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Review

# The Relationship Between Professional Identity in Nursing and Nurse Performance

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**Abstract:** Professional identity is a fundamental aspect of nursing practice as it influences nurses' understanding of their roles, responsibilities, and contributions to healthcare services. A strong professional identity enables nurses to build confidence, enhance ethical commitment, and maintain integrity when facing challenges in the workplace. This study aims to analyze the relationship between professional identity and nurse performance through a literature review method. Literature searches were conducted in PubMed, ScienceDirect, CINAHL, Scopus, and Google Scholar databases using keywords related to professional identity and nurse performance. The selection process yielded eight relevant research journals, consisting of two national and six international journals. The analysis revealed that a strong professional identity is closely associated with increased motivation, job satisfaction, communication skills, clinical decision-making, and interprofessional collaboration. Theories supporting this relationship include Social Identity Theory, Self-Determination Theory, and Professional Role Theory. The study emphasizes the importance of strengthening professional identity through nursing education focused on self-reflection, clinical experience, and leadership that supports professional development. Thus, a strong professional identity significantly contributes to improving nurse performance and healthcare service quality.

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## Introduction

Professional identity is a critical foundation in nursing practice as it closely relates to how nurses understand their roles, responsibilities, and contributions to healthcare services. Professional identity is defined as an individual's understanding of themselves as part of a specific profession, including the values, attitudes, and behaviors inherent in that profession (Johnson et al., 2020). In the nursing context, professional identity helps nurses build confidence, enhance their commitment to ethical practice, and maintain professional integrity when facing various challenges in the work environment (Fagermoen, 2017). Furthermore, a strong professional identity enables nurses to perform their roles more effectively as caregivers, educators, and patient advocates (Wright et al., 2019).

The relationship between professional identity and nurse performance has been widely discussed in previous studies. Research indicates that nurses with strong professional identities tend to have higher work motivation, better job satisfaction, and the ability to deliver quality care (Chen et al., 2021). Additionally, a positive professional identity contributes to improved nurse performance in areas such as patient communication, clinical decision-making, and multidisciplinary team collaboration (Slatyer et al., 2018). Conversely, a lack of clear professional identity can lead to role confusion, low motivation, and decreased quality of healthcare services (Ten Hoeve et al., 2014).

Understanding the importance of professional identity in nursing practice and its relationship with nurse performance highlights the need for further exploration of how factors such as education, work environment, and leadership influence the development of professional identity and its impact on nurse performance. This literature review aims to analyze the concept of professional identity in nursing and examine the relationship between professional identity and nurse performance based on existing empirical evidence.

This literature review is expected to make a significant contribution to the development of nursing policies and practices. A deeper understanding of the relationship between professional identity and nurse performance can assist policymakers in designing more effective educational and training programs to build strong professional identities among nurses. Furthermore, the findings of this review can be utilized by hospital management and healthcare institutions to create work environments that support the development of professional identity, ultimately improving overall healthcare service quality. Nursing practice based on a strong professional identity can also strengthen the relationship between nurses and patients and increase public trust in the nursing profession.

## Research Method

This study uses a literature review method aimed at analyzing and synthesizing previous research findings on the relationship between professional identity in nursing and nurse performance. The databases used include PubMed, ScienceDirect, CINAHL, Scopus, and Google Scholar. Keywords used include: "Professional Identity in Nursing," "Nurse Performance," "Relationship between Professional Identity and Performance," "Professionalism in Nursing," and "Nursing Leadership." The selected articles were published within the last five years (2018-2023) in English and Indonesian. **Inclusion Criteria:** Original research articles investigating the relationship between professional identity and nurse performance, Quantitative; qualitative; or mixed-method studies, Full-text articles available. **Exclusion Criteria:** Articles not relevant to the topic, Articles with unclear methodologies, Duplicate publications. The search was conducted using a combination of keywords. Initial selection was performed by reading titles and abstracts, followed by a full-text review to ensure relevance to the research objectives. Data were analyzed narratively, and selected articles were categorized based on research variables, methods, key findings, and conclusions.

## Result and Discussion

Dari hasil penelusuran di dapatkan 8 jurnal penelitian, 2 jurnal nasinaol dan 6 jurnal internasional.

### *Theories That Support the Relationship Between the Two Variables*

The relationship between professional identity in nursing and nurse performance can be explained through several contemporary theories. One of them is Social Identity Theory, which states that individuals define themselves based on membership in certain social groups, including professions. A strong professional identity in nursing encourages nurses to behave in accordance with professional norms and standards, which in turn improves their performance. In addition, Self-Determination Theory emphasizes that when nurses have a clear professional identity, they tend to have stronger intrinsic motivation to perform optimally. Recent research has also shown that nurses' professionalism, which is a manifestation of professional identity, is positively related to nurses' performance in providing effective and quality nursing care.

The relationship between professional identity in nursing and nurse performance can be explained through Professional Role Theory and Work Motivation Theory. Professional Role Theory emphasizes that the understanding and internalization of professional roles by nurses increases their commitment to nursing standards of practice and ethics, which in turn has a positive impact on their performance. Meanwhile, Work Motivation Theory states that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation

influence individual performance. Research shows that high work motivation is positively related to nurses' performance in providing effective and quality nursing care.

Studies show a positive relationship between professional identity and nurse performance. A strong professional identity encourages nurses to behave in accordance with professional norms and standards, which in turn improves their performance. Research by Jiwanti et al. (2022) found that nurses' professionalism, which is a manifestation of professional identity, is positively related to nurses' performance in providing effective and quality nursing care.

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#### *Implications for Nursing Education*

Professional identity development in nursing education has significant implications for the quality of future healthcare services. Curricula that support nurses' professional identity development should include components that focus not only on technical knowledge and skills, but also on the formation of professional attitudes, ethical values, and behaviors that conform to professional standards. Emphasis on clinical experiential learning, self-reflection, and interprofessional collaboration in the nursing curriculum can help students internalize their role as professional nurses (Saragih, 2022). In addition, the integration of theory and practice in nursing education will strengthen students' understanding of professional identity and increase their commitment to professional standards, which ultimately has a positive impact on the quality of patient care (Jiwanti et al., 2022). Thus, a curriculum designed to support nurses' professional identity development is essential to produce competent, dedicated, and ethical health workers.

#### *Implications for Nursing Management and Leadership*

The implications for nursing management and leadership are significant in strengthening nurses' professional identity. The role of leaders in developing and supporting nurses' professional identity is crucial as effective leadership can encourage nurses to adopt the values of professionalism and commitment to ethical standards and best practices in providing nursing care. Leaders who have a clear vision and support the development of professional identity can create a positive work environment, which not only strengthens nurses' sense of belonging to their profession, but also improves their performance in providing quality care (Saragih, 2022). Leaders who set an example through professional behavior and are committed to nurses' career development will increase nurses' intrinsic motivation and build a work culture that prioritizes service quality (Jiwanti et al., 2022). Therefore, leadership development that focuses on strengthening nurses' professional identity is a key factor in improving the quality of health services in hospitals or other health facilities.

#### *Conclusions and Suggestions*

Building a strong professional identity is critical to improving nurses' performance, as this identity includes not only technical knowledge and skills, but also values, ethics, and commitment to the nursing profession. Nurses who have a clear professional identity tend to be more motivated to provide quality care, maintain good relationships with patients, and work more efficiently and effectively in teams. Research shows that a solid professional identity is directly related to nurses' job satisfaction and commitment to the profession, which ultimately contributes to improving the quality of health services (Saragih, 2022). In addition, a strong professional identity helps nurses face challenges in their daily work, reduces stress levels, and increases their confidence in making appropriate clinical decisions (Jiwanti et al., 2022). Therefore, the development of a strong

professional identity should be an integral part of nursing education and training to ensure optimal quality of care.

Recommendations for future research related to nurses' professional identity and nurse performance could focus on exploring factors that influence professional identity development across different cultural contexts and health systems. Further research could also study the long-term impact of training programs or educational interventions designed to strengthen professional identity on nurses' performance, both in clinical and non-clinical contexts. In addition, research examining the relationship between different leadership styles and nurses' professional identity development could provide deeper insights into how nursing managers and leaders can more effectively support professional development. Further research on the influence of external factors, such as health policies and working conditions, on professional identity could also make an important contribution to the development of a more holistic nursing education curriculum.

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