

Holistic Critical Thinking and Nursing Diagnosis Process: A Challenge for the Nurse in the Current Global Scenario

Fernando Riegel*

Professor of Department of Medical-Surgical Nursing (DEMC) of School of Nursing, Universidade Federal do Grande do Sul (UFRGS), Porto Alegre, Brazil

***Corresponding Author:** Fernando Riegel, Professor of Department of Medical-Surgical Nursing (DEMC) of School of Nursing, Universidade Federal do Grande do Sul (UFRGS), Porto Alegre, Brazil.

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Abstract

The current scenario of global health reminds us to the need for qualified professionals to meet the demands of existing care and health care due to the changes in the epidemiological profile and the complexity of the diseases. Besides, the climate changes and deleterious effects of the strength of men is causing disasters and catastrophes never imagined. It is urgent to reformulate the way nurses think to better prepare them to confront the global challenges, ensuring safe and quality care to patients and their families facing the emerging demands. It is believed the holistic critical thinking can transform the teaching and practice of nurses, aiding them to act in situations of adversity and uncertainty.

Keywords: *Thinking; Teaching; Diagnostic Process; Nursing Diagnosis; Nursing*

Identification of the Problem

The constant and rapid changes in the world, arising from social, political and economic questions over the last decades, have resulted in changes in the health care of a global society with consequent changes in the epidemiological profile, increase of the complexity of health problems and demands of individuals. The affirmative imposes to different disciplines of knowledge, especially health ones, the suitability of their care processes aiming solutions of actual or potential needs of the individual, and it highlights how important is the practical application of the nursing diagnosis process using a thinking of quality in order to obtain the best results [1].

Nursing has a prominent place, because it constitutes a social and humanistic practical discipline of health care, structured in the science and art of preventing, make diagnoses based on care needs, and diverse problems, in addition to the treatment of humans beings with the knowledge, skills and attitudes of care. This premise mobilizes theorists of nursing all over the world in the tireless mission to produce specific knowledge in the field of teaching, research, and care, to develop, test and implement technologies and instruments of care to orient the choice of best practices, sensitive to the uniqueness of each individual and the context of life and general well-being of an individual [1].

To face the changing times, the importance of to teach the nursing process through its five steps and with an emphasis on the application of the diagnostic process of nursing is highlighted. In addition, to teach the diagnostic process is important to teach to think holistically.

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For this reason, it is important to develop strong intellectual skills on nurses, as well as technical and scientific, ethical, aesthetic, and humanistic skills. Today and in the future, the best nurses will demonstrate the ability to investigate, diagnose, establish goals and work based on evidence, with the holistic perspective. The holistic critical thinking is more evident in the diagnostic process of nursing in the first and second stages, because “get the right problem” will be the first and most important step in its solution. The application of a strong critical thinking, in conjunction with good clinical data and solid knowledge, is essential for an accurate diagnosis, which considers all relevant factors [1].

Critical thinking is the process of forming a reflective judgment about what to believe or what to do in any given context [2]. It is reflective, which means it is open to self-monitoring and self-correction. It applies cognitive abilities, including analysis, inference, evaluation, interpretation and explanation. More than skills, a strong critical thinking is driven by internal motivation consistent to apply the skills. A guide to the pursuit of truth, curiosity, confidence in the reasoning, organization, forecast and maturity of judgment characterize a strong critical thinker. Individuals are able to transform themselves into strong critical thinkers, and also groups or teams working together on solving problems [2].

Critical thinking allows the critical thinker considers how problems are framed, quality of the evidence, appropriateness of the methods, reasonableness of the criteria, applicability of theories and principles through reflection. Instead of reacting to clinical situations in an automatic or unthinking way, the nurse with strong critical thinking will consider several factors, including clinical data, life and family situation of the patient [2].

However, the Holistic Critical Thinking (HCT) is an essential tool to the diagnostic process teaching in nursing. HCT is a guideline, it articulates and unifies all relevant elements of a clinical situation and the human dimensions of the patients in different situations academics and nurses will find themselves [2]. To think holistically is to design the well-being of the patient as an integrated whole, not only as a momentary clinical question or issue to be dealt isolated from the whole of the personal health and life circumstances [3].

Thus, intersubjectivity and dialog are constructions of this process revealing fundamental existential phenomenological aspects when professionals are prepared to be with the patient to find authentic care [1]. Face to events of nature, including natural disasters, civil wars, terrorist acts and complex situations involving multiple victims, the holistic critical thinking is an indispensable tool for the performance of the duties of nurses and other health professionals in contexts of uncertainty and adversity.

It is necessary to break the paradigm still so dominant in health services that nursing is reduced to the minimalist biomedical model, despite the obvious appeal for more humanised models in health care [3].

To transform the practice of nurses internationally requires a different notion of reality in a vast universe of different cultures and ethnicities, breaking a technical clinical model and evolving to a humanized care practice. To achieve this international goal, it should consider the adequacy of the essential goal of developing critical thinking in nursing education, with innovative strategies to teach and learn, or with a curricular innovation, including even disciplines with focus on the development of thought of a nurse. Treating students as human beings fully capable of thinking reflectively, the teacher is already recognizing the importance of considering every human being, and the curriculum will allow the student to do it when the professional practice begins [3].

In this context, to think about thinking in a holistic perspective is revealed and its historicity and temporality, defining the way a person is part of the world or takes part of it with others in the health-disease process, are considered a unified whole in clinical decision making [1]. This implies the need of a differentiated care considering the uniqueness of this human being [3].

Therefore, the templates that can contribute to the measurement or evaluation of the HCT are required in curricular practices to identify the need to define active strategies for teaching and learning, oriented to development through exercise and reflection of the processes of prevention, diagnosis and successful treatment [4].

The holistic critical thinking in nursing emerges as a possibility to allow nurses act in several and unfavourable scenarios. The holistic approach includes the participation of individuals in their entirety, including all dimensions composing the human being, body, mind, and spirit, parts of a dynamic and integrated whole, present in the process of caring for and with other human being [3].

Methodological approach

It is a theoretical and critical reflection to reflect critically on the implementation of the nursing process in times of changes and adversity in the international scenery, to train nurses to think critically and holistically. The theoretical references of Facione [2] was used to ground and highlight the importance of critical and holistic thinking in the application of the nursing process in the daily work of the nurse, considering the socio-economic-environmental and world relational scenarios. This reflection has the important task of provides reflection to students, teachers, and graduated nurses for the challenge of being and doing nursing in adverse scenarios.

Theoretical reflection

The current global scenario prints a series of uncertainties and challenges to health care professionals, especially nurses, considering situations like the COVID-19 pandemic, the effects caused by natural disasters such as hurricanes and earthquakes, natural disasters and accidents with multiple victims caused by the strength of men in its habitat, damage caused by terrorist attacks and civil wars in several countries. Also, population movements of emigration and immigration, health care of a large number of refugees, religious persecution, different cultures and beliefs.

Facing it, the health services is confronting demands above those they are prepared for, exhausting professionals and, in many situations, frustrating them due to the lack of conditions and structure for the implementation of a more qualitative nursing care.

Thus, a critical reflection infer that the holistic critical thinking is an important skill to be developed in the teaching of the diagnostic process, in order to prepare professionals and future nurses to face complex realities and still ensure the application of the diagnostic process with accuracy and reliability [4].

For the development of thinking with quality, in other words, holistic thinking, it can be realized the influence of holistic perspective conceiving the world as an integrated whole and not only a junction of separated parts. From this understanding of the world, the holistic perspective contributes to an approach aiming the integral human being. In this perspective, education in nursing needs to be thought in a transdisciplinary way, leaving behind fragmented models of teaching, breaking the idea of fragmented know dominated for decades in the nursing Brazilian education [3,4].

The teacher will have the important duty of deconstruct concepts focused on fragmentation, breaking old paradigms and conceptions of education, teaching and learning, as for example: the banking, authoritarian, and focused on content and transmission education, requiring the teacher changes the posture, evolving from the transmission of knowledge to the production of knowledge, focusing on the leading role of the student.

It is expected that the teacher will find space in their teaching practice to reflect on the following question: for what and why nurses are being trained? The holistic training is broad and encompasses all aspects involving patient care, contemplating the biological, psychological, social, emotional and spiritual dimensions [3].

The technological advances and the crisis of human relations require an increasingly productive education to face the challenges of transformation of relations to the common good and the rehabilitation of the health of persons in different social and care contexts.

The teaching of the nursing process with a new and transformative view in order to prepare nurses to act in different contexts of care is highlighted. To teach about thinking and its consequences for making decisions in complex situations can contribute and prepare nurses

for advanced clinical practices. The teaching action demands the participation of the being in its entirety, in other words, the parts of a whole need to be interconnected to the development of skills of thought can be obtained in the act of teach, be and do nursing [5].

This theoretical and critical reflection aims to contribute to a personal analysis of nurses, nursing students, and teachers. It cooperates to the openness of mind to pursuit new possibilities and paths to be followed in order to further qualify the practice of nursing and ensure the application of the diagnostic process with accuracy, taking accurate clinical decisions and providing to human beings a human, ethical, safe, aesthetic and solidarity care at all levels of the health care. Also, in the different contexts of adversities implemented in the current global scenario.

In addition, it brings into reflection the urgent need to change the way nurses think to face the several challenges the global society imposes on them. This way of thinking is the holistic and critical thought, in other words, to think with quality to make decision assertively, focusing the priority issues to be addressed from the perspective of each patient. It is the way of thinking not connected to standards imposed by society or by the political context, it is an ethical and responsible way of thinking about life.

This study of reflection aims to qualify the practice of nursing education, training nurses to think holistically and to highly interfere in how to teach be and practice nursing, impacting decisively in the expected results face the different needs of patients, families and health teams.

With these actions, the expectation is to awaken trainers to the commitment with the act of teaching in times of change, to adapt their teaching practices to teach the importance of holistic and critical thinking about the being and doing nursing.

Conclusion

To teach to think holistically is not an easy task, it requires from the teacher the ability to create and recreate itself each day, proposing new and promising strategies for teaching and learning focusing the development of critical thinking skills, such as: analysis of clinical cases for application of the nursing process, realistic simulations, interprofessional realistic simulations, mental and conceptual maps, skills training, mini-clinical examinations, among other strategies for the development of behavioural and cognitive skills and mental habits required for a good critical thinker.

The nurse is responsible for the personal developing related to the holistic thinking, considering the labour market will require such expertise face to the several contemporary challenges professionals in the field of health has found.

The theoretical referential of Facione can contribute and be the base for care practices of nursing students, nurses, and teachers in this important mission regarding the development and implementation of the nursing diagnosis process grounded in thinking with quality, the holistic and critical thinking.

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