Review of professional values, self-efficacy and job satisfaction of obstetric nurses across job-related challenges

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Abstract
The purpose of this review was to examine articles related to professional values, self-efficacy and job satisfaction of obstetric nurses across job-related challenges across different countries and cultures, as well as to identify specific studies that have been carried out exclusively in China. The review was undertaken in two stages, an initial review and an updated review. At both stages systematic literature searches of online databases were performed to identify articles on the professional values, self-efficacy and job satisfaction of obstetric nurses across job-related challenges. A total of 27 articles concerning research were included in the final analysis.

Keywords
professional values; self-efficacy; job satisfaction; obstetric nurses; job-related challenges

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1. INTRODUCTION

Nursing staff shortage is one of the typical concerns for worldwide healthcare settings. The global shortfall in healthcare staff will reach 12.9 million by 2035 (WHO, 2013). China is seriously short of nurses, with 0.376 per patient in 2015 slightly increasing to 0.6 per patient. Although in China there are 3.8 million nurses work for nursing caregivers, the patient-nurse ratio still had a gap with a national standard that is 0.8-0.9 per patient (Ministry of Health, 2018). The approaching baby boom and increased aging population hunt for more nurses. However, many nurses are quitting their job. Junior nurses need a longer time to handle difficulties for new work setting to adjust their job. Moreover, there are plenty of required tests and exams for the new nurses, such as monthly practical exams, weekly viva and technical license exams (Zhang, 2018). Limited staff contributes to nurses’ burnout. Usually, one nurse needs to serve more patients. Gradually, nurses would have more difficulties and pressure. In addition, nurses work at a place where the nursing staff shortage having plenty of a hard time approaching difficult tasks.

In order to make up for nursing shortages, nurses are often required to work on long shifts, risking fatigue that could lead to medical errors. When nurses work extended hours and overload work, they could not rest properly. Without sufficient rest and sleep, nurses are not only suffering from daytime sleepiness, fatigue, and impaired mental function but also have a hard time to make proper decisions, which can compromise patients’ safety. Recently, in many hospitals, nurses often forced to participate in assigned activities during their rest time even they get heavy tiredness from work (Lu, 2015).

In addition to the above-mentioned challenges, the move from one-child policy into a two-child policy by the Chinese government since 2015 could increase the extra workload for nurses, especially those who work within the obstetric setting. The introduction of this two-child-policy could mean that the obstetric nurses would receive more patients associated with childbearing within their healthcare services. It is predicted that by 2050, the population to be 1.42 billion under the two-child policy, compared to 1.27 billion under the one-child policy. Whilst the workload of the obstetric nurse is expected to be burdensome due to this new policy, they also have more pressure due to conflict with their own family planning. Nurses do not have enough time to spend with their family, which can make nurses feel more frustrated, which could lead to low self-efficacy (Zheng, 2008).

Self-efficacy refers to beliefs that determine how people feel, think, motivate themselves and behave (Bandura, 1986). Nurses’ self-efficacy is a strong belief to enhance nurses’ accomplishments and personal well-being in many ways. Nurses with high self-efficacy usually have high assurance in their capabilities to achieve difficult tasks (Cai, 2011). In China, most of the time nurses have to work under high pressure with obvious low job satisfaction and low self-efficacy due to over workload and long-term shifts, as well as the heavy burden of manually writing nursing records and documents (Zhang et al., 2011). Furthermore, nurses might doubt themselves whether they should carry on their careers. Findings of a study by Yang (2017) showed that nurses with low self-efficacy more likely tend to quit their job. Similarly, the study of Han (2014) pointed out that self-efficacy is an important predictor of nurses’ professional functioning.

General self-efficacy has a positive correlation with job satisfaction (Han, 2014). Low self-efficacy could lead to low job satisfaction (Han, 2014). Nurses’ job satisfaction is the expectation of their work, which is significantly related to nurses’ job retention (Cowin et al., 2008), intention to leave (Huang, 2012), burnout and job performance (Pan et al., 2013). As well as it significantly affects patient outcomes, such as quality of care (Mohr et al., 2011) and patient satisfaction (Szecsenyi et al., 2011). That is why it is very essential for clinical nursing practice.

Self-efficacy also contributes to the success of academic performance and professional values in clinical practice (Mohsen, 2016). According to (Mohsen 2016), nurses’ professional values offer a framework for decision-making and ethical practice, contributing to an individual’s professional commitment, leading to a better healthcare outcome. Similarly, (Cara 2015) concludes that professional values form the basis for nurse attitudes and behaviors, and guide nurses’ clinical practice decisions.

In order to conduct appropriate strategies to adjust challenging situations and to serve proper care, nurses need to improve knowledge of professional values,
which built up during socialization into nursing from codes of ethics, nursing experiences (Al-Banna, 2017). Meanwhile, nurses also need to enhance knowledge of self-efficacy which determine how nurses feel, think and act, which affect the capabilities to healthcare service (Caza et al., 2016) and knowledge of job satisfaction which includes attitudes towards work, work ethic, professional development, the development of work, and even, to some extent, perceptions of the meaning of life (Hair, 2010). Psychological constructs of nurses’ professional values could predict a level of job satisfaction. Structural equation modeling was used for testing the prediction of nurses’ professional values and self-efficacy of job satisfaction. Nurses’ professional commitment is variable, which functions as a mediator between predictor (self-efficacy-SE) and a criterion variable (job satisfaction-JS). As a mediator, it explains what the effect is, provided that correlations among all variables are significant (Ivana, 2018).

Self-efficacy, professional values, and job satisfaction influence the nurses’ job performance and job retention, which affect the quality of healthcare. To reiterate, this literature review is organized under the following headings: concept of professional values; professional values effects on nursing; concept of nurses’ self-efficacy; nurses’ self-efficacy effects on nursing; research theoretical foundation; concept of job satisfaction; job satisfaction effects on nursing; current challenges for nurses in clinical practice and summary of literature review. Objectives of this literature review are to learn and compare research questions, design and methodology among related articles, to utilize their research methods and findings. Overall, the researcher figured out gap knowledge for this study and limitations of empirical studies on professional values, self-efficacy and job satisfaction among nurses, although, there was a lack of studies that includes professional values, self-efficacy and job satisfaction as research variables at the same time. Recently, in China, there is midwife, obstetric nurse and maternal and child healthcare specialist nurses server for maternal and child healthcare. Unfortunately, in public hospitals for most of the situations, midwives only assign to the labor room. Recently antenatal, intrapartum, and postnatal care for women and newborns commonly provided by obstetric nurses. That is why the researcher aims to study on obstetric nurses. Taking an example of China as an example of a non-western country the aims of this review are unfolded:

(i) To provide recent epidemiological studies that have been carried out on the professional values, self-efficacy and job satisfaction of obstetric nurses across different countries and cultures.

(ii) To provide recent epidemiological studies that have been carried out exclusively in China on the professional values, self-efficacy and job satisfaction of obstetric nurses across different job-related challenges.

2. METHODS

The review was undertaken in two stages: the initial review and an updated review. The initial review was conducted based on the search terms strategy. Articles were selected based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria (Table 1).

2.1 Search Strategies

Reviewed articles were selected based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria (Table 1) via online databases. The eligibility of the studies was then assessed in three different stages: screening titles, abstracts and full text (Figure 1). The inclusion criteria included: articles have been published from 2008 to 2019; studies that report professional values, and/or self-efficacy, and/or job satisfaction, and/or nurses’ job retention, and/or nursing challenges; studies have been conducted among nurses; full text available, and English/ Chinese language publications. Studies published between the years 2008 and 2019 were included because they are more likely to reflect the current state of professional values, self-efficacy and job satisfaction among nurses. Studies were limited to the English/Chinese language due to a lack of translation resources. Studies were excluded if in the study nurses were not the focus of the study, not peer-reviewed studies, not published in English/Chinese. Based on inclusion criteria (Table 1), the search finally identified 26 studies that provided information related to research objectives. This present review was conducted using the scoping review methodology issue from Joanna Briggs Institute Reviewers’ Manual 2015 Methodology for JBI Scoping Review.

The following online databases were searched: Ebsco, PubMed, PsycARTICLES, Wiley online library. Keywords used in various combinations were: professional values, ethical value, professional ethics;
nurses’ self-efficacy, nurses’ self-effectivity; general self-efficacy, evidence-based nursing self-efficacy; nurses’ job satisfaction; job retention; job encouragement; nursing challenges; challenges for nurses in China. References lists of included studies were inspected in order to capture relevant references.

The assessment for eligibility of the studies conducted in three different stages included: screening titles, abstracts and full text (Figure 1).

In Figure 1, there are 1247 journal articles identified and transferred to a bibliographic database Refworks. A total of 832 articles were excluded as they were duplicates. The remaining 415 articles were screened for the title and year of publication (2008-2019). This identified 106 articles that were not published within the years and titles that were not related to professional values, self-efficacy and job satisfaction of nurses. The abstracts of the remaining 309 articles were screened. At this stage, only 184 studies met the inclusion and exclusion criteria, therefore, 125 papers were excluded. A further 157 articles were discarded.

2.2 Effects of professional values on nursing

Author Dehghani (2015) points out that nurses, as the largest health care group, have well known and important professional values. The use of these values in nursing practice increased the quality of patient care, nurses’ occupational satisfaction, retention in nursing and commitment to the organization. American nursing association 2015 codes of ethics emphasized that regardless of the practice setting, the nurses’ professional values influence nursing activity and the development of nursing as a profession (Epstein, 2015). According to Mohsen (2013), nurses’ professional values offer a framework for behavior assessment, and influence nurses’ goals, strategies and actions, decision-making and ethical practice. Which could contribute to a better outcome of healthcare. In order to develop the nursing workforce across all contexts of practice, nurses with high professional values could commit to teaching, supervising and assessing successfully. What’s more, nurses could recognize the vital role of research to inform quality healthcare and policy development, conduct research ethically and support the decision-making of people who participate in research (Mohsen, 2013).

2.3 Factors affecting nurses’ professional values

Some empirical studies have revealed a range of factors that influence nurses’ professional values, such as professional development (professional education and training), professional attitude and professional experience. One study from Terzioglu (2016) pointed out that professional attitude is essential for the professional standards’ development and the provision of quality care. Similarly, Flinkman et al. (2013) reported that one reason nurses leave their jobs might be related to their professional identities; improvements in professionalism may play a major role in nurses’ commitment to their profession. Moreover, Dehghani (2015) concluded that the nurses’ professional values affected by internal factors which include communication skills and individual character and responsibility, as well as external factors that insist on organizational preconditions, educational and cultural development and support systems.

2.4 Self-Efficacy

2.4.1 Concept of self-efficacy

Self-efficacy is commonly defined as having a belief in one’s capability to succeed. One feels up to the challenge of difficult tasks and is therefore intrinsically motivated by them (Bandura, 1997; Zeldin, 2008). Self-sufficiency plays an important role; it affects not only employees’ behavior but also other determinants such as the perception of barriers and opportunities in the social environment, emotional tendencies, goals and expectancy in employment (Bandura, 2006). Similarly, Kadir (2017) states that self-efficacy is a self-assessment of the beliefs and

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<td><strong>Inclusion criteria</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Exclusion criteria</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurses were not the focus of the study, not peer reviewed studies, not published in English/Chinese.</td>
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attitudes of the staff working toward their abilities and their knowledge accumulation compared to what is expected of them. Again, self-efficacy as the belief in the competence of individuals to perform certain tasks. It is a sense of control over one’s environment and behavior (Schwarzer, 2013).

In many studies, self-efficacy predicts success in professional practice. However, some authors made the point that new nurses not only need to adopt the role and environment change but also face a difficult mission of work and life as a new staff so new nurses’ self-efficacy is generally low (Li, 2010; Liu, 2012). The study of Li (2010) shows that newly employed nurses have low self-efficacy. Similarly, a study by Stajkovic and Luthans (1998) revealed professional self-efficacy positively affects job-related performance and people with low professional self-efficacy have low motivation to confront problems. When it comes to the nursing field, nurses with high self-efficacy are motivated more internally compared with outside pressures for their careers (Baghban, 2010). Similarly, the study of Soudaga (2015) points out that self-efficacy is an important predictor of nurses’ professional functioning. Likewise, author Melnikov (2013) states that self-efficacy contributes to the success of academic performance, mathematics and professional practice in the clinical. Author Azam (2017) also made a relevant point that self-efficacy is the most influential factor of nurses’ performance and high self-efficacy empowers nurses to make efforts to perform as well as possible. Furthermore, nurses with high self-efficacy are motivated more internally
2.4.2 Effects of self-efficacy on nursing

Researcher Alavi (2017) considered that self-efficacy is the most influential among factors affecting nurses’ performance and it affects the core competency of nurses. Author Azmoude (2017) indicates that the majority of healthcare professionals do not have the desired level of self-efficacy in the implementation of Evidence-Based Practice. Self-efficacy plays an essential role in different aspects. According to the study of Kadir (2016) concluded that staff working with high self-efficacy is to be less concerned about the adverse situation and their chances of successfully making decisions in difficult conditions. One study of Caza (2016) stated that nurses with low self-efficacy used to have low job satisfaction and poor job retention. Therefore, an organization employs staff with high self-efficacy in an attempt to overcome role stress.

Another study states that high self-efficacy contributes to improving clinical nursing care (Yi, 2015). The study by Farokhzadian (2016) shows that by improving the nurse's self-efficacy can prevent the nurse from work slack and strengthen nurses' knowledge and skills, which contributes to better nursing care. Studies reveal that self-efficacy has a positive effect on individual nurses and the care they provide which subsequently affects the nursing unit as a whole. Improved outcomes for patients and the health care system may result (Manojlovich, 2005). To sum up, self-efficacy is the belief in one’s ability to cope with all sorts of environmental challenges or the extent of general confidence to which have enough ability to complete the activity or achieve a goal. Specialized self-efficacy is concerned with particular areas of behavior and function. Recently, with increased awareness and expectations to receive good healthcare, more attention to the self-efficacy of nurses is needed.

2.4.3 Factors Affecting Nurses’ Self-efficacy

Some previous studies have revealed that factors like years of working experience professional education and development influence the nurses’ self-efficacy. One study from Soudagar (2015) stated that the possible predictor variables of nurses’ self-efficacy were interested in the nursing field, years of experience in the field of nursing, work setting, working hours per week, marital status, and educational level. However, self-efficacy was predicted by the years of experience in the field of nursing and the interest in the nursing field. Significant relationships were noted in the study of Azmoude (2017) between proficiency in English language and the use of databases with EBP knowledge (professional education and development), self-efficacy and practice.

2.5 Nurses’ job satisfaction

2.5.1 Concept of nurses’ job satisfaction

Job satisfaction is a psychological construct, which is considered as an evaluation of an affective reaction to a job (Locke, 1976). Job satisfaction is described in terms of psychological concepts, including attitudes towards work, work ethic, professional development, the development of work, and even, to some extent, perceptions of the meaning of life (Hair, 2010). Based on the reviewed literatures, components of job satisfaction include promotion and individual growth (Yang et al., 2012), recognition and praise (Mrayyan, 2006), responsibility and control (Mountzoglou, 2010), remuneration (Sriratanaprapat al., 2012), work conditions (Hu, 2007), work itself (Stamps&Piedmonte, 1986), administration and organizational policies (Cao, 1998), interaction (Hu & Liu, 2004), and family and work balance (Mueller and McCloskey, 1990).

2.5.2 Effects of nurses’ job satisfaction on nursing

National research showed that 45% of Chinese nurses were dissatisfied with their jobs (You et al., 2013). However, nurses’ job satisfaction is significantly related to nursing outcomes, such as nurses’ job retention (Cowin et al., 2008), intention to leave (Huang, 2012), burnout (Kalliath & Morris, 2002), and job performance (Pan et al., 2013), as well as significant influence on patient outcomes, such as quality of care (Mohr et al., 2011) and patient satisfaction (Szecsenyi et al., 2011). That’s why it is very important for clinical nursing practice. Therefore, it highlights the importance of maintaining nurses’ job satisfaction in the nursing profession.
Job satisfaction is an emotional state that is attained in achieving the results at which the individual is aiming. One element of job satisfaction is the positive experience of being a part of a well-functioning workgroup (Huang, 2012; Liu, 2015). Recruiting new staff while maintaining a strong commitment to the organization among current staff is a significant challenge for the health care sector. In the future, it will be necessary to prioritize job satisfaction in health care if hospitals are to ensure adequate staffing by maintaining high levels of commitment amongst existing employees while recruiting new staff (Mohr, 2011). An important predictor of job satisfaction is the quality of collaboration between nursing staff members and between nursing staff and nurse managers (Sriratanaprapat, 2012). Job satisfaction has a positive effect on the quality of care and patient outcomes. Hospitals with high job satisfaction scores have been reported to also have a high quality of care and favorable patient outcomes (Liu, 2015; You, 2013).

2.5.3 Factors Affecting Nurses’ job satisfaction

Job satisfaction among nurses is an important topic of research. Nevertheless, it is necessary to continually examine it because of the many factors that contribute to JS. One study from Kuru (2016) pointed out that job satisfaction of clinical nurses was significantly correlated with choosing one’s working department, liking one’s job and sufficient salary from the nurses’ point of view. However, there were no apparent significant relationships between mean participant total job satisfaction scores and age, gender, education and working time (Kuru, 2016). One study from (Barac, 2018) stated that it is necessary to develop programs in permanent professional training such as supervising work in hospital departments and workshops on professional self-empowerment to achieve a greater degree of job satisfaction. According to Moos (2008), the work environment affects job-related outcomes, such as employees’ job satisfaction as well as the satisfaction of patients. A phenomenological study found that family-friendly schedules and locating resources for students and parents contributed to job satisfaction (Smith, et al, 2009). Moreover, Ma (2009) found that day-shift nurses had higher job satisfaction than night shift and evening shift nurses. The regular hours, non-weekends and holiday schedules may provide for better integration of work and home life.

2.6 Current challenges for nurses in China

2.6.1 The effects of China’s universal Two-child policy

The one-child policy was introduced in 1979 by the Chinese Government who considered population containment as essential to lifting China out of severe poverty caused by decades of economic mismanagement. Indeed, fears about the aging population have probably been the most influential factor in the decision to lift the one-child policy. In November 2013, came to a policy allowing couples in which at least one of the marital partners was an only child to have two children. Zheng (2016) points out that a baby boom is one of the major nursing workforce issues. After the implementation of the government’s new two-child policy, an increasing number of pregnant nurses are going to be on six-month maternity leave around the same time, which will result in a critical nursing shortage in China. Zheng (2016) also states that some local health authorities are now considering the options of employing part-time nursing staff. This may promote a better lifestyle for nurses but may not solve the issues of the nursing workforce shortage. Furthermore, in 2020 the government might start a three-child policy, which could make the staff shortage worse (MOH). Therefore, any increase in birth rate resulting from the two-child policy will exacerbate pressures on an already stressed healthcare system (Zeng, 2016).

2.6.2 Over workload and long-term shifts

Over workload and long-term shifts affect nurses’ self-efficacy and job satisfaction. In China, most of the time nurses have to work under high pressure with obvious low self-efficacy due to over workload and long-term shifts, as well as the heavy burden of manually writing nursing records and documents (Zhang et al., 2011). The study of Ghiyasvandian (2014) reported that nurses with a high level of self-efficacy usually satisfy with their job and have good skills in communication with patients and other medical staff. Which will contribute to nurses’ job retention and patient-nurse relationship. However, in recent years, Chinese nurses with low self-efficacy tend to leave their job. Nowadays more and more nurses got job-related distress due to overload work and complex relationships with patients (Zhang et al., 2011).

2.6.3 Nurses’ pressure.
Research from Cheung (2017) reveals that the nature of nursing care, workplace hazards, workplace violence, and employment pressure are the main sources of pressure. Büssing (2017) concludes that stressors related to a hospital setting, failure of balance between family and work, limited interpersonal relationship and discrimination from others, which contributes to higher pressure for nurses.

2.7 Summary

Previous researches focused on one or two variables, either nurses’ professional values, self-efficacy or job satisfaction. Based on a review of existing literature, in China, there are limited studies reported on professional values, self-efficacy and job satisfaction among obstetrics nurses. Eventually, an increasing number of clients will demand healthcare services with the two-child policy development. That is why more attention is needed to pay on clinical nurses, especially obstetric nurses, to improve the level of nurses’ professional values, self-efficacy and job satisfaction, to cope with the challenges. The researcher aims to determine the main affecting factors nurses’ self-efficacy, professional values, job satisfaction and potential strategy for improvement.

In China, there are limited studies reported on professional values, self-efficacy and job satisfaction among obstetrics nurses. Except for training nurses with required knowledge, skill and attitude, spiritual and psychological support could be better encouragement for them to carry on their career. Especially, more clients will demand healthcare services with the two-child policy development. The researcher aims to determine the main affecting factors of nurses’ self-efficacy, professional values, job satisfaction and potential strategy for improvement to help nurses cope with challenges that could lead to heavy psychological pressure. Furthermore, this study might help future researchers in doing a wide discussion on effective and practical intervention to improve self-efficacy, professional values and job satisfaction of nurses. It will also serve as a basis and a reference to the researchers who want to expand the study contributing to better nursing practice. This study will not only help the administrators of different institutions to utilize detailed and planned strategies to improve nurses’ self-efficacy, professional values and job satisfaction but also it will contribute to proper leadership and management.

3. RESULTS

The findings presented in this section are based on the summary of both the initial and updated reviews. The initial review identified that resulted in 27 articles being included based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria highlighted above. These studies were examined further to confirm that the focus was on the professional values, self-efficacy and job satisfaction of nurses. The selected articles were then included in the review. Papers were appraised using the Critical Appraisal Skills Program (CASP) (Public Health Resource Unit 2006). The main purpose of using CASP was to assess the quality of the papers and provide insights into the methods and methodology used in the primary studies.

Findings presented Values represent basic convictions of what is right, good or desirable, and motivate both social and professional behavior. Therefore, values are active standards that define social and professional behavior and affect moral judgment. Nursing is a discipline rich in values. Research regarding values is particularly helpful in providing ways to understand nurses’ reactions to different clinical situations (Rassin, 2015). Similarly, Florence Nightingale realized in the nineteenth century that nursing is also a profession founded on specific human values. Professional values are the values acquired during socialization into nursing from codes of ethics, nursing experiences, teachers, and peers (Al-Banna, 2017). Study of Kim (2015) states that professional values are a source to promote nurses’ ethical competencies in clinical settings and dealing with ethical concerns in the present era. Likewise, author Cara (2015) concludes that professional values form the basis for nurse attitudes and behaviors, and guide nurses’ clinical practice decisions. Weis (2009) emphatically stated that nurses’ professional values are standards for action, which espoused in nursing practice to evaluate the integrity of the individual and the organization. Nurses’ professional development is about the acquisition and internalization of values that espoused by nurses providing a framework on which expectations and standards can be developed and improved.
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## II: Studies on nurses’ self-efficacy

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<td>Tertiary hospitals and secondary hospitals in tianjin</td>
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<td>Huang (2017)</td>
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