

To Our Dear Readers,

In contemporary health systems, the attitude of protecting and improving health, treatment of disorders, and rehabilitation of chronic issues are significant apprehensions in terms of both content and priority in service delivery. When we speak of mental health, it would not be wrong to say that one of the most important services in this field is psychotherapy. Although the value of psychopharmacology remains undeniably important in the treatment and rehabilitation of mental disorders, especially chronic ones, for most cases, psychotherapies are strengthening their place in the context, sometimes in combination with psychopharmacology and sometimes as treatment modalities used alone. Even if they do not experience any significant problems, people currently apply to psychotherapies to get to familiarize with and improve themselves. Minding all this background, efforts to understand people and orienting them to way of maturity so to solve their problems have become the principal of therapeutic interventions. These efforts have led to the spread of different psychotherapy echoes that developed based on theoretical approaches that seem quite different from each other today. Besides, their results are evaluated within the framework of scientific evidence.

The field of mental health, unlike other medical fields, is in a position where numerous different areas of expertise work together, thus, ambiguities and conflicts occur every so often in terms of roles and competencies. One of these areas of conflict or uncertainty, is the debate about who can be a psychotherapist. Undoubtedly, interdisciplinary discussions are necessary on every issue concerning human health and may lead to beneficial consequences for the field. However, these discussions should be held on a scientific and legal basis and should be continued by focusing on the concept of "expertise", which is based on foundations such as competence, adequacy and authorization. A discussion that prioritizes or excludes any expertises cannot be in the best interest of society, nor is it compatible with the fundamental value of mental health professionals, which emphasizes the opposition to the term "otherization".

Psychotherapy is a treatment method based on scientific theories, supposedly valid for people of all ages and targeting gaining insight and maturation, which operates through the communication and interaction of the psychotherapist and the patient/client in a dynamic relationship, with the aim of changing dysfunctional behaviors and eliminating/controlling the effects of mental symptoms. In other words, psychotherapy is a form of treatment relationship that involves application of interpersonal and therapeutic methods used to improve individuals' behaviors, thoughts and other personal characteristics in a desired direction.^[1]

The competence of the psychotherapist can be described as "the application of communication, knowledge, technical skills, clinical judgment, emotions, values, and contextual understanding through scientific and ethical methods for the benefit of the individual and the community served".^[2] Competence puts forth the knowledge and skills that a professional/expert must have in order to perform in an occupation. Although to become a psychotherapist, it is essential to have a bachelor's degree from one of the professional areas accepted to be included in mental health specialization fields in all developed countries, and it is subjected to some amount of change according to specific conditions of countries, at least today, it is necessary to complete one of the theoretical and applied psychotherapy trainings given in institutions recognized by local authorities. In this context, it is obvious that psychiatric nurses, who are mental health experts, should not be subjected to any scientific or legal uncertainty in their professional work as "psychotherapists" after receiving psychotherapy training properly.

Psychiatric nurses are highly trained, competent professionals educated to provide multifaceted interventions, which can range from psychotherapy and medication management to behavioral therapies. Psychiatric nurses are in a key position for ensuring access to egalitarian mental health services, as they make up 44% of the entire mental health workforce.^[3] For all these reasons, appraisal of psychiatric nurses as psychotherapists after completing the appropriate educational process is likely to facilitate society's access to this service.

Even though psychotherapy training was carried out through a master-apprentice relationship in our country for a long while with undocumented training, certified psychotherapy training based on different theoretical schools is now becoming increasingly common. Although this situation puts the features of the trainings in a questionable state, it will be an attitude befitting the modern understanding of mental health if this discussion is supervised by relevant professional chambers/organizations in line with standards and ethical principles but not held and controlled by a sole professional organization.

Providing psychotherapy services via psychiatrists, psychiatric nurses, psychologists, psychological guides, counselors and social workers whose aim is offering mental health services in line with human dignity in the world and in our country to members of society of all ages and socio-cultural positions, spreading of good practices including the provision of services with the principle of accountability and inspection by professional institutions should be a national objective.

It can be asserted that psychotherapy studies should be included more frequently in the Journal of Psychiatric Nursing in the form of experimental and descriptive studies, systematic reviews or case reports, as it not only creates scientific evidence for the field, but also invites mental health experts to think together in this field. Besides, it is also likely to contribute to increase the visibility of psychiatric nurses as psychotherapists.

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References

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