
Letters to the editor

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To the editor:

The article by Dzurec and Abraham,¹ "The nature of inquiry: Linking quantitative and qualitative research," in *Advances in Nursing Science* 16:1, was of particular interest to me as I am a graduate nursing student at Saint Xavier University presently taking a course called "Theoretical Basis for Advanced Nursing Practice." My class has examined the "whole of knowing" based on each of the patterns described by Carper²: empirics, ethics, personal knowing, and esthetics. We have also viewed those processes relating to creation of knowledge in each particular pattern—namely, the quantitative and qualitative methods.

In Dzurec and Abraham's article, the "fundamental analogy" between quantitative and qualitative research is explained. Consistencies between these two seemingly contrary methods are further explored. In addition, the authors address

the evidence that the empiricist paradigm continues to dominate nursing research.

Chinn and Kramer³ have spoken to the fact that most conceptualizations of empiric knowledge in nursing are linked to a traditional view of science. However, ideas about legitimacy for the science of nursing now include activities conducted within the phenomenologic paradigm. Dzurec and Abraham¹ expanded this conception toward an evolution of an integration of methods. These authors adhere to the premise that the methods of one paradigm are no more scientific than the methods of the other. This view goes hand in hand with the belief that each pattern of knowing is equally vital and essential, each making a contribution to the whole.³

Examination of the six common pursuits relevant to the quantitative and qualitative methods fosters a deeper understanding of the essential process of inquiry. Increased awareness of the importance of the use and integration of different research paradigms is a key factor in empowering nurses in practice to advance nursing's "whole of knowing."

REFERENCES

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3. Chinn PL, Kramer MK. *Theory and Nursing—A Systematic Approach*. 3rd ed. St. Louis, Mo: Mosby Yearbook; 1991.