

How will you use formal and informal socialization in your nursing practice?

Posted on May 10, 2018

View this essay online:

<https://academic-master.com/how-will-you-use-formal-and-informal-socialization-in-your-nursing-practice/>

Introduction

Professional socialization in nursing is the process through which I learn to think, act, communicate, and make decisions in ways that reflect the responsibilities of the profession. It begins before employment and continues throughout education and practice because nursing identity develops through both structured instruction and participation in real clinical communities. The American Association of Colleges of Nursing describes professionalism as the formation of a sustainable professional identity shaped by accountability, integrity, compassion, advocacy, collaboration, courage, humility, and ethical conduct (AACN, n.d.). This definition shows why socialization is more than learning routines. Formal education provides standards, scientific knowledge, clinical competencies, and ethical expectations, while informal experience shows how those principles are enacted under pressure. My own family, culture, education, work history, personality, and beliefs also influence how I interpret patients and colleagues. I therefore need to integrate personal identity with professional obligations through reflection rather than assuming that either classroom instruction or workplace custom is automatically sufficient. Professional socialization becomes deliberate when I compare what I observe with evidence, policy, and nursing values.

Using Formal and Informal Socialization in My Practice

I will use formal socialization to establish the dependable boundaries of safe practice. Nursing courses, simulation, clinical objectives, orientation, institutional policies, competency assessments, continuing education, and professional codes provide explicit guidance about patient safety, documentation, delegation, communication, scope of practice, and accountability. Informal socialization will develop alongside that foundation through handovers, observation of experienced nurses, feedback, team discussions, unexpected clinical events, and daily interaction with patients and families. These experiences can teach judgment that is difficult to capture in a textbook, such as how an experienced nurse changes tone when a frightened patient becomes overwhelmed or how a team prioritizes several urgent needs simultaneously. Informal learning must still be examined critically because a common workplace habit can be unsafe, outdated, or inconsistent with policy.

When I see a practice that conflicts with formal standards, I will seek clarification from a preceptor, educator, or current evidence rather than assuming that repetition makes it correct. Used together, formal guidance and reflective participation can help me become adaptable without normalizing shortcuts that compromise professional responsibility.

Personal Influences and Reflective Professional Identity

My personal socialization began through family, culture, religion, school, friendships, media, community expectations, and previous employment, all of which shaped my ideas about authority, privacy, responsibility, illness, communication, gender roles, and helping behavior. Some of these influences support nursing by strengthening empathy, discipline, patience, or respect, while others may create assumptions that need to be reconsidered. Beliefs about pain, mental health, disability, family structure, substance use, or personal responsibility can affect clinical judgment if they remain unexamined. The clinical environment will add another layer through instructors, supervisors, staffing conditions, institutional culture, other professions, and the behavior that a unit rewards or ignores. Positive role models can teach advocacy and calm decision-making; negative environments can normalize incivility, rushed communication, or unsafe workarounds. AACN emphasizes that professional identity develops in interaction with a nurse's personal identity and background rather than replacing them (AACN, n.d.). Reflection therefore allows me to preserve values that strengthen care while identifying beliefs or habits that could interfere with equitable, person-centered practice.

Taking an Active Role Through Preceptorship and Continuing Learning

I will treat professional socialization as an active learning process rather than something that happens automatically after I receive a nursing role. A structured preceptorship can help connect academic knowledge with daily accountability because the Nursing and Midwifery Council describes preceptorship as a supported beginning that integrates newly registered professionals into a workplace, builds confidence, and helps them apply professional standards in practice (NMC, 2020). I would use a preceptor or mentor to establish learning goals, discuss difficult decisions, request specific feedback, and identify areas where further education is needed. Reflection after challenging situations would help me examine what happened, which evidence guided my actions, how communication affected the outcome, and what I would change next time. I would also participate in case review, quality improvement, interprofessional learning, professional associations, and continuing education. Active socialization includes contributing to others as well: AACN identifies mentorship and development of colleagues as part of professionalism (AACN, n.d.). My goal is therefore to become both a learner and, over time, a reliable professional role model.

Blogs, Social Media, and the Public Image of Nursing

Digital communication extends professional socialization beyond the clinical setting because blogs and social platforms allow nurses to explain practice, discuss technology, share educational resources, and connect with colleagues across specialties. The [American Nurses Association](#) states that social media can increase the visibility of nursing while also requiring nurses to maintain professionalism and share credible information (ANA, n.d.). Public writing can strengthen professional identity because explaining a topic requires a nurse to organize evidence, consider audience needs, and distinguish personal experience from general clinical guidance. The same visibility creates risks. A patient can sometimes be identified from a combination of diagnosis, location, timing, age, or unusual circumstances even when a name is omitted, and personal frustration posted online may be copied beyond the intended audience. NCSBN likewise emphasizes confidentiality and professional boundaries in digital communication (NCSBN, n.d.). Responsible nursing communication therefore depends on privacy, accuracy, respectful language, appropriate scope, and clear disclosure when commercial interests influence content.

Evaluating Nursing Blogs and Responding Professionally

Little Nursey Blog and *The Nerdy Nurse* illustrate different ways a nursing identity can be presented publicly. The former uses a personal, candid style centered on student and early-career experience, which can help readers recognize the emotional realities of training but can also blur the boundary between private frustration and a public professional identity when context is limited. *The Nerdy Nurse* uses a more organized educational format focused on nursing, technology, informatics, school, and professional development; its commercial and affiliate content also demonstrates why readers should distinguish educational material from recommendations that may generate revenue. Neither style is inherently professional or unprofessional. Credibility depends on whether the writer protects confidentiality, identifies opinion as opinion, uses reliable evidence, discloses conflicts of interest, and avoids degrading patients or colleagues. When I encounter inaccurate or harmful content, my response should also reflect nursing standards. ANA guidance emphasizes credible information and professional conduct online, while current NMC guidance treats social-media behavior as part of professional accountability (ANA, 2024; NMC, n.d.).

Conclusion

Formal and informal socialization will both shape my nursing practice, but I will use them differently. Formal education, policy, professional codes, competency standards, and continuing learning

establish the evidence-based and ethical framework within which I am accountable. Informal observation, teamwork, feedback, patient relationships, and workplace experience help translate that framework into judgment, communication, and professional confidence. My personal background remains part of this process, so reflective practice is necessary to identify assumptions that may affect care. Preceptorship provides a structured bridge into professional responsibility, while public communication through blogs and social media adds another setting in which nursing identity is formed and judged (NMC, 2020). A strong public image cannot be created by presenting nursing as perfect; it depends on practice that is competent, compassionate, candid, and accountable. By seeking feedback, protecting confidentiality, evaluating online information carefully, and contributing constructively to colleagues' development, I can take an active role in becoming the kind of nurse whose professional identity is demonstrated consistently in both clinical and public settings.

References

- American Association of Colleges of Nursing. (n.d.). *Domain 9: Professionalism*.
- American Nurses Association. (2024). *Social Media Do's and Don'ts for Nurses*.
- American Nurses Association. (n.d.). *Social Media Principles for the Nursing Profession*.
- Blais, K., & Hayes, J. S. (2015). *Professional nursing practice: Concepts and perspectives* (7th ed.). Pearson.
- National Council of State Boards of Nursing. (n.d.). *A Nurse's Guide to the Use of Social Media*.
- Nursing and Midwifery Council. (2020). *Principles of preceptorship*.
- Nursing and Midwifery Council. (n.d.). *Guidance on using social media*.
- Little Nursey Blog*. (2011–2014). WordPress.
- The Nerdy Nurse*. (n.d.). Nursing, healthcare technology, and professional development blog.