

ChatGPT answers a frequently asked question about nursing: What it is and what it is not

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1 | INTRODUCTION

ChatGPT is designed to generate human-like text and communicate with users in natural language (Dale, 2021). It can quickly search vast amounts of health literature to provide researchers (and students) with pertinent data on specific topics and help them keep up with the latest findings. ChatGPT is useful for clarifying theories and concepts by extracting relevant data from research articles and saving researchers time in data collection. It provides comprehensive and streamlined information but is not yet capable of critical thinking or deep analysis (Ashraf & Ashfaq, 2023). ChatGPT is a language model that has been taught to appear persuasive, not to decode and understand the content. It follows that the texts it generates can be misleading and based on questionable or even fake sources (Dave et al., 2023). Recently, ChatGPT has been used in various academic settings, such as nursing education, research, and practice (Abdulai & Hung, 2023; Sallam, 2023).

Trained on Big Data, it has been argued that ChatGPT is probably more knowledgeable than many human educators (Miao & Ahn, 2023), but is that really the case? If artificial intelligence technology in its current manifestation becomes the primary source of scientific production (see studies on Big Data) in a discipline such as nursing, how can we distinguish and recognize the contribution of the original thinking of the researcher, student, or teacher from the product generated by algorithms?

2 | CHATGPT ON NURSING

To find out how it works, we have asked ChatGPT to write us some statements focusing on nursing, by answering the ultimate question regarding the definition of the domain of nursing discipline. The prompt was the following: "Tell me what nursing is and what it is not."

What nursing is:

1. Patient-centered care: Nursing is a profession primarily focused on providing comprehensive care to individuals, addressing their physical, emotional, social, and spiritual needs. It places the patient at the center of care delivery.
2. Holistic approach: Nursing incorporates a holistic approach, considering the physical, emotional, social, and spiritual aspects of a patient's well-being. This approach recognizes that these aspects are interconnected and impact health and healing.
3. Clinical Skills: Nurses possess a wide range of clinical skills, including administering medications, conducting assessments, monitoring vital signs, performing medical procedures, and providing wound care.
4. Health promotion: Nurses educate patients and their families about health conditions, treatment options, medication management, and preventive measures. They empower individuals with knowledge to make informed decisions about their health.
5. Advocacy: Nurses act as advocates for their patients, ensuring that patients' rights, preferences, and well-being are respected and upheld within the healthcare system.

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6. Collaboration: Nursing involves working collaboratively with other healthcare professionals, such as physicians, therapists, pharmacists, and social workers, to provide holistic and well-coordinated care.
7. Ethical practice: Nurses adhere to a strict code of ethics, including principles of patient confidentiality, cultural competence, and the delivery of compassionate, patient-centered care.
8. Lifelong learning: Nursing is a dynamic field, and nurses engage in continuous learning to stay updated with the latest medical advancements, research, and evidence-based practices (ChatGPT, 2023).

What nursing is not:

1. Limited to hospitals: While hospitals are a common setting, nursing extends to various healthcare settings, including clinics, home healthcare, schools, and telehealth.
2. Gender-specific: Nursing is no longer a profession limited to one gender; it is open to people of all genders.
3. Obsolete due to technology: Technology complements nursing but does not replace it. Nurses use advanced tools and electronic health records to enhance care.
4. Solely traditional: Nursing has diversified with specialized roles, such as nurse practitioners, nurse anesthetists, nurse educators, and nurse informaticists, offering a range of career options.
5. Passive: Modern nursing is proactive, with nurses actively involved in patient care planning and advocating for patient needs.
6. Replacing physicians: While nurses play a crucial role in patient care, they do not replace the expertise and responsibilities of physicians. Physicians are responsible for making medical decisions and providing specialized medical treatments.
7. Simple or easy: Nursing is a demanding profession that requires critical thinking, adaptability, and the ability to manage high-stress situations. It is not a simple or easy job and often involves long hours and complex responsibilities (ChatGPT, 2023).

3 | DISCUSSION

If, on the one hand, we can summarily agree with what has been written, since the statements are logically structured and the content corresponds to general experience, on the other, we cannot but consider the definitions given by ChatGPT as somewhat stereotyped and superficial, referring primarily to the professional rather than the disciplinary dimension of nursing. Almost all attributed characteristics are the result of sociocultural norms and models, as well as the development of health and welfare systems that directly affect the development of nursing (e.g., gender perspective, hospital vs. community care). There are no elements that relate the changes caused by factors or attractors internal to the profession to those resulting from external or contextual development. The danger is that stereotypes and clichés condense into seemingly general consensus themes that propose socially meritorious actions as intrinsically valid even without a purpose justifying them. For example, holistic care becomes superior to the administration of medication

without any reason to justify this superiority. Herein lies the danger of stereotyping, in which an element is assumed to confer value (at a cultural or social level) on the action regardless of the professional purpose it actually serves. A professional action, on the other hand, should produce effects that make possible the result that social or cultural value justifies as corresponding to the disciplinary perspective (Cao et al., 2023). For example, the idea of self-care corresponds to a social value that enables the nurse to choose nursing interventions that empower the patient to care for himself (Matarese et al., 2018). Thus, in agreement with V. Henderson (1991), we can state that nursing does not count for what it does, but for what it enables the patient to do, in the sense that self-care is the guiding value.

It would appear that many theorists over the years have repeatedly grappled with the concepts of nursing (Hadadian-Chaghaei et al., 2022). For example, nursing was described by Florence Nightingale as the act of using the patient's environment to support him, by Hildegard Peplau as fostering the relationship between nurse and client, and by Martha Rogers as a humanistic profession. The effort to shape and define nursing by answering the question "What can the nurse do?" found passionate supporters among twentieth-century nurses. In the current time, however, the predominant question has evolved to be something like this: "What outcomes might be appropriately derived from the impact of nursing actions?" reflecting the assumption that the peculiarities of the profession can be found in the results obtained for patients, mainly thanks to the actions of nurses focused on valuable outcomes (Coster et al., 2018). ChatGPT does not yet have the intelligence to unfold evolutionary patterns and distinguish stereotypes from the discrepancy between the professional dimension and the disciplinary dimension that guides this professional action. In other words, ChatGPT provides a flattened description of a multidimensional phenomenon.

The result of the input provided by professionals should be a better state of health for the patient because this is required by the principle of beneficence. Herein lies the answer to the question, what is nursing? The question should actually be rephrased as: What defines nursing, its actions or its goals? Since nursing can coexist in both dimensions, there are clear consequences of focusing on the actions rather than the goals. Far from a biomedical and pathophysiological perspective, nursing's role is to encourage people to maximize their ability to control their psychophysical processes or to activate their potential for health (Zanotti & Chiffi, 2016). This is reminiscent of the empirical approaches of nurse-led interventions that activate patients' self-management skills (Westland et al., 2020), although they focus only on increasing physical activity rather than on the cross-behavioral concept of health potential as a whole.

According to Chiffi and Zanotti (2015), health potential refers to the possibility of improving the health status of a patient, family, or group starting from their current level of health. It follows that nursing interventions (predicated on the nurse-patient relationship, the integration of physical, psychosocial, and relational needs, and a supportive context; Mudd et al., 2020) are not particularly effective without the active participation of the patient. The greatest theoretical and constitutive value of nursing diagnoses, we believe, should be to enhance the autonomy and health capacity of patients, families, and communities.

Improving health potential is the goal and can only be achieved if nursing practice and methodology are supported by a balanced integration of techniques and knowledge from clinical, scientific, and humanistic fields and by incorporating normative boundaries into the diagnostic framework (Chiffi & Zanotti, 2015).

The problem of nursing is to justify the goal it pursues because the goal gives value to the action, it is not the action itself. ChatGPT does not address the relationship between nursing goals and interventions but only describes the actions of nurses. In the ChatGPT view of nursing, the purpose pursued by the action does not appear; it is invisible. One consequence of this is that the argument produced by ChatGPT is quite easy to recognize as such and does not yet justify the current debate about its possible fraudulent use, for example, by students in their written work—assuming, of course, that the professor must be interested in capturing both the critical core and formal correctness. Moreover, the value of the independence of the subject is also not directly visible in the ChatGPT view of the disciplinary dimension of nursing. Peirce et al. (2020) argued that technologically assisted ways of knowing should not be value-free, but rather invested in ethics, and reflective of nursing's social, political, and cultural values. If we look at things today, when nursing values should be an integral part of our knowledge development, we can see that ChatGPT is far from realizing these ideals.

4 | CONCLUSION

In summary, artificial intelligence is still far from mimicking human intelligence in describing nursing care. For now, it functions like a rake, collecting data and organizing it into structures according to the rules of semantics and logic. What is missing is the part of illogic and apparent contradiction that enlivens the discussion and makes it epistemically interesting. So, yes, ChatGPT has an extensive knowledge base. But that knowledge is more in the sense of possessing information than in the sense of critically reformulating new hypotheses based on that information. While it is true that artificial intelligence will develop far beyond its current limits, criticality must refer to the capacity achieved so far, not the potential capacity of this intelligence.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The authors have nothing to report.

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