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Editorial

Challenge for Nursing Research

In the past century, nursing research has been primarily concerned with the nursing discipline. Project studies have been produced that have validated knowledge about nursing interventions, following the same policies of medicine in their development. Health research in low-income countries has emerged as a mixture of national and international programs, giving rise to a slow awareness raising related to the identification of the need for the development of research programs from their own distinct knowledge of the discipline. The spark of collaboration that had started in previous years between some countries has fizzled because research programs were previously determined by the donor country, and recipient countries suffered a lack of technology and infrastructure.

Looking towards the future, I ask, what is the purpose of nursing in research development in this millennium? Is it to continue to build research projects as it has done in the past, or is it to develop research programs that provide strong evidence for nursing practice? Which method directly impacts specific needs of diverse populations, social innovations in organizing services, provision of patient care, disease prevention through behavioral change, and new ways of understanding societal needs?

Finding answers to these questions focuses attention on *how* to develop nursing research now and in the future. Latin America, for example, needs to initiate the development of new nursing theories that meet their unique needs, and that will sustain relevant research to support the development of its next generation of researchers. It is necessary to honestly recognize that the challenge is that nursing has a much broader context in this millennium than it has had in the past, and that the designed research programs need to home in on understanding human responses, promoting optimal health, and significantly preventing illness. To meet this challenge, the nursing profession must not only demonstrate their contribution to economic development, but also to the development of innovative strategies that can be beneficial to society.

Innovation thrives at the intersection of diverse perspectives and knowledge. Considering this, perhaps nursing should recognize the need to develop new, interdisciplinary, and multicenter programs of research which not just examine professional development, but also meet the specific needs of individual societies.

Doctoral programs in nursing are based on the philosophy that it is the “development and evaluation of new ideas as interconnected processes that drive innovation forward.” Nursing, at this time, is called to contribute to social innovation in the organization of services, provision of patient care, and disease prevention through nursing intervention. The new context of nursing is in recognition of systems research, health cultures, and

behaviors. The change in the world economy has been influential in changing the paradigm of health research in local communities, requiring new health programs.

My response to my own question regarding nursing's purpose is that the profession needs to take on the challenge with excellence and leadership. "Only those who dare to fly with conscious love will meet with eternity".

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