

Consolidation of qualitative studies in health research

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The papers included in this special issue of *Revista da Escola de Enfermagem da USP*, were selected from the papers submitted to the 3rd Ibero-American Congress on Qualitative Research (CIAIQ2014) which took place, 14-16 July, at the University of Extremadura in Badajoz, Spain. The papers published, were, however, extended and deepened relatively to the versions presented at the conference.

The health research area of CIAIQ2014, in its various aspects and branches, had a significant participation with a total of 69 papers selected for publication in the conference proceedings. However, for publication at *Revista da Escola de Enfermagem da USP*, only those who achieved the best score, at the Scientific Committee evaluation assessment, were selected, resulting in a total of 30 papers.

Among the themes of this series of articles were notorious subjects such as studies in nursing and training, works about medicine, papers with focus on the methodologies used, perception of students and patients about the provision of primary cares as well as intervention programs for insertion, organization and operation of health services to improve the life condition of patients and families, and the role and performance of health professionals.

Research conducted addressed the role and representation of nurses in child and adolescent care in the area of drug abuse, understanding and difficulties of caregiving mothers of children with tuberculosis, and preserving the users' privacy as an essential factor in the teaching and learning of nurses.

In the context of nursing education, we highlight the works that pointed to the perception of nursing students that highlight art as a pedagogical strategy in learning of nursing knowledge. Also, the use of questioning, reasoning and explanation as means of raising awareness among students for more compassionate care and the analysis of possibilities and limits of nurse training by competences. Other studies show the results of the experience of nurses on duty in a Spanish hospital and social representations of medical students about the meaning of living in the family health strategy, mental illness among the elderly, having primary health care as an important strategy to overcome barriers to mental health care. Spirituality, religion and faith have come out positively for facing difficulties and improving the quality of life.

Another aspect addressed was the need to look for the family, particularly mothers that since pregnancy and childbirth undergo changes in their lives after the baby's birth, as well as training for mothers, providing moments of health education in the hospitalization period of the child, promoting a dialogue between practitioners and family.

Regarding the methodologies used in the research, it became clear the use of case study narratives, interviews, focus groups, documental research and literature review methods.

It should also be noted works that implemented European and American intervention programs, works that analyzed the integrated health model for suicide prevention in Spain, and the analysis of Brazilian policy for the reduction of accidents and violence with the commitment of health professionals. Another highlight is the study based on reports of the main Brazilian newspapers about the "Mais Médicos" program.

In addition to these works, the perceptions of interventions were identified by the researchers in order to obtain from patients and the elderly, public-private institutions, the importance of public policies that equate the services provided by the institutions to the expectations of the elderly.

Other papers addressed interventions' perceptions and we emphasize health education for the prevention of dengue, implementation of a program to improve the quality and access to primary care, and finally, the need to invest in innovative strategies care for hypertensive patients who do not adhere to medication.

It also deserves to be mentioned studies that scrutinized the gender perspective in two distinct lines. The first emphasized gender as a central category in determining violence and health practices as an innovative field of study. The second emphasized the dream, the motivation and the reality of Brazilian migrant women in Switzerland.

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Finally, it deserves emphasis, the study of different temporalities of breast cancer disease. In it, the authors try to understand and highlight the need for health professionals to analyze the time lived by the person and the necessary therapy for cancer.

This special issue of *Revista da Escola de Enfermagem da USP* brings several research works that strengthen the use of qualitative methodologies for research in healthcare. Increasingly, researchers in this area have noticed that many of their research problems need a more interpretive, phenomenological and naturalistic approach or paradigm that involves a methodology of qualitative nature.

We hope that the reading of this special issue may provide a differentiating look to students of nursing, medicine, and other health professionals, about the diverse studies presented, as well as the rigor and quality that these studies present with the use of appropriate qualitative methodologies.