

PROFESSIONAL ORGANISATION OF NURSES AND ITS INFLUENCE ON DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES IN THE HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

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Abstract

This review article aims to analyse professional publications focused on nurses' decision-making and the influence of professional organisations on health policy. We searched for articles published between 2012 and 2022 in PubMed, EBSCO, ProQuest, ScienceDirect, JSTOR and Google Scholar, using the following keywords: professional organisation of nurses, decision-making processes in the healthcare system, and nurses' decision-making. We used Boolean operators to determine the relationship between the previously mentioned keywords. We drew on professional literature and the Ministry of Health of the Czech Republic website. The website of the Ministry of Health of the Czech Republic contributed to the overall professional organisations' overview in the Czech Republic. The database search results were studies dealing only with nurses' decision-making in any nursing line, from bedside nurses and nurse managers to nurses working in a professional organisation. Another study looked at professional organisations' functions, strategies, and influence on health policy. The search focused on decision-making processes, types, and phases. The search result is a diagram serving as a general overview of all search phases.

Keywords: *Decision-making processes in health care; Nurses' decision-making; Professional organisation of nurse*

INTRODUCTION

This review article deals with professional organisations and their influence on decision-making processes in the healthcare system. It is necessary to mention that nurses have several roles in their profession. Every role is closely related to decision-making. Plevová et al. (2012) reported that we can only make a decision if we have a choice. It must consist of at least two options. Strnad (2003) states that the decision is closely related to the criteria that determine decision-making, which

the author considers to be a process in which only one option is selected from the offered solution options. Decision-making affects our efficiency, future, and prosperity in a given activity or organisation. Decision-making is a natural and inseparable part of daily life, but in everyday life, we do not put as much emphasis on it as in a profession or organisation. It is completely automatic. Strnad (2003) places great emphasis on correct decision-making in any line, be it managerial or in the provision of nursing care.

We can characterise decision-making using a process with several stages. The essential step is determining the conditions that lead to the fulfilment of the goal. It is a matter of defining the fundamental problem. In the second stage, the defined problem is analysed and evaluated. The third stage deals with identifying possible solutions or decisions. The last stage includes choosing a resolution to reach the set goal in the first stage (Plevová et al., 2012).

The study of Roussel et al. (2011) is worth mentioning. They state that leaving strategic decisions to the nurses can reduce frustration, increase satisfaction, and improve morale and interaction with colleagues. Leaving important decisions to the nurses greatly increases productivity and is highly motivating. Nurses feel that they are part of something.

We have several nursing and health organisations in the world; examples are the International Council of Nurses (ICN), Workgroups of European Nurses Researches (WENR), Association for Common European Nursing Diagnoses, Interventions and Outcomes (ACEN-DIO), World Health Organization (WHO), and others. For the Czech Republic, it is appropriate to mention ČAS or the Czech Association of Nurses, and SVVS - the Association of University-Educated Nurses. The goal of all organisations is to associate and make various decisions (Ministry of Health of the Czech Republic, 2021). Therefore, we can say that the decision-making process takes place at every level of the health system, where everyone deals with the problem they are trying to solve (WHO, 2018).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The primary sources of the search were PubMed, Ebsco, ResearchGate, Scopus, Google Scholar, Medvik, Medline, JSTOR, Science Direct and ProQuest. However, usable sources are only from PubMed, Proquest, Google Scholar, JSTOR, Science Direct and EBSCO databases. The search results were repeated in the other databases. We used the following keywords: professional organization of nurses and decision-making, professional association membership questionnaire (PAMQ), and the influence of professional organizations of nurses. We searched in English, and the chrono-

nology of data was from 2012 to 2022. Another criterion was that studies and scientific articles had to be full text.

Diagram 1 gives an overview of the procedure for review articles. Other search criteria were peer-reviewed periodicals and articles, scientific articles, studies, and full texts. After entering the criteria in the PubMed database, we found 777 articles. 51 were classified as applicable. We found 454 articles in the Science Direct database and included only one. The EBSCO database offered 655 articles, but we included only 8. Google Scholar found 864 articles, but after a more detailed study, we included only 8. We found approximately 580 articles in JSTOR and approximately the same number in Proquest. We included 7 articles from JSTOR and 5 from Proquest. We finally included 80 articles. After a more detailed study of all the articles we excluded 70 and classified 10 articles as applicable and beneficial to the given topic. Table 1 contains an overall summary of articles on the subject, the authors, country of origin, year of publication, type, goals, and results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

We identified six different study types. We found a total of ten studies – three qualitative, three quantitative, and studies with only one article each. They are exploratory, qualitative, and exploratory, experimental, and cross-sectional-exploratory studies.

Seven studies were related to professional organisations, two focused on decision-making, and one focused on decision-making associated with professional nursing organisations.

After a detailed study of the articles mentioned above, all the information for this review article was of great benefit. Specifically, Chiu et al. (2020) note that nursing organisations play a significant role in Canada and significantly intervene in public policy. However, the operation of nursing organisations is changing based on the influence of society and the economy. Rowley et al. (2020) state that there are still nurses who are not members of a professional organisation. Based on this fact, they conducted research that addressed two issues. The first investigated the factors that influence nurses to join professional organisa-

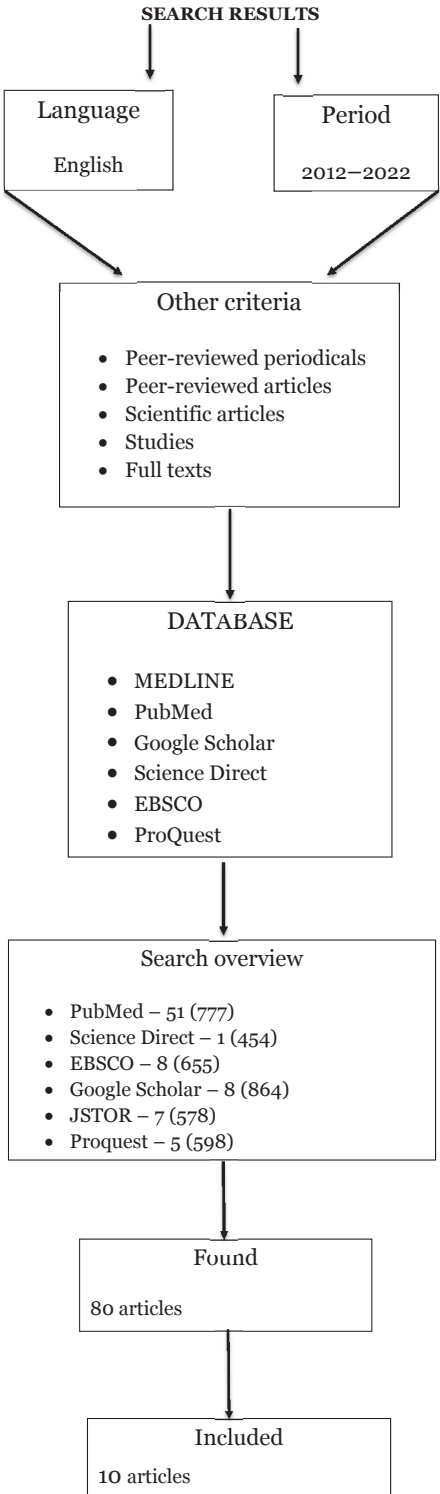


Diagram 1 – Overview of the search process

tions. The second problem, closely related to previous research, is identifying factors influencing nurses' decision-making. The survey results indicate that nurses are interested in professional organisations because they want to develop further by using the programmes offered by the organisations. The last finding was an increase in the prestige of the profession. Çamveren et al. (2020) conducted qualitative research where the sample included young nurses. The purpose of the study was to find out the reason for leaving the organisation. As a result, young nurses do not see their managerial colleagues or peers standing up for their profession.

The study of Chiu et al. (2020) focuses on three crucial areas: decision-making of nursing organisations and spheres of influence, decision-making by nursing organisations regarding policy advocacy tactics and engagement approaches, and policy advocacy and its impact within nursing organisations. Specifically, a study by Jensen et al. (2016) deals with identifying the information-based capabilities necessary for decision-making in nursing management. The result of their research is a recommendation to incorporate the identified abilities into the education of nurse managers. At the same time, this fact would contribute to evidence practice.

Hajizadeh et al. (2021) from Iran note that nurse managers are rarely involved in policy making and influence, although they are still recommended for this process. Hajizadeh et al. (2021) chose a qualitative form of semi-structured interviews as a research method. The results indicate that nurse managers would suggest being more informed about health policy because they can take timely action in the rapidly changing health environment. Furthermore, Hajizadeh et al. (2021) recommend that nurses who work in politics use different strategies.

Wadsworth et al. (2016) seek to involve all nurses in strategic planning and goal setting. The goal was to connect nursing care with strategic initiatives in the system. Their research has led to significant positive change and continued progress throughout the healthcare system.

The above-mentioned theory of Roussel et al. (2011) continues with the issue. Leaving strategic decisions to nurses leads to increased satisfaction, better interaction with colleague-

Table 1 – Objectives and results of the studies

Authors	Study origin	Study type	Goals	Results
Chiu et al. (2020)	Canada	Qualitative and explorative study	Examining nursing organisations and their influence on policy	Influence of the nursing profession on health policy
MacDonald-Rencz (2015)	Canada	Explorative study	Labour Force project 2030	Association of nurses
MacDonald-Rencz (2015)	Canada	Explorative study	Labour Force project 2030	Association of nurses
Pinho and Albuquerque (2013)	Portugal	Quantitative study	The influence of nurses' organisational and professional commitment on conflict resolution strategies	The higher the level of organisational commitment a nurse has, the higher the level of professional commitment
Marques-Pinto et al. (2018)	Portugal	Quantitative study	Investigate why nurses leave organisations	Involving nurses in decision-making processes regarding their policy and professional practice environment and improving nurses' professional well-being are two key strategies to reduce nurse fluctuation.
Çamveren et al. (2020)	Turkey	Qualitative study	Focusing on the younger generation of nurses and finding out their reasons for leaving organisations and determining their point of view	Young nurses do not have support from their managers and colleagues
Wadsworth et al. (2016)	Pennsylvania	Experimental study	Creating a new nursing vision based on revising the model of professional practice, aligning councils	This process/model and framework provides structure. Significant outcomes that recognize the work of individual entities while aligning future strategies and goals are identified
Rowley et al. (2020)	USA	Cross-sectional survey	This study aimed to identify factors influencing nurses' decisions to join nursing associations	Results indicate that factors influencing NPs' decisions to join professional associations include the desire for professional programmes, professional improvement, and personal development
Jensen et al. (2016)	Portugal	Quantitative study	To identify the information-based skills necessary for decision-making in nursing management	If these skills were incorporated into the education of nurse managers, it would contribute to evidence-based practice; it would be possible to integrate information and communication technologies into management as well
Hajizadeh et al. (2021)	Iran	Qualitative study	To explore the barriers and facilitators that relate to the participation of nurse managers in the health policy-making process	Accomplishing that nurse managers must take the opportunity to participate in health policy-making
Sundean et al. (2022)	USA	Qualitative study	To find out how nurses perceive their influence when working on boards of directors	As a result, it is recommended that executives and leaders of healthcare organisations nominate nurses as voting members of their boards of directors

es, and higher work productivity. Cherry et al. (2019) appeal to the leadership of nursing organisations as they are the ones who hold the future of the nursing profession in their hands. Chisengantambu-Winters et al. (2020) note that decision-making is an integral part of the work of managers and that there is a significant lack of nursing literature focusing on the processes that nurse managers use to make decisions. The authors of the article identified the types of decision-making and all their connections. Based on this, Chisengantambu-Winters et al. (2020) designed the so-called dependency model. The dependency model represents all the factors that influence the art of decision-making. The authors identified these factors based on interviews with a predetermined sample of nurses (nurse managers, nursing directors, coordinators) from various healthcare facilities. Thus, they identified eight critical variables in the dependency model (situation to be addressed; the period in which the nurse must make a decision; required input from colleagues; perceived complexity of the task and environment; duration and time needed to make a decision; the availability of resources; determination of the decision-making environment; personal characteristics (Chisengantambu-Winters et al., 2020). Lau and Hiemisch (2017) also mention individual elements and that the person who is supposed to make decisions should have high rational and conscious thinking and reflection.

In 2012, Elwyn et al. (2012) created a new model that was based on shared decision-making. Shared decision-making was well-presented to the authors. Still, according to Elwyn et al. (2012), the so-called instructions were missing, so the mentioned approach could be achieved in everyday practice. Scholl et al. (2018) agree with this despite the health policy that promotes shared decision-making and leads to poor implementation. Therefore, Elwyn et al. (2012) created a three-phase

model that is said to be practical and easy to remember.

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, we can say that all studies point to nurses becoming more involved in decision-making processes, so their prestige can increase. Everyone is trying to involve a new, young generation in nursing and professional organisations. Based on the study by Çamveren et al. (2020), it is crucial to support the young generation of nurses. According to the research of Rowley et al. (2020), it would be appropriate to offer nurses in professional organisations the programmes they require and encourage them to develop professionally – which nurses seem to care about. Another conclusion is to support the establishment of the Czech Association of Nurses regarding health policy. One of the many reasons for this can be sharing the latest information and having faster feedback, thus contributing to the decision-making process in Czech nursing. According to Roussel et al. (2011), leaving the possibility of decision-making to nurses is appropriate, as this leads to job satisfaction. At the same time, the new subject – ‘management of decision-making in nursing’ – could be incorporated at universities in general nursing. In this way, nurses would be guided to make decisions during their university studies and be better prepared for the nurse manager role. The last point is not a recommendation but the realisation that personality and character of nurses play an essential part in decision-making. Lau and Hiemisch (2017) note the same. Nurses are personalities who work with the patient’s body and psyche.

Ethical aspects and conflict of interests

The authors have no conflict of interests to declare.

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