



INTEGRATIVE LITERATURE REVIEW ARTICLE

NURSE PROFESSIONAL SKILLS IN HOSPITAL ACTIVITIES

COMPETÊNCIAS PROFISSIONAIS DO ENFERMEIRO NAS ATIVIDADES HOSPITALARES

COMPETENCIAS PROFESIONALES DEL ENFERMERO EN ACTIVIDADES HOSPITALARIAS

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ABSTRACT

Objective: to identify nurses' professional competences in the hospital area. **Method:** this is a bibliographic, descriptive, integrative review study, with timeframe from 2009 to 2018, conducted at PubMed Central® (PMC®), PubMed / MEDLINE, EBSCOhost, ERIC and Regional Library of Medicine (BIREME). Results were presented as figures followed by descriptive analysis. **Results:** 12 articles were found. It was evidenced that the term competence exerted influence on the leadership attribute, which, in turn, influences organizational and team development, as a transformation of the nurse's role in the workplace, interpersonal relationships, care security and promotion of safe practice. Gaps in human resources management by competences were identified, influenced by the rapid and constant changes in production contexts, technological developments, processes of market competitiveness and work production, especially in health. **Conclusion:** it is concluded that there is a need for field studies to highlight the competences through investigation with subjects acting in different scenarios. **Descriptors:** Nursing; Professional Competence; Competence; Health Management; Hospital Administration; Practice Management.

RESUMO

Objetivo: identificar as competências profissionais do enfermeiro na área hospitalar. **Método:** trata-se de estudo bibliográfico, descritivo, tipo revisão integrativa, com recorte temporal de 2009 a 2018, realizado na PubMed Central® (PMC®), PubMed/MEDLINE, EBSCOhost, ERIC e Biblioteca Regional de Medicina (BIREME). Apresentaram-se os resultados em forma de figuras seguida da análise descritiva. **Resultados:** encontraram-se 12 artigos. Evidenciou-se que o termo competência exerceu influência sobre o atributo liderança que, por sua vez, exerce influência no desenvolvimento organizacional e equipe, como transformadora do papel do enfermeiro no local de trabalho, relacionamentos interpessoais, segurança assistencial e promoção de prática segura. Identificaram-se lacunas na gestão de recursos humanos por competências, influenciada pelas rápidas e constantes alterações nos contextos produtivos, evoluções tecnológicas, processos de competitividade de mercado e produção de trabalho, especialmente, em saúde. **Conclusão:** conclui-se que há necessidade de estudos de campo para evidenciar as competências por meio de investigação com sujeitos atuantes em diferentes cenários. **Descritores:** Enfermagem; Competência Profissional; Competência; Gestão em Saúde; Administração Hospitalar; Gerenciamento da Prática Profissional.

RESUMEN

Objetivo: identificar las competencias profesionales de las enfermeras en el área hospitalaria. **Método:** este es un estudio de revisión bibliográfica, descriptiva e integradora, con un cronograma de 2009 a 2018, realizado en PubMed Central® (PMC®), PubMed / MEDLINE, EBSCOhost, ERIC y la Biblioteca Regional de Medicina (BIREME). Los resultados se presentaron como cifras seguidas de un análisis descriptivo. **Resultados:** se encontraron 12 artículos. Se evidenció que el término competencia ejercía influencia sobre el atributo de liderazgo, que a su vez influye en el desarrollo organizativo y de equipo, como una transformación del rol del enfermero en el lugar de trabajo, las relaciones interpersonales, la seguridad de la atención y la promoción de prácticas seguras. Se identificaron brechas en la gestión de recursos humanos por competencias, influenciadas por los cambios rápidos y constantes en los contextos de producción, los desarrollos tecnológicos, los procesos de competitividad del mercado y la producción laboral, especialmente en salud. **Conclusión:** se concluye que existe la necesidad de que los estudios de campo resalten las competencias a través de la investigación con sujetos que actúan en diferentes escenarios. **Descriptor:** Enfermería; Competencia Profesional; Competencia; Gestión en Salud; Administración Hospitalaria; Gestión de la Práctica Profesional.

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INTRODUCTION

In Brazil, the concept of competence has been discussed since the 1990s, when universities and organizations were required to create creative strategies to align human resources. It is known that the concept of expert collaborator began to lose strength and the generalist collaborator emerged, who, in addition to having technical knowledge in their activities, added skills to perform other activities related to their position.¹

There is a lack of agreement on the term competence, but there is a continuous and global process in an attempt to establish and delineate patterns, attributes, attitudes, skills, experiences in the expectation of seeking the best conceptualization and significance of competences for nurses. It is advocated by followers of the integrative theory of competencies that leaders do not simply have attributes, they must be put into action so that the team or organization in which they operate can raise the level of performance required by the context.²

Competence is characterized by encompassing knowledge, skills and experiences aimed at performing a function in the organization; Thus, the organization, in its growth, empowers people, and as they develop, they do the same with the organization.³

Competence is defined as the capacity of the individual who, by inserting himself in the world of work, in the organizational context, mobilizes his abilities to meet the demands of the organization and contributes to the construction of organizational competences.⁴⁻⁵

The National Curriculum Guidelines (NCGs) address six competencies and general skills for the exercise of health professionals: health care; decision-making; Communication; leadership; administration and management and continuing education.⁶

From this perspective, it is considered essential to know what are the essential professional competences for nurses working in the hospital area through the objective proposed below.

OBJECTIVE

- To identify the professional skills of nurses in hospitals.

METHOD

This is a bibliographical, descriptive, integrative literature review study.⁷⁻⁹ The structure elaborated in six steps was used: 1) establishment of the review problem; 2) sample selection; 3) establishment of inclusion and exclusion criteria; 4) data analysis; 5) interpretation of results and 6) presentation of the review.⁹

The following guiding question was established: "What evidence does the published studies bring about the Professional Skills of Nurses?". Thus, the necessary scientific support for this study was acquired through a bibliographic survey conducted on the Virtual Health Library (VHL) portal, including information sources: PubMed Central® (PMC®), PubMed / MEDLINE, EBSCOhost, ERIC and Regional Library of Medicine (BIREME). Consensus was sought in the literature on the subject and, in particular, publications in the Portuguese language to synthesize the published knowledge, advances, limitations and build the propositions for the composition of the study itself.

Inclusion criteria were comprehended as articles on nurses' professional competences, which were fully available online, published in Portuguese, English or Spanish, with a timeframe from 2009 to 2018.

The timeframe was justified by the consolidation of the integrating current of competences in an attempt to establish and delineate patterns, attributes, attitudes, skills, experiences in the expectation of seeking the best conceptualization and significance of competences for nurses in the late 1990s. Exclusion criteria for incomplete articles that did not answer the guiding question were applied.

For the data collection of the selected articles, an instrument consisting of information related to the identification of the articles was used: database; parents; title; year of publication; purpose of the study; main results and classification by level of evidence.

The search terms contained in the Medical Subject Headings (MeSH) and VHL descriptors were selected through an information specialist (librarian). The strategy was searched in a structured way with the indexed descriptors in the databases accessed through the Higher Level Personnel Improvement Coordination (CAPES) Journals Portal, according to their respective research resources, as shown in figure 1, Next.

Research sources	Research resources
PubMed/MEDLINE	("professional competence "[All Fields] AND "clinical competence"[All Fields]) AND "nursing administration research"[All Fields]
EBSCOhost	("competency management" AND "nursing")
ERIC	("competence management" AND "nursing")
BIREME	("competência profissional" AND "administração de serviços de saúde" AND "administração dos cuidados ao paciente" AND "Enfermagem")
PubMed Central® (PMC®)	"competence management nursing" ("mental competency"[MeSH Terms] OR ("mental"[All Fields] AND "competency"[All Fields]) OR "mental competency"[All Fields] OR "competence"[All Fields]) AND ("organization and administration"[MeSH Terms] OR ("organization"[All Fields] AND "administration"[All Fields]) OR "organization and administration"[All Fields] OR "management"[All Fields] OR "disease management"[MeSH Terms] OR ("disease"[All Fields] AND "management"[All Fields]) OR "disease management"[All Fields]) AND ("nursing"[Subheading] OR "nursing"[All Fields] OR "nursing"[MeSH Terms] OR "nursing"[All Fields] OR "breast feeding"[MeSH Terms] OR ("breast"[All Fields] AND "feeding"[All Fields]) OR "breast feeding"[All Fields])) AND ("open access"[filter])

Figure 1. Search databases and resources used to implement the search strategy. Botucatu (SP), 2018, Brazil.

The evidence of the article was classified into six levels: Level I - studies related to the meta-analysis of multiple controlled studies; Level II - individual experimental studies; Level III - quasi-experimental studies, such as the nonrandomized clinical trial, the pre and post-test single group, as well as time series or case control; Level IV - non-experimental studies, such as descriptive, correlational and comparative research, with qualitative approach and case studies; Level V - Systematically obtained program evaluation data and Level VI - Expert opinions, experience reports, consensus, regulations and laws.¹⁰

In the presentation of the results, descriptive figures were used, respecting the selection criteria and the identification of the articles.

Due to the fact that this is an integrative literature review, attention was paid to the ethical issues provided for in Resolutions No. 466/2012 and No. 510/2016 of the National Health

Council, which involve research with human beings and Social and Human Sciences, respectively. Please be informed that all information described is from public domain productions, not being necessary confidentiality and anonymity.

RESULTS

A total of 254 articles were found. The first step was characterized by reading the titles and abstracts and excluding duplicate articles and those that did not answer the guiding question. In the second stage, the articles read in full that did not respond to the study proposal, shown below in figure 2.

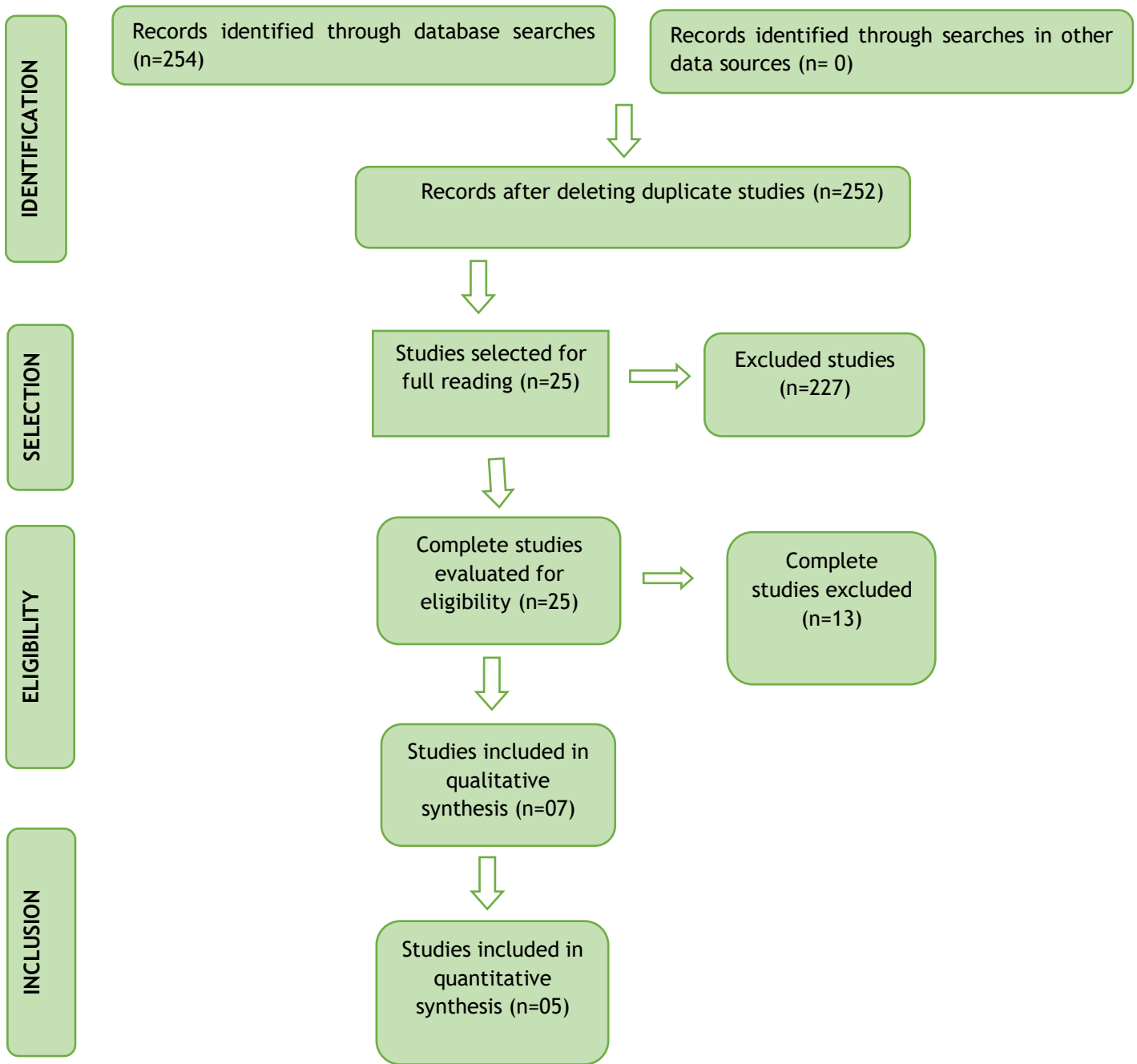


Figure 2. Study selection flowchart adapted from the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA 2009). Botucatu (SP), 2018, Brazil.

In the process of analysis of the articles, 12 publications that fully met the inclusion criteria were identified. Predominated: PMC[®] and EBSCOhost (33.34%) followed by PubMed and BVS - BIREME (16.66%) and ERIC journals were not included.

The publications were read and analyzed by two independent reviewers. A compilation of data based on the variables databases, title and authors, year and country of publication, level of

evidence, objectives and relevant considerations of the study on the professional competences of nurses working in the hospital area was constructed.

The articles in the databases were identified according to the country of origin: four publications from Brazil; three from the United States of America (USA); two from Australia and one from Finland, Japan, and China, shown in figure 3.

Research Source / Country / Levels of Evidence	Title / Year of Publication	Objectives	Relevant Considerations
PMC [®] / China / IV	<i>Factors influencing training transfer in nursing profession: a qualitative study.</i> 2018	Identify the factors that influence the transfer of training in the nursing profession.	Health managers need to understand the factors that influence the training to maximize the benefits of training. Right training beliefs and values, rigorous employee selection, relevance of training content, training instructions that facilitate learning and transfer, peer support, supervisors and organization,

			organizational culture such as change, sharing, learning and support, and Professional development is the key to successful transfer training.
PMC® USA IV	<i>Using systems thinking to envision quality and safety in healthcare.</i> 2018	Raise awareness of the administrative roles and educators in empowering clinical nurses to understand the impact of their actions on patient outcomes and organizations, using QSEN skills and a systemic thinking approach.	Providing high-quality, evidence-based, patient-centered care is a key role for clinical nurses. Leading nurses, like educators, act as facilitators for clinical nurses as they collaborate to improve care.
PMC® Finland IV	<i>A systematic review of factors influencing knowledge management and the nurse leaders' role.</i> 2017	Describe the factors that facilitate or inhibit the development of nurses' competence and the role of the nursing leader in knowledge management.	They indicated little research available on knowledge management, despite the long tradition of nursing leadership research. There is a need for research on nursing knowledge management that can be used to influence organizational obstacles in the implementation of evidence-based practice. Focus on factors related to the role of the nursing leader as an agent of change, influencing the effectiveness of competence development, as well as the professional development of nurses can be supported. Nursing leaders need evidence-based interventions to support shared learning and build infrastructures that facilitate skills development.
PMC® Australia IV	<i>Does clinical supervision of healthcare professionals improve effectiveness of care and patient experience? A systematic review.</i> 2017	Determine if clinical supervision of healthcare professionals improves care effectiveness and patient experience.	Clinical supervision of health professionals is associated with the effectiveness of care. Significant improvement in the care process has been found that can improve compliance with processes that are associated with better patient health outcomes. No association was found between clinical supervision of health professionals and the dimension of patient experience in quality of care.
BVS Brazil IV	<i>Competências do enfermeiro na gestão hospitalar.</i> 2016	Know the skills required of nurses in hospital management.	Nurses lack a global view of the institution and its target market. The most obvious difficulty is knowing how to deal with people, manage conflicts and balance the interests of the led and the institution. Relevance in the analysis of quality and performance indicators, and the construction of the integration between management and assistance was strongly highlighted in the articles.
BVS USA VI	<i>The establishment of evidence-based practice (EBP) competencies for practicing registered nurses and advanced practice nurses (APNs) in real world clinical settings: proficiencies to improve healthcare quality, reliability, patient outcomes, and costs.</i> 2014	Develop a clear EBP skill set for both nurses and APNs in clinical settings that can be used by healthcare institutions in their quest to achieve high performance systems that consistently implement and sustain EBP.	Incorporating EBP competencies into health system expectations and operations can drive greater quality, reliability and consistency of food health as well as cost savings. Research is needed to develop valid and reliable tools for assessing skills. Organizations that set standards for practice should develop criteria and endorse EBP competencies as the basis for building and maintaining the acquisition of EBP knowledge, the development of EBP skills, and the incorporation of a positive attitude toward EBP to promote best practices. Nursing Leaders must integrate EBP competencies into multiple processes that impact nurses in their clinical setting. Interview questions, guidance, job descriptions, performance reviews, and

			clinical ladder promotion programs. EBP competencies should be integrated into academic and clinical education programs to continually establish and strengthen EBP as a basis for practice.
EBSCOhost Brazil IV	Professional competence: the construction of concepts, strategies developed by health services and implications for nursing. 2013	Identify and analyze the scientific literature on the theme professional competence, strategies of health institutions for its development and implications for nursing.	The meanings of the concept of professional competence. Strategies for the development of professional competence and implications for nursing. There was a predominance of the concept of professional competence from its constituent elements, knowledge, skills and attitudes.
PubMed USA IV	Are you confidently competent? 2012	Update the 1994 Nurse Manager Competency Instrument (NMCI), which was developed to measure the competencies required for the nurse's role in 2010.	Measuring nurse manager competencies includes an impact on nursing manager development and knowledge and capacity education. Skills, when developed, can make a difference in the overall influence of the unit's nursing manager, thus creating an environment for improving patient and team outcomes.
PubMed Australia IV	Characteristics of leadership that influence clinical learning: a narrative review. 2011	Identify Nursing and Leadership Learning Culture.	The influence of leadership on learning and organizational development. The leadership in undergraduate clinical education. Central Leadership Factors: Role of the Nursing Unit Manager, Collaboration and Relationship Building, and Role Modeling.
EBSCOhost Japan IV	Development of the Holistic Nursing Competence Scale. 2011	Measure nursing competence of Japanese nurses and test their psychometric properties.	The Scale has the potential to help nurses correctly assess their own level of competence and identify their educational needs, and allow organizations to develop appropriate in-service education programs.
EBSCOhost Brazil IV	Developing professional skills of in-service nurses. 2010	Describe the construction and implementation of an in-service nurse group competence development program with a focus on contributions and identify the professional competencies developed and contributions made by the nurse groups participating in this program.	The skills developed were to act, mobilize resources, learn, commit, take responsibility, have strategic vision and communicate. Contributions involved skills development, aggregation of social and economic values, teaching and research. He pointed out that it is possible to build professional skills in services.
EBSCOhost Brazil IV	Nurse competences in knowledge management and intellectual capital. 2009	Nursing management skills and practical management of knowledge and human capital and applicability of competency management.	Working with the managerial competences of nurses is considered knowing how to look for evidence and knowing exactly how to find them, using them to base communication on explicit and fair concepts, that make the expectations, feedback in performance appraisals and individual development plans of their human capital for knowledge management objective.

Figure 3. Identification and synthesis of studies included in the integrative literature review. Botucatu (SP), 2018, Brazil.

DISCUSSION

It was revealed, among the studies, that the term competence exerts influence on the leadership attribute which, in turn, influences the organizational and team development, as a transformer of the nurse's role in the workplace, interpersonal relationships, care security and promotion of safe practice, as well as evidence-

based strategies applied to professional skills, aimed at improving health indicators.^{4-5,11-9}

Nursing managerial competencies were considered, such as the ability to know where to look for and find information and communicative precepts to make the performance evaluation process and individual development plans feasible for management practice.¹¹

Professional competence is related to the involvement of experiences, attitudes and personal values properly used in response to

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professional practice situations. In an integrative review of the subject, we highlight the competences relevant to the occupational roles of the professional nurse and the contributions in the learning processes implemented by the organizations, exemplified by permanent education for the development of competences.⁵

It is emphasized that, allied to this, the correct beliefs and values about training provided by health service managers, rigorous selection of staff for training and the relevance of training content, as well as training instructions, facilitate learning and professional development. It can be assisted by continuous professional development, stimulated and provided by reflective exercises, role playing and simulation, conflict management and leadership and management skills.^{13,15}

The attributes of the lead nurse are expected to be able to develop educational strategies that facilitate the understanding and use of evidence-based strategies to achieve better care and organizational outcomes.^{16,19}

It is emphasized that Nursing leaders need to be trained and stimulated to improve the knowledge management of clinical practice and, thus, identify the weaknesses and potentialities of their employees in order to promote the strengthening of professional competences of nurses under their responsibility.¹³⁻⁴

Some managerial skills were progressively developed, such as: service performance evaluations; adjustments of care / clinical processes; execution of appropriate work schedules; guidelines and standardization of conduct, among other managerial / administrative activities, provided that they are effectively practiced by administrators and managers, which contribute to care reliability and reduce costs of health services.¹⁵

The competences proposed by the NCDs and the nurse's training were related and it was evidenced that five of them belong to the managerial competences of the nurse. (20) The nurse's attributes were enumerated in: leadership; alignment of purposes; affective communication; common vision of the future; customer focus; team motivation; interpersonal relationship; Communication; human resources management and care; creative talents; speed of responses; shared responsibilities and competencies; sense of fairness and ethics, which are common to any organization, regardless of its philosophy, structure or organizational strategy.^{11,21}

Therefore, it was understood that professional competence is affected by the organizational environment, evidencing the level of demand dependent on the objective reality and the subjective ability to analyze and influence the environment itself, and can still develop in different ways and in different places that are necessarily designated according to their

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background. Involved experiences, attitudes and personal values appropriately used in response to professional practice situations.^{5,22-3}

The importance of revision studies is clarified in order to know, analytically, what the literature recommends about the researched and studied subject, however, it is also understood that the great majority of the studies are built with specific objectives and, therefore, it is designed to answer punctual and non-generic research questions such as review studies that often dare to answer broad and complex questions.

The theme competence was evidenced, especially in the Brazilian scenario, as fragmented in specialties or directed to studies related to nursing education.

Competence has been conceptualized in recent years as the way to rethink interactions between people and organizations. People and their knowledge and capabilities versus organizations and their demands in the field of essential work processes and relational processes (relationships with customers, suppliers and the workers themselves) have been profoundly changed in recent years.¹¹

The need for scientific basis is also recommended for the better performance of nurses' activities presented in classic studies not included in this review because they do not answer the guiding question of the research.²⁴⁻⁶

CONCLUSION

Given the analysis of the publications, the lack of consensus building or a mandatory definition of what is the competence of nurses working in hospital services was identified. Limitations of this study and, perhaps, several others were found: the impossibility of comparing and standardizing the researches carried out on the subject, regarding the research methods, scenarios, subjects, and intervening factors that undermine and compromise evidence criteria.

Gaps in the human resources management by competences were inferred from the literature, probably due to the rapid and constant changes in the productive contexts, the speed of technological changes, the processes of market competitiveness, which can generate imbalances between qualifications, and the production of work, especially in health.

In this sense, the importance of field studies that seek to identify competences through investigation with subjects acting in comprehensive scenarios and with the use of validated and calibrated research instruments is highlighted.

Professional competence was considered the most relevant criterion for professional development of the nurse's role within organizations, favored and supported by training

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and development of attributes such as decision making and leadership.

Thus, this study is expected to contribute to the development of new research in this area and to collaborate with the activities of hospital nurses regarding professional skills.

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