

Toward a Unified Understanding of Digital Professionalism in Nursing Students: A Concept Analysis

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Introduction

- Nursing students face persistent challenges - blurred lines between personal and professional identities in digital contexts
- Experience confusion what digital professionalism is and full implications of their online activity
- Analysis can help students, educators, and institutions achieve a unified understanding of digital professionalism for student assessment, curriculum development, and policy creation

Purpose

- To define digital professionalism by identifying its attributes, antecedents, and consequences in the context of nursing students

Methodology

- Walker and Avant (2019) concept analysis method
- **Electronic databases:** CINAHL, Scopus, PubMed, and ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global
- **Search strategy:** “nurs* student*” OR “student nurs*” AND “social media” OR “TikTok” OR “Facebook” OR “Twitter (X)” OR “Snapchat” OR “Instagram” OR “Youtube” OR “Threads” OR “Reddit” OR “LinkedIn.”
- 18 articles included in the concept analysis after title/abstract screening and full text screening

Results

- **Definition:** Digital professionalism in nursing can be operationally defined as the consistent demonstration of professional behaviours, values, and competencies on digital platforms.
- **Defining attributes:** nursing students safeguarding privacy and confidentiality, establishing clear boundaries between personal and professional identities, being accountable for their online actions, engaging in civil and respectful digital discourse, and complying with relevant professional regulatory standards and institutional policies.
- **Antecedents:** (1) access and exposure to digital platforms; (2) peer and professional role modeling; (3) professional educational exposure; (4) awareness and internalization of professional values; and (5) personal motivation and self-efficacy.
- **Consequences:** (1) impact on professional reputation, employability, and academic progress; (2) influence on professional identity formation; (3) legal and regulatory outcomes, and (4) public and institutional image.

Conclusion

- The operational definition can serve as a foundation for a unified understanding for students, educators, and institutions.
- Future research should establish a standardized tool to measure digital professionalism in nursing students, strengthening its operational definition.
- Operational definition should be explored across various cultural contexts to identify its unique similarities and differences.

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