

Utilizing Social Media in Graduate Nursing Education: A Review of the Literature

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Overview

- As technology evolves, the use of social media is increasingly being used by health professionals.
- Social media is a term that is inclusive of a number different virtual tools which allows for interactions among individuals (Lopez & Cleary, 2018).
- As a teaching strategy, social media can be helpful to nursing educators. It has also been found to be useful in teaching nursing students about "communication, professionalism, healthcare policy and ethics" (Schmitt, Sims-Giddens & Booth, 2012).

Background and Significance

- With graduate nursing students preferring learning environments and strategies that are enriched by technology, a thorough understanding of the implications of the use of social media in nursing education is needed.
- Social media can provide a way for nursing faculty to promote the use of technology and professional engagement, skilled competencies often lacking among nursing students (Schmitt-Giddens & Booth, 2012).
- Despite a number of reviews being readily available on the current best practices regarding social media use in undergraduate nursing education (Ross & Meyers, 2017), little is available regarding applicability to graduate nursing students.

Methodology

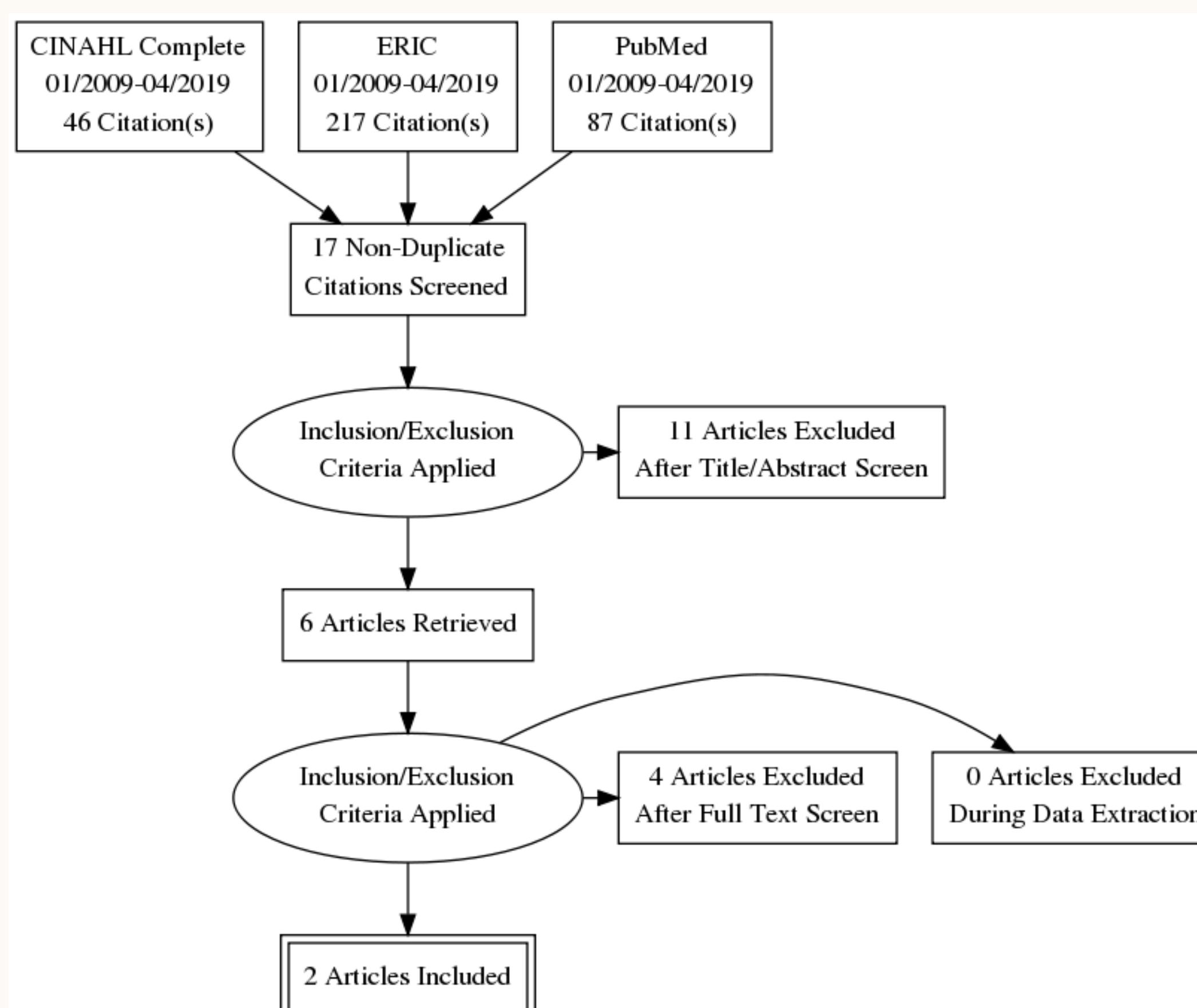
Framework

The search was conducted using the 5-stage methodology developed by Whittemore and Knafl (2005) including problem identification, literature search, data evaluation, data analysis, and results presentation. Bandura's Social Learning was used as a theoretical framework for the review.

Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion criteria were established to limit articles to those that were published in English between January 2009 and April 2019, explored social media utilization among faculty of nursing as a teaching strategy in the education of graduate nursing students. Unpublished dissertation work, conference proceedings, abstracts and editorials were not included.

Results



A total of two studies were found to meet all inclusion criteria and were reviewed. Each presented a case report of a teaching strategy using social media to promote achievement of course objectives among graduate nursing students. No interventional studies were found regarding social media as a teaching methodology in graduate nursing education and neither study reported student academic achievement as an outcome.

- Strang, Knopp and Schubert (2015) reported the outcomes of a project that required graduate nursing students to engage in regular blogging regarding their experiences in a study-abroad nursing course.
- Shaw, Sperber, Cunningham (2016) described a case study which was designed to use different forms of social media to disseminate a collection of information based on an assigned topic.



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Discussion

Further exploration of the use of social media in nursing education, specifically at the graduate level, is needed.

- Future research and publications focusing on current best practices in utilizing social media in the graduate nursing curriculum would be beneficial.
- Exploration of the learner outcomes associated with this practice or of potential risks or policy considerations in implementing the use of social media as a teaching strategy with this population would be warranted.
- While case studies offer interesting and informative evidence for consideration are needed to establish best practice of the social media as a teaching pedagogy in graduate nursing education.

Conclusion

- This integrative review sought to examine literature published regarding the current utilization of social media in graduate nursing education.
- Reviewed literature suggests the potential of this teaching methodology as an effective strategy to enhance graduate nursing student learning.

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Theta Psi at-Large Chapter

