

Triangulation in nursing research: Issues of conceptual clarity and purpose

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摘要

Abstract

The controversy concerning the value of qualitative, quantitative and triangulation approaches to nursing research for understanding human behaviour and increasing nursing knowledge has been an increasing source of debate among nurse scholars. However, the differences and similarities of these three perspectives have not been fully compared as either philosophies or methodologies. The purposes of this paper are to provide an understanding of the origin and development of the triangulation research method, clarify major sources of confusion in the presentation of a triangulation study, and discuss the problems and possible solutions of a triangulation study. Finally, an example of multiple triangulation in a nursing research within a Taiwanese cultural context -- turning points of recovery from cardiac surgery during the intensive care unit transition -- is presented. In the course of the paper, suggestions are also given to help nurse researchers recognize when it is most appropriate to use a certain research method, whether that be qualitative, quantitative or triangulation.