



Revista da Escola de Enfermagem da USP

ISSN: 0080-6234

reeusp@usp.br

Universidade de São Paulo

Brasil

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Revistas brasileiras de enfermagem: grandes conquistas, novos desafios

Revista da Escola de Enfermagem da USP, vol. 43, núm. 4, diciembre-enero, 2009

Universidade de São Paulo

São Paulo, Brasil

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## Brazilian nursing journals: great achievements, new challenges

Piotr Trzesniak<sup>1</sup>

*It was 1998 and I held a (less important) position on the Board of the Brazilian Association of Scientific Editors (ABEC – abbreviation in Portuguese). We were contacted by ABEn about giving a mini-course during the National Meeting in Salvador. Despite all the tourist attractions, all the more-important members were unable to attend; so there I went. It was my first adventure in nursing, though I had already ventured into library and information sciences, which gave me some, but not much, confidence.*

*There was, of course, some homework to do before I could go. Fortunately, the city where I worked, Itajubá, in the state of Minas Gerais, is home to Wenceslau Brás School of Nursing and its library. I went there to check what Brazilian nursing journals were available, and found about 15 titles – all in print. Attention all of you under 30 years of age: until not so long ago – let's say half a generation – there were no electronic journals!*

*In September 2009, there were five only in SciELO (one of which is also in RedALyC), in addition to another five (different) journals using the SEER/OJS platform (without mentioning some of general health journals, which include nursing). What riches, what happiness. You see, I obtained this information in 10 minutes, in a single session to prepare this text. Hence, undoubtedly, the first and greatest achievement of Science (in terms of infrastructure, if we can refer to it as such) was electronic dissemination. Nursing (as an area) and this REEUSP of us all has remained completely in tune during this transition.*

*Another relevant change concerns indexing. I did not check this information in 1998. It would be possible for me to find it today, but what good would it serve? It is almost certain that there were a few in the LILACS index, but not much more than that. Today, there is a much more thriving panorama, starting with the databases themselves, which are much broader in terms of titles, much friendlier in terms of queries, and much, much quicker in providing answers.*

*Also, within this aspect, over the last few years, REEUSP has done great work with SciELO, ISI/Thomson Reuters, and Scopus. Names that imply respect from the community, prestige for the journal, and satisfaction for the editorial team from the feeling of doing a good job.*

*I believe I have said enough about accomplishments, but challenges are what really matter. I think I had the greatest challenge on one of my 1998 transparencies. At that time, slides were handwritten on a transparent plastic film using a special little pen.*

*This is what I wrote: I went to the library and found several journals. I thought of improvements that could be made to some of them, but I had one doubt: what knowledge pertains to nursing alone? What part is not borrowed from other areas? I do not know, but I am sure that you do.*

*Yes, I am sure that you editors who were there in 1998 knew. But do all the other nurses and those few everyone know? Nursing is an area in which practice is much more developed and active than its scientific aspect, and its professionals are often too busy to think academically. Nevertheless, it should be done for at least two reasons: (i) from the perspective of the evaluation by CAPES (Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel, abbreviation in Portuguese), all areas are predominantly scientific; and (ii) despite one not being an academic, one should have the view of a scientist (I will explain later) to be able to produce good articles.*

*Oops, I ended up mentioning the second great challenge (good articles) before I concluded the first (the particular science of nursing). It would be better to address one at a time.*

*Nursing science: if I entered the ABEn Congress troubled about this issue, it did not take long for me to calm down. I found that care is the nursing science, and this relieved me. Information can come from Psychology, Physics, Biochemistry, or Economics: nursing will add the care dimension to it and transform it into its own knowledge.*

*A little should be explained about how a physicist thinks: this ... ethnic group becomes satisfied with a plausible hypothesis and sticks to it until it is revealed inadequate. They do not really care if it is correct or not. Therefore, if a certain idea of care is correct, great. But, if it is not correct, it is great too: in the next editorial, a nurse, who, different from me, really understands about the subject, can write an editorial correcting me...*

*(but please do not hit me too hard, first see the last paragraph).*

*Good articles result from the combination of new knowledge and many individuals involved in the editorial process complying with their respective roles. Many years ago, I defined that process as being a cordial complicity among authors, reviewers and editors towards the excellence of knowledge. That concept pleases me until today, and I will now try to make it clearer.*

*1. Knowledge: a scientific article should represent advancement in knowledge, based on an original study. As a very brief explanation, knowledge is what makes us able to control the universe (natural and human) to benefit humanity (survival, pleasure, quality of life, leisure). Before the study, knowledge does not exist: after completing the study, knowledge is revealed, but still does not exist! Only after being published on a journal with visibility, does knowledge come into existence!*

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2. The role of the editor: *the editor's major responsibility is to make the best and most updated knowledge available for humanity. Best knowledge does not refer to that having only two positive reviews, rather, it refers to that which (i) is well constructed and justified, and (ii) is relevant (i.e., it will have direct results for the good of humanity), or (iii) it will provide support for other studies that will result in direct benefits for humanity (has a potential for serving as reference).*

The editor should be positive about the quality of what is being published!

3. The role of the author: *first, research, research, and research, becoming pregnant with new knowledge. When gestation is complete (don't worry, you'll know when the time is right), then write!*

*Do not submit the article wishing, expecting, demanding it to be published, but keep a spirit of knowledge construction. The journals' editorial process is part of that construction; the final version of a manuscript is not complete knowledge.*

*One should certainly want, expect, and demand good reviews, and be ready to rewrite the paper taking into consideration the constructive suggestions (it is the editor's duty to ensure that reviews are good and constructive).*

Authors should be positive about the quality of what they are submitting! *Never make random submissions, thinking what comes is gain; never delegate to superiors, transferring author responsibilities, especially trivial corrections, to reviewers and editors.* Such opportunist actions make authors a duly target of harsh responses from the editor and/or reviewers.

4. The role of the reviewer: *remember that every reviewer has a day as an author. Do you expect good and constructive reviews, on time? Then provide good and constructive reviews, on time!*

*Your reward, your greatest return for the good reviews you provide will be the reviews you receive.*

5. More for the editor: *The editor should take care that (i) reviewers only receive promising manuscripts, and (ii) authors always receive good and constructive reviews.*

*I promised something special for the final paragraph, and it is a very personal message to the nursing community. It was indeed very easy to find copies of my 1998 transparencies among the many papers I have collected over 40 years (I started really young!) of academic life, despite having moved three times (and they say that two is already enough to compare to a fire!). The reason for this is not my being a very organized person. It is that I keep a true love affair with nursing and, if it did not become evident in the previous paragraphs, I want to make it very clear here.*

*And thank you very, very much for the generous welcome.*