

## EDITORIAL

### QUESTIONS IN DEBATING NURSING KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION

The process of developing research has been conducted under enormous pressure, whether due to time available for the researcher; competition for financing; the practical impact of the results of such investigation; access to already-produced knowledge; accompanying the dynamic of scientific, technological, social, and political changes; or yet to factors related to the announcement of produced results related to a more and more repressed demand in quality periodicals, measured through factors of impact, among others.<sup>1</sup>

Beyond these forces – which make up part of professional nurses' daily lives – especially those who find themselves interacting with the academic area of nursing, there are still some questions which have become sources of concern, particularly those related to ethical-epistemological aspects.

Before pointing out solutions, this editorial has the intention to suscitare reflections surrounding the contemporary discussions involving Nursing scientific production, based on highlighting some questions.

One of these questions speaks with respect to the position or *status* that nurses assume (or should assume): Are we nurses who research or scientists/researchers? In general, nurses have a difficulty in assuming the position of scientists or investigators. This may be the consequence of the recent insertion of Nursing in the world of science, if compared to other disciplines (four decades *versus* four centuries).<sup>2</sup>

Another question speaks with respect to the Generalist/Specialist polarization and all that is involved with it, when considering knowledge production itself. Would there be some advantage in the field of sciences? What would they be?<sup>3</sup> Without forgetting to consider the depth of scope and lateralness of thought inserted as qualitative criteria incarnate in the "Profile of the Nursing Doctorate"<sup>4</sup>

In addition, another consideration to be faced: Collective or individual production? Together with research groups? For research groups? And the (almost) imperative contemporary quality of Interdisciplinarity?<sup>3</sup> Beyond this, in what way should we align (and conduct) international partnerships? And multicentric studies? What strategy should be adopted for the spread "international visibility"? How can we practice "overseas" partnerships?

The choice of theoretical-methodological approaches has also been a challenge: How do we overcome the *quali versus quanti* discussions? Mixed Methods?<sup>5</sup> How can we respect theoretical-conceptual differences in the distinct approaches without losing the specificity and reflexive sophistication of each of them?<sup>6</sup> Equally relevant are the reflections surrounding the need to advance beyond describing reality. It becomes indispensable to think of strategies which also seek to explain, predict, and control phenomenon/ facts concerning investigative scrutiny<sup>1</sup>... would we be prepared for Translational Research?

Another interrogation is also found at the base of such discussion, and relates to the question: Why do we research? In order to enlighten strategies to resolve practical problems? In order to construct and peer more in-depth into constructs/concepts? In order to, after all, produce nursing knowledge? Would it be to contribute to the quality of care and to its results? In order to found decisions and actions in practice, administration, and education, based on scientifically documented knowledge? In order to diminish health care costs? In order to construct scientific bases for practice?<sup>1</sup> In order to outline a body of knowledge, in order to distinguish nursing from other professions? In order to seek scientific answers to professional questions? In order to evidence the benefit that Nursing brings to society? In order to document the difference that nursing does in the sense of establishing its practical and social relevance?

Yet another interrogation takes form: How to stimulate for what Nursing consumes produced knowledge? How do we disseminate this knowledge in a manner that it may have practical impact? These questions certainly are related to access to information – open access or restricted access, with the language utilized in its publication and the value professionals attribute to the knowledge produced.

Finally, but not lastly, we must consider that publishing knowledge is a “product” that will be a source of the evaluation of the scientific capacity of Nursing, whether by internal or external evaluators.

New paths as they have been pointed out, principally through evaluatory organizations (and attributors of “grades” to the Graduate Programs), make us look to the horizon and question: After all, which are the requirements that define the quality of knowledge produced and what are the defining characteristics of the sought-after “scientific maturity” in order to conquer the best levels of access and permanence in the scientific community?

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