EDITORIAL

Some considerations on the nursing knowledge

At present, the complexity and amount of knowledge is enormous and diversified in several fields and, in spite of its success, it can't express confidence on dogmatic knowledge. This knowledge is characterized by a process that gradually develops but never ends. Another characteristic is that knowledge is a social product with several conditioning factors, with priorities at each time and with a construction in every period of life.

The nursing, a profession which serves to produce social well-being has been constructing its own knowledge to do process in accordance with the same contingencies above mentioned. Some important aspects of the construction of this trajectory will be here discussed.

The first nursing conceptions, named modern, were based in an idea associating arts, sciences, discipline, planning and care. To observe and to register facts, the exercise of art and the virtue when assisting someone were considered important points for a profession that must not be seen as a bunch of tasks that anyone could do. The health comprehension and the process of cure was based in the science of that age when the individual was considered as a unit and a totality when receiving care.

With the improve of the scientific knowledge in several fields, emphasis was given to development of care in scientific basis without rejecting conceptions of the human being as a totality and to be ethically considered when receiving care. This aspect always meant a search for coherence and integration to minimize fragmentation caused by changes of priorities for the nurse's action in health care.

The practice organized according to scientific basis occurred due to application of theories of development, systems, organization and leadership of biomedical models and elaboration of nursing theories. It was the beginning of some considerations to establish main concepts which could define the field domain and to serve as the origin for the theoretical and practical progress of the profession.

The effort of the theoretical organization had an influence on the perception of the need to study and classify the interesting events for the area. The knowledge field must have its own concepts, a language corresponding to the aimed facts. The arrangement of concepts with similar characteristics in classes with relationships and definitions in the context of practice related problems, led to the elaboration of classifications started by pioneer studies as Faye Abdellah, Virginia Henderson and Mac Cain. These were the precursors of the current taxonomies and among them, we will mention only three: - Nursing Diagnosis Classification System (NANDA); Nursing Intervention Classification System (NIC); and Patient's Results Classification System (NOC).

Due to the dynamic characteristic of the language, the event classifications which bring some interest to the professional area are always subject to improvement changes. At present, a great number of nurses works to manage that attribution of the concepts could correspond more and more to the meanings of the phenomena observed in the practice and that investigations may conduct to interventions and results which could bring benefit for the population receiving Nursing care. The knowledge will be complete if it could bring efficiency in the to-do process. On this regard, a fragmentation is observed: the progress of theoretical knowledge is not totally shared by the nurses during their practice. The distance between theory and to perform Nursing has its origin in questions regarding accepted academic education, bureaucratic, political and economic situations which challenges the professional of the area to search for solutions.

Among this reality full of contingencies, diversities, ruptures and doubts regarding knowledge we can find the adequate focus which will bestow integration and unit to the profession. Those are: Nursing has the objective to care/assist the human being: to assist people's life requires scientific and technical learning impregnated with Ethic and necessary respect to the care of a human being who is not only an amount of organs but fitted with intelligence, desire, affectivity and spirituality.

The magnitude of the to know/to-do processes in Nursing relies in the attitude of the reverence expressed by scientific competence and technique in caring which promotes life and protects human being against dehumanization.