Critical realism: an important philosophical perspective for nursing researches

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Abstract

Background and Aim: Qualitative and quantitative researches are conducted through different approaches. Each of them has their own specific philosophical basis. Due to the advent of the critical realism philosophy, this study aimed to discuss the critical realism as a philosophical perspective in nursing and health system researches.

Materials and Methods: In this study, the data were collected through PubMed ،Wiley, Science Direct ، Ovid and Google Scholar databases using realism, critical realism, philosophical perspective, health and nursing as keywords.

Results: Critical realism as a philosophical orientation and as a research methodology leads to conduct valid researches to improve health system. In addition, it leads to a better understanding of personal, social-background and organizational factors and the interactions among them. Different subjects were considered in reviewing literatures including critical realism as a moderate philosophical perspective, its perspective to the realism and idealism, critical realism principals, its approach toward research methodology and the role of critical realism in nursing and health system.

Conclusion: To promote the quality of nursing cares, critical realism can be a suitable guide for nursing researches to a better understanding of activities and interactions of nurses and its relationship with health system structures and its mutual effect. According to these results, corrective measures should be planned and implemented.

Keyword: realism, critical realism, philosophical perspective, nursing

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