

THE PIONEERING ROLE OF THE BRAZILIAN NURSING ASSOCIATION IN RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT: FROM THE JOURNAL TO THE RESEARCH CENTER

Pioneirismo da associação brasileira de enfermagem no desenvolvimento da pesquisa: da revista ao centro de pesquisa

Pionerismo de la asociación brasileña de enfermería en el desarrollo de la investigación: de la revista al centro de investigación

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ABSTRACT

The aim in this research is to analyze the initial initiatives of the *Associação Brasileira de Enfermagem* for the development of nursing research. Considering a time frame that encompasses the period from 1932 to 1971, when the *Revista Brasileira de Enfermagem* (Brazilian Nursing Journal), until the creation of the *Centro de Estudos e Pesquisas*, of the *Associação Brasileira de Enfermagem*. The sources used were written documents located in the Documentation Center of Anna Nery School of Nursing at *Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro* and in the Memory Center of the *Associação Brasileira de Enfermagem*, besides journal issues located in the Sectorial Library of the Graduate Program at Anna Nery School of Nursing. In this analysis, it is perceived that this association's efforts represented a true space of research and education of nurse researchers in Brazil.

Keywords: Nursing; History of nursing; Nursing Research.

RESUMO

O presente estudo tem como objetivo analisar as primeiras iniciativas da Associação Brasileira de Enfermagem para o desenvolvimento da pesquisa em enfermagem. Com um recorte temporal que engloba o período de 1932 a 1971, ano de criação da Revista Brasileira de Enfermagem à criação do Centro de Estudos e Pesquisas, da Associação Brasileira de Enfermagem. As fontes utilizadas foram documentos escritos localizados no Centro de Documentação da Escola de Enfermagem Anna Nery da Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro e no Centro de Memória da Associação Brasileira de Enfermagem, além de edições da revista localizadas na Biblioteca Setorial da Pós-Graduação da Escola de Enfermagem Anna Nery. Percebe-se, nesta análise, que os empreendimentos realizados por essa entidade representaram um verdadeiro espaço de investigação e de formação de enfermeiros pesquisadores no Brasil.

Palavras-chave: Enfermagem; História da Enfermagem; Pesquisa em Enfermagem.

RESUMEN

El presente estudio tiene como objetivo analizar las primeras iniciativas de la Asociación Brasileña de Enfermería para el desarrollo de la investigación en Enfermería. Con un recorte temporal que engloba el período de 1932 a 1971, año de la creación de la Revista Brasileira de Enfermagem (Revista Brasileña de Enfermería) hasta la creación del Centro de Estudios e Investigaciones de la Asociación Brasileña de Enfermería. Las fuentes utilizadas fueron documentos escritos localizados en el Centro de Documentación de la Escuela de Enfermería Anna Nery, de la Universidad Federal de Rio de Janeiro, y en el Centro de Memoria de la Asociación Brasileña de Enfermería, además de ediciones de la revista localizadas en la Biblioteca Sectorial de la Pos Graduación de la Escuela de Enfermería Anna Nery. Se percibe, en este análisis, que los emprendimientos realizados por esa entidad representaron un verdadero espacio de investigación y de formación de enfermeros investigadores en Brasil.

Palabras-clave: Enfermería; Historia de la Enfermería; Investigación en Enfermería.

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INTRODUCTION

This study is focused on the main contributions of the *Associação Brasileira de Enfermagem* (ABEn) to the development of nursing research. The aim is to analyze ABEn's initial initiatives for the development of nursing research. The time frame covers the period from 1932 till 1971. The initial year corresponds to the creation of the first nursing journal, and the final year to the creation of a Study and Research Center for Nursing. During the years under analysis, ABEn, created in 1926, was the only entity representing Brazilian nursing.

Thus, across several decades, nurses from the *Associação Brasileira de Enfermagem* struggled for the growth, development and social acknowledgement of the profession. Concerning research, ABEn has always been concerned with understanding the importance of its production, dissemination and consumption. In that sense, in 1932, ABEn created the first nursing journals, the current *Revista Brasileira de Enfermagem*. In addition, in 1940, the Nursing Week was established and, in 1947, the 1st National Congress of Nursing was held¹.

Another significant ABEn undertaking was the development of the first nursing research based on large figures, which was the Survey of Nursing Resources and Needs in Brazil (1956-1958). The final report deriving from this survey, entitled "Guidelines for Nursing in Brazil", was concluded in 1960¹.

To proceed with the data survey and execute the recommendations it contained, a commission was created, also funded by the Rockefeller Foundation. This support was suspended in 1962 though, when the previous commission was replaced by the Documentation and Study Commission, which was the main responsible for collecting numerical data about nursing schools and education until the mid-1970's¹.

At the graduate level, the 1968 University Reform (Law 5.540/68) established the non-severability principle of teaching and research and the requirement of *stricto sensu* graduate courses for the teaching career². In that sense, this reform created the opportunity for Brazilian nursing to undertake strategies to accumulate and institutionalize its scientific capital through the implementation of Master's programs, the first of which was implemented in 1972.

In that context, in 1971, the Assembly of ABEn Delegates, held during the XXIII Brazilian Congress of Nursing in Manaus, created the Study and Research Center in Nursing (CEPEn). It should be highlighted that the creation of this center precedes the creation and implementation of the nursing master's program in Brazil and the inclusion

of Nursing in the National Graduate Education System³. This "art of anticipating trends"^{4:28} is closely linked with the association members' accumulation of school capital and information capital, which allowed them to "apprehend the sense of the game, that is, the sense of the history of the game, referring to the future of the game"⁴.

This sense of the game was needed as, in the scientific context, individuals or institutions whose dispositions differ from the field's requirements, are at risk of always occupying a bad position, and hence bear all of the consequences of these positions. Nevertheless, these individuals or institutions can fight against the forces in this field, and not submit their dispositions to the existing structures, but instead try to conform them to their dispositions. For this game, the acquired dispositions - the *habitus* - determine the positions taken to submit or react to the forces at stake.

In view of the research problem, the following objective was put forward: To analyze the *Associação Brasileira de Enfermagem*'s initial initiatives for the development of nursing research.

METHOD

The primary sources for this historical-social study are documents located in the Documentation Center at Anna Nery School of Nursing, Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro; at the Memory Center of the *Associação Brasileira de Enfermagem* and at the Sectorial Library of the Graduate Program at Anna Nery School of Nursing. In the latter, the issues of the *Revista Brasileira de Enfermagem* published in the 1950's, 1960's and 1970's were located, each year containing three to four volumes. Data were collected between October 2010 and May 2012.

Among the different written documents that were consulted in the abovementioned collections to elaborate this study, institutional and official documents were selected, including: decree-laws, bylaws, regulations, regiments, reports, internal bulletins, circular letters, work policies, organizational charts, information bulletins and institutional letters.

The secondary sources, including papers and books about Nursing History, particularly published by the *Associação Brasileira de Enfermagem*, supported the analysis of the findings, also guided by the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of field and scientific capital.

The capital concept, borrowed from economics, plays a key role in Pierre Bourdieu's thinking. As regards scientific capital, the right to enter and continue in the scientific field depends on its accumulation, as the fields are the place for two forms of power, corresponding to two kinds of scientific capital: on the one hand, there is the power

that can be called temporary or political, that is, the power connected with the occupation of important positions. On the other hand, there is a specific power, called personal prestige, deriving from objectified or institutionalized acknowledgement by peers - competitors or a renowned fraction of the scientific field⁴.

The field concept, conceived as a space with different dimensions, was applied in the study to understand the strategies the nurses applied to assert the scientific capital that was collectively accumulated in and by the field (and therefore in an incorporated state)⁴. That is so because the scientific field reveals concurrent social constructions and countless representations aimed at "revealing and asserting a way of seeing"^{4:33}.

The project that originated this study received approval from the Research Ethics Committee at EEAN/HES-FA, on May 31st 2011 (Protocol 042/2011). This study contributes to previous publications on the theme through a deeper discussion on the development of Nursing research in Brazil. In that sense, it is justified by the fact that the current challenges are not new, especially regarding the international production and dissemination of knowledge and the strengthening of nursing education at the graduate level.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The initial movements of the *Associação Brasileira de Enfermagem* on behalf of research

In 1932, one of the first initiatives the *Associação Brasileira de Enfermagem* took was to respond to the American nurses' recommendations with regard to the social recognition of the profession, which is the creation of its own journals, called "Annaes de Enfermagem" at that time. This important initiative did not only permit better communication between the nurses, but also represented the first space in Brazil where the nurses gave visibility to their statements¹⁻⁵. It should be mentioned that, together with the National Congress of Nursing, started in the next decade (1947), the journal was the first intellectual environment nurses used as a nursing dissemination strategy.

The National Congresses of Nursing were renowned as one of ABEn's most important accomplishments, as they constituted the inspiration source for the development of nursing as a profession, and of nurses as citizens useful to society. At the end of the congresses, the recommendations were approved that would be forwarded to the different policy-making levels. These recommendations were important to guide the actions of ABEn's different boards of directors¹.

The first National Congress of Nursing was held in São Paulo, on March 18th-22nd 1947, at the University of São Paulo School of Nursing. The central theme was "Jointly elaborating an efficient nursing program, aiming for the development of the profession at a higher level"¹. As early as in its first version, the theme of the event demonstrated its proposal to collectively contribute to the development of the profession. In addition, the creation of the event clearly evidences the Association's investment in the production of space to accumulate institutional capital, as this capital "is essentially acquired through specific strategies"⁴, like participation in scientific meetings for example.

As regards the location of the event, the fact that a Southeastern state was chosen to host the first national congress is certainly justified by the fact that, together with Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo possesses a larger number of schools and graduated nurses. In addition, São Paulo was also the first State to create a section of ABEn (1945). That is the case because the choice of places in the social space is closely linked with the accumulation of symbolic capital (volume and weight) by the agents inserted in that space, as the different physically objectified social spaces tend to concentrate the rarest goods and their owners or users in certain places of the physical space, as opposed to the places that mainly or exclusively groups the most needy (poor suburbs, ghettos)⁶.

Therefore, by holding a congress in a state capital, the *Associação Brasileira de Enfermagem* distinguished both itself and the profession, as social acknowledgement is partially obtained through the appropriation of spatial positions in which the social positions are affirmed. Thus, "*the inhabited or appropriated space serves as a kind of spontaneous symbolization of the social space*"^{6:120} as, in a hierarchical society, there is no room that is not hierarchized and that does not express these hierarchies and social distances. In that sense, the capital is the place of the capital, that is, the place where the positive hubs of all fields and most agents in these dominant positions are concentrated⁶.

The keynote session was presided by Edith de Magalhães Fraenkel, who used to be the chairwoman of ABEn-São Paulo at that time. During the ceremony, the Minister of Education and Health, the Minister for Aeronautics, the Governor of São Paulo State and the Rector of the University of São Paulo were present. In addition, almost 20 Brazilian and North American officers and nurses at the service of the American Air Force attended¹. The presence of personalities from different spheres of the Brazilian and American society contributed to manifest the group to itself and others, as the formal establishment of the group, including rites, depends on the power of the establishing authorities and the addressees' willingness to know and acknowledge the institutional condi-

tions of a valid ritual. That is so because the rituals' symbolic efficacy varies with the addressees' degree of preparation, who are more or less willing to welcome the group⁷.

As from 1956, the National Congress of Nursing was called the Brazilian Congress of Nursing and, in 1957, ten years after the first event, the Edith de Magalhães Fraenkel Award was founded for the best "nursing research" studies. This was also the first award ABEn created¹.

The establishment of an award served not only as a stimulus to enhance scientific production, but also as a device that started outlining social differences that would value nurses' scientific capital, in view of a new order that announced the importance of research for the development of Brazilian nursing. Underlying the efforts to encourage scientific efforts was Edith de Magalhães Fraenkel's updated symbolic capital, in view of the choice of her name for such an important award. Edith presided the association for 15 years (1927-1938/ 1941-1943/ 1948-1950) and was always present during the activities of the Association and the nursing community in general¹.

Initially, the "Edith de Magalhães Fraenkel" award was offered to the best research in the Operating Room area. Upon the decision of ABEn, in 1970, one year after her death, the award was offered to the best research presented during the Congress¹. This change increased the possibilities for more participants to run for the award, stimulating the qualitative improvement in the presented studies and consequently enhancing the visibility of the award granted during the congress in the scientific nursing community. This visibility was also important for the winner of the award because the scientific capital is a particular kind of symbolic capital (prestige, good reputation, fame), which corresponds to the scientific acknowledgement or credit attributed by peers - competitors inside the scientific field. Thus, the award granted prestige to the winner and the personality who lent her name.

Moreover, the link between Edith's name and an award and the expansion of the theme area symbols a strategy to consecrate and eternalize the founders of Brazilian nursing, preserving their memory for posterity, as this type of nomination immortalizes the person who is represented, permitting the intentional or implicit expression of a social identity.

In the year ABEn celebrated its 30th anniversary (1956), the Survey of Nursing Resources and Needs started in Brazil. The Final Report of the Survey, entitled "Guidelines for Nursing in Brazil" was published in 1960. Based on the results, recommendations were forward to several Ministries, Universities and Schools and Programs for Baccalaureate and Auxiliary Nurses, among other institutions. The

results did not only indicate more general issues related to the profession, but also identified data that served as a parameter to analyze the population's health conditions and the professionals' situation in their professional practice¹⁻⁸.

The Documentation and Study Commission, created in 1962, was aimed at producing statistical information needed for the activities of the Association and to respond to the requests of public entities and communication means. This commission was officially established and regulated in the ABEn Bylaws in 1965¹.

The coordinators of the Documentation and Study Commission were: Amália Corrêa de Carvalho (1964-1968), Glete de Alcântara (1968-1970), Anayde Corrêa de Carvalho (1970-1972), Nilza Dias da Rocha Medeiros and Anayde Corrêa de Carvalho (1976-1980)¹. As a result of the new Bylaws in 1976, the Documentation and Study Commission was called the Commission of Scientific and Documentation Activities (CACID).

As a way to continue the report of the Survey of Nursing Resources and Needs in the educational area, in 1969, the Documentation and Study Commission presented a document about the situation of Nursing Schools between 1956 and 1969. A summary of that document was published in a folder, which presented the evolution of nursing education, including statistical data and information about nursing staff. It should be highlighted that the commission's reports pictured the situation of Nursing in terms of its professionals' quantitative preparation, permitting the planning of future actions. These reports represented the main published data source about Brazilian nursing¹.

During the 1960's, ABEn continued its work on behalf of the profession, mainly regarding the encouragement of nursing research in Brazil. In that sense, it is highlighted that, on May 30th 1963, Glete de Alcântara, the former chairwoman of the *Associação Brasileira de Enfermagem* (mandate 1952-1954) participated in a public exam held in Ribeirão Preto/SP to become a Full Professor on chair number 4 - History of Nursing and Ethics, at the University of São Paulo at Ribeirão Preto College of Nursing (EERP/USP)⁹.

The only candidate was submitted to a didactical test and presented her dissertation entitled "Modern Nursing as a Professional Category: Obstacles to its Expansion in Brazilian Society". She passed the exam and became the first nurse in Latin America to serve as a Full Professor. This accomplishment was disseminated among nurses through the Revista Brasileira de Enfermagem and the Association's information bulletins:

"(...) Glete de Alcântara obtained the mean score of 9.75, which brilliantly enabled her to serve as a full professor in the History of Nursing and Ethics. (...) The exam was very meaningful to nursing which, in the words of Professor Álvaro Guimarães Filho (Member of the Examination Committee - Dean of the USP School of Hygiene and Public Health), when he complimented the candidate, had come of age"^{9:187}.

The perceived importance of a full professorship for the profession echoes in Bourdieu's words, when he mentions that public exams involve ranking principles that represent the acknowledgement of competences, establishing social distinctions based on differences. This assertion is verified in the following excerpt, taken from the Editorial of the Revista Brasileira de Enfermagem published in 1963:

"Nursing is confirming its position in the group of health professions that has the privilege of full professorships. It is a superior position in terms of rights as well as duties. May the new privilege serve as a powerful stimulus for nurses to provide its professional contributions, - not just any help, but help that is effective and satisfactory, exactly because it is provided by a nurse"^{9:115}.

A year later (1964), ABEn organizes the XVI Brazilian Congress of Nursing in Salvador, Bahia, where the theme - nursing and research - was discussed for the first time. During that Congress, the discussions resulted in recommendations to ABEn, to nursing faculty and service heads, about the incorporation of research into their care practices¹⁰.

Nevertheless, even before the publication of the Congress' recommendations, in an editorial published in REBEn, the importance of further qualification for nurses was discussed, underlining that this qualification should be stimulated through courses, conferences, meetings, seminars and congresses, in the national sphere, by Nursing Schools, ABEn and other institutions¹¹. These recommendations express the understanding about the importance of accumulating scientific capital to gain visibility, make itself known and be acknowledged.

The Associação Brasileira de Enfermagem in view of the changes brought about by the 1968 University Reform

Concerning nurses' scientific production, during the second half of the 1960's, it remained imprisoned in a vicious circle: nursing did not produce scientific studies because the nurses were not prepared for this but, on the other hand, without nursing research, no nurse-researchers were prepared, and this certainly hindered the progress of the profession.

The discussion about scientific research during the XVI Congress (1964) indicated its importance to contribute to the advancement of the profession and the development of the systemized body of scientific knowledge, based on nursing theories that would underlie new studies, new knowledge, with a view to the renewal and recycling of professional practice⁵. This congress takes place in the effervescence of the military coup that had happened on March 31st 1964. On that occasion, education was ruled by the Law of Directives and Bases of National Education - LDB (Law 4.024/1961), which consolidated the traditional model for higher education institutions in Brazil, which maintained the full professorships, isolated schools and universities made up by the mere juxtaposition of professional schools, without any further concern with research¹².

Nevertheless, the movement towards a university reform in Brazil had been debated on since the start of the 1960's, even before the establishment of the Military Regime in the country. This mobilization involved distinct segments of college life and intense student participation. Examples are the National University Reform Seminars, which the *União Nacional dos Estudantes* (UNE) held in 1961, 1962 and 1963¹².

In 1965, the Minister of Education and Culture Cultura, Flávio Suplicy de Lacerda, under the government of Castelo Branco, requested a pronouncement from the Federal Council of Education / CFE about the need to set up graduate programs. The 1961 LDB, however, only allowed the CFE to regulate higher education programs that entitled its graduates to practice self-employed professions (undergraduate programs). In view of these obstacles, the counselors turned to Law 4.881/65 - Law of the Teaching Profession, whose Paragraph 25 enabled the CFE to define graduate programs and their characteristics¹³.

This maneuver favored the elaboration of Federal Education Council Opinion 977/65, which presented a graduate education model that was strongly influenced by the North American model. The document indicated that the objective of graduate education was to grant students

in-depth knowledge that would allow them to reach a high standard of scientific or technical-professional competency, which could not be gained at the undergraduate level¹⁴.

According to that opinion, other aims of graduate programs were the education of a prepared and competent teaching staff and high-level researchers, beyond the professional qualification of other technical-administrative professionals needed for the country's development. Also, graduate programs should receive a place at universities, as part of the university complex, needed to accomplish the essential goals of universities².

Three years later, the University Reform (Law 5.540/68), launched on the eve of Institutional Act 5, issued in December 1968, which characterized the start of the regime's most repressive cycle, which continued until the end of Médici's government (1969-1974)¹⁵, firmly established the principle of non-severability between teaching and research and the requirement of *stricto sensu* graduate programs for the teaching career².

In view of these changes in the Brazilian context, ABEn discussed the implications of the 1968 University Reform for nursing education as early as during the Brazilian Congress of Nursing in 1967 and subsequent congresses. At the XXI Brazilian Congress of Nursing, held in Porto Alegre in 1969, Amália Corrêa de Carvalho and Circe de Melo Ribeiro, the chairwoman and deputy chairwoman of the ABEn, respectively, discussed the theme "Declaration of Principles", presenting the Associação Brasileira de Enfermagem's position on professional education¹⁵. The following excerpt contains fragments of the study that was presented:

"The nursing curriculum is expected to develop the student's critical and research ability and constitutes the base for the further qualification of nurses, in specialization and graduate programs; [...] Nursing teachers have to be prepared in specialization and graduate programs, with defined objectives concerning the qualification for teaching activities; [...] about the principles:⁶. The graduate education and specialization of nursing professionals are essential conditions for the improvement of nursing practice and for its maintenance at high quality levels"^{15:217}.

During the same congress, the study "Bases for the policy of the Associação Brasileira de Enfermagem" should be highlighted, written by Judith Feitosa de Carvalho and Hilda Lozier, Ministry of Health Nurse and Nursing Advisor in Region V - PAHO/WHO, respectively. In that study, the authors present an action plan for the entity, in view of the new requirements imposed by the 1968 University Reform, as the reforms in higher education obliged the nursing schools to reformulate the undergraduate and graduate course curricula to adjust them to the guidelines of the university reform¹⁶.

The authors of the same study also affirmed that the reformulations needed in undergraduate and graduate teaching required the Associação Brasileira de Enfermagem's Education Committee to take measures to: undertake studies about the *stricto sensu* graduate course curricula in nursing; study and propose a plan for graduate courses; qualify the teaching staff for the development of new curricula; study the determinations of the University Reform for the organization of Schools, with a view to the elaboration of a proposal to articulate teaching and research and to serve as a guide for nursing schools, so as to comply with the educational objectives¹⁶.

In view of the acknowledged need for studies to respond to the reformulations needed in teaching, discussed during the congress, the following final recommendations were approved:

"study the priority areas for nursing research and establish a test program to gradually address the national needs; get to know the research entities in Brazil and establish coordination agreements; study the means to set up a group of expert nurses to provide advice in research development; create a fund to finance nursing research, including printing, publication and distribution expenses; study and propose the accomplishment of short-term courses about research methodology in different regions around the country; establish exchanges with Brazilian and international entities to obtain updated bibliographic material and exchange experiences about nursing research and other related areas"^{16:230}.

Um novo Currículo Mínimo foi formalizado (1972), através do Parecer do Conselho Federal de Educação (CFE) nº 163/72 e da Resolução/CFE nº 04/72, que dispôs sobre a nova estrutura curricular para o curso de graduação em

enfermagem e a formação profissional da enfermeira, que abrangia as ciências básicas, as disciplinas profissionais e as habilitações específicas: enfermagem de saúde pública, enfermagem obstétrica e enfermagem médico-cirúrgica¹.

One year earlier, in July 1971, the XXIII Brazilian Congress of Nursing was held in Manaus, which recommended that nurse-educators and service sectors continued investing in research production¹⁷:

1. That they work to develop research in the different areas of nursing; 2. that they take interest in the development of studies to collect objective data to support improvements in care delivery and 3. that they undertake operational research to check the feasibility of systemized observation in different work situations^{17:25}.

In the same year (1971), Anna Nery School of Nursing submitted a request to the Federal Education Council for the approval and accreditation of the first Master's program in Nursing in Brazil. ABEn disseminated this fact in the Documentary made on the occasion of the XXIII Brazilian Congress of Nursing.

In 1972, the first Master's program was implemented in Brazil. The creation of the first *stricto sensu* graduate program marked the institutionalization of scientific production¹. The Master's program was aimed at developing and deepening undergraduate education, expand the competence levels and professional skills, with an integrated approach to nursing teaching, research and care delivery.

In this context, on the eve of the creation of the first Master's program in nursing in Brazil, the ordinary meeting of the Assembly of Delegates was held during the XXIII CBEn. At this assembly, the proposal by Haydée Guanais Dourado was approved, the former coordinator of the Legislative Committee, for the creation, in São Paulo, of an independent legal entity called to Study and Research Center in Nursing (CEPEn)¹.

The objectives of this entity, defined in Special By-laws (CEPEn), which were only approved in 1979, were to join studies and information about health of interest to nursing research; develop research in nursing and related areas; support the development of nursing research through previously approved projects; promote and encourage nursing research publications and disseminate research already developed¹⁸.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The effects of the important transformations that took place in nursing education, mainly in the 1960's and 1970's, can still be felt in the second decade of the 21st century. That is so because, across almost five decades, we can feel the voices of our predecessors resounding when they fought to and were able to successfully include Brazilian nursing into the scientific community. ABEn was the entity that concentrated the nurses in the fight for the development of the profession in the course of the 20th century, together with the nursing colleges, in charge of encouraging and disseminating nursing research.

The efforts by the *Associação Brasileira de Enfermagem* and the nursing colleges represented a true space for research and researchers' training, as the scientific area includes the institutions in charge of the production and circulation of scientific goods (scientific production).

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