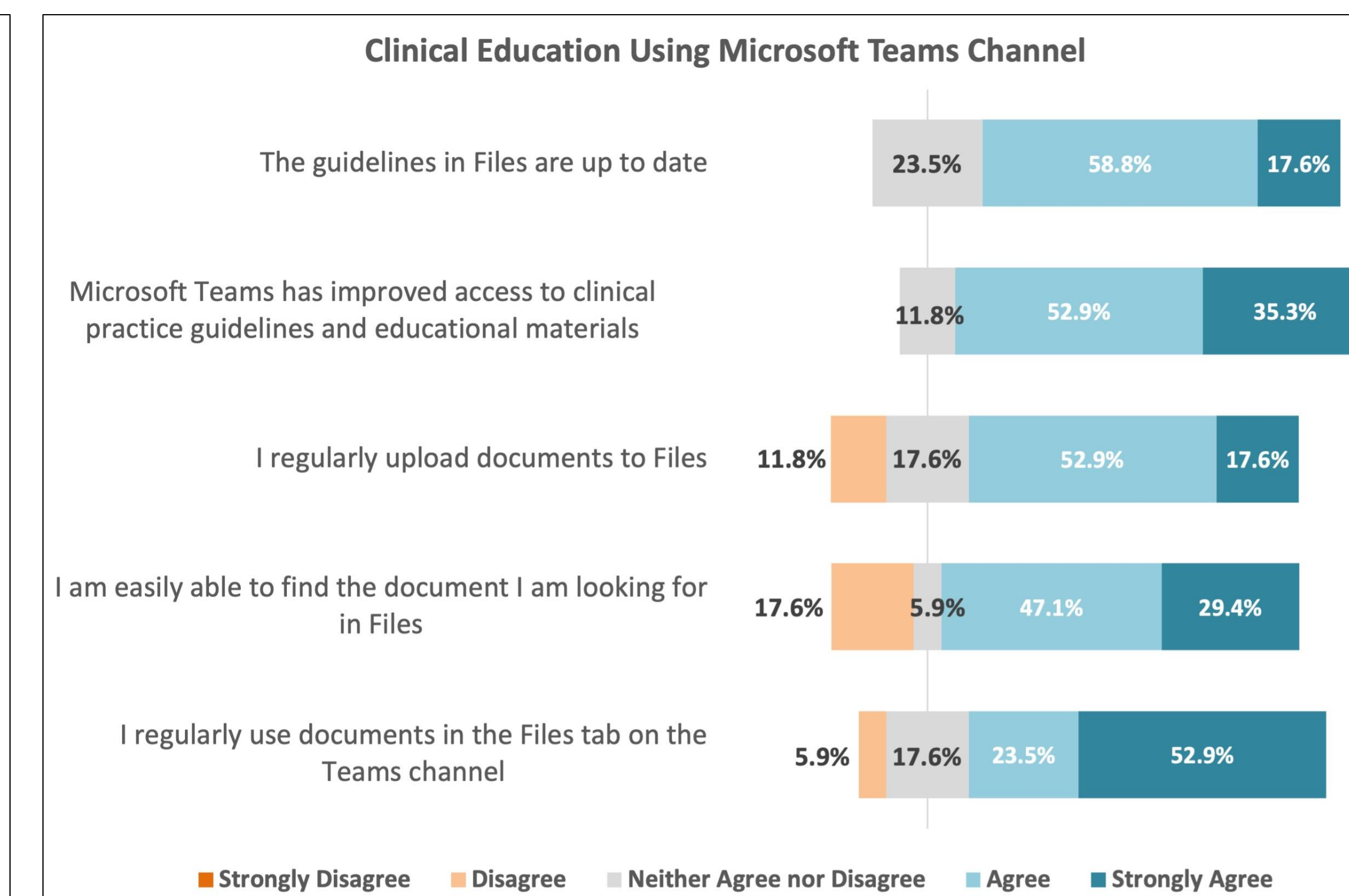
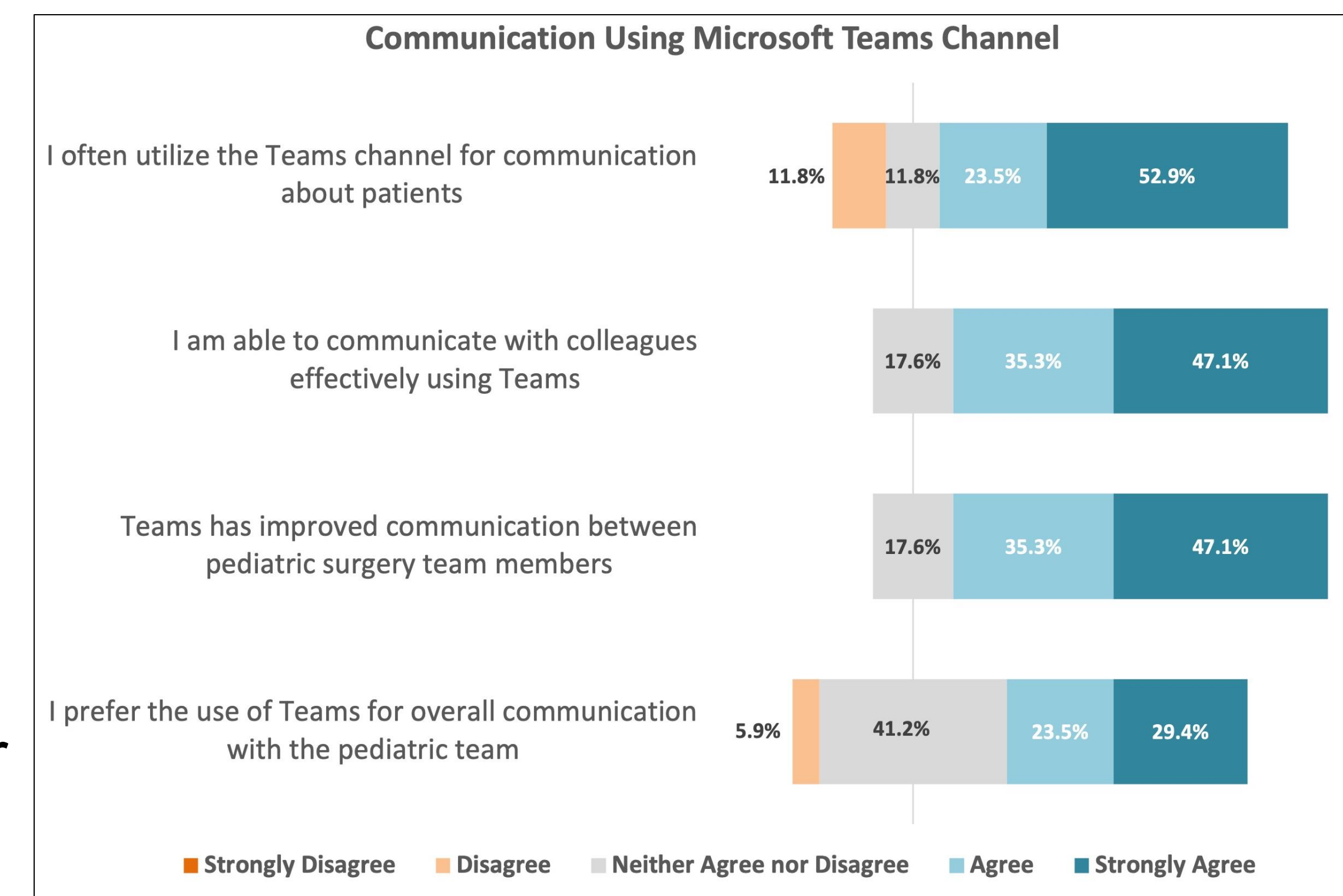
Methods

Microsoft analytics measured 90-day engagement with the Teams channel.

Qualtrics survey was created and distributed to members of an academic surgical division. Survey included:

- Likert scale questions to quantify utilization of the division Teams channel.
- Ranking questions on their preferred method of communication for five unique clinical scenarios.

Results



Data

Microsoft analytics:

- Over 90 days, the Microsoft Teams channel had 62 active users inclusive of physicians, nurses, schedulers, pharmacists, and trainees with 700 posts, 698 replies, 711 reactions, and 400 mentions.

Likert scales:

- 76.4% strongly agreed or agreed they often utilize the Teams channel for communication about patients.
- 82.4% strongly agreed or agreed they can communicate effectively using Teams and the use of Teams has improved communication between pediatric surgery team members.
- 76.4% strongly agreed or agreed they regularly use documents uploaded in the Files tab on the Teams channel.
- 88.2% strongly agreed or agreed that Microsoft Teams has improved access to clinical practice guidelines and educational materials.

Ranking:

- Microsoft Teams ranked as the preferred method for non-urgent communication with pediatric team members and non-urgent communication about patient updates.

Conclusion

- Microsoft Teams is a unique and efficient tool for communication and distribution of clinical education and practice materials in a surgical division.
- Teams expedites secure interdisciplinary interaction and timely advancement of patient care.