



## **ABOUT CASE STUDIES AND EXPERIENCE REPORTS**

The quality of the scientific production of a researcher has often been assessed by the insertion and international impact factors. Although it is open to criticism, this is the posture currently adopted in Brazil and in other countries. In addition, the journals responsible for the dissemination of these results develop their own strategies that enable their inclusion in international databases. These criteria include, among other things, the type of article published, preferring those from field research and that create scientific evidences of high level.

A large number of articles submitted to Brazilians journals, in particular to Rene journal, have focused on apparently less complex designs like case studies and experience reports. I say "apparently" because, far from what one might imagine, these two types of research, to produce reliable scientific evidences, require as much methodological rigor as any other type of study. Unfortunately, there is great confusion in the definition of these two types of studies and the literature is particularly incipient on this differentiation, especially when seeking a more exact characterization of experience reports.

An experience report belongs to the social domain, is part of human experiences and should contain both the impressions observed as well as the conjectured. This type of study is important to describe a particular experience that raised new reflections on a specific phenomenon. An example of experience report is the description of a new approach of care that led to reflections on the nursing role. In this case, the focus is on the experience and the reflection on the experience lived.

Case studies, in their turn, are based on the analysis of contextual conditions, which are considered to be highly relevant to explain a phenomenon<sup>(1)</sup>. Such environmental conditions include the implementation of new techniques of care or education and the results achieved through it for an individual or for a particular institution. The focus is on the relationship between context and phenomenon under study.

Regardless of the above definitions, experience reports and case studies should be carried out only if they lead to new evidences on the phenomena being studied. Describing cases or reporting experiences that are commonly found in professional practice or that do not add new information, does not justify publication in journals, besides unnecessarily exposing people and institutions involved.

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## **REFERENCES**

1. Yin RK. Estudos de caso: planejamento e métodos. 2ª ed. Porto Alegre: Bookman; 2001.