

Emotional Labour in Healthcare: A Scoping Review of Literature

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The concept of emotional labour is investigated in healthcare by various disciplinary areas, but in different perspectives. The purpose of this scoping review is to identify and systematize the production available in research database about the emotional labour in healthcare, not only regarding the distribution of publications, but also the areas of health that have contributed to the development and operationalization of emotional labour, and its conceptualization. In this present review scoping opted for the methodology described by Arksey & O'Malley (2005), which is considered to be an efficient strategy to map the literature on a topic well delimited, to reveal methodological and empirical gaps in a body of data referring to the scientific production researched and identified as a critical area for research. Considering the topic of interest and based on the mnemonic PCC, recommended by Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI) in the publication of Peters, Godfrey & Khalil et al. (2015), were established the following elements: health professionals (Population), emotional labour (Concept) and different areas of healthcare (Context). This mnemonic is also reflected in the title and in the inclusion criteria. The identification and selection of the relevant publication was conducted through the 3 stages recommended by Aromataris & Riitano (2014). We resorted to various electronic tools to accomplish the research of scientific production in Portuguese and English, without a time limit. The two reviewers have ensured the consistency of the decisions on the application of inclusion and exclusion criteria for scientific production in this review, that resulted in the inclusion of 136 studies in this review. The construction of a general table (of 136 documents) with relevant information allowed to synthesize and interpret data through content analysis (categorization) and numerical analysis (statistics) which, in turn, allowed to answer the research questions. To summarize and synthesize the characteristics of scientific production in this review, it was used the technique of conventional content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). The results show a growing number of publications since 1992, and its distribution by 5 continents, demonstrating interest of the world scientific community by emotional labour phenomenon in healthcare. Concerning the distribution of data in analysis by type of documents published, it appears that scientific literature predominates. The authors that stand with more publications, in the countries most quoted, in the United Kingdom it presents Pam Smith with 12 registers and in Portugal presents Paula Diogo with 9 records. Regarding the design of emotional labour were identified three areas of focus, Nursing was the health area with more publications. Although, emotional labour conceptions adopt different approaches on healthcare scientific production, it seems to converge to a consensus: health professionals need to regulate their own emotions in order to positively influence the emotional management of clients, but also use emotions to provide care. Nevertheless, there are significant gaps in qualitative and quantitative research, including mix studies, in all groups of health professionals in the Community context, and as well as in conceptual models and clinical studies of emotional labour.

Keywords: Emotions, Emotional labour, Emotions work, Professional health groups, Healthcare.



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