



THE CONTRIBUTION OF
POST-PROFESSIONAL
DOCTORAL DEGREES TO THE
CAREER DEVELOPMENT OF
HEALTHCARE WORKERS

A Scoping Review

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PROBLEM

Physician Assistants (PA) are the only prescribing practitioners in the United States that do not require an entry-level doctorate.

PAs may choose to pursue doctorate level education by enrolling in post-professional doctorate programs.

The value of these degrees and terminal projects remains understudied.

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this scoping review is to identify what is known in the current body of literature about the value of post-professional doctoral degrees for non-entry-level healthcare workers in creating professional development and career advancement.



INCLUSION CRITERIA

POPULATION, CONTEXT, CONCEPT



Included: Sources examining the value of post-professional doctoral degree programs or terminal projects (CONTEXT) in creating career development (CONCEPT) for non-entry-level healthcare workers who are pursue or complete the degree were included (POPULATION).

METHODOLOGY



Utilized Joanna Briggs Institute methodology
Registered protocol with the Open Science Framework.



Searched CINAHL, PubMed, ERIC, Education Source
Complete, Medline (OVID) and Google Scholar.



Searched Networked Digital Library of Theses &
Dissertations, and the Open Access Theses &
Dissertations

METHODOLOGY



Hand searched JAAPA and JPAE
Completed forward and backward citation chasing

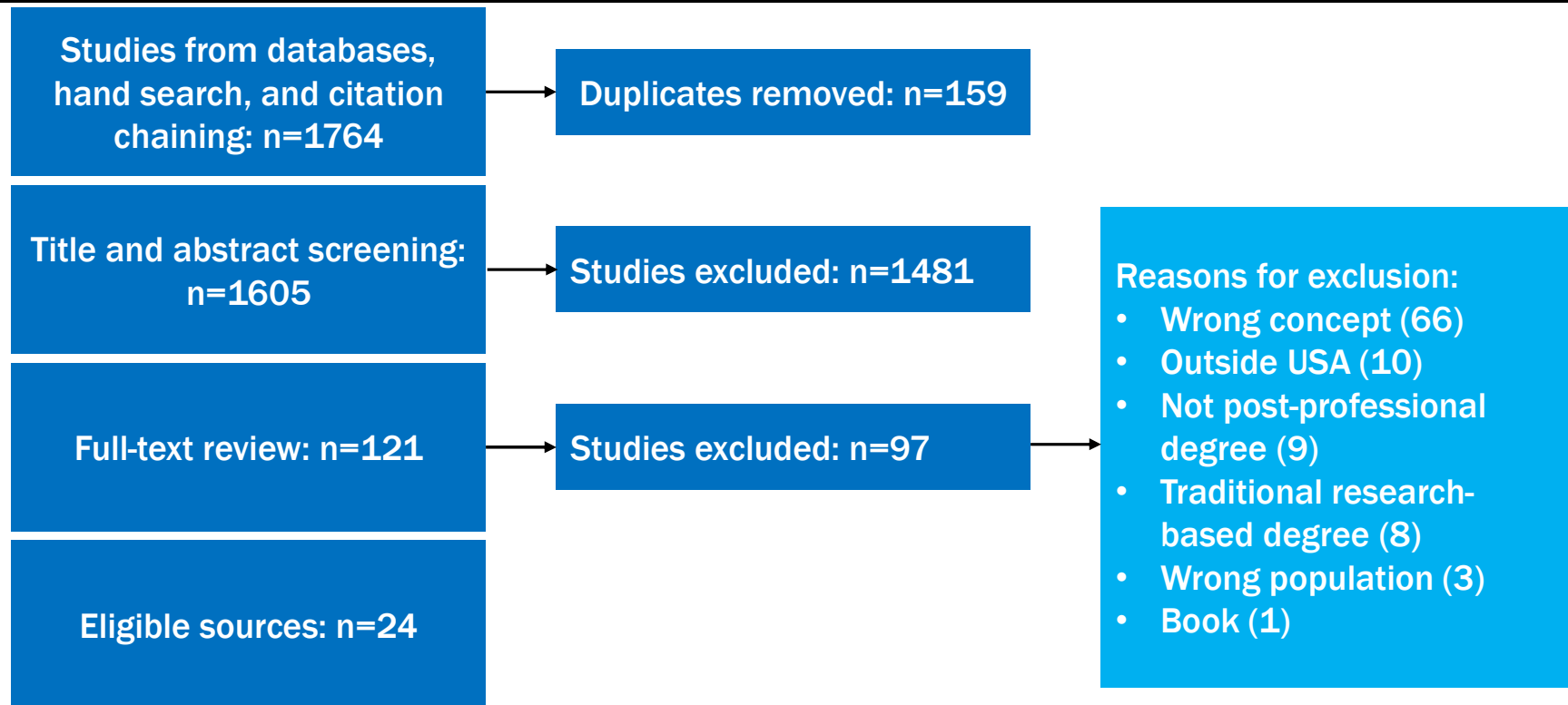


No date limitations were placed and only sources in English were included.



Two independent reviewers screened each search result and extracted data from each eligible source using Covidence software.

SCREENING



DETECTIVE WORK

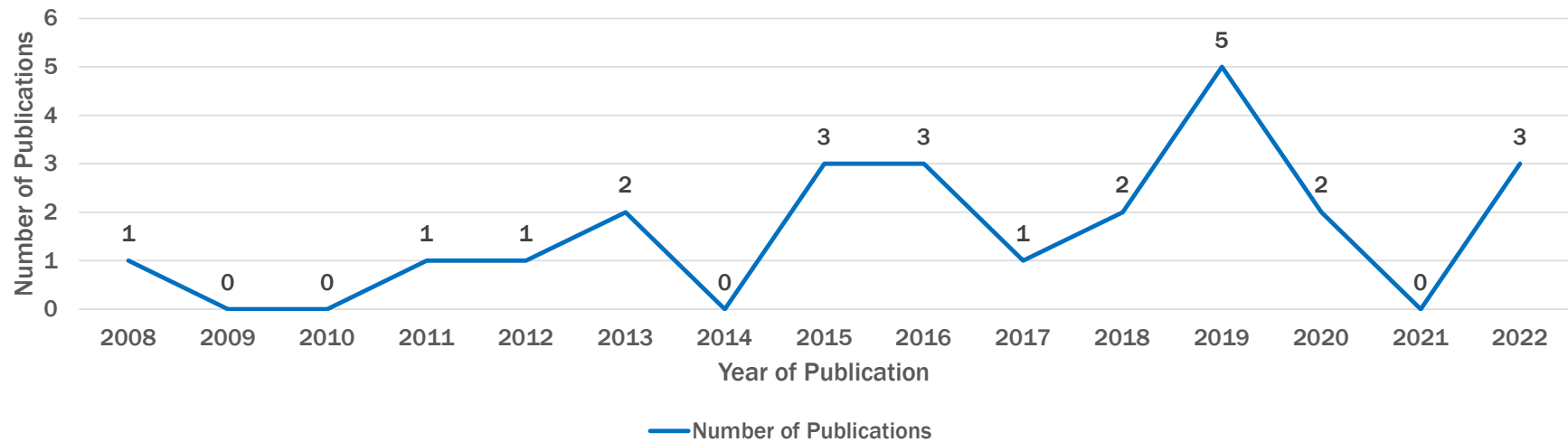
Nurse practitioners

- Push for doctorate training began in 2004.
- In 2018, the National Organization of NP Faculties made a commitment to require the DNP as entry-level for NP practice by 2025.

Occupational therapists

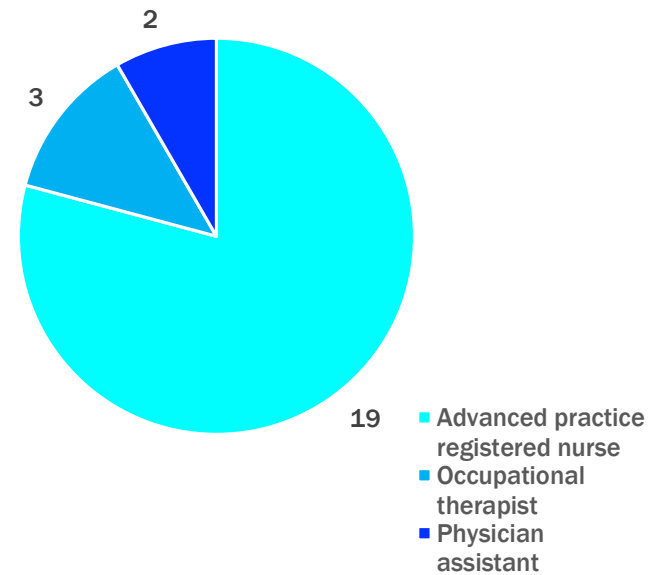
- Profession as a whole has remained opposed to entry-level doctorate.
- In 2019, the AOTA endorsed multiple points of entry into OT practice to reduce student debt and maintain access to care for patients.

PUBLICATIONS BY YEAR



OCCUPATION TYPE

Number of Publications by
Occupation Type



STUDY DESIGNS

Number of Publications:

Study Design:

8

• Quantitative

6

• Qualitative

3

• Mixed Methods

4

• Commentary/opinion/editorial

2

• Case study

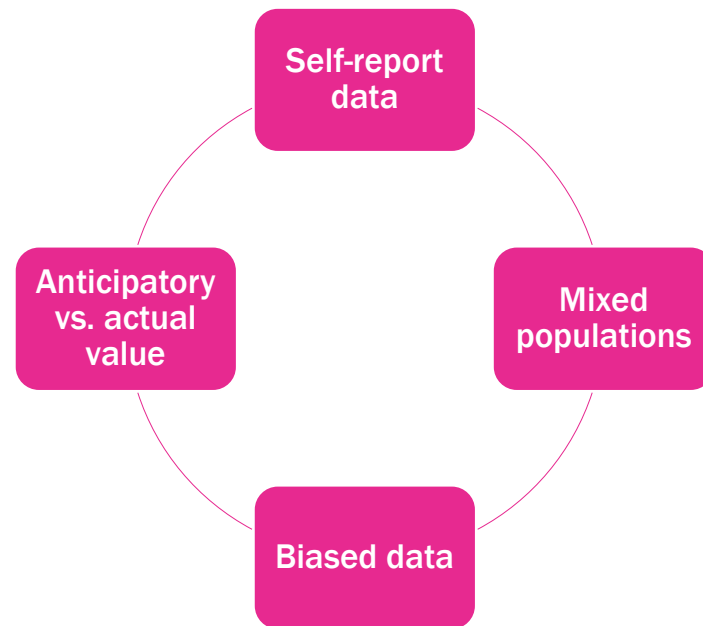
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• Non-systematic review

OUTCOMES BY OCCUPATION TYPE

Outcome	Total (%)	APRN (%)	OT (%)	PA (%)
Improved clinical acumen	17 (71)	13 (68)	2 (67)	2 (100)
Enhanced professional visibility	16 (67)	12 (63)	3 (100)	1 (50)
Enhanced scholarly capability	15 (63)	13 (68)	1 (33)	1 (50)
Readiness for leadership role	14 (58)	11 (58)	2 (67)	1 (50)
Preparation to function as a faculty member	12 (50)	10 (53)	1 (33)	1 (50)
Increased confidence	12 (50)	9 (47)	3 (100)	-
General career advancement	11 (46)	10 (53)	1 (33)	-
Enhanced scholarly productivity	9 (38)	7 (37)	1 (33)	1 (50)
Promotion from clinical role into administration	6 (25)	5 (26)	1 (33)	-
Readiness to be change agents	3 (13)	3 (16)	-	-

CHALLENGES



CALL FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Better understanding of the value of the post-professional doctorate for PAs.