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Spirituality in nursing: A concept analysis

My main aim in this work has been to give a comprehensive and critical analysis of spirituality, and to explore the concept of spirituality in nursing.

Spirituality has always been present in the history of nursing and continues to be a topic of nursing interest. Spirituality has ancient roots. The term “spirituality” is interpreted as Spirit, is translated with Breath, Soul, whereas Spirituality (Immateriality) is Spiritual Nature. In Sanskrit, the term Atman [self] has been defined as: "Spiritual essence of life". Historically, the term spirituality is associated with the term religiosity, a definition that persists, today and often the two terms are interchanged. In the health care context, the construct is still nebulous, and a further explanation of the concept is important to ascertain the meaning of it.

For to clarify the concept of spirituality in nursing was explored using Rodgers’ evolutionary and inductive method of analysis.

Data were analysed focusing on their attributes, antecedents, and consequences, as well as terms related to spirituality in the nursing and non-nursing literature. The analysis settings were constituted by articles published in English, from 2008-2018, in international electronic databases, dictionaries, books, and e-books.

The analysis of the concept of spirituality revealed that it has a range of characteristics and is influenced by numerous factors. These include the dynamic processes that the human beings undergo in relation to religious pluralism, beliefs, and traditions, as well as the values embedded in our complex and multi-ethnic society, all of which define spirituality. A model case demonstrated the need to understand the religious aspects of spirituality.

This article shows that, nurses need to recognise the multidimensionality of the phenomenon and the different ethnic, cultural and religious diversity embedded in spirituality. Besides, they need to be aware of the different ways to express spirituality. To have a better comprehension of the concept, it could be helpful for nurses to have a deeper knowing of the sociology of religions that provides new ways of comprehending spirituality.

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Carla Murgia

RN, MSN, PhD student

University of Rome "Tor Vergata",

Rome, Italy

Phone +39 3338358609

Infermiera ASL Roma1 email: carla.murgia@aslroma1.it