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**‘NHS policy and nurses’
post-registration
development:
considerations of data
availability and
generation’**

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Presentation overview



Background
context and theory



Research aim



Methodology –
data collection



Methodology –
data analysis



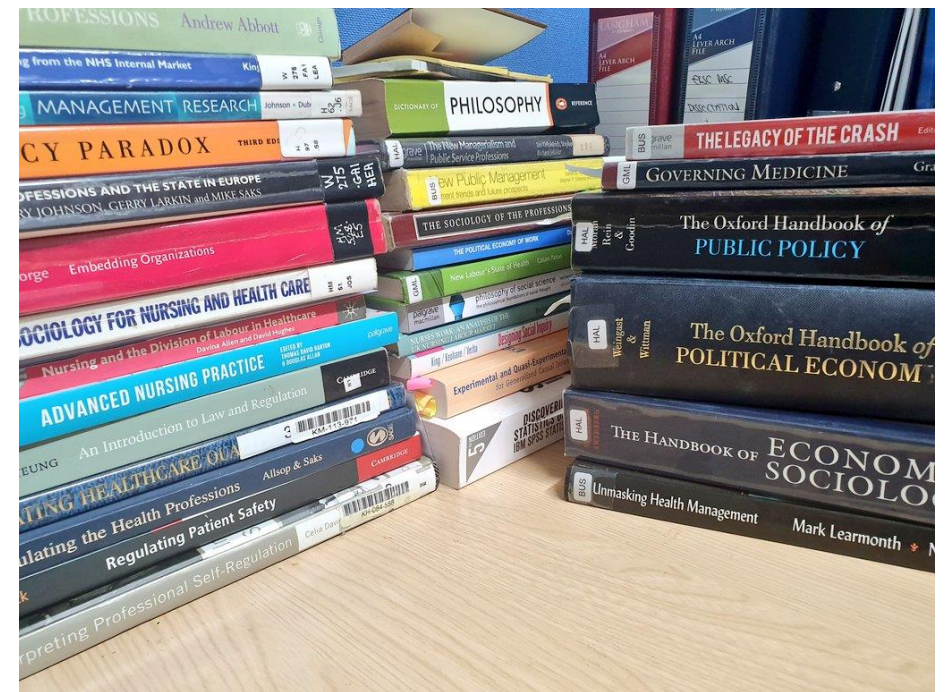
Results



Discussion



Conclusion





Background – Context

- Post-registration development for nurses has been shown globally to be a key intervention for retention, and quality of care improvement.
- Whilst the COVID pandemic has moved the development of the nursing workforce further up the policy agenda in the UK (Buchan, Ball and Shembavnekar et al, 2020), nurses' post-registration development remains fragmented and lacks national cohesion.
- National policy is the overarching mechanism for employers, who remain responsible for nurses' post-registration development. Employers work in partnership with local Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to meet workforce demand and requirements set by policy.
- Therefore, exploring policy is key to understanding why development is fragmented, and what other factors or influences may be contributing to the difficulties with establishing more forward momentum.



Background – Theory

- This work forms part of my wider PhD research into the influence of political economy on nurses' post-registration development. This presentation illustrates the first part of my data collection which was document analysis of NHS policy from 1989-2020.
- My PhD is theoretically underpinned by the countervailing powers framework by Light (1991, 1995) which is based within the sociology of the professions literature.
- This framework enables a consideration of political economic dynamics and changes and the subsequent impact on the nursing profession.
- This research is further underpinned using a feminist philosophical perspective to account for the power dynamics in the countervailing powers framework and the gender construct of the nursing profession.



Research aim

‘To explore policy influences upon nurses’ post-registration development in the English NHS’



Methodology – data collection

Process

1. Database, archive and manual searching
2. Identifying documents to be included
 - Inclusion and exclusion criteria applied including focusing on England only
 - At this stage 73 documents were included
3. Narrowing down the document list for analysis
 - Applied extra exclusion criteria due to volume of documents
 - 37 documents were finalised

Document title	Publication year	Government administration	Author(s)/publisher
Working for Patients	1989	Conservative	Department of Health
The new NHS. Modern, dependable	1997	Labour	Department of Health
Making a difference. Strengthening the nursing, midwifery and health visiting contribution to health and healthcare	1999	Labour	Department of Health
Agenda for Change	1999	Labour	Department of Health
The NHS plan. A plan for investment. A plan for reform	2000	Labour	Department of Health
Delivering the NHS plan	2002	Labour	Department of Health
The NHS improvement plan. Putting people at the heart of public service	2004	Labour	Department of Health
The NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework (NHS KSF) and the Development Review Process	2004	Labour	Department of Health
Modernising nursing careers: Setting the direction	2006	Labour	Department of Health
High quality care for all. NHS next stage review final report	2008	Labour	Department of Health
A high quality workforce	2008	Labour	Department of Health
Framing the Nursing and Midwifery contribution driving up the quality of care	2008	Labour	Department of Health



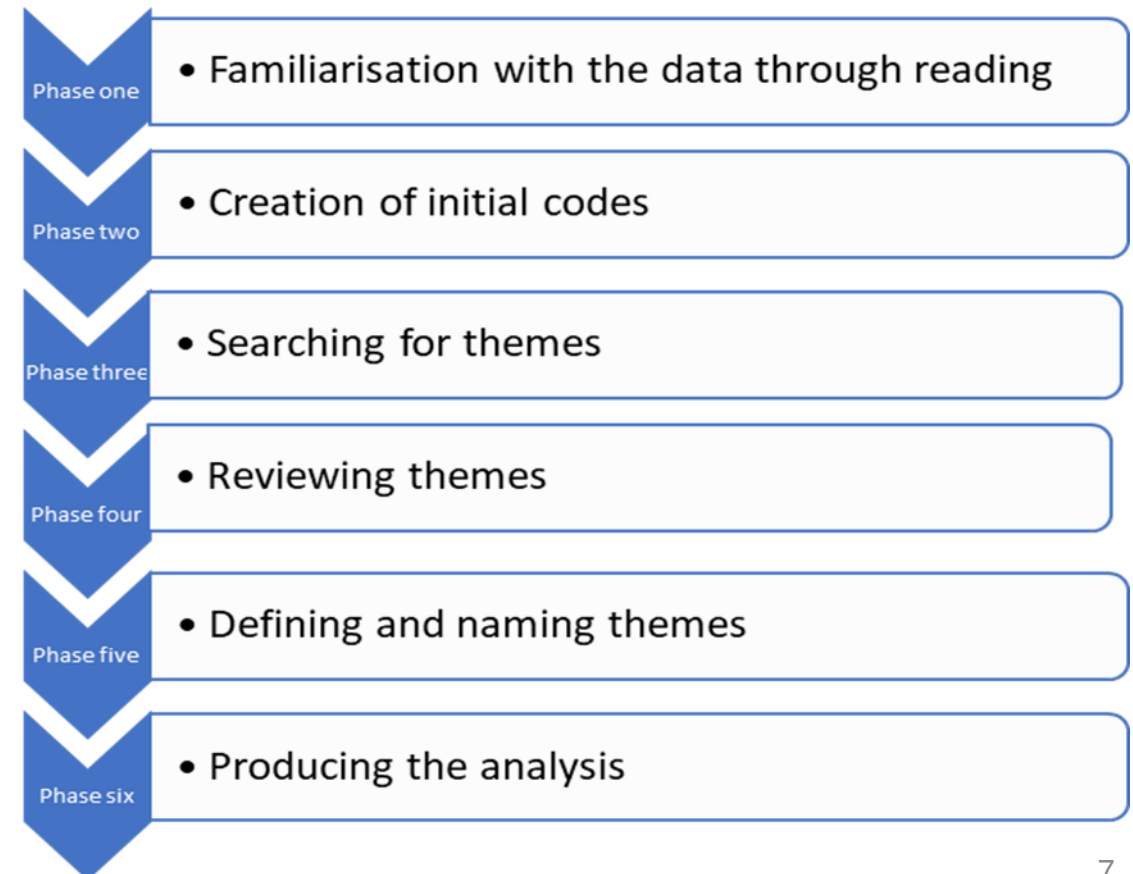
Methodology – data analysis

Underpinning

- Taylor, Rizvi and Lingard et *al.* (1997)
 - Policy context
 - Policy text
 - Policy consequences
- Abductive reasoning

Process

- Braun and Clarke (2006)





Results – the data gap

Overview

- I drew 3 main themes from the documents analysis. However here I am focusing on 1 of the themes; the data gap, and two core areas within this:

1. Workforce planning and data modelling
 - Essentially policy is 'nursing by numbers' but without the numbers
2. Agenda for change (AfC)

- *[AfC is a] job evaluation-based process that harmonises reward mechanisms and improved structures for learning common learning, knowledge and skills framework, and continuing professional development (Department of Health [DoH], 2004a p.62)*
- *“[AfC will] Improve all aspects of equal opportunity and diversity, especially in the areas of career and training opportunities” (DoH, 2004b p. 2)*
- *“Through AfC we now have a national NHS careers framework that provides the opportunity to break down traditional occupational boundaries, enables greater movement and transferability of skills and provides better career opportunities” (DoH, 2006 p. 13)*



Discussion

- The constitution of 'nursing work' – often still remains outdated which impacts on ability to conduct demand planning. More specifically for policy makers to see or understand.
- Impacts post-registration development and careers when fundamentals of the nursing workforce are not understood. Hard to then build on and develop without a more in-depth understanding..
- As a core policy stipulation from government, and a dividing factor between NHS and non-NHS workers (for example primary care nurses in GP practices are not covered by AfC), there being no evidence base to AfC impact on development, a core foundation to its creation, is a significant gap in knowledge and understanding.
- Considerations here to potential omni professionalism in AfC and viewing all professions as homogeneous. Some questions here may be: is that a problem? Does that impact nurses' professional development?



Conclusion

- The nursing workforce is being constituted by numbers, without the data to inform such decisions. Supply vs. Demand . There needs to be both!
- This approach is inadequate, making post-registration development, including national career pathways and progressions challenging.
- Policy makers need to concentrate on demand workforce planning and more research on labour economic components (among others) to help develop long-term sustainable policies that invest in nurses' development beyond registration. Reliable data generation and application is needed in order to help employers work with HEIs to develop and retain nurses.
- I am exploring these aspects (and my other themes) in my semi-structured interviews with Macro (national), Meso (organisational) and micro (frontline) individuals. This includes exploring opinions and views on AfC impact and influence on nurses' post-registration development



References

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**Thank-you for listening. Are there
any questions?**

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