Developing a new health-related policy analysis tool (HrPAT): An action research cooperative inquiry approach

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Abstract

Aim: To develop an analysis tool for nursing, midwifery and health-related policies and professional guidance documents.

Background: Analysis tools can aid both policy evaluation and policy development. However, there is a dearth of studies examining the use of tools in health policy making and health policy evaluation, and no framework for analysing the content of professional regulation and guidance documents among healthcare professionals.

Method: This study used an action research, cooperative inquiry design, involving team members from five higher education institutions. Four face-to-face meetings and 37 teleconferences were held as part of this project, within a series of action research cycles.

Results: The final output was the Health-related Policy Analysis Tool (HrPAT). The HrPAT consists of 21 statements in 6 key domains of policy making: Context, Process, Content, Stakeholder Consultation, Implementation, and Evaluation.

Conclusion: Use of the HrPAT can assist in policy development, evaluation and implementation, as well as providing some retrospective analytical insights into existing health policies.

Implication for Nursing Management: Professional regulation documents, guidelines and policy reports should be capable of being scrutinised for their content, quality, and developmental process. The HrPAT can assist policy makers and professional regulators in drafting and critically revising such documents.