

## **A STUDY OF THE INCREASE OF LIBRARY USE AND NURSING RESEARCH IN SPAIN**

**Rosa de Dios, et al**

*translated from the spanish by Jane Badley*

### **Introduction**

The idea for this work started to develop when a group of Spanish librarians attended the "IV Jornadas de trabajo de la Adea", a conference on scientific information and health care held in Granada, 12-13 November 1993.

The conference discussed the lack of interest shown by the nursing profession in research and its possible causes.

The conference debate made us consider the lack of motivation for nursing research at a time when the number of inquiries in our libraries was increasing and there was a growing interest on the part of the professionals.

Therefore we decided to study the changing dynamics in our libraries and their possible causes.

### **Objectives**

To describe the change that is taking place in the nursing profession in relation to the use of libraries and research and to examine the reasons why this change is taking place.

### **Justification**

We believe that nursing research should receive support from its libraries/centres of information.

As specialists in information we are in constant contact not only with the nursing profession but also with students, the future professionals.

Our involvement and responsibility in the development of users and, in some cases, as collaborating teachers in the optional subject "Methodology of Research" have driven us to deepen our knowledge in the field of nursing research.

### **Materials and Methods**

We examined the library borrowing in the last three years of seven university nursing schools in Catalonia in Spain. These are: del Mar, Sant Joan de Deu, Santa Madrena, Vall d'Hebron, Rovira Vergili, 'Crue Roja' de Terrassa, d'Andorra. We considered this period since borrowing and lending had begun to be counted in these centres as they now have a graduate "documentalista". The library of Blanquerna was excluded as the School of Nursing was only opened during the academic year 1992-1993.

We also assessed the increase and range of the bibliographical material used and the process of computerisation in this period.

We examined three Spanish general nursing journals. The journals chosen for this study were *Enfermeria Cientifica* (Scientific

Nursing), *Enfermeria Clinica* (Clinical Nursing) and *Revista Rol de Enfermeria* (Journal of the Role of Nursing). The criterion that was followed was to include only Spanish journals on general nursing by Spanish authors. That is why the translation of the American journal Nursing is not included. We also included the journal *Enfermeria Cientifica* (Scientific Nursing) although this journal started with articles translated from other languages, because at present it meets our criteria. We also excluded Spanish journals that specialise in one subject.

We chose for the sample the first whole year of publication of each of the journals (except for *Enfermeria Clinica* since it was first published in 1991 and thus would not otherwise be represented) and the year 1993 since the year 1994 had not then ended.

We could not make any comparisons with the journal *Enfermeria Clinica* but it was useful to reinforce the results from the other two.

To collect the material we devised an index card. In this index the variables of the authors, their profession, whether the article had a bibliography and its typology (periodicals, books, grey literature) were collected.

We chose the indicators of productivity so as to follow the procedures advised by the International Council of Nursing for the evaluation of research (number of publications based in the research, distribution of these publications, frequency of quotations, etc.).

## Results

With regard to the use of libraries, borrowing has increased from a total of 9,601 items in the academic year 1991-1992 to 14,865 items in the academic year 1992-1993 to 21,824 items in the academic year 1993-1994.

With regard to the range of users, the number of students has increased (from 75.96% for the academic year 1991-1992 to 81.77% for the academic year 1992-1993) and welfare professionals (from 4.66% in the academic year 1991-1992 to 5.48% in the academic year 1993-1994); on the other hand the number of teachers has decreased (from 19.37% in 1991-1992 to 12.73% in 1993-1994).

With regard to the acquisition of periodical publications there has been an increase in subscription to foreign journals (in the academic year 1991-1992 there was a total of 17.91% while in the academic year 1993-1994 they were 50.54% of the total), while subscription to national journals kept pace with the rate of publication.

The number of items acquired by our libraries has also increased in the last three years, from 1660 books and 143 audiovisuals in the academic year 1991-1992 to 2350 books and 337 audiovisuals in the year 1993-1994.

With regard to the computerisation of libraries, in the academic year 1991-1992 there were two Schools which were computerised, while for the academic year 1993-1994, 5 schools are now computerised. Two schools also have CD-ROM for their users.



As for the journals, we obtained 51 copies of journals for the sample, with a total of 431 articles. We examined 222 articles contained in 22 numbers of *Enfermeria Cientifica*; 48 articles contained in 6 numbers of *Enfermeria Clinica*; 161 articles contained in 23 numbers of *Revista Rol de Enfermeria*.

The total number of authors cited was 830, comprising 400 from *Enfermeria Cientifica*, 151 from *Enfermeria Clinica* and 279 from *Revista Rol de Enfermeria*.

The background of the authors was found to be, for *Enfermeria Cientifica* for the year 1983, 33 academics, 32 nurses, 56 doctors and 15 people from other professions. For the year 1993 *Enfermeria Cientifica* included as authors 103 academics, 101 nurses, 15 doctors, 15 from other professional and 7 students.

The background of the authors found in *Revista Rol de Enfermeria* in 1979 was 23 academics, 39 nurses, 7 doctors and 14 people of other professions, while the same journal showed that in 1993 there were 62 academics, 82 nurses, 11 doctors and 29 people of other professions writing the articles.

The background of authors found in *Enfermeria Clinica* in 1993 was 45 teachers, 105 nurses and one person from another profession.

In relation to the first years of publication, there has been a notable increase in the inclusion of bibliographies in the articles.

*Enfermeria Cientifica* in 1983 included a bibliography in only 6% of the articles, whilst in 1993 it was of the order of 96%. In *Revista Rol de Enfermeria* in 1979, 63% of the articles included a bibliography but in 1993 94% included one. The journal *Enfermeria Clinica* in 1993 included a bibliography in all of its articles.

With regard to the range of the material cited by the authors, there was a great increase in the use of periodical publications (in 1970 in *Revista Rol de Enfermeria* 34.27% of the citations were from serials while in 1993 this had increased to 52.78%). This compares with a considerable decrease of the number of monographs cited (in 1979 *Revista Rol de Enfermeria* 51.64% were quotations from books compared with 1993 when it was 39.89%).

### Conclusion

The increasing importance of nursing research implies that the nursing profession as well as information professionals are uniting to achieve the same aim: to promote a policy of quality and develop a habit for research.

From our point of view we consider that the information that we have contributed about the use of libraries is relevant for it reflects the parallel growth of the use of libraries with nursing research in the last few years. Thus the number of borrowers and the number of items acquired on behalf of all the centres which have contributed to this study has been verified. There has been a significant increase in the purchase of titles published abroad (books as well as journals) which are related to the inquiries instigated because of new information technology which gives access to information on scientific nursing research from all over the world. With regard to the number

of bibliographical references in the articles studied we see a connection between this and the increase in the use of bibliography, and therefore the use of libraries. We have also observed an interest from publishers in publishing nursing bibliographical material (as well as translations from originals).

We have also been able to prove that in 1993, the majority of the professionals that publish in nursing journals belong to the nursing profession; this is different from what used to happen in the first years of publication, when professionals from other areas, such as doctors, economists, psychologists, etc. were the main authors.

In this short period of time, due to the acceleration of the information process (in the last three years the majority of our libraries have been computerised) and the presence of other supporting material, as for example CD-ROM, access to information has ceased to be an obstacle for the professional nurse. In this process of accessing information, the user has to make an effort to use these new technologies as and when their own investigation requires it.

Libraries provide support at all times, widening access to information and bibliographical sources, educating users (especially students, the future professionals) and, in short, facilitating the road to research for the nursing profession.

*The above is a summary of a more detailed report produced by Rosa de Dios (EUE del Mar), Isabel Coma (EU Creu Roja), Alicia Martin (EUE Sant Joan de Deu), Angels Canal (EUE Sta Madrena), Marta Miguel (EUE Vall d'Hebron), Carme Montcusi (EUE Tarragona), Rosa Sunyer (EUE Blanguerna), Anna Llorens (EUE Andorra).*

*Further information from Carme Montcusi Puig,  
Universitat Rovira I Virgili  
Biblioteca Seccio D'Infermeria  
Dr Mallfre Guasch, 4  
43007 Tarragona, Espania.*