PRODUCTION OF KNOWLEDGE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE RESEARCHER

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Forty years ago a post graduate stricto sensu in the nursing area was established in Brazil, with the first master’s degree in 1972 at the School of Nursing Anna Nery-UFRJ. Since then, the programs have been instituted in several Schools and Colleges of Nursing in Brazil and keep growing in quantity and quality.

Certainly the Graduate, master’s level and the doctoral boosted the research and, consequently, the production of knowledge about what matters to the field of health and nursing care - their science and art. There have been many achievements over these forty years, expressed both in political spaces occupied by nurses in the development agencies and in the evaluation programs, concerning the growing process of qualifying courses for the achievement of excellence, national and internationally. The struggles and challenges are constant and the gains have been evidenced in the gradual increase of grants to researchers and the achievements of numerous notices for promotion of research in the area.

The growth of nursing science is noticed in the advances that have been evidenced in the field of technologies in health care, both in process and in the product, which are closely linked to the dynamics of knowledge production. Nevertheless, even if we recognize these achievements and progress, it has been in the agenda of various meetings - appointments for the area evaluation and scientific events - the social responsibility that is up to us, the researcher’s own practice, with the production, dissemination and application of knowledge. This was even the central theme of the National Seminar on Nursing Research recently conducted in June 2013.¹

That focus debate in this area stands in the understanding that science must be in the service for the society, without it, there’s no sense for the production of knowledge. The researcher, in particular in the nursing area, which is the focus of this editorial, has a moral duty to address their research for the welfare of the society, comfort and to the human health care. Meanwhile, there is a sense of ethics in the work of the scientist who transcends the care applied in the process of developing a research project.

Thinking about the responsibility of the researcher, including ethics, science and knowledge production, is not restricted to the care and respect that is limited to the resolutions that regulate human research, although these are undeniably important. The principles of ethics in research and production of knowledge permeate from conception of the idea that will guide the study - which should be in favor of society / humanity - its constitutive processes and methods of approach - how to conduct the research - their potential risks and benefits and reality - as well as the uses to be made of its results, the choices by diffusion processes and the authorship of papers to be published.

The diffusion of produced knowledge, in presentations at national and international events, which put the researcher in direct contact with interlocutors, whether at the academy or when practicing, is one of the ways that promotes inter-subjectivity necessary for the scientific critical and marking on the characteristic of the practical application of research results that are produced in the field of science. Dialogue with peers about our productions, hear their criticisms and consider other viewpoints and arguments, is motivating and salutary: it does very well to science.

The publication of research results is an important broadcast device that expands the possibilities for its application, as it allows the other students to consume the knowledge being produced, debate, refute, replicate and apply. A survey is not complete if you have not published their results. A bound research, without visitation and citation, lies lonely and go down in history as an unfinished work.

Social responsibility and commitment by the researcher with the diffusion and application of knowledge produced is an important expression of the ethics of research, the producer should not settle for their product and be satisfied with the success of the results, only by the scope of the theoretical production. As part of the social responsibility of the researcher, the satisfaction must be collective, arising out the potential of its application and its effective transfer to a practical level, in an attempt of which has scientific and social impact with what was produced.

Doing research is a human act, and thus, is not out of ethics which makes us human: endowed with freedom, choice, decision and action. If we choose to walk through the field of science and decide to be part of the political-scientific game on this field, we should do the research with the responsibility and commitment that is required, after all, let’s be ethical.

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² 17º. Seminário Nacional de Pesquisa em Enfermagem (SENPE), realized by the Associação Brasileira de Enfermagem (ABEn), which subject was “O clássico e o emergente: desafios da produção, da divulgação e da utilização do conhecimento” from 3 to 5 June, 2013.