



# Journal of Nursing

Revista de Enfermagem

UFPE On Line

ISSN: 1981-8963

## REVIEW INTEGRATIVE ARTICLE

### COMMUNICATION IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEADERS AND LEAD IN THE CONTEXT OF NURSING

#### A COMUNICAÇÃO NO RELACIONAMENTO ENTRE LÍDERES E LIDERADOS NO CONTEXTO DA ENFERMAGEM

#### LA COMUNICACIÓN EN LA RELACIÓN ENTRE LÍDERES Y LIDERADOS EN EL CONTEXTO DE LA ENFERMERÍA

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#### ABSTRACT

**Objective:** to analyze relevant aspects about the importance of communication in the relationship between leaders and led, in the Nursing team. **Method:** integrative review, including studies indexed in the databases LILACS, BDNF, MEDLINE and CINHALL, in which nine articles were selected from 2003 to 2015. **Results:** were grouped into three categories << Communication barriers and Nursing Leadership >>; << Potential of communication in the act of leading and results for the organization >> and << Participatory leadership and dialogic communication >>. **Conclusion:** communication is characterized as one of the main strategies of success in the interpersonal relationship in the Nursing team, being fundamental for the development of the work. Inefficient communication between staff can lead to damage to quality of care. The effectiveness of communication among health professionals influences several aspects such as leadership, decision making and Nursing care planning. **Descriptors:** Nursing; Leadership; Communication; Interpersonal Relations.

#### RESUMO

**Objetivo:** analisar aspectos relevantes sobre a importância da comunicação no relacionamento entre líderes e liderados na equipe de Enfermagem. **Método:** revisão integrativa, sendo incluídos estudos indexados nas bases de dados LILACS, BDNF, MEDLINE e CINHALL, nas quais foram selecionados nove artigos publicados de 2003 a 2015. **Resultados:** foram agrupados em três categorias << Barreiras na comunicação e a liderança em Enfermagem >>; << Potencialidades da comunicação no ato de liderar e resultados para a organização >> e << Liderança participativa e comunicação dialógica >>. **Conclusão:** a comunicação se caracteriza como uma das principais estratégias de sucesso no relacionamento interpessoal na equipe de Enfermagem, sendo fundamental para o desenvolvimento do trabalho. A comunicação ineficiente entre a equipe pode acarretar prejuízos para a qualidade da assistência. A eficácia da comunicação entre os profissionais de saúde influencia vários aspectos como a liderança, a tomada de decisões e o planejamento da assistência de Enfermagem. **Descritores:** Enfermagem; Liderança; Comunicação; Relações Interpessoais.

#### RESUMEN

**Objetivo:** analizar aspectos relevantes sobre la importancia de la comunicación en la relación entre líderes y liderados en el equipo de Enfermería. **Método:** revisión integrativa, incluyendo estudios indizados en las bases de datos LILACS, BDNF, MEDLINE y CINHALL, en las que se seleccionaron nueve artículos publicados de 2003 a 2015. **Resultados:** fueron agrupados en tres categorías << Barreras en la comunicación y el liderazgo en Enfermería >>; << Potencialidades de la comunicación en el acto de liderazgo y resultados para la organización >> y << Liderazgo participativo y comunicación dialógica >>. **Conclusión:** la comunicación se caracteriza como una de las principales estrategias de éxito en la relación interpersonal en el equipo de Enfermería, siendo fundamental para el desarrollo del trabajo. La comunicación ineficiente entre el equipo puede acarrear pérdidas para la calidad de la asistencia. La eficacia de la comunicación entre los profesionales de la salud influye en varios aspectos como el liderazgo, la toma de decisiones y la planificación de la asistencia de Enfermería. **Descritores:** Enfermería; Liderazgo; Comunicación; Relaciones Interpersonales.

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INTRODUCTION

The communication between the professionals who make up the health team is one of the aspects of great importance for the organizations, especially so that the human being reaches the desired productivity, stands out in the professional scope and develops the relational competence with the work team.

In the Nursing context, communication is an important element in the nurses' leadership process, since the way the messages are transmitted will interfere with the desired result.<sup>1</sup>

Nursing uses, as an instrument of their knowing/doing, the communication which occurs during interpersonal relationships in patient care. This ability to communicate interferes directly with the activities of the Nursing team.<sup>2</sup>

Evidence about the importance of the communicative process, especially in patient care, confirms that communication among the Nursing team constitutes a broad area for research, and needs to be better explored.<sup>3</sup>

The nurses' leadership competency is directly related to the ability to communicate and has been required in both primary care, and hospital care. According to Law No. 7498/86, which regulates Nursing practice, it is the responsibility of the nurse to direct the Nursing institution of the health institution, head of Nursing services, as well as, the planning, organization, coordination, execution and evaluation of the assistance.<sup>4</sup> Ideally, those who perform management activities should have leadership skills, so that it can ensure that the team conducts in an aggregate and motivating way, increasing the professionals' loyalty to the institution.

Through good leaders, will be the development of professionals more involved and committed to the vision, mission and objectives of the organization. Starting from this premise, leadership is an indispensable competency for whoever coordinates a team, since the direction of the goals and their results arises from those who lead those who carry out the actions.<sup>5</sup>

The studies on communication in the Nursing leadership exercise are justified by the fact that these professionals must be prepared to assume leadership positions, always aiming at the well-being of the clientele, encompassing communication, commitment, responsibility, empathy, ability to decision-making, and management effectively and effectively.<sup>6</sup>

Considering the relevance of the study theme, the question is: What are the potentialities and weaknesses in the communication process between leaders and led? How important is communication in this context?

OBJECTIVE

- Analyze the relevant aspects about the importance of communication in the relationship between leaders and leaders in the context of Nursing.

METHOD

In order to meet the objectives of this study, an Integrative Literature Review (IR) was carried out, which is a research method with the purpose of gathering and synthesising research results on a delimited topic or issue, in a systematic and orderly manner, contributing to the deepening knowledge.<sup>7</sup>

For the accomplishment of this study, six stages were covered: Identification of the theme and establishment of the problem; Selection of the sample; Categorization of studies; Analysis of results; Presentation and discussion of the results; Presentation of the revision.<sup>8</sup>

The inclusion criteria adopted were: primary articles; available free of charge; that address the theme "communication in the relationship between the Nursing team"; indexed in the databases of Latin American and Caribbean Literature in Health Sciences (LILACS), BDNF, *Medical Literature Analysis and Retrieval Systems Online* (MEDLINE) and CINHALL; published between 2003 and 2016; in Portuguese, English and Spanish. Controlled descriptors were used: "Nursing"; "Leadership"; "Communication" and "Interpersonal Relationships".

The exclusion criteria were: publications in the form of theses, dissertations, monographs, books, reviews and reports of experience.

A bibliographic data collection form was used to extract information about the identification of the authors, the database where the article was found, the purpose of the study, methodology, type of research, results and conclusions.<sup>8</sup>

It is noteworthy that, in the selection phase of articles, both abstracts, and articles selected in full, the reading was carried out by three independent researchers and the possible divergences regarding the suitability of the studies for the research were settled with the main investigator's arbitration, to reach the final sample of articles selected for review.

The following figure, shows the selection of the articles that composed this integrative review.

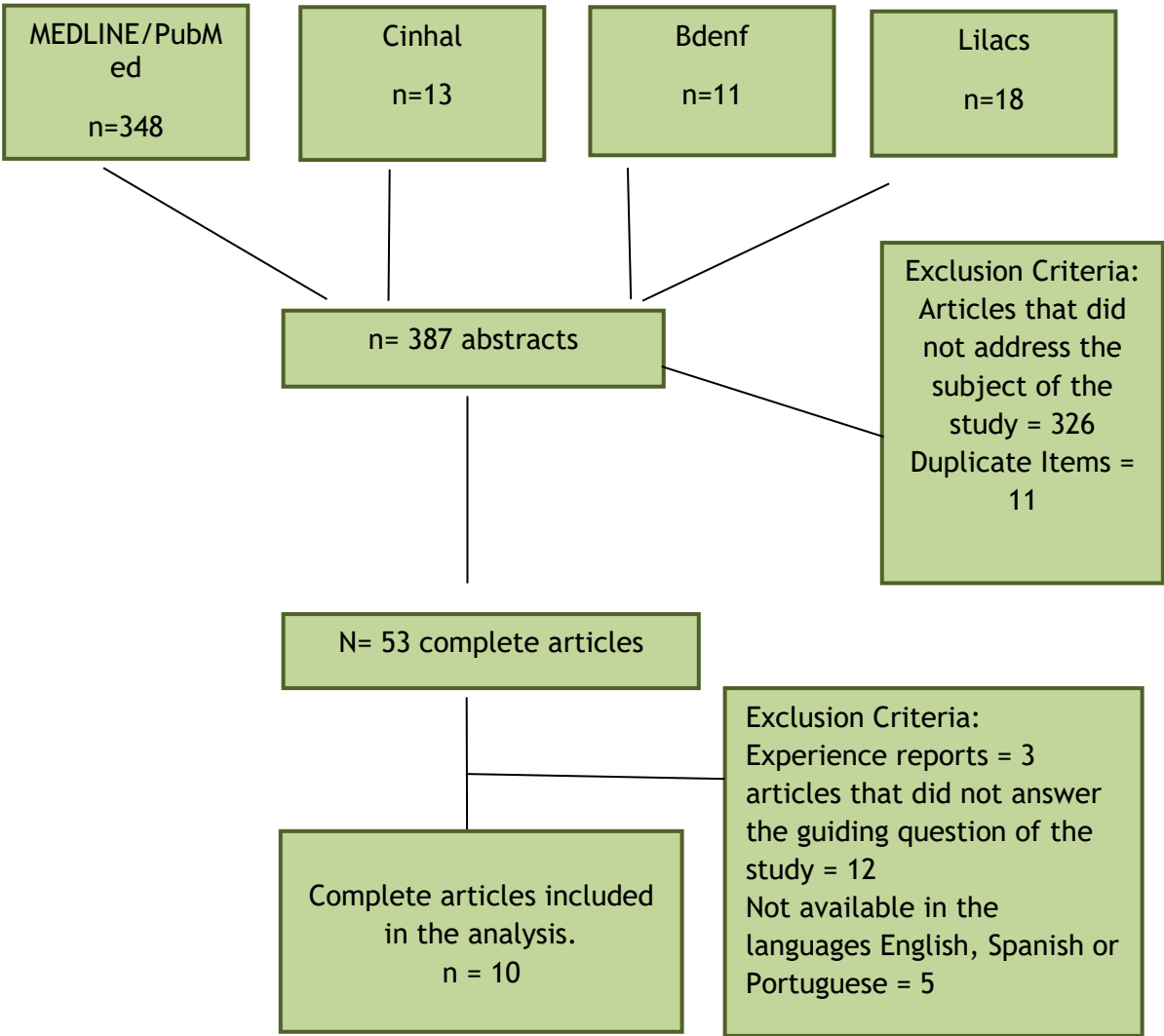


Figure 1. Flowchart of the integrative review search strategy. Ribeirão Preto (SP), Brazil, 2017.

RESULTS

For the composition of the final sample, ten articles were selected. The studies were published in eight different journals, being 55.5% national and 44.5%, international. In relation to the years of publication, there was a higher frequency in the year 2010,

equivalent to 33.3% (n = 03). For the interpretation of the data, the publications were grouped into three categories: "Communication barriers and leadership in Nursing"; "Potentials of communication in the act of leading and results for the organization" and "Participatory leadership and dialogic communication".

| Category                                         | Publication                                                                                                                                                                 | Type of study                                  | Professionals who composed the sample | Level of evidence | Outcome                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Communication barriers and leadership in Nursing | Santos, KM AB.; Silva, MJP. Communication between leaders and lead: nurses' vision 2003. <sup>10</sup>                                                                      | Descriptive quantitative study                 | Nurses                                | 6                 | They highlight problems that are causing negative impact on communication between the team: problems of communication with other areas of the hospital; lack of praise from the superior directly to the nurses; lack of constructive criticism of professional performance; non-acceptance of nurses' opinions; people who do not speak honestly and openly; and not recognition of nurses' work. |
|                                                  | Cherry, B.; Ashcraft, A.; Owen, D. Perceptions of job satisfaction and the regulatory environment among nurse aides and charge nurses in long-term care 2007. <sup>12</sup> | Descriptive Qualitative Study.                 | Nursing assistants                    | 6                 | Participants highlight flaws in the communication process between leaders and team members and charge for a more respectful stance, equal treatment and greater participation. The authors point out suggestions that may be effective in improving the communication process and cite the "10 steps to creating a positive work environment" as a guideline.                                      |
|                                                  | Reader, TW.; Flin, R.; Mearns, K.; Cuthbertson, BH. Interdisciplinary communication in the intensive care unit 2007. <sup>14</sup>                                          | Descriptive Qualitative Study.                 | Nurses of ICU and doctors.            | 6                 | ICU team members have divergent perceptions of communication between them. The ease of communication among team members is also associated with the degree of understanding of patient care objectives. It is necessary to create an atmosphere in which team members feel they can communicate openly without fear of reprisal or embarrassment with one another.                                 |
|                                                  | Nunes, NAH.; Siqueira, PBDC.; Andrade, TCCD.;                                                                                                                               | Exploratory qualitative and quantitative study | Nursing Assistants and Technicians    | 6                 | Communication is considered an effective tool in the sharing of ideas.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

|                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                     |                                                          |                  |   |  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|------------------|---|--|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Potentials of communication in the act of leading and results for the organization. | Paula, MABD. Leadership in Nursing from the perspective of Nursing auxiliaries and technicians 2010. <sup>16</sup>                  |                                                          |                  |   |  | Among other aspects, effective communication is seen as an essential characteristic for a good leader. The authors also highlight communicability, ability to listen and speak, practicality in conflict resolution as a skill that needs to be worked out and stimulated with nurses and, especially, those in training.                                             |
|                                                                                     | Brusamolin, L.; Montezeli, JH.; Peres, AM. The use of managerial skills by nurses in an emergency hospital care 2010. <sup>17</sup> | Descriptive Qualitative Study.                           | Nurses           | 6 |  | Communication, considered as a managerial competence of the nurse, facilitates the transfer and receipt of information and knowledge. It also favors the organization of the service and the delineation of the objectives with the team. The leader's success is related to his or her ability to communicate, which is essential for nurses' professional practice. |
|                                                                                     | Vilela, PS.; Souza, AC. Leadership: a challenge for the newly formed nurse 2010. <sup>18</sup>                                      | Exploratory study with quantitative-qualitative approach | Nurses           | 6 |  | Communication is an attribute considered essential for leadership, but difficulty in communication becomes the main challenge. In order for the nurse to lead the Nursing team effectively, communication is imperative.                                                                                                                                              |
| Participatory leadership and dialogic                                               | Linton J.; Farrel, MJ. Nurses' perceptions of leadership in an adult intensive care unit: A phenomenology study 2008. <sup>19</sup> | Qualitative research, using phenomenology.               | Nurses           | 6 |  | It is through communication that the leadership is transmitted to the team, being defined as the exchange of information and opinions. Dialogue is important for the leader to ensure that all sides have been heard prior to decision making. It is through effective communication between leaders and leaders that they feel valued.                               |
|                                                                                     | Hartung SQ, Miller M.                                                                                                               | Descriptive Qualitative                                  | Nursing managers | 6 |  | Communication was the most                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

|                       |                                                                                                                          |                                            |        |   |  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|--------|---|--|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>communication.</b> | Communication and the healthy work environment: nurse managers' perceptions 2013. <sup>20</sup>                          | Study.                                     |        |   |  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|                       | Montezeli, JH.; Peres, AM.; Bernardino, E. Management skills required of nurses in an emergency room 2013. <sup>21</sup> | Qualitative descriptive exploratory study. | Nurses | 6 |  | important part of managers' work. They adopted as a strategy for good communication the accessibility, discussion and debate between the unit team, frank and authentic dialogue. They sought to listen to their collaborators, encouraging them to solve problems, even using other methods of disseminating information through e-mails shared with their team.<br>Leadership and communication are important management skills in Nursing work, but communication is considered difficult if it is to be done. Dialogue should be constantly practiced and evaluated to identify gaps and to correct them. The leader plays an important role in establishing effective communication. |



## DISCUSSION

In the articles analyzed, the authors were unanimous in reporting on the importance and the necessity of adequate communication, both in the professional relationship with the client and in the relation leader x led.

In the analysis category <<**Communication barriers and leadership in Nursing**>>, three articles were explored that explored perceptions about job satisfaction and how nurses perceive the communication process. In addition, they analyzed the perception of communication between the interdisciplinary team and identified communication difficulties related to Nursing leadership.

Relationships in organizations begin to be established through a process of interaction between their elements, which creates professional bonds, in order to act collectively and achieve a common goal, through coherent words and attitudes. Among the skills required for Nursing practice, the following stand out: management, leadership and lifelong education.<sup>9</sup>

The leader must have some differentiated skills that reflect on his success with the team. Among these skills, the most effective communication is highlighted.<sup>10</sup> However, studies point to failures in the communication process between leaders and leaders, perceived by nurses who have a negative impact on the team.

Communicating, properly, is important so that leadership is effective and the organization's objectives, are met. In this sense, the commitment to improve communication is extremely important for a good relationship between the team.<sup>11</sup>

It is necessary to adopt strategies for the promotion of effective communication, because the inefficacy in communication produces dissatisfaction in the work and makes the leader spend most of the time resolving conflicts. Communication becomes fundamental to the success of leadership, since it allows the nurse to approach his team with the intention of sharing ideas and visions.<sup>12</sup>

The way in which the organization of work, occurs in health institutions interferes in the quality of communication among professionals. In the case of the Functional Model, the communication follows the hierarchical scale, is directive and aims at the fulfillment of orders and tasks. On the other hand, there is Teamwork, which aims at the organization of a joint work among the

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members, aiming at the provision of qualified assistance to the patient.<sup>13</sup>

The team modality favors the dialogical and effective communication by the leader, contributing to the improvement of the quality of Nursing care.<sup>14</sup>

In the daily challenge of the leadership exercise, open, direct and transparent communication among the team emerges as an indispensable element in the conduct of work, favoring the approximation of the various fields of knowledge in the professional relationship. The ability to communicate is a leading factor in leadership as it enables the leader to promote the desired changes in the work environment. The way the leader communicates and the coherence between discourse and practice are essential to achieve the expected results.<sup>15</sup>

Studies in this category highlight the importance of effective communication for the exercise of leadership, which contributes to the improvement of group performance and, consequently, to patient care.

The articles grouped in the category <<**Potentials of communication in the act of leading and results for the organization**>>, highlight communication as a managerial competence that is related to the process of organization of the health service.

Communication is associated with quality, safe care, and a common sense of teamwork.<sup>16-17</sup> Study highlights that using effective communication, as a managerial tool, is necessary to share critical information, outline team parameters (eg, who does what), and establish the working climate.<sup>18</sup> To this end, the leader must ensure that team members participate in the decision-making process.

In a qualitative study, conducted in Australia, the researchers identified that, in the Nursing teams, clear communication and respect for each other's contributions to the team were central to quality and delivery of safe care.<sup>18</sup>

There is no doubt that communication is considered an essential element for the quality of care, but all studies included in this category refer to the challenge of using this skill as a tool.<sup>13</sup> These studies point to the importance of health workers in the specialized technical, ethical-political, communicational and personal interrelations dimensions for participation as integral subjects in the world of work.

Leadership becomes essential in the professional life of the nurse, because being able to communicate clearly with the group,

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posses the ability to point out solutions to conflicts, and the initiative in decision making are attributes that guarantee a satisfactory performance in the art of caring.<sup>19</sup>

It should be noted that, in addition to effective communication, other attributes that corroborate the adequate leadership performance, such as theoretical and practical knowledge, cooperation with the Nursing team, motivation and dedication to work were cited. The authors also highlight communicability, ability to listen and speak, practicality in conflict resolution as a skill that needs to be worked out and stimulated with nurses and, especially, with those in training.

The category <<Participatory Leadership and Dialogic Communication>> brought together three articles, which emphasized the importance of dialogue between the health team in the effective exercise of leadership.

The Nursing profession needs leaders at all levels, whether in care, teaching or management. At a time when there is a shortage of leading nurses, communication plays an important role, as do the skills of effective leadership, whose nurse leads by example, by communicating easily and recognizing staff.<sup>16</sup>

To assist in the development of leadership skills, nurses need to be adequately prepared and educated for this role.<sup>20</sup>

Graduate schools play an important role in the training of these nurses. They contribute to the student's opportunities to combine the development of managerial skills during the internship and discussions with teachers, especially, by providing students with experiences of participation in managerial practice, combining theory and practice.<sup>18</sup> However, it does it is necessary to improve these skills in the development of their professional life.

Although health situations and environments are different, leadership skills gained over the years are necessary. Lack of formal education and leadership training are a concern of managers of health organizations in the 21st century, and these are issues that need to be complemented by training, further training and postgraduate courses in leadership.<sup>18</sup>

The importance of leadership learning is focused on strengthening the work group in order to value individual competencies and dilute the power in the team, so that, each member can recognize the purpose and meaning of their work.<sup>21</sup> Only in this way will

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it be possible to jointly those involved from the decisions taken.

Studies point to the need for participatory processes to solve problems. This implies the development of teamwork, as well as of the relationship with the group, necessary for the achievement of professional and organizational goals.<sup>22</sup>

To do so, it must be considered that a single person does not have all the knowledge for decision making. This process should be shared with the team, more accurately, to bring together the knowledge of each member of the multiprofessional team in this decision-making process.<sup>23</sup>

In this sense, the participatory process in solving problems is related to the managerial capacity of this nurse, who must be focused on the articulation and the mobilization in face of the facts presented for decision making. It is necessary if this nurse is proactive and has knowledge, skills and attitudes for any and all situations, predictable or not, to evaluate, systematize and decide the most appropriate conduct, based on scientific evidence.<sup>6,24</sup>

The leader must know how to communicate in two ways, which implies knowing how to listen to people, facilitating the way of transmitting information, understanding the problems and points of view of their people, in order to be able to advise and guide them. In this way, it is also, necessary to understand the expression of ideas of its people, the transmission of information and knowledge and the experiences and expectations of its staff.<sup>25</sup>

In this perspective, the communication between these professionals is of paramount importance for a reciprocal exchange and interaction between the leader and the leader. This is the common denominator of teamwork, which must occur from the reciprocal relationship between work and interaction.<sup>26</sup> Teamwork is, above all, an element that is embedded in the managerial competencies that nurses must develop along with their team.

If this exchange does not occur, nurses can not decide practically anything in their daily life, considering that, in order to enable this team communication, it is necessary to adopt a participative management, which seeks to update and transmit knowledge, mobilizing potentiality and creativity of workers, in order to change the existing reality, capable of bringing, to the work routine, an innovative and transformative environment.<sup>26</sup>



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Currently, the model of interpersonal relations, that must predominate in the work, is the democratic one, in the perspective of a contemporary management, in which the leader needs to develop communication skills.<sup>6</sup>

In short, communication is an intrinsic act of human existence, being a very important competence to be developed by nurses and their staff, facilitating the understanding of the other, their way of thinking, feeling and acting. It is through this that the problems can be identified and understood, thus facilitating personal and professional interaction in health service organizations.<sup>23</sup>

Leadership and communication are essential strategies for nurses' professional practice. It is through communication that the understanding of the message that is being passed occurs, favoring that there is a good interpersonal relationship between the people who are communicating.<sup>18</sup>

## CONCLUSION

This study allowed a deepening of communication as a managerial competence of nurses, and showed that this tool is essential for the development of leadership.

Data on communication in the interpersonal relationship in Nursing were gathered. In addition, it was highlighted the importance of communication for nurses' leadership performance, presenting conclusions of authors who defend the communicational practice as a key element for the management actions of this professional.

Leadership and communication are understood as strategies that allow, the nurse, to implement the changes so desired in this new perspective, using these tools with the intention of humanizing care.

It was concluded that communication is considered an effective tool in the sharing of ideas, considered an essential attribute to be able to exercise leadership, being an essential characteristic for a good leader.

It is through communication that the leadership is transmitted to the team, by allowing the nurse to have an approximation with them, allowing the exchange of information and opinions, with frank and authentic dialogue between his team, with the purpose of sharing ideas and visions, contributing to the improvement in group performance and, therefore, to patient care.

Among the weaknesses, the study highlighted the problems in the communication process. Most institutions are

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very forceful, they maintain a hierarchical management model, whose communication process is flawed, always occurring in the form of order rather than orientation, making it difficult to team work

Thus, it is necessary to create strategies for the promotion of effective communication, an indispensable element in the conduct of work, because it is understood that inefficiency in communication causes job dissatisfaction, causing the leader to spend most of his time resolving conflicts. Striving to improve communication is extremely important for a good relationship between the team, favoring the approximation of the various fields of knowledge in the professional relationship.

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Submission: 2016/12/14

Accepted: 2017/09/22

Publishing: 2017/11/15

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