QUALITY APPLIED TO NURSING IN LATIN AMERICA: A REVIEW.

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ABSTRACT

Different definitions of quality of care were reviewed as the desired health outcomes for individuals and the general population, and some refer to the definition of health itself and to the influences of the patient, family and health system. In Latin America, the objectives of quality of care are contained in the definitions reviewed. Due to the importance given to quality assessment for the definition of health policies, since the beginning of its application, methods of analysis of the structure, processes and results of the system are reported. The factors where Nursing has an impact on the quality of care are described, considering that the representation in the administrative levels of the Health Systems and the formal elevation, promote the development of Nursing actions in elements of the structure and processes of the system related to the results.

Keywords: quality of health care; nursing care.

1. INTRODUCTION

Total quality as a perception by the different stakeholders of the organizations has become in recent years a fundamental factor in competitiveness and a differential factor among institutions in different sectors (Cubillos Rodríguez & Rozo Rodriguez, 2009). In health, the perception by patients determines the level of quality of organizations through the attention of nurses who are responsible for keeping track of the details of patient care and care at different levels (Borré Ortiz & Vega Vega, 2014). The measurement of quality processes in the provision of medical services is important for the satisfaction of patients who for some reason need continuous care by health professionals. Therefore, the present study frames its effort in knowing the current state of the scientific publications that constitute study material for the continuous improvement in quality applied to nursing as a determinant in the perception of patients and relatives, as well as the perceived quality of life within the nursing workplaces which translates into the efficient execution of tasks assigned by each department.

Therefore, a bibliometric study is proposed on the scientific production on the variable Quality applied to Nursing by authors affiliated to Latin American institutions during the period between 2015 and 2020 with the purpose of answering the research question: How has been the production of scientific publications on the variable Quality applied to Nursing in Latin American countries during the period 2015-2020? The answer to this question will be achieved through the search of documents registered in Scopus establishing parameters such as year of publication, country of origin, area of knowledge and type of publication for their respective organization and interpretation.
II. GENERAL OBJECTIVE
To analyze from a bibliometric and bibliographic perspective, the production of high impact research papers on the variable Quality applied to Nursing during the period 2015-2020 in Latin American countries.

III. METHODOLOGY
A search for information was conducted through the Scopus tool, which yielded a total of 353 research papers published in high impact journals, which will be subjected to a quantitative analysis taking into account the parameters explained in the methodological design, as well as a qualitative analysis to know the position of the authors regarding the application of quality processes to nursing in Latin American countries.

3.1 Methodological design

Phase 1
- Identification of data to be analyzed

Phase 2
- Construction of the analysis material

Phase 3
- Conclusions and drafting of the final document

Figure 1. Methodological design

Source: Own elaboration (2021)

3.1.1 Phase 1
Phase 1 identifies the research papers that will be subjected to the analysis proposed in the methodology, using the Search tool available on the Scopus platform web page, where the information is searched for using different selection parameters such as:

✓ Published papers whose study variables are related to the application of quality processes to nursing.
✓ Research papers published during the period 2015-2020.
✓ Publications by Latin American authors and institutions.
✓ Without distinction of type of publication.
✓ Without distinction of area of knowledge.

After applying the above search parameters, a total of 331 research papers were obtained that meet the characteristics required by the present phase and that can be analyzed by means of the methodology explained in Phase 2.

3.1.2 Phase 2
Under the fulfillment of phase 2, the classification of the data is carried out through the elaboration of graphs, tables and figures to facilitate their interpretation. The information will be classified according to the following aspects:

✓ Year of publication
✓ Country of origin of publication
✓ Knowledge area
✓ Type of publication
Once the information is organized according to the related order, the study proceeds to its subsequent interpretation, giving the writing a qualitative approach, exemplifying different case studies with the purpose of establishing the relevant characteristics in some investigations and the position of their respective authors regarding the subject under study.

It should be noted that the tools used for the elaboration of the study material will be Excel and VOSviewer, which will be elaborated from data provided by Scopus through its Analyze search results tool.

3.1.3 Phase 3

Once the information is identified, organized and interpreted through the completion of phases 1 and 2, the conclusions are drawn and the final document is drafted.

IV. RESULTS

4.1 Co-occurrence of words

![Figure 1. Co-occurrence of words.](VOsviewer)

Source: Own elaboration (2021); based on data provided by Scopus.

Figure 1 shows the relationship between the most common keywords in the research on the variable under study. As a central axis, the word Human is found, which is related to the study of the physical integrity of the being, since there is proximity with the variables Nursing Care, Health, Clinical Practices, Patient Care, Patient Safety, which allows inferring that everything related to health care from the nursing staff is measured by hospital management as quality according to the perception of the users of the health service. The upper part of the figure shows an important relationship in terms of academic training processes, the words Students, Occupational Health, Learning, Nursing Student are found, which warns about the importance of handling definitions of quality from the professional preparation, which determines a vital aspect in the execution of practices aimed at the health care of human beings, therefore the academy provides within its curricular content, training that allows delivering quality from nursing care.

On the right side of the figure are subsets of words related to the evaluation and feedback of processes within the clinic. Words such as electronic health records, medical records, retrospective studies, medication errors and training are recorded. The above gives indications of the feedback processes that the clinics put into practice in the care of patients, since they even touch on topics such as errors in medical processes and training, which allows inferring that they seek to establish quality standards in the management of patients to reduce the risk of errors in the different activities that are carried out around the treatment of people who need medical care, whether in-hospital or outpatient.

4.2 Distribution of scientific production by year of publication
Figure 2 shows the behavior of publications during the period between 2015 and 2020 in Latin America. To highlight, during that period, the production of publications remained above 50 papers per year, reaching its highest peak in 2020 with 68 research papers published among which is the article entitled "Validation of the checklist for the care provided to patients in the immediate postoperative period of cardiac surgery" (Batistini, et al., 2020) which has as its objective the design of a checklist type system for the registration of patients who are in the postoperative period of cardiac surgeries. This proposal is aimed at the nursing staff in charge of patient care. This checklist defines parameters of vital importance in cardiovascular surgery patients in order to provide reliable and safe care to each one according to their own requirements. In this way, quality processes are managed in the provision of health services by professionals in this area.

The second year with the highest production was 2018, which records 67 documents within which is the one entitled "Work related to the quality of life of nursing professionals in the sterilization material center" (Nazareth, de ALMEIDA, & da SILVA, 2018) which proposes as an objective, to measure the quality of life of nursing staff within their workplace, understanding this perception as the concept of total quality which involves the opinion of users or customers, or in this case patients, but the staff working within the facilities of health centers. The paper applied a survey-type tool to 40 employees, of whom 50% stated that they were satisfied with the working conditions, 70.15% stated in the same question that the domain "use of skills" was the most relevant to motivate satisfaction among them. The main finding of the aforementioned study is that when analyzing the variables remuneration and fair compensation, they are closely related to psychometric variables of employees such as satisfaction, quality of life and professional motivation. The importance of similar studies is that by applying this type of tools it is possible to analyze the level of commitment that an employee may have in the execution of their work. In this case, the nursing staff, feeling that they are in a good place to work, give their potential in the care of patients who in turn will manifest the perception of quality desired by any organization.

4.3 Distribution of scientific production by country of origin.
Figure 3 shows that Brazil is the Latin American country with the highest production of publications concerning quality applied to nursing during the period 2015-2020 registering a total of 255 documents within which we referenced the article entitled "Stress factors of nursing students in their last year" (Mendes & Martino, 2020) which analyzes the emotional state of medical students in their last period of training to know detail of their motivations at the time of entering working life. In this way, it is possible to control and manage an emotional stability within the new nursing staff in search of quality in the provision of health care.

Colombia is the second country in Latin America with the second largest number of publications, although with a wide margin of difference with Brazil. There are 27 documents, including the one entitled "Patient safety culture in primary care nurses" (Camacho Rodriguez & Carvajal, 2018) whose objective is to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the patient safety culture in primary care nurses and its relationship with sociodemographic variables with the purpose of analyzing the state of safety in patients with this type of care, and to provide feedback on the processes through which care is provided to users. This makes it possible to reduce the risk of complications or errors in the procedures associated with patient care in health care centers.

Within the document management classified by country of origin, it is worth highlighting the contribution made by authors of different nationalities in different research projects. In this way, each document can be counted as a unit within the publication records for each country. Figure 1 shows how Latin American authors have interacted outside their nationalities.
Brazil is the country with the highest participation in co-authorship of scientific papers in Latin America, registering collaboration with authors from Portugal and Canada most of the time. Colombia, on the other hand, has published papers with authors from Spain, Mexico and Cuba. A third subset is made up of Argentina, Germany, Chile and the United Kingdom.

4.3 Distribution of scientific production by area of knowledge

Due to the nature of this research, Nursing is precisely the discipline with the largest number of records according to the Scopus database with a total of 239 documents, among which is the paper entitled "Evaluation of the professional performance of nurses under the theory of Patricia Benner" (Hernandez-Perez, Hernandez-Nunez, Molina-Borges, Hernandez-Sanchez, & Senan-Hernandez, 2020), which aims to measure the performance of nurses using this theory. A performance test and a competency observation guide were applied, reaching the conclusion that the nursing staff in the municipalities of Mayabeque province, where the tool was applied, have a
A high level of professional performance thanks to their ability to intuitively recognize patients' needs, which translates into patient satisfaction and perception of quality.

Medicine and Social Sciences, occupy the second and third place with 104 and 29 publications respectively during the period 2015-2020. From this last area of knowledge, the article entitled "The good nurse according to the elderly: who is kind, dedicated and who explains to me" (Davis-Toledo, Bustamante-Munoz, & Lopez-Caja, 2020), stands out and makes an analytical description of the perception of the service received by the nursing staff to elderly patients who described a good nurse as one who offers a good treatment to patients, explains each procedure practiced, which leads to a favorable opinion in the provision of the service by older adults and their families.

Other areas of knowledge involved in research on quality processes applied to nursing are Engineering, Health Professions, Biochemistry and Genetics, Environmental Sciences, among others.

4.4 Type of publication

Authors from all areas and countries of origin have different options for publishing their research papers. For the present study of publications referring to quality applied to nursing in Latin American countries during the period 2015-2020, 87% of the documents identified during the execution of phase 1 of the methodological design, correspond to journal articles. The 9% are reviews within which we mention the one titled "Effect of an educational program on the quality of the nursing process record" (De Melo, Da Silva, De Melo, Flores P.V.P., & Cavalcanti, 2019), whose objective is to verify the effect generated by the design of an educational program on the quality of the nursing process registry, revealing a significant improvement in the quality of nursing registries, leaving in evidence the need for the creation of a training program in the formation of quality in the registries implemented by the nursing staff for the control of their patients and their care. In this way, quality can be guaranteed in the delivery of treatment and care required by patients according to their individual requirements.

Conference papers total 4% of the total output within which we find the one entitled "Application of an effective methodology for the analysis of frailty and its components in the elderly" (Mello, et al., 2018) whose objective is to develop a multifunctional sensor to assess frailty, based on the marker phenotype and deficit accumulation index and "User-centered design practices for redesigning a nursing e-chart in line with the nursing process" (Schachner, et al., 2016) through which an interface is designed and proposed for the registration and monitoring of patients by nurses in order to improve the quality of this process based on a theoretical model adapted from Virginia Henderson. The above allows constant and systematized monitoring of patient registration with the help of technological advances.
V. CONCLUSIONS

The study of the variable quality applied to nursing in Latin America and its publications during the period 2015-2020 is led by Brazil, followed by Colombia, Chile, Cuba and Mexico. In 2020, the highest number of publications was registered, 68 in total, followed by 2018 with 67 and 2016 with 63. Within the period analyzed, 2017 presented the lowest number of publications during that period registering a total of 50 documents.

The perception of quality in the provision of health services by the nursing staff in medical institutions is marked by variables such as level of preparation, charisma, development of professional competencies, which generates in the patient an atmosphere of trust and comfort during treatment or moments in which he/she requires care from the nurses. On the other hand, according to the authors cited in this research, the perception of the nursing staff regarding their quality of life in their workplace is evaluated. This determines a vital factor in the interaction with patients, since it reveals positions of conformity to the working conditions in terms of remuneration, stability, work environment, conflict management and in general all the human management of the hospital centers. One of the aspects most taken into account in the studies identified through phase 1 of the methodological design is the documentary management of patient records in order to reduce the risks of errors in the practice of care programs for patients requiring both face-to-face and remote care, since after the pandemic generated by the spread of COVID-19 and the mobility restrictions decreed by governments worldwide, the provision of services such as education and health in many cases was limited to remote access, making it necessary to provide generalized training in new methodologies for the provision of health services.

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