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Perceiving and practicing the nature of nursing in Poland

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Summary

Introduction: The social and political transition taking place in Poland during the last decade has resulted in changes in the system of education. The results of empirical studies indicate that both the system of education and the period of its transition exerted an influence on the qualifications of nurses.

Aim: The focus of the study was the relationship between the selected education factors and the occupational experience of nurses.

Methods: The study was conducted by the method of a diagnostic survey with the use of the authors' version of a questionnaire form. The variables were tested by means of chi-square test and Spearman's correlation test. The investigations covered a group of 324 occupationally active nurses in area of the city of Lublin.

Conclusions: The analysis indicates that among many variables concerning education and occupational improvement, only the type of education (1st and 2nd level of occupational differentiation) has a statistically significant effect on auto-defining of nursing in the the nature of occupational activities performed.

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Introduction

The social and political transition taking place in Poland during the last decade has resulted in the induction of changes in the system of education by the adjustment of standards to the requirements contained in the European Union Directives, and the determinants specified by the Bologna

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Declaration. The aforementioned changes concern every level of the system of education, including also the 1st and 2nd-degree education level in nursing, as presented in Figs. 1 and 2.

The basic changes in the system of nursing education in Poland consist in the following:

- Adjustment of the national standards of education to EU standards;
- implementation of the bachelor level of education as a basic education level for nurses;
- provision of a wider access to qualification improvement by shortening of the studies for a Master's degree, the regulation of doctoral studies and vocational improvement (Sztembis, 2006).

The consequence of changes in the area of socio-occupational functioning - the education of nurses - is exerting an effect on the auto-percep-

tion of the occupational role of a nurse, as well as the realization of this role in practice by performing occupational activities on behalf of patients (Tymowska, 2001).

Research shows that the system of education and its period of transformation have influenced nurses' qualifications and their image, which is defined by a level of knowledge, skills and attitude demonstrated by practical activity throughout nursing care. The level of nursing occupational competence is also influenced by nurses' motivation for continuous professional development (Kózka et al., 2007).

The nature of the occupational activities of a nurse comes from the occupational role defined in national and international circles (Poznańska, 1989).

The present study uses a methodology of defining nursing process appealing to the theory of

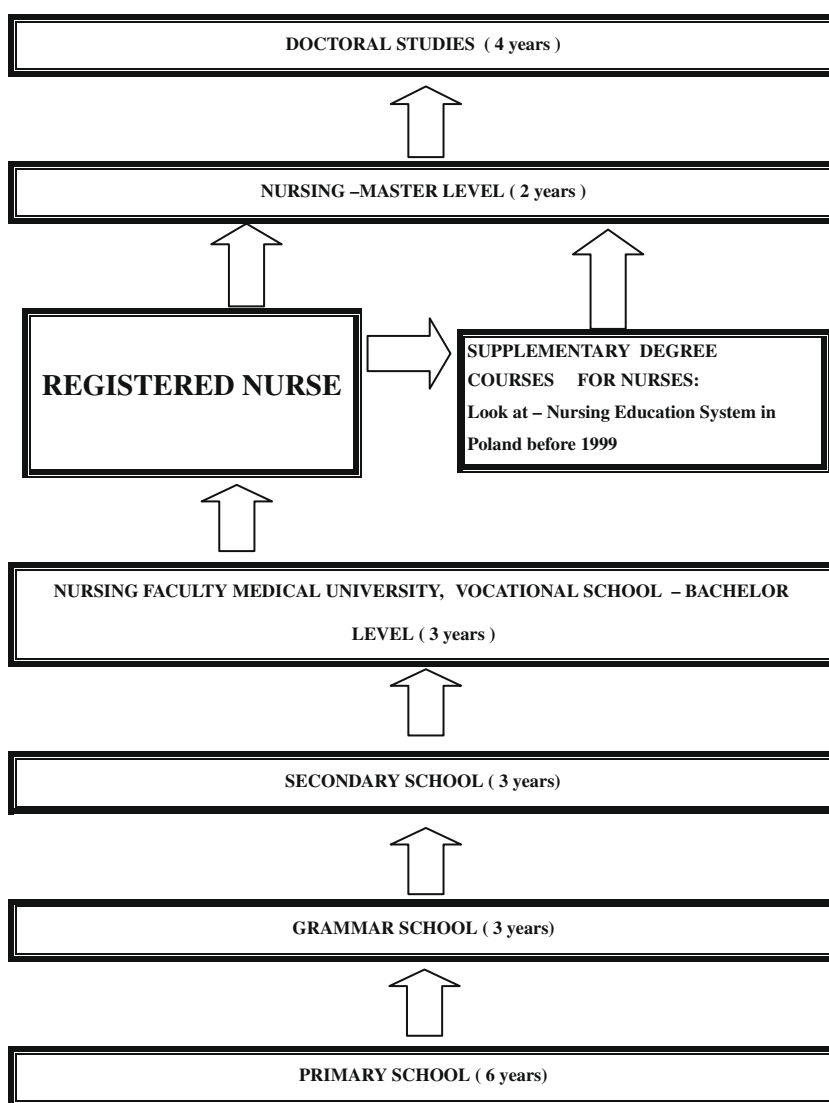


Fig. 1 Nursing Education System in Poland after 1999 (Zarzycka and Ślusarska, 2007).

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