The Use of Social Media in the Nursing Profession

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2018 Laurea

Laurea University of Applied Sciences

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Nursing Degree Programme
Bachelor's Thesis
April, 2018

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Year	2018		Pages	35

The purpose of this thesis was to explore the potential benefits and risks that come along with the use of social media, within the nursing profession. Hence, the aim was to gain an insight regarding the impact social media has on registered nurses and their work.

The following thesis was conducted using the literature review research method. In total 9 articles were deemed relevant to the research topic and were obtained from the following databases provided to students of Laurea University of Applied Sciences: CINAHL (ebsco), SAGE premier 2016 and Laurea Finna. Critical appraisal of data was performed on all research articles prior to in depth analysis, using the inductive approach of the qualitative content analysis.

The findings of this literature review indicated that the use of social media within the nursing profession was beneficial to both nursing staff and healthcare consumers. The utilization of social media platforms enables registered nurses to enhance their nursing competence by obtaining evidence-based information in real time. In addition, nurses can take part in health-related political discussions, receive feedback from patients and facilitate multifaceted communication with healthcare consumers. Within the literature review, many studies specified that there is a lack of guidelines and policies within healthcare facilities to prevent the potential risks of social media use among registered nurses. There is a need for both national and universal guidelines, emphasising what is deemed acceptable and not, in order for nurses to take full advantage of the benefits of social media platforms.

The author recommends further research to be implemented on social media use among registered nurses in Finland. In addition, further, in depth research could be conducted to explore, what registered nurses think about social media use in their working life, to gain the nurse's perspective.

Table of Contents

1   Introduction

It has been noted that the use of social media is increasing rapidly on a global scale. Therefore, it can be said that individuals and families whom are in need for nursing care, due to an illness are most likely to be active users of social media. (Schroeder 2017.)

Social media provides a significant platform for communication as it enables the distribution of information on a global basis. Due to the increase in the accessibility and use of internet as well as communication technology, there is a changing pattern within the way clinically practicing nurses communicate among each other and healthcare customers. Within the past year, social media alone has had a substantial effect on the delivery of healthcare through innovation. (Thomas 2013.)

Social media can be used for a variety of reasons among healthcare professionals, including health promotion and patient engagement encouragement. Due to the increase in mobile and internet access, a larger population have the ability to share what they are doing and thinking. Within the healthcare field this means that people are posting things relating to their own health, reviews on certain medical treatments, and raising awareness of relevant health conditions. (Fox 2011.)

According to Fraser (2011), professional nurses tend to become hesitant, concerning the use of social media platforms and to break those barriers of doubt and uncertainty, hence nurses should become competent with the fundamentals of using social media. Fraser (2011) argues that many registered nurses are cautious of utilizing social media due to the belief that it may breach patient confidentiality. In addition, according to Burton et al (2016), it is rather uncommon for hospitals to have social media policies, hence the benefits of it as a professional tool are unknown.

The role of social media and it's use among healthcare professionals have been documented in both positive and negative manners. Numerous benefits and potential opportunities can be associated with the use of social media; however, this may differ if legal implications and ethical principles are compromised (Career guts 2012). In Laurea University of Applied Sciences, within the nursing degree programme, students are encouraged to partake in different social media programs such as LinkedIn, in order to network and build connections. Senior lecturers also advise their students to create Facebook and WhatsApp groups among themselves, to for instance disseminate coursework information or keep up to date with any scheduling changes. The researcher of this literature review intends to investigate whether these social media platforms which are encouraged for nursing students to utilize are applied within the nursing profession.

Hence the researcher aims to gain an insight in the way social media platforms are utilized among registered nurses and its potential impacts on their working life.

2 Theoretical Framework

The key concepts of this research paper include, social media, registered nurse and the nursing profession. These main keywords will be defined in detail, in the following chapter.

2.1 Social Media

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines social media as "including forms of electronic communication, perhaps websites that enable social networking, through which information, pictures, ideas, private messages and other content is shared among users." According to Peate (2013), social media can be defined in multiple manners, as it includes a vast number of internet platforms which are regarded diverse and allow their users to interconnect in various ways. Social media is acknowledged to be a diverse collective term, including platforms that enable content sharing, social or professional networking and web publishing (Casella et al 2014). Furthermore, these platforms come along with their own set of advantages and disadvantages. Currently, predominant social media platforms, include; Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn (Lachman 2013).

2.1.1 Brief History of Social Media

After the discovery of the internet and Web 2.0., many engineers took this discovery as an advantage to help them design and develop a new paradigm for interaction on a virtual scale. Due to the new development of social media tools, innovation was evident in regard to programming languages and database architectures. Social networking was one of first social media platforms that were utilized by internet users in the late 1990's and early 2000's. These platforms included email and IM (instant messaging) and were used in means to communicate with close family and friends. As social media developed, new structures appeared which enabled users to connect with people they were acquainted with, admired and took an interest in. Thanks to the evolution of social media, a new paradigm was formed that enabled a basis for information access, connecting information, ideas and con-tent. Social media has evolved tremendously, in the past decade, and has been incorporated into everyday life by users. (Boyd 2015.)

2.1.2   Examples of Social Media Platforms

Regarding social media platforms, social networking is the most universally used, enabling users to connect with loved ones and share different types of information (Fraser 2011). Facebook is one of the most used social media platforms with over 2 billion active users (Facebook 2018). Facebook emphases more on connecting users with their family and friends whereas other platforms, for instance LinkedIn, focus on social networking among professionals. According to LinkedIn (2018), more than 500 million people are regular members registered within the social media platform. The LinkedIn mission states that their goal is to "connect the world's professionals, in order to allow them to be more productive and successful (LinkedIn 2018). The following platform enables users to advertise their educational background, work experience, skills and accomplishments, which may potentially result in work recruitment.

Another form of social media includes content sharing, involving sharing pictures and videos or documents (Fraser 2011). Some of the platforms which allow users to share a diverse range of media include YouTube and Instagram. One has the accessibility to "enjoy videos and music they love, upload original content and share it all with friends, family and the world on YouTube (YouTube 2018). The platform also permits viewers to comment on the content available, which omits a discussion forum for people to connect, inform and inspire (Casella et al 2014).

 Fraser (2011) claims that professionals have the freedom to share their information and ideas with others through web publishing. Blogging is viewed to be both current and a highly favoured form of web publishing (Casella et al 2014). Through blogging, users can share any type of content with their viewers, as well as conversing with them within the comment section, resulting in discussions. Another type of web publishing includes microblogging, where users are able to share small amounts of information (140 characters or less) with their following (Casella et al). Twitter is a common forum for microblogging, with more than 330 million users, acquiring a mission to "give everyone the power to create and share ideas and information instantly, without barriers (Twitter 2018)."

2.2   Registered Nurse

According to the Finnish Nurses Association, a registered nurse should have received her education from a university of applied sciences, which can also be referred to as a polytechnic. The qualification includes a registered nurse's qualification, and a minimum of 210 credits should be received prior to graduation. A registered nurse should work according to the nursing science and ought to have the ability to work responsibly and independently.

 In regard to the treatment, a registered nurse should be able to promote health, treat and rehabilitate and prevent the spread of disease. Problem solving, evidence-based nursing and the ability to apply as well as master the constant stream of health technology, are a few of the attributes a qualified registered nurse should acquire. (Finnish Nurses Association 2017.)

2.3   The Nursing Profession

It is evident to understand the important characteristics a nurse must require post graduating, whilst defining the nursing profession. A registered nurse is considered to be able to complete the required clinical skills, within healthcare institution in question. Clinical nursing practice focuses on all areas of technical skills, patient care, cultural competency, critical thinking skills, decision making skills and nursing communication skills.
(Ebsco Nursing Resources 2017.)

The nursing profession requires people with a wide variety of attributions and skills, due to the numerous various specialisation fields: operating room, nursing home, neonatal ward, maternity ward etc (Chaska 2001). Hence, it is easy to say there is room for everyone to succeed and focus on an area they are passionate in and prosper. Even though there are several fields of nursing, the Nursing and Midwifery Council (2014) argue that a registered nurse needs to meet both the physical and mental needs of people suffering from various conditions and are of different ages. In addition, the NMC (2014) guidelines regarding the standards of competence outline that all registered nurses must uphold professional values, interpersonal skills, effective decision-making skills and the ability to take leadership and delegate others.

Currently, the nursing profession is in the center of revolutionizing, due to the new innovation and high technology medical devices. For instance, more technology use has decreased the need for face-to -face contact with patients and the awareness regarding evidence-based practice is more emphasized upon. Even though the nursing profession continues to progress, there are certain traits within the nursing profession that will never evolve. This involves caring for patients in a holistic manner and supporting patients. (Saver 2006.)

2.4   Social media and Nursing

Social media in nursing is still regarded as an unfamiliar phenomenon to some extent. Hence, there is not so much evidence-based information concerning how nurses have implemented the use of social media in their nursing career (Kung & OH 2014). Researchers Kung and OH conducted a study aiming to explore whether nurses used social media in their working life and what type of characteristics these nurses acquired. According to the findings, from a total of 410 registered nurses, 94% indicated that they were active users of various social media platforms whereas 1% of the participants claimed to not know how to use the it at all.

Piscotty et al (2013) claim that social media is intertwined within many career paths and nursing is not an exception to it. However, within the nursing profession there is a significant difference in the way social media has been adopted by hospitals and their regulations towards it, based on universal spectrum.

3   Purpose, Aim & Research Questions

The purpose of this literature review was to explore the potential benefits and risks that come along with the use of social media, within the nursing profession. Hence, the aim of the research paper was to gain an insight regarding the impact social media has on registered nurses.

Consequently, the following research questions were formed:

1."What are the potential benefits that come along with the use of social media among registered nurses."

2."What are the potential risks that come along with the use of social media among registered nurses."

4   Research Methods

4.1   Literature Review

A literature review was used as the research method by the author, to conduct this thesis. According to (Hart 1998), a literature review is defined by the selective collection of available literature which include information, data and evidence written from a specific perspective, to fulfil the aims and views regarding the topic chosen. In terms of the process of a literature review, the author should have the ability to effectively evaluate the selected documents, in relation to the research proposal (Hart 1998). The use of literature review as a research method enables the author to review and explore published literature on the re-search topic and incorporate their findings in a gradual manner (Aveyard 2010).

According to Coughlan & Cronin (2017), when executing a literature review, it is essential that the purpose and aim of the study are identified beforehand. Hence, a concrete topic of interest is easier to review, and the focus of the literature review will be more focused upon (Coughlan & Cronin 2017).

4.2   Inclusion & exclusion Criteria

Prior to the data retrieval phase, the researcher focused on formulating a research question, which would help guide the data collection stage. According to Aveyard (2010), in order to prevent potential misinterpretations, it is essential to form a research question that validates the purpose of the literature review. Hence, the author formed clear and concise research questions, which interrelated to both the aims and objectives recorded. In addition to the research questions, an inclusion and exclusion criteria was constructed to help guide the author throughout the data retrieval process to find high quality scholarly articles, which focused on the literature review topic. The inclusion and exclusion criteria are demonstrated precisely in Table 1.

The author had chosen to use peer reviewed articles as they are prone to be higher in quality, due to the criteria they must undergo to be deemed as "peer reviewed" on databases (Lloyd Sealy Library 2017). According to the Lloyd Sealy Library (2017), peer reviewed articles are also assessed in relation to the validity of the research methodology and procedures. The Author had also decided to use data which had been published within the past 5 years, henceforward the data retrieved would be more up-to-date. This way, the readers will be more aware of the current situation regarding the research topic.

4.3   Data Search Process

The data retrieval process was implemented electronically using databases that were pro-
vided by Laurea University of Applied Sciences. These databases were free of charge and pro-
vided reliable literature sources such as scholarly articles, journals and theses that were evi-
dence based. The computerized databases the author decided to utilize included, Cumulative
Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature (CINAHL), Sage premier 2016 and Laurea Finna.
The inclusion and exclusion were applied in all data searches, in addition to different combi-
nations of the key concepts.

The first database that was used to search for literature was CINAHL (EBSCO). CINAHL is a da-
tabase available in Laurea Finna's portal online and is accessible for students whom are in
search for literature. Two screenings were implemented during the data research process us-
ing different combinations of the following key words; Social media, Clinical nursing OR pro-
fessional nursing & Social media, professional nursing OR registered nurse. Altogether, both
screenings resulted in 15 search hits and only 2 of those articles were eligible for the litera-
ture review.

The second database used by the author, also available through Laurea Finna's portal online,
was SAGE premier 2016. This online database includes more than 800 journals in social sci-
ences, science technology, business and medicine (Laurea LibGuides 2017). However, the re-
searcher was only focused on the search for scholarly articles in relation to the subject of
nursing. The following keywords were used in search for data: Social media AND professional
nursing, clinical nursing. This search resulted in 6 articles altogether, in which only one was
appropriate to be used within the literature review.

The fourth and final online database that was used was Laurea Finna. This electronic data-
base is Laurea Library's online search service and includes both their printed and electronic
collection. According to Laurea Finna (2017), their system includes library licensed databases
and their article search engine is designed in a manner to find English journal articles (Laurea
Finna 2017). In regard to the data search, the author used the following key concepts: Social
media, professional nursing AND clinical nursing. The data search resulted in 44 hits in which
6 were eligible and implemented into the final review.

A more detailed illustration of the data search is illustrated in Figure 1. In addition, Table 1
demonstrates the number of articles that were included and excluded from the literature re-
view thoroughly.

Figure 1: Data Search Process

DATABASES UTILIZED FOR ARTICLE SEARCH

CINAHL (EBSCO)	SAGE PREMIER 2016	LAUREA FINNA

TOTAL NUMBER OF RESULTS USING DIFFERENT COMBINATIONS OF KEYWORDS + INCLUSION CRITERIA

n= 15	n= 6	n= 44

ARTICLES ELIGIBLE ACCORDING TO TITLE

n= 11	n= 3	n= 34

ARTICLES ELIGIBLE ACCORDING TO ABSTRACT

n= 5	n= 2	n= 16

ARTICLES FULLY READ AND SELCTED FOR LITERATURE REVIEW

n= 2	n= 1	n= 6

TOTAL NUMBER OF ARTICLES SELECTED: N= 9

Table 1: Inclusion and Exclusion of Articles

INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION CRITERIA

INCLUSION CRITERIA	EXCLUSION CRITERIA
Articles focusing mainly on the use of social media among registered nurses.	Articles which focused mainly on the use of social media among other healthcare professionals.
Articles reporting on social media use within the nursing profession.	Articles focusing on social media use in nursing education.
Articles must be relevant to the two research questions formed.	Articles which are irrelevant to the research question.
Articles must be peer reviewed and in the English language.	Articles which are not peer re-viewed & in a language other than English.
Articles published from year 2012-2017	Articles published prior to 2012.

IN TOTAL 65 ARTICLES WERE REVIEWED:

- ➔ 56 Articles failed to meet the inclusion criteria
- ➔ 9 articles met the inclusion criteria & were selected for the literature review.

4.4   Critical Appraisal of Data

Amanda Burls (2009), defines critical appraisal as a process where data is thoroughly and sys-tematically examined in order to judge its value, relevance and trustworthiness to a particu-lar context. The main aims of research work include gathering information and analysing the data to produce relevant information, which is why it is critical that reviewed literature is not poor in quality, irrelevant and or biased. During this phase of the data analysis, the re-searcher had come to the decision to use an already established criteria to evaluate the qual-ity of all 9 articles.

The Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP) was utilized to evaluate the research data. The researcher found it easily accessible and deemed it appropriate to use to determine the overall quality of the research articles. The following programme enables their users to de-velop the necessary skills to comprehend the scientific data and provides readymade check-lists. These checklists assess the validity, results and relevance of the research data (Burls 2009). The CASP allows their users to critically appraise articles with different re-search methods, altogether there are eight tools available online. The following programme is also free of charge for public use and enables users to evaluate data online.

According to CASP (2017) 3 major steps are taken into consideration regarding appraising data for evidence. The first step focuses on assessing whether the data at hand is good in quality according to whether it is valid or not. Evaluating the validity of an article, enables the re-searcher to classify whether their data is evidence based. The second step assesses the rele-vancy of the research data in accordance to the results presented. The relevancy of the arti-cles also determines whether the study is transferable on a local and global scale. Evaluating the transferability of research articles is the final approach of the Critical Appraisal Skills Pro-gramme.

The CASP requires the users to answer approximately 10 questions using the following words: "yes", "no" or "can't tell", to answer the majority of these ten questions. The author made sure to thoroughly read the questions, thus the articles would be appraised clearly and ac-cordingly with the instructions provided the CASP tool. Because there was no scoring tool within the Critical Appraisal programme, the researcher decided to categorize the articles as, "Excellent", "good", "mediocre" and "poor". The categorization was determined in the following manner: minimum score of 8/10 was deemed excellent, minimum score of 7/10 was good, minimum score of 5/10 was deemed mediocre and any score below 5 was categorized as poor. The author was unable to appraise one of the articles using CASP, as the article used a research method that was not available on the Critical Appraisal Skills Programme.

Table 2 demonstrates the critical appraisal process conducted by the researcher in detail.

Table 2: Critical Appraisal Chart

Author, year, Country	Title	Purpose of Study	Article Type	Findings	CASP Score
Ian Peate, 2013, UK	The community nurse and the use of social media	Examine ways community nurses can utilize social media	Qualitative Researc	Social media has evolved the way we communicate and will provide community nurses with both risks and opportunities.	GOOD
Rhonda Wilson, Jamie Ranse, Andrew Cashin & Paul McNamara, 2013, Australia	Nurses and Twitter: The good, the bad, and the reluctant	To explore the use and uptake of social media use among working nurses.	Qualitative Research	Beneficial for nurses to adopt social media early due to the positive opportunities and benefits.	GOOD
Vicki Lachman, 2013, United States	Social media: Managing the ethical Issues	Portray the ethical issues that come along with social media use in nursing.	Qualitative Research	Although there are many benefits to social media use, nurses are obliged to conduct in a professional manner.	MEDIOCRE
Evan Casella, Jane Mills, Kim Usher, 2014, Australia	Social media and nursing practice: Changing the balance between the social and technical aspects of work.	To imagine the way social media could be incorporated into the nursing process.	Narrative research	With additional use of social media among nurses, more accessible care will be provided to patients.	NOT GRADED (Ungradable)
Caleb Ferguson, 2013, Australia	It's time for the nursing profession to leverage Social Media	To explain the ways social media platforms can be utilised as a positive influence in the nursing profession.	Qualitative Research	As with numerous tools, social media comes with risks, however is important to manage it in order to leverage the benefits of SoMe.	MEDIOCRE

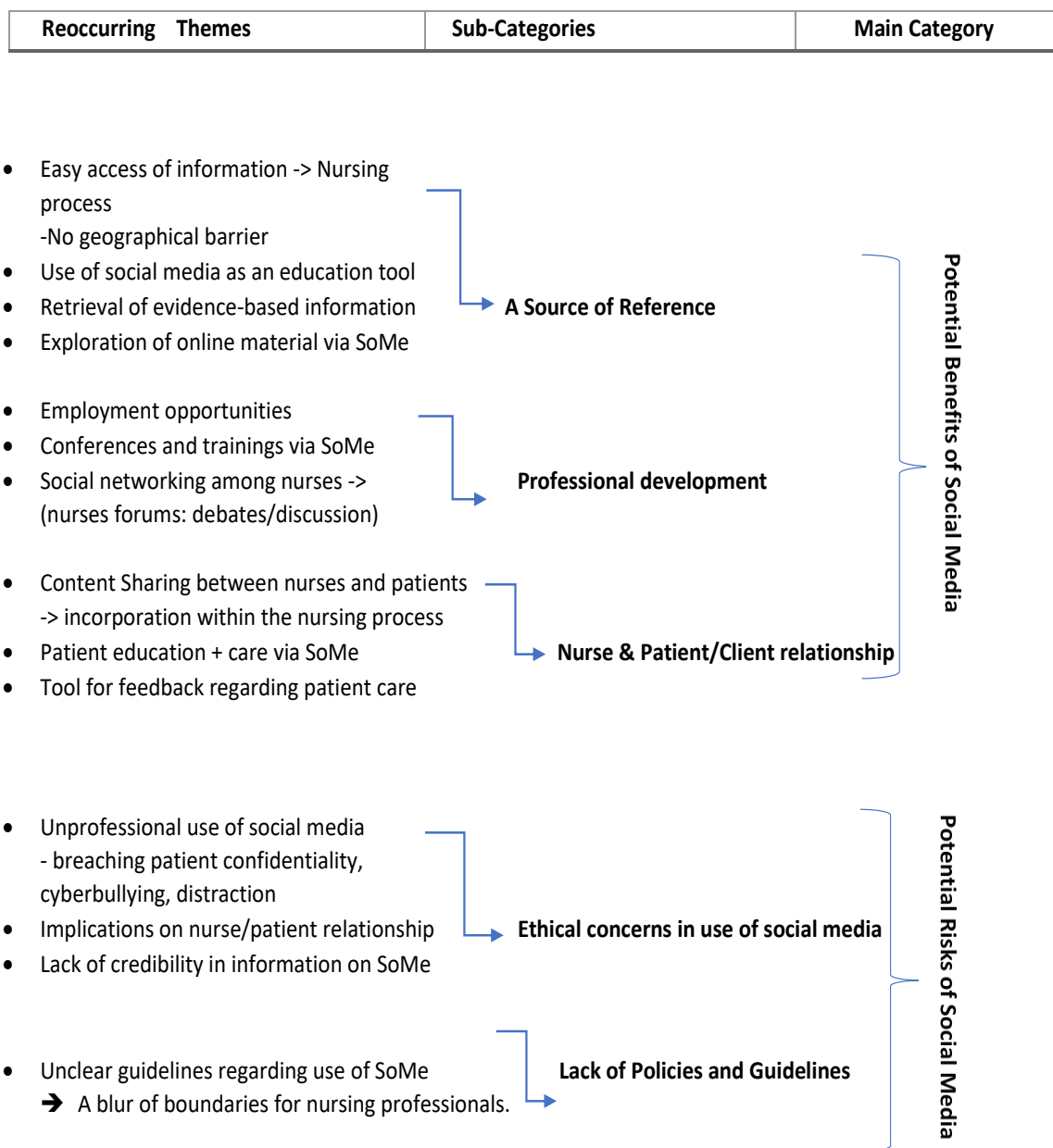|					
Jennifer Jackson, Robert Fraser, Peter Ash, 2014, United States	Social media and Nurses: Insights for Promoting Health for Individual and Professional Use	Provide an overview of how social media can be used in nursing and its implications in care delivery	Systematic Literature Review	Social media has revolutionised the way we communicate, hence if nurses are aware of its risks they can use it to its maximum benefit.	EXCELLENT
Wilma Schroeder, 2017, Canada	Leveraging Social Media in #FamilyNursingPractice	Explore ways in which social media can be used in family nursing.	Systematic Literature Review	Social media allows family nurses to communicate with patients/clients in ways which were not possible year ago.	GOOD
Gemma Ryan, 2016	International perspective on social media guidance for nurses	To conduct an analysis of content regrading social media guidance in nursing	Systematic literature Review: Content Analysis	There Is a lack of concrete, evidence-based guidance regarding social media use in nursing	GOOD
Mariano, Maniego, Manila, Mapanoo, Maquiran, Macindo, Tejero & Torres 2017, Phillippines	Social Media Use Profile, social skills & nurse-patient interaction among registered Nurses in Tertiary hospitals.	To determine how social media use among health consumers and nurses impact social skills & nurse-patient interaction	Cohort Study	Frequent social media use can have negative effects on patient engagement, however longer social media use improves social skills among both groups	EXCELLENT

4.5   Qualitative Content Analysis

The researcher implemented the qualitative content analysis to form the findings and obtain answers regarding the research questions formed beforehand. Content analysis is a commonly used research technique for qualitative data, and it is used to interpret meaning from the data retrieved. A predominant feature of this type of research method is that the data collected can be reduced to concepts which describe the research phenomenon, and this is done by using categories, codes, a model or a conceptual map (Elo, 2014). The concepts are usually established during the abstraction phase, but it is dependent on the author and their familiarity with the research topic.

The qualitative content analysis process includes a data retrieval stage and a phase in which the data is made sense of (Elo, Kyngäs 2008). Qualitative content analysis can be divided into two sub-categories; deductive and inductive. In regard to whether the deductive or inductive approach is taken, that is dependent on the purpose of the study. In the inductive content analysis, the concepts are retrieved from the data, whereas in deductive content analysis, the analysis is based on past knowledge. (Elo, Kyngäs 2008.)

 The author of the following thesis concluded during the planning phase to utilize the inductive approach of analysis. This was due to the lack of evident past "theories" regarding the research phenomenon. During the analysis phase, each unit of analysis was coded with a specific colour. Henceforth similar data were coded with the same colour and grouped together, which aided the literature review process to move smoothly. Sub categories were formed from the reoccurring themes that were coded by the same colour, resulting in 5 subcategories. Each subcategory was given a preliminary title that was relevant to the presented information. The analysis phase was finally concluded with the induction of the 5 subcategories into 2 main categories, resulting in compact generalized data retrieved from individual information. The content analysis process is indicated in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Content Analysis Process

Reoccurring Themes	Sub-Categories	Main Category

- Easy access of information -> Nursing process
  -No geographical barrier
- Use of social media as an education tool
- Retrieval of evidence-based information → **A Source of Reference**
- Exploration of online material via SoMe

- Employment opportunities
- Conferences and trainings via SoMe
- Social networking among nurses -> **Professional development**
  (nurses forums: debates/discussion)

- Content Sharing between nurses and patients
  -> incorporation within the nursing process
- Patient education + care via SoMe
- Tool for feedback regarding patient care → **Nurse & Patient/Client relationship**

Potential Benefits of Social Media

- Unprofessional use of social media
  - breaching patient confidentiality, cyberbullying, distraction
- Implications on nurse/patient relationship → **Ethical concerns in use of social media**
- Lack of credibility in information on SoMe

- Unclear guidelines regarding use of SoMe
  ➔ A blur of boundaries for nursing professionals. → **Lack of Policies and Guidelines**

Potential Risks of Social Media

5   Findings

The findings presented within this research paper are based on the 9 analysed articles. Furthermore, the following results indicate the potential benefits and risks that come along with the use of social media within the nursing profession.

5.1   Potential Benefits of Social Media Use

5.1.1   A Source of Reference

6 of the 9 articles analysed within this literature review claimed social media to be a common source of reference among registered nurses. Within his research article, Ferguson (2013) stated that even though many may question and frown upon the credibility and accuracy of sources found through social media, there are many nursing academics that are active users within this convenient tool. Hence, they use this platform to disseminate their research findings, resulting in accessible educational information for registered nurses with the absence of any geographical barrier. Correspondingly Schroeder (2017) mentioned that the social media platform Twitter has many nursing journals as active users, henceforth they are prone to post new literature updates or article abstracts online to their followers. This way, nurses are not on the lookout for information, but the information is delivered to them in real time.

According to Casella et al (2014), social media can be incorporated to all stages of the nursing process which consist of the assessing, diagnosing, planning, implementing and evaluating phase. The diagnostic stage, which involves the analysation and synthesis of the data collected from the planning stage, may require diagnostic background knowledge. Furthermore, the utilization of social media platforms does not only advance the diagnostic competency among registered nurses, whom are required to diagnose patients, but it can also lead to a more advanced diagnosis among patients (Casella et al 2014).

Several nursing practices have now implemented ward specific secure intranet wikis, which enable employees to source, critique and edit evidence-based information regarding patient care. Nurses whom may be in need for nursing interventions can use this social media platform to create a care plan, by assessing previously used successful nursing interventions mentioned in the ward specific wiki. Utilising the wiki tool, registered nurses can also upload evidence-based practices and literature onto the secure intranet wiki, for other nurses to use and benefit from. (Casella at al 2014.)

5.1.2   Professional Development

Both Ferguson (2013) and Jackson et al (2014) argue that a variety range of social media pro-
grams are used by several nurses on a global spectrum to not only advance their personal
goals but to also fulfil their professional aspirations. Additionally, Jackson, Fraser & Ash
(2014) suggest that in terms of an organizational level, social media can also be manipulated
to recognize nurses and recruit new employees. LinkedIn is considered a great social network-
ing platform for career development and social networking among professional nurses, as it is
known to connect all professionals around the world, deeming to make them more successful
and productive (Casella et al 2014). Users of this program can customize their profile accord-
ing to the work occupation, education, work experience, skills and expertise.

A predominant factor which was discussed profoundly within the articles analysed, in terms of
the benefits of social media use within the nursing profession included, social networking
among peers.
 Nurses from all around the globe have the capability to network, exchange ideas and infor-
mation via social media, which would have not been possible many years ago. Due to its in-
fluence upon work place settings, social networking apps have created a sense of community
and organizational commitment amongst registered nurses. In result, an optimistic working
culture is prominent, which positively influences nursing satisfaction, sense of inclusion and
most importantly patient safety (Jackson, Fraser & Ash 2014.)

Through Social networking programs, nurses do not only maintain personal relationships with
their peers, but they sustain a current awareness on upcoming events; education or training
days, conferences and health policy discussions (Wilson et al). For instance, Wilson and his
fellow research partners (2013) introduced the NSW Nurses and Midwives association within
their research study, explaining that this was a health campaign driven by nurses active on
social media to improve nurse and patient ratios. This example was given to help portray the
opportunities registered nurses have today, as they are able to participate in political conver-
sations. In doing so, they have the capability to advocate for health policies that target to im-
prove healthcare on a global spectrum.

 3 of the 9 articles analysed claimed that both nursing academics and various health institu-
tions are present on social media platforms. According to Peate (2013), numerous professional
healthcare organizations are currently active participants on Twitter, for instance The Nurs-
ing and midwifery Council and the Department of health (UK). Hence, it is evident that these
organizations are using platforms such as Twitter to deliver initiatives and public health cam-
paigns to the public, which is significant information for a registered nurse to uphold (Peate
2013.)

5.1.3 Nurse & Patient/Client relationship

One of the articles analysed was a descriptive-correlational study conducted by Mariano et al (2013). Its purpose was to study the influence the use of social media had on the social skills and nurse-patient interaction of registered nurses. Mariano and her fellow research partners (2017), demonstrated in their results, that nurses whom used social media for a longer duration daily showed an increase in both verbal and nonverbal social skills. Furthermore, the use of non-handheld devices (computer or laptop) increased patient engagement, nurse openness and nurse engagement. Hence, Marionao et al (2017) advise registered nurses to access social media platforms, if deemed necessary during care delivery, through non-handheld devices.

In reference to family nursing, Schroeder (2017) expressed that it is essential for family nurses to not only engage in online discussions but to also provide valid and reliable information to the public in areas where people are seeking it. Additionally, there are family/patient groups online on social media that discuss their experiences and feelings, hence nurses can use this as a tool to understand the perspectives of the patients and their feelings towards their illnesses. YouTube is a form of content sharing which is presently dominantly in use throughout many hospitals and health agencies (Schroeder 2017). Hence, videos regarding "what to expect once admitted into the hospital/ward" or "how to cope with a certain illness" are presented using this platform.

Due to the use of social media platforms, nurses do not necessarily need to be in face-to-face contact with their patients, if their client/patient has internet access (Casella et al 2014). Therefore, there has been an increase in nurses using blogs, wikis and other social media platforms to provide some type of health education sessions online (Nelson et al 2011, cited in Casella et al 2014). In accordance to Casella et al (2014), researcher Larkin mentioned that several forms of mHealth, which is a mobile technology intergraded into health care, have been recently assimilated to interact with social media to assess and monitor patient data. An example of this includes a diabetes app, targeted for young teenagers that allows health professionals to manage their diabetes after a real-time blood glucose data is recorded.

A phenomenon that was reoccurring within the articles analysed included the existence of open dialogue between registered nurses and health care consumers through social media. Social media opens a dialogue and a platform for feedback and criticism amongst patients/clients and healthcare providers (Ferguson 2013). Henceforward it is easier for healthcare providers and facilities to improve certain services or policies according to the needs and feedback of the public population. According to Peate (2013), within the UK, health policy is involving to a state where patients are more empowered to have a say in the type of healthcare they are provided with.

Furthermore, The Department of Health's digital strategy (2012), emphasized that the NHS would be observing social media platforms critically, to understand and listen to patient's concerns and needs in order to further better their services.

5.2 Potential Risks of Social Media Use

5.2.1 Ethical Concerns

It is exceptional for professional working nurses to maintain their professional integrity whilst using social media. Within all 9 articles, there was a mention regarding the possibility of ethical misconduct whilst using social media. A common factor that most of the articles analysed mentioned to be a concern in regard to social media use included, breaching patient confidentiality and using social media platforms to speak ill of other staff members or patients. In terms of social media, it is quite difficult for working professionals to differentiate their personal and work life. Hence there can be a blur of boundaries in what to share through social networking sites (Ryan 2016).

Jackson, Fraser and Ash (2014) argue that the constant use and participation of social media programmes could somewhat be detrimental to an individual's health. The recognition and exchange of emotions is perceived to be a key phenomenon in nurse and patient communication, however frequent virtual interactions may alter an individual's ability to recognize and effectively respond to displayed emotion. Hence, it is extremely important for nursing professionals to be able to question what type of impact social media has on their professional conduct. For instance, whether it a stressful, supportive, energizing or distracting factor. More specifically social media is prone to cause both interruptions and distractions within the nursing profession. (Jackson, Fraser and Ash 2014.)

Whilst distracted, there is a higher tendency for nurses to make medication errors or miss out on key information during handoff sessions, which may cause consequences that may be detrimental to a patient's life. In addition, it is crucial for registered nurses to have the competency to obtain trustworthy and credible information from social media sites. Even though accurate information is available through social media sites, hazardous false information is still accessible. (Jackson, Fraser and Ash 2014.)

In context of the study executed by Mariano et al (2017), the results presented that frequent use of social media among nursing staff had a negative effect on patient openness and engagement, compromising care delivery. Additionally, nurses whom used handheld devices, such as a phone, during patient care had a disrupt in their interaction with their patients. Hence, patients felt less involved in the plan of their care as the nurses were too busy accessing information via handheld devices. This resulted in lack of communication between the health professionals and consumers.

5.2.2 Lack of Guidelines and Policies

Researchers Schroeder (2017) and Ryan (2016) both express within their research studies, that there is a lack of policies and guidelines for registered nurses, in terms of social media use in work situations. Due to the lack of knowledge regarding limitations in what is acceptable or not, there is a higher chance of further misuse of social media platforms whilst in a professional setting.

Implications and inappropriate use of social media may also arise from several types of guidelines and policies provided by different healthcare facilities. For instance, one hospital may acquire guidelines whereas another acquires none or dissimilar rules, resulting in a variation of behavior judgement. There is a need for professionalism and professional behaviors to be perceived in a consistent manner, on a global spectrum. This is hard to execute without evidence-based and well-proportioned guidance. (Ryan 2016).

6   Discussion

6.1   Discussion on Findings

The set purpose of the literature review was to explore both the benefits and risks that came along with the use of social media, regarding the nursing profession. The findings resulted in three potential benefits and two potential risks. These findings are based completely upon the 9 articles that had been analyzed profoundly by the researcher.

It is evident from the findings, that use of social media is highly beneficial, not only among nurses but also healthcare consumers. It plays a key role in communication, health promotion, shared decision making, information retrieval and social networking. In accordance to the literature review conducted, using social media, registered nurses have much more opportunities in terms of professional development and seeking competence in real time.

 The use of social media is most frequently free of charge and is regarded to be less time consuming. Within the healthcare profession, the use of social networking sites enable unique types of interaction between nurses and healthcare consumers that would not have been possible many years ago. In addition, healthcare professionals are now employing individuals whom were born or raised in the 90's, hence this population of nurses have never known life without the use of internet. Therefore, they are more likely to embrace a hospital or health organization that incorporates social media use in nursing.

Wilson et al (2013) had disclosed within their article that it is extremely important that registered nurses have the trait to adapt to change, as changes within policies, clinical practices and evidence-based knowledge is continuously developing. Hence, the early adoption of social media could represent many beneficial opportunities to nurses. However, in order for this to take place, there needs to be educating sessions and trainings executed for registered nurses in regard to the best ways to use social media in the nursing profession. Ryan (2016) had identified that several policy makers focus on the "Dos and Don'ts" rather than raising awareness in theories and frameworks that illustrate how the benefits of social media can be applied in practice.

In order to leverage the benefits and positive influences of social media in the nursing profession, there needs to be more stern guidelines in place, further explaining what is permissible and what is not. In compliance to the findings, there appeared to be a blur in ways to use social media and what would be acceptable to share with the public population. On a global scale, some hospitals ban the use of social media whereas others embrace it, hence there is a need for global policies and guidelines in terms of the use of social media, in addition to the benefits and risks that come along with it.

6.2   Limitations

The following literature review is limited to the 9 articles that were selected from different online databases that were available to the students of Laurea University of Applied Sciences. Unfortunately, there were published articles that included both titles and abstracts that focused on the purpose of the research paper, however they were not free of charge. Hence, it is important for the author to state that information which may have been beneficial to this research study was possibly omitted.

Another limitation to this study includes the inexperience of the researcher. This may limit the quality and more specifically the data analysis phase which had been conducted within the beginning of the literature review. The author had used The Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP), to evaluate the value of the research data. As the researcher had no past knowledge upon different research methodologies, the critical appraisal stage was quite difficult to execute, due to lack of competence and proficiency in relation to this specific topic. Additionally, as the following research paper was executed by one researcher, the results of the literature review have the potential to lack objectivity. Even though, many measures were taken to prevent this, as will be mentioned in the following chapter.

6.3   Trustworthiness and Ethical Considerations

According to the Statistics solutions (2017), in regard to qualitative research, trustworthiness refers to credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability. Furthermore, trustworthiness is a factor that should be always taken into consideration during the implementation of a literature review.

To ensure both the credibility and reliability of the research articles that had been chosen for content analysis, the Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP) was adopted. The following programme promised to examine the relevancy and trustworthiness of the selected articles, in terms of the research methodology used. In addition, during the analysis stage that author had made sure to read all 9 articles at least twice. This was done to prevent any misinterpretations from occurring or the potential to omit relevant information. In addition, this allowed for key categories to be identified more clearly. The inclusion criteria used within this research paper also ensured the trustworthiness. As mentioned previously, peer reviewed scholarly articles were selected, that were published from years 2012-2017. These attributes increase both the credibility and transferability of the literature review.

The use of qualitative data makes it difficult to control the diversity of the results, interviewer bias, and favouring one perspective (Elo et al 2014). Even though one researcher executed the research paper, a varied range of articles were selected that all correlated well with the research questions. All processes of this literature review, more specifically the data analysis phases were all documented in a detailed manner, both electronically and manually to furthermore emphasize the trustworthiness of the overall study. During the thesis process, the researcher took apart in several thesis seminars, to not only receive feedback from supervisors, but to also observe thesis presentations completed by other classmates.

Additionally, the author of this research paper strongly avoided plagiarising the work of other researchers, by paraphrasing and using citations using the Laurea referencing guidelines. Because it is an ethical violation to use the work of others, the researcher made sure to give credit where due to any information which was used from research articles or other online sources throughout the thesis process. In addition, whilst completing the thesis process, the author made sure to comply with all the regulations that were set by The Finnish National Board on Research Integrity (TENK), regarding the responsible conduct of a research study. These guidelines were utilized to make sure that the literature review would comply to be both ethically acceptable and reliable.

7   Conclusion & Further Research Recommendations

It is evident that the results of the literature review suggest that the benefits that can be obtained from using social media are tremendously convenient when it comes to the nursing profession. However, it is crucial that registered nurses are aware of the risks and use social media platforms both appropriately and when deemed necessary. Applied guidelines and polices formed by healthcare organizations would furthermore ensure the use of social media in a safe manner. All in all, according to the findings, the use of social media among registered nurses is strongly recommended, as tools for communication are constantly evolving. Hence, the adoption of social media would be effective for both registered nurses and healthcare consumers.

Further research would be recommended to be implemented on how registered nurses' use social media platforms in hospitals and other healthcare facilities based in Finland. In addition, during the information retrieval stage, the researcher noticed that there was a lack of studies executed reporting the nurse's perspective on social media use. Hence, further research could be conducted to explore what nurses think about social media use in their working life. This could be conducted using qualitative research methods such as, questionnaires and interviews.

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Figures

Tables

Appendix 1: Summary of applied research articles.

Author, year, Country	Title	Purpose of Study	Article Type	Findings
Ian Peate, 2013, UK	The community nurse and the use of social media	Examine ways community nurses can utilize social media	Qualitative Research	Social media has evolved the way we communicate and will provide community nurses with both risks and opportunities.
Rhonda Wilson, Jamie Ranse, Andrew Cashin & Paul McNamara, 2013, Australia	Nurses and Twitter: The good, the bad, and the reluctant	To explore the use and uptake of social media use among working nurses.	Qualitative Research	Beneficial for nurses to adopt social media early due to the positive opportunities and benefits.
Vicki Lachman, 2013, United States	Social media: Managing the ethical Issues	Portray the ethical issues that come along with social media use in nursing.	Qualitative Research	Although there are many benefits to social media use, nurses are obliged to conduct in a professional manner.
Evan Casella, Jane Mills & Kim Usher, 2014, Australia	Social media and nursing practice: Changing the balance between the social and technical aspects of work.	To imagine the way social media could be incorporated into the nursing process.	Narrative research	With additional use of social media among nurses, more accessible care will be provided to patients.
Caleb Ferguson, 2013, Australia	It's time for the nursing profession to leverage Social Media	To explain the ways social media platforms can be utilised as a positive influence in the nursing profession.	Qualitative Research	As with numerous tools, social media comes with risks, however it's important to manage it in order to leverage the benefits of Social media.
Jennifer Jackson, Robert Fraser, Peter	Social media and Nurses: Insights for Promoting	Provide an overview of how social media can be		Social media has revolutionised the way we communicate,

Ash, 2014, United States	Health for Individual and Professional Use	used in nursing and its implications in care delivery	Systematic Literature Review	hence if nurses are aware of its risks they can use it to its maximum benefit.
Wilma Schroeder, 2017, Canada	Leveraging Social Media in #FamilyNursingPractice	Explore ways in which social media can be used in family nursing.	Systematic Literature Review	Social media allows family nurses to communicate with patients/clients in ways which were not possible year ago.
Gemma Ryan, 2016	International perspective on social media guidance for nurses	To conduct an analysis of content regrading social media guidance in nursing	Systematic literature Review: Content Analysis	There Is a lack of concrete, evidence-based guidance regarding social media use in nursing
Mariano, Maniego, Manila, Mapanoo, Maquiran, Macindo, Tejero & Torres 2017, Phillippines	Social Media Use Profile, social skills & nurse-patient interaction among registered Nurses in Tertiary hospitals.	To determine how social media use among health consumers and nurses impact social skills & nurse-patient interaction	Cohort Study	Frequent social media use can have negative effects on patient engagement, however longer social media use improves social skills among both groups