

REFERENCES USED IN THE MIDDLE RANGE NURSING THEORIES: INTEGRATIVE REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Objective: To identify the theoretical references used in the elementary studies of Brazilian nursing for the development of Middle Range Nursing Theories.

Method: Integrative literature review with data collection at the Thesis Bank of the Higher-Level Personal Improvement Coordination and at the Brazilian Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations of the Brazilian Institute of Information in Science and Technology, held between September and November of 2018.

Results: After selecting the 6,498 enlisted studies, four addressed Middle Range Nursing Theories. Among the theoretical references, two used the Imogene King Theory of Goal Attainment and two the Roy Adaptation Model.

Conclusion: It was observed that the references used for the construction of the Middle Range Nursing Theories in the primary studies of Brazilian nursing were the Imogene King Theory of Goal Attainment and Roy's Adaptation Model.

Keywords: Theoretical Models; Nursing Theory; Nursing.

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INTRODUCTION

Theory is an organized, coherent and systematic articulation of a set of statements related to significant aspects of a subject, which are established in a comprehensive way to describe or explain a phenomenon, or a set of phenomena[1-3]. In this sense, Nursing Theory can be defined as a set of interrelated, articulated, logical and systematic concepts of statements related to meaningful inquiries, with the clear purpose of explaining or predicting facts/events[3].

Other authors define Nursing Theory as a relation between concepts, with the purpose of describing, explaining, predicting or prescribing Nursing care, thus, this Theory can be established to propagate ideas or a new view in the nature of a phenomenon of concern[4].

Theories can be classified according to complexity, degree of abstraction and present themselves in divisions namely: the metatheory that presents the philosophical base of the subject, the great theory that has a comprehensive conceptual structure, the Middle Range Nursing Theory with a limited number of concepts of restricted scope, and the theory of practice that explains the specific prescriptions to a given situation[5].

With respect to the Middle Range Nursing Theories, these have the potential to guide practice, and are considered as the result of theoretical thinking to summarize and instate nursing knowledge[6]. These can be understood as a way of filling gaps between theory and research, as well as increasing the evidence for quality practice and for better grounding teaching in this field. Thus, the connection between the Middle Range Nursing Theory and research strengthens the development of knowledge by providing key concepts and supporting the relationship between them that can be translated into measurable variables and therefore applicable to the clinical context[7].

The Middle Range Nursing Theories focus on specific phenomena of practice[8]. In this way, due to its feasible applicability to the nursing profession, the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development recognizes the axis of theories and methodologies for its ability to make effective knowledge products and of wide validity[9].

Systematic review focusing on nursing Theories has highlighted an increase in the literature published in nursing journals on the development and use of this theory[10]. Another systematic review on Nursing Theories concluded that approximately 40% of

the published theories were on Middle Range Nursing Theories[11].

The development of Middle Range Nursing Theories is considered a relevant step for the growth of nursing knowledge, and for its construction, it is recommended to use a comprehensive conceptual model in the area of nursing[6]. That is, it is recommended to use the great theories, theoretical references, for presenting global perspectives, framework and theoretical support[4]. It is believed that researchers and nursing professionals when appropriate theoretical frameworks to support their actions contribute to the transformation of professional practice as well as favors the contiguity of theoretical and methodological concepts.

Thus, in view of the above, it is confirmed that knowing the references used for nursing care based on Middle Range Nursing Theories is a robust and plausible alternative to conjugate research-theory-practice with a view to the advancement of nursing knowledge. Based on these considerations, the objective of this study was to identify the theoretical references used in the primary studies of Brazilian nursing for the development of Middle Range Nursing Theories.

METHODOLOGY

The integrative review was chosen as a method to reach the objective of the study, since it fits in the comprehensive methodological strategy that allows searching, critical evaluation and synthesis of relevant evidences[12] on the theoretical references adopted in the Middle Range Nursing Theories in Brazilian nursing. It is understood that the objective of a dissertation and, above all, of a thesis is to contribute to the scientific advance. In this context, Brazil has several primary studies not yet analyzed, and it is considered opportune and original to carry out this study on national scientific production.

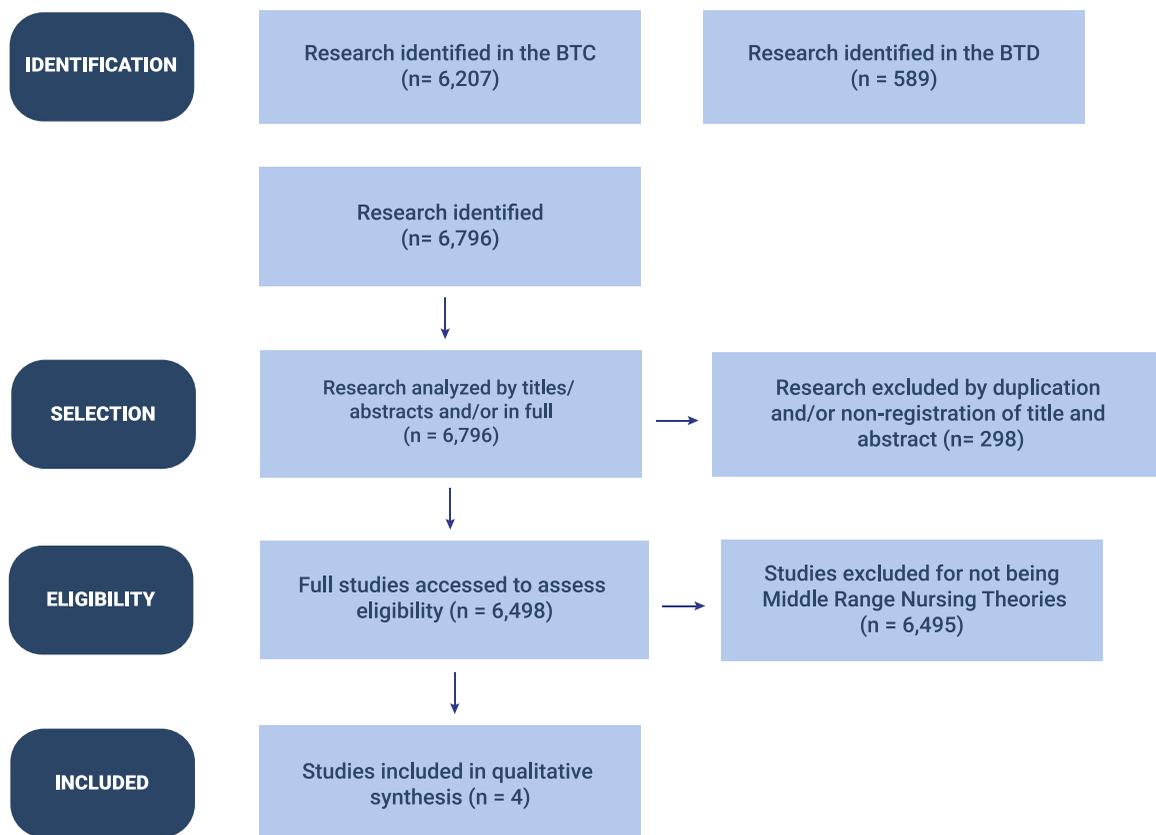
This review was developed in six stages[13]. The first was the identification of the theme and the selection of the research question: What are the theoretical references used in the primary studies of Brazilian nursing in the Middle Range Nursing Theories?

In the second stage, inclusion and exclusion criteria of studies were established. The following inclusion criteria were considered: theses and dissertations available at the Thesis Bank of the Higher-Level Personal

Improvement Coordination (BTC/CAPES) and at the Brazilian Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations of the Brazilian Institute of Information in Science and Technology (BDTD/IBICT), and produced in Nursing Post-Graduate Programs, with a focus on Middle Range Nursing Theories in the period from 2014 to 2018. We chose this temporal cut-off to be able to synthesize and approach the most recent knowledge regarding the use of Middle Range Nursing Theories. The exclusion criteria were: repeated studies and not available online in full.

The search and analysis of the literature were carried out from September to November of 2018, in the BTC/CAPES and in the BDTD/IBICT. The following descriptors were used: "Nursing Model" and "Nursing Theory", according to the Descriptors in Health Sciences (DeCS). Both BTC and BDTD we used Advanced Search. In the BTC, the following refinements were applied: "Master and Doctorate", "Year", this being the last five years. Afterwards, it was applied the refinement "Health Sciences", "Nursing Knowledge Area", totaling 681 studies. In BTD, the search was done using the descriptors "Nursing Model" and "Nursing Theory", using the advanced search and "All Fields" and "All Terms" options, which totaled 589 studies.

Subsequently, a new search was made in the BTC database, using the term "Middle Range Nursing Theories", the refinement occurred by "Master and Doctorate", "Year", being in the last five years, "Health Sciences", "Nursing Knowledge Area", "Nursing Evaluation Area". Thus, 5,526 studies were obtained. Of the 6,796 studies, two were excluded because they were not available in full, 296 were excluded because they were repeated, totaling 6,498 studies. For this selection process, the recommendations of the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyzes (PRISMA) were used, as shown in Figure 1.



Source: adapted from PRISMA model

Figure 1 Selection flowchart of primary studies for integrative review - Brazil, 2018.

The 6,498 researches were analyzed by reading the titles, abstracts and, if necessary, the full texts, in order to identify which of them approached Middle Range Nursing Theories. In this way, four Brazilian studies that addressed the theme were identified, being one dissertation and three theses. In the third stage, the texts were read in full. The fourth stage was characterized by the

completion and evaluation of an instrument prepared by the authors, with the data of the selected publications, containing information on the title, objective, methodology and theoretical framework adopted. The fifth stage consisted of the discussion and interpretation of the results obtained, followed by the sixth stage, with the presentation of the evidences found.

RESULTS

After applying the eligibility criteria, a dissertation published in 2017 and three theses published in 2015, 2016 and 2018 were selected. Among the Brazilian universities that produced the studies are the Anna Nery Nursing School (Federal University of Rio de Janeiro - UFRJ) with two theses; the Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte (UFRN) with a dissertation and the Federal University of Ceará (UFC) with one dissertation.

All the studies were of qualitative approach, one of them of the methodological type and three theorists; three used the Integrative Review of Literature (one methodological and two theorists) as the first stage of the construction of the Middle Range Nursing Theories and to support the elaboration of the concepts. Two were validated by judges (methodological and theoretical) and two carried out conceptual analysis (theoretical), as presented in Table 1.

TITLE	OBJECTIVE	METHODOLOGY	THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK
Nursing Medium-Sized Theory of Attention in Mental Health ^[14] .	To propose a Middle Range Nursing Theories for mental health based on Imogene King (1981) ^[17] and on the conceptual and philosophical aspects of the Unified Health System.	Theorist of analytical nature. The analysis of conceptual nursing models proposed by Fawcett (2005) ^[18] and the knowledge analysis proposed by Gowin (1984) ^[19] were performed.	Imogene King's Middle Range Nursing Theory (1981) ^[17] .
Construction and validation of the Nursing risk diagnosis of excessive fluid volume from a Middle Range Nursing Theory ⁷ .	To propose the nursing diagnosis Risk of excessive fluid volume in patients submitted to hemodialysis from a Middle Range Nursing Theory.	Methodological research, developed in three stages: theoretical-causal validation, content validation and clinical-causal.	Roy's Adaptation Model (2014)
A middle range theory of breastfeeding: care technology ^[15] .	To elaborate a Middle Range Nursing Theory of Breastfeeding, based on Imogene King's Open Systems Conceptual Model.	Theoretical, descriptive-exploratory and, to elaborate the theory, followed the Walker and Avant model (2005).	Imogene King's Theory of Goal Attainment (1981).
Ineffective respiratory pattern in children with congenital heart defects: construction and validation by judges of a Middle Range Nursing Theory ^[16] .	To develop a Middle Range Nursing Theory that defines and explains the elements and processes that lead to the establishment of the Ineffective respiratory pattern nursing diagnosis.	Theoretical study, used the model proposed by Lopes, Silva and Herdman (2015).	Roy's Adaptation Model (2014)

Chart 1 Characterization of studies on Middle Range Nursing Theories - Brazil, 2018.

Regarding the evidences found, all the studies mentioned that the Middle Range Nursing Theory is verifiable in the nursing clinical practice, it allows to produce technologies for the care, favors the application of the nursing process and the practical use of the theoretical references adopted to a context or need for care.

DISCUSSION

The interest in the Middle Range Nursing Theory is opposed to the broad dialogue between academic and service when considering the great nursing theories, wide or abstract, to directly guide the interventions[17]. Regarding to construction, the Middle Range Nursing Theories can usually follow an inductive or deductive orientation and even conciliate both. The deductive strategies are based on great theories or theoretical models, while the inductive orientation starts from the data to organize and build a new theory[6,20].

In this way, the general steps for the formulation of a Middle Range Nursing Theory can be: induction through research and practice; combination of Nursing and non-nursing Theories; derivation of theories

from other subjects that relate to nursing; derivation of practical guidelines and standards based on research and deduction or application of great theories[17,21]. Other authors classify procedures as: induction of practice; research induction; concept construction followed by test in research and practice; deduction from theories of higher abstraction level, and derivation from theories of other subjects[22].

The procedures that were adopted in the analyzed Brazilian studies were by the deductive method, that is, they are derivations of great theories or have theoretical support. This procedure diverges from other countries when it is observed that the construction of Middle Range Nursing Theories occurred by the inductive method (construction of theories through data)[23], or even, they were derived from subjects other than nursing[24-25], or practice guidelines or standards of care[21].

Among the theoretical references used, two theses[14-15] opted for Imogene King's Theory of Goal Attainment (1981)[17]. This author does not propose steps for the construction of Medium-Sized Theories[17], and the studies analyzed that derive from this Theory were of the theoretical type, one of them used the conceptual analysis proposed

by Fawcett (2005)[14,18] and the other the analysis of concepts proposed by Walker and Avant (2005)[4,15].

Another framework used was Roy's Adaptation Model[26]. This evokes that the Middle Range Nursing Theories can be developed from existing research, to become evidence for practice. The Model stipulates six steps to be followed for the construction of a Middle Range Nursing Theory, namely: select studies by similarity; analyze, classify and select the main concepts of the studies; evaluate if the concepts identified are discrete and observable, and if they have a level of abstraction that can be generalized through clinical situations; draw a pictogram from the interrelationship of the identified concepts; proposing theoretical statements or propositions based on the interrelationships of the selected concepts; and to create the new middle range nursing theory based on the evidence of research findings[26].

In this study, it was observed that among the works that used Roy's framework for the construction of Middle Range Nursing Theories, a thesis was conducted through theoretical-causal validation, content validation and clinical-causal[7], and a dissertation[16] was developed from the model proposed by Lopes, Silva and Herdman (2015).

It should be noted that in the methodological study[7] the researchers opted for the validation of nursing diagnoses through a case-control study; and one of the theoretical studies[16] carried out a literature integrative review and validation by judges, creating a pictogram to synthesize and analyze causal propositions and relationships.

Although there are divergences in the use of different methodological frameworks for the construction of the Middle Range Nursing Theories, all the dissertations and theses analyzed here prove their feasibility to the professional nursing practice. In this sense, the Middle Range Nursing Theories, because they are located halfway to the great theories and of the practice, keep characteristics of theoretical and methodological references. And, in this way, they provide a practical way for nurses to connect the philosophical perspectives of the subjects with the real world, and to transcend theory and clinical practice[6]. However, of the 6,498 theses and dissertations initially analyzed, only four were included in the study because they presented the development of the Middle Range Nursing Theory and the theoretical and methodological references of its construction. The exclusion of most research reinforces the need for discussions about the

future of nursing, especially due to the need to overcome scientific objectivity and the technical and clinical tendency of the productions in this field.

CONCLUSION

The synthesis of the knowledge achieved with this work reveals that the main theoretical references adopted in the constructions of Middle Range Nursing Theories are Imogene King and Roy's Theory. In addition, it shows the incipience of dissertations and theses regarding the use of theoretical frameworks for the construction of Middle Range Nursing Theories in the Brazilian Nursing area. The study had as limit the incompleteness in the register of the investigations in the two Brazilian theses banks, which still do not make available all the works in full.

To propose the elaboration of instruments, explanatory models and studies of Nursing Theories, associated with the application in practice and adaptation to the different experiences, are increasingly necessary, since they provide theoretical basis for the professional work of nursing and assist in the confrontation of the contemporary world transformations.

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