

Information Need and Information Seeking behavior Among Nurses: Review of the Previous Studies

Mohammad Reza Davarpanah (Corresponding author)
Professor, Department of LIS, Ferdowsi University
mrdavarpanah@yahoo.com

Mohammad Aazami
Lecturer, Department of LIS, Kerman University of Medical Sciences
mohammadaazami14@gmail.com
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Abstract

Purpose: This study was carried out to assess the information seeking behavior among nurses and to recognize their information needs through analysis of research papers published in this field in international journals.

Methodology: Citation analysis was used. The population under study included the articles in the field of nurses' information seeking behavior, which were indexed in databases of Pubmed, CINAHL, ScienceDirect, MedLine, ProQuest, Emerald, EBSCO, and the search engine Google scholar during 2000-2009.

Findings: The obtained results indicate that nurses make use of human resources and medical texts for the purpose of gaining specialized information, making their personal knowledge up-to-date, meet the clinical needs of patients such as prevention, identification, treatment, and obtaining drugs information. Consulting their colleagues and physicians and analyzing the patients' profiles are the most important information resources for nurses. Evidence-based nursing pattern is the common information seeking pattern among nurses. The nurses' motivations for information seeking are answering the patients' questions and resolving the ambiguities in specialized texts and patients' profiles. The most significant barriers against nurses' information seeking include lack of time, unavailability of resources, being too much busy, lack of necessary information seeking skills, and unfamiliarity with information resources. Relying on the information given by colleagues, as well as paying insufficient attention to specialized texts in their field and electronic information resources are among the major challenges of information seeking behavior in this field.

Originality/Value: Information flow and its desirable use in an information society are dependent on the adaptability between information and users. Furthermore, a main challenge for nurses is to make immediate and precise decisions in emergency. The findings of this study can be informative in future programming for meeting the information needs, efficient use of information resources, and identification of common pattern of information seeking among nurses.

Keywords: Information seeking; Information need; Information resources; Nurses.