Clinical differential validation of nursing diagnosis using Q methodology: innovative approach

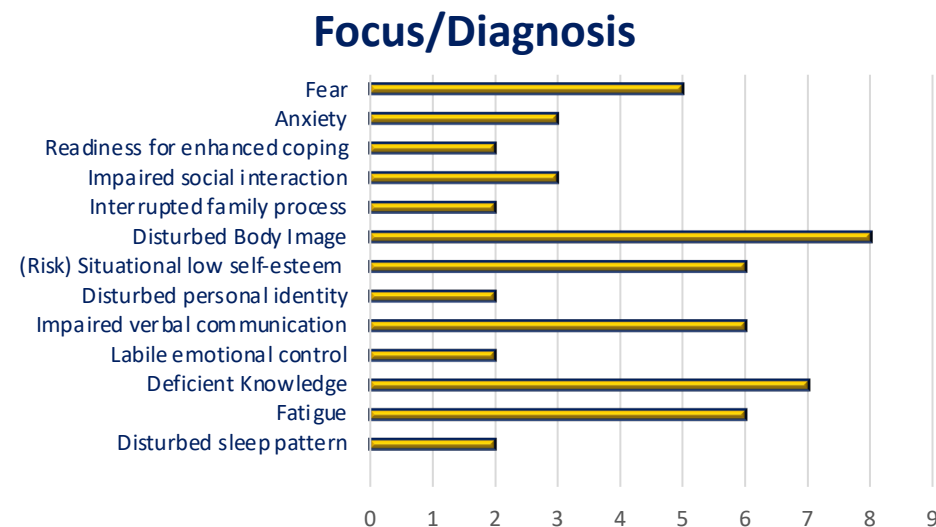Silvia Caldeira PhD, MSc, RN[1]; Susana Miguel MSc, RN[2] ; Tiago Casaleiro MSc, MRS, RN[2];Helga Martins RN[2];
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Introduction

The **human responses** of head and neck cancers patients were identified in the literature review. However, most **diagnoses are subjective**, and the clinical validation could improve the level of evidence and provide nurses with clinical indicators for clinical reasoning and effective planning and interventions.

Nurses' focus of interest concerns the human responses to life and health transitions, and these comprise subjective phenomena, which are sometimes difficult to measure or understand.

Q methodology has been described as a great promise to improve the study of the subjective phenomenon because combines qualitative and quantitative research in a more structured way[1]. This methodology is based on the assumption that **subjective phenomena** are **transmissible** and **accessible** to **systematic analysis**[2].

Aim

The aim of this work is to provide a critical analysis of clinical differential validation of nursing diagnosis using Q methodology.

Methods

A critical analysis of clinical differential validation of nursing diagnosis using Q methodology.

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Results

Focus/Diagnosis

- Fear
- Anxiety
- Readiness for enhanced coping
- Impaired social interaction
- Interrupted family process
- Disturbed Body Image
- (Risk) Situational low self-esteem
- Disturbed personal identity
- Impaired verbal communication
- Labile emotional control
- Deficient Knowledge
- Fatigue
- Disturbed sleep pattern

We have **Subjective Diagnosis** → We need **Clinical Validation** → We have **Similar Diagnosis** → We need **Differential Validation**

Q METHODOLOGY
- Study of the subjective phenomenon;
- Combines qualitative and quantitative research;
- Subjective phenomena are transmissible and accessible to systematic analysis.

Conclusions

The diagnoses identified in this population are predominantly subjective. Therefore, it is necessary to carry out studies of differential validation by the similarity of some diagnostics and their defining characteristics.

The **Q methodology** has been used in **nursing** research at an International level to study **subjective phenomena** in different contexts. This type of methodology allows the integration of qualitative and quantitative procedures, facilitating understanding **subjective human responses** regarding the health/disease process.

Implications for nursing pratice

The differential validation of these subjective foci, with Q methodology, could improve evidence and provide nurses with clinical indicators for clinical reasoning and effective planning and interventions.

References

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