Integrative Review versus Systematic Review

DOI: 10.5935/1415-2762.20140001

In recent decades, health professionals, especially nurses, have often been challenged to pursue scientific knowledge based on evidence, in order to offer the best care available to patients. This scenario has driven the need for nurses to consume and produce specific knowledge inherent to their work in different professional contexts.[1]

Evidence based practice (EBP) is a problem-solving approach to decision making, which incorporates the search for the latest and best evidence, professional clinical competence, values and patients' preferences related to the care given.[2] It appears as a dynamic to link theory and practice, as it aims to gather, implement and evaluate the best research results for safe clinical practice, with quality and low cost.

Although EPB is a movement already discussed and used in countries as Canada, United Kingdom, and the United States since the 90's, in Brazil it is still unknown and little used among nurses.

Due to the amount and complexity of information produced daily and disseminated in the healthcare field, it becomes necessary for the nurse to gather the best available evidence that answers a clinical question that needs to be understood, taking into consideration the validity and relevance of the evidence found.

From this perspective, review articles, as well as other categories of scientific papers, are studies that use bibliographic or electronic sources of information to obtain research results from other authors, aiming to substantiate theoretically and scientifically a particular purpose[3]. However, in order for these review articles to produce quality results applicable in clinical practice, they must be conducted following a scientific method that gives them validity.

Thus, integrative and systematic reviews are meticulous research methods implemented to provide the best knowledge produced about a given research problem, so they can be critically evaluated by a professional with clinical skills and subconsequently be incorporated into the health care practice.

Integrative literature review is a method that aims to synthesize results obtained in studies about a topic or issue, in a systematic, orderly and broad manner. It is referred to as integrative because it provides further information on a subject/problem, thus establishing a body of knowledge. Therefore, the reviewer/researcher can develop an integrative review with different purposes, which can be directed to definition of concepts, theories review or methodological analysis of studies about a specific subject.

This method allows the simultaneous inclusion of quasi-experimental and experimental studies, combining data from theoretical and empirical literature, providing a more complete comprehension of the theme of interest. The variety in the composition of a sample of integrative review in conjunction with multiplicity of purposes of this method provides a complete picture of complex concepts, theories or problems related to health care, which are relevant to nursing. [2]

For the construction of an integrative review it is necessary to follow six distinct steps, being the identification of the topic and selection of hypothesis or research question; establishment of inclusion and exclusion criteria for the studies/sample or literature search; defining the information to be extracted from the selected studies/categorization of studies; assessment of the included studies; interpretation of results; and presentation of the review/synthesis of knowledge.[2]

A systematic review, unlike an integrative review, is a method used to answer a specific question about a specific health care problem. It is an accurate synthesis of all studies related to an issue/question about a specific health problem cause, diagnosis and prognosis, but often involves the effectiveness of an intervention for the solution of this problem. [3] Usually, the studies included in these reviews are designed as experimental studies and are considered original work due to the methodological rigor.[4]

The performance of a systematic review involves the work of at least two researchers who will, independently, assess the methodological quality of each selected study, using a research protocol. Basically, a systematic review may be conducted in seven steps[5], to be started with: a) construction of a research protocol that follows the same rigor of a primary research; b) formulation of the research question using the PICO[6] acronym, in which P corresponds to patient or population, I is the intervention, C is the comparison or control and O is the outcome or result; c) search of studies with the definition of key words, research strategies in each of several electronic databases (Medline, Cinahl, Embase, Lilacs, Cochrane Controlled Trials Database, SciSearch, among others); d) selection and review of studies with the application of the predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria; e) critical evaluation of each article; f) data collection using instruments to analyze in pairs (two researchers simultaneously) the methodological validity. There are several tools that can be used in the analysis of methodological quality of the studies included in the systematic review, as the instruments Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network (SING)[7], Jadad Scale[8], among others. At this step the strength/hierarchy of an evidence[9-10], applicability of the results, the cost and relevant practice are established, determining the boundaries between benefits and risks of a particular intervention; g) and finally, the summary of results/data, where the studies should be gathered based on the similarity among them. Each of these groups should be predetermined in the protocol, as well as the graphical and numerical presentation, to facilitate the understanding of the reader.

Once published, the review will receive suggestions and criticisms, which should be incorporated into subsequent editions, featuring a dynamic publication that must be updated every time new studies on the subject arise.

The use of these two methods of research is the foundation of the evidence-based practice (EBP). From them, nursing produces scientific knowledge to support decision-making about the best care offered to the patient and strengthens the profession.

The EBP is a challenging process for nurses, considering the significant increase in scientific production in the area, the organizational barriers and the professionals' individual, who must acquire skills and abilities necessary for the incorporation of research in their daily practice.

Flávia Falci Ercole [1]
Laís Samara de Melo [2]
Carla Lúcia Goulart Constant Alcoforado [3]

[1] RN. PhD degree in Science. Adjunct professor at the Basic Nursing Department from the Nursing School, Federal University of Minas Gerais-UFMG. Belo Horizonte, MG – Brazil.

[2] RN. Master student at Nursing School from the UFMG. Belo Horizonte, MG – Brazil.

[3] RN. PhD student. Assistant Professor at the Basic Nursing Department from the Nursing School, UFMG. Belo Horizonte, MG – Brazil.

REFERENCES

1. Crossetti MGO. Revisão integrativa de pesquisa na enfermagem o rigor cientifico que lhe é exigido [editorial]. Rev Gaúcha Enferm. 2012 jun; 33(2):8-9.
2. Mendes KDS, Silveira RCCP, Galvão CM. Revisão integrativa: método de pesquisa para a incorporação de evidências na saúde e na enfermagem. Texto Contexto Enferm. 2008 out-dez; 17(4):758-64.
3. Galvão CM, Sawada NO, Mendes IA. A busca das melhores evidências. Rev Esc Enferm USP. 2003 dez; 37(4):43-50.
4. Rother ET. Revisão sistemática x revisão narrativa. Acta Paul Enferm. 2007 abr-jun; 20(2):v-vi.
5. Galvão CM, Sawada NO, Trevisan MA. Revisão sistemática: recurso que proporciona a incorporação das evidências na prática da Enfermagem. Rev Latino-am Enferm. 2004 maio-jun; 12(3):549-56.
6. Santos CMC, Pimenta CAM, Nobre RC. A estratégia PICO para a construção da pergunta de pesquisa e busca de evidências. Rev Latino-am Enferm. 2007 maio-jun; 15(3):508-11.
7. Shea BJ, Grimshaw JM, Wells GA, Boers M, Anderson N, Hamel C, et al. Development of AMSTAR: a measurement tool to assess the methodological quality of systematic reviews. BMC Med Res Methodol. 2007, 7:10 doi 10.1186/1471-2288-7-10. [Citado em 2014 maio 14]. Disponível em: http://www.biomedcentral.com/1471-2288/7/10 .
8. Jadad A, Moore RA, Carrol D, Jenkinson C, Reynolds DJM, Gavaghan DJ, et al. Assessing the quality of reports os randomized clinical trial: Is blinding necessary? Control Clin Trials. 1996; 17(1):1-12.
9. Phillips B, Ball C, Sackett D, Badenoch D, Straus S, Haynes B, et al. Levels of Evidence and Grades of Recommendation. Oxford Centre for Evidence-Based Medicine-Centre for Evidence - Based Medicine Website - http://www.cebm.net/, 2005.
10. Atallah AN, Trevisani VFM, Valente O. Princípios para tomadas de decisões terapêuticas com base em evidencias científicas. In: Prado FCR, Ramos JA, Valle JR, Rothschild H, Borger DR. Atualização terapêutica. 21. ed. São Paulo: Artes Médicas, 2003, cap 22, p. 1704-6.