

# Nursing research: sowing seeds for a good crop

## *Investigación en enfermería: sembrar para recoger buenos frutos*

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Research is a demanding and complex process. It is like climbing a great mountain—especially when faced for the first time and alone. It takes time to build a good team, acquire proper tools, and, most importantly, develop the skills needed to carry out a solid study. And just when one believes they have obtained relevant results and that their conclusions might contribute new clinical knowledge, the arduous and often unfamiliar process of publishing in scientific journals begins.

At that point, one misses those seemingly unnecessary scientific writing workshops from undergraduate or master's studies, or regrets not having read more papers as a reader. It is not easy to make one's research or nursing hypothesis appealing to journal editors; shaping it with a distinctive style can be difficult, and one's vocabulary may not align with the conventions of scientific writing. It is a real challenge.

And, just like learning to intubate, we eventually realize that knowing how to write our findings is essential if we want them to reach the clinical community—addressing the research question in an objective, analytical, and at the same time clear manner that captures the interest of any reader.<sup>1,2</sup>

This is the final challenge that many students should face upon completing their Master's Final Project (MFP).<sup>3,4</sup> It is a task that not all are willing to undertake, but it should indeed be the aspiration of every research project, given the great effort and sacrifice it requires. This challenge not only involves students but also their tutors, who must mentor these projects so that they can eventually be submitted to scientific journals.<sup>5</sup>

Currently, in Spain, 17 official Master's programs in Emergency, Disaster, and Critical Care Nursing are offered.<sup>6,7</sup> With an average of 30 places per program, this group could produce more than 300 scientific papers each year as MFPs. While it is true that the evaluation rubric for these projects does not always include publication as a requirement, the many hours of supervision and academic support invested could also represent a valuable

academic output for faculty, motivating them further and serving as a quality indicator for the university program during reaccreditation processes.<sup>8</sup> Indeed, the symbiosis between academia and clinical practice should also become a reality for nursing professionals. Joint supervision of MFPs, combining the competencies of academic faculty and clinicians, is one of the aspects most highly valued by postgraduate students.<sup>9</sup>

Another point for reflection concerns where these findings ultimately end up. If these projects go beyond being merely a hypothetical study design and actually contain results of relevance to the profession, where are they stored? Perhaps in university repositories, which are increasingly numerous but often poorly cataloged, little known, and not easily accessible. As a result, the true impact of academic nursing development in Spain on scientific production remains unclear.<sup>10</sup>

Revista Española de Urgencias y Emergencias (REUE) offers an opportunity for students and instructors to publish, as it involves no economic cost and requires no translation into other languages. As an open-access, online journal, it significantly increases the chances of being cited and read, while sharing the Spanish language with all of Latin America.<sup>11</sup>

Finally, it is worth highlighting the openness to new and relevant topics that such academic scientific production can bring each year to the entire community involved in the progress and development of emergency and critical care.<sup>12</sup> Both quantitative and qualitative analyses have a place here. There are many future challenges and a pressing need to open new spaces for scientific evidence.<sup>13</sup> To achieve this, active involvement from Emergency Medical Services (EMS) would be essential, contributing 3 key elements that could bring greater dynamism and pace to our scientific output: the creation of independent ethics committees, the participation of clinical nursing professionals as MFP mentors, and the management of centralized, secure databases.<sup>14</sup> Examples of the latter are

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**Table 1.** Official Master's Degrees in Emergency and Urgent Care offered by Spanish universities (2022)

| Official Title   | Institution   |
|--|---|
| 1 Master's Degree in Critical Care in Emergency and Urgent Nursing                             | Universidad de Granada                              |
| 2 Master's Degree in Comprehensive Nursing Care in Critical and Emergency Situations in Adults | Universidad de Málaga                               |
| 3 Master's Degree in Nursing in Critical Care, Emergency, and Urgent Care                      | Universidad de Jaén                                 |
| 4 Master's Degree in Advanced Practice Nursing in Emergency and Urgent Care                    | Universidad a Distancia de Madrid                   |
| 5 Master's Degree in Nursing in Emergency, Urgent, and Critical Care                           | Universidad San Jorge                               |
| 6 Master's Degree in Nursing in Emergency, Urgent, and Special Care                            | Universidad Católica San Antonio                    |
| 7 Master's Degree in Nursing in Emergency and Critical Care                                    | Universidad de Oviedo                               |
| 8 Master's Degree in Nursing in Emergency and Urgent Care                                      | Universidad Católica de Valencia San Vicente Mártir |
| 9 Master's Degree in Nursing in Critical and Emergency Care                                    | Universidad de León                                 |
| 10 Master's Degree in Nursing in Emergency, Urgent, and Medical Transport Care                 | Universidad San Pablo-CEU                           |
| 11 Master's Degree in Nursing in Emergency and Intrahospital Critical Care                     | Universidad San Pablo-CEU                           |
| 12 Master's Degree in Emergency, Urgent, and Critical Care in Nursing                          | Universidad Europea de Canarias                     |
| 13 Master's Degree in Emergency, Urgent, and Critical Care in Nursing                          | Universidad Europea de Madrid                       |
| 14 Master's Degree in Emergency, Urgent, and Critical Care in Nursing                          | Universidad Europea de Valencia                     |
| 15 Master's Degree in Adult Emergency and Urgent Care  | Universidad Alfonso X El Sabio                      |
| 16 Erasmus Mundus Master's Degree in Emergency and Critical Care Nursing                       | Universidad de Oviedo (International Consortium)    |
| 17 Master's Degree in Emergencies and Disasters  | Universidad de Alicante                             |

Source: Registro de Universidades, Centros y Títulos (RUCT). Ministerio de Universidades, Spanish government.

the U.S. National Emergency Medical Services Information System (NEMSIS),<sup>15</sup> a federally funded program designed to standardize patient care reports from EMS agencies and facilitate state and national data repositories for service evaluation and improvement, and the National Emergency Medical Services Management Association (NEMSMA) bidirectional database shared between EMS and their reference hospitals.<sup>16</sup>

Research does not end with the design of a study or the local analysis of data. It enriches and advances our knowledge when it is shared, disseminated, discussed, and debated. Therefore, from the REUE Editorial Committee, we encourage students to publish master's theses of scientific quality, academic tutors to open their doors to clinical professionals, and clinicians to engage in learning this new professional role—mentoring and supervising postgraduate students

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