NURSES' TRAINING PROCESS: GRADUATES' POINT OF VIEW ON PRACTICE AND INSERTION IN THE WORLD OF WORK

PROCESSO FORMATIVO DE ENFERMEIROS: VISÃO DE EGRESSOS SOBRE PRÁTICA E INSERÇÃO NO MUNDO DO TRABALHO

PROCESO DE FORMACIÓN DEL ENFERMERO: VISIÓN DE LOS EGRESADOS SOBRE LA PRÁCTICA Y LA INSERCIÓN EN EL MUNDO LABORAL

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ABSTRACT

Objective: to identify the potentialities of the nurses' training process based on the graduates' point of view of their professional practice and insertion in the world of work. **Method:** a descriptive, exploratory study with a quantitative and qualitative approach. One-hundred ninety-eight (68.5%) graduates of a Nursing course in the south of Minas Gerais participated in the study and answered an electronic form sent by digital platform. Descriptive statistical analysis and thematic analysis were performed. **Results:** the graduates indicated the university's institutional tradition, teacher training, ease of teacher-student relationship and experience with extracurricular activities as potential training opportunities. They mentioned satisfaction with the profession but highlighted that the remuneration is below the responsibilities assumed at work, with consequent professional devaluation. They indicated themes that can be strengthened during the academic path for professional insertion, such as extending the practical workload, improving the relationship between the academy and the preceptorship of healthcare services, strengthening management/management teaching, autonomy, leadership, and decision making, empowerment professional, among others. They demonstrated the importance of preparing for work in their own work experience and through permanent education. Final **Considerations:** research with graduates allowed to evaluate the training process, being relevant for the planning and readjustment of education policies. Maintaining follow-up policies and an effective communication channel with graduates to follow their trajectory contributes to the curriculum being continuously reviewed and reformulated in the dynamics of the training process, facilitating the transition between academia and the world of work.

Keywords: Curriculum; Education, Higher; Nursing Education Research; Professional Training; Health Workforce; Education, Nursing.

RESUMO

Objetivo: identificar as potencialidades do processo formativo de enfermeiros a partir da visão dos egressos sobre sua prática profissional e inserção no mundo do trabalho. Método: estudo descritivo, exploratório, com abordagem quanti-qualitativa. Participaram do estudo 198 (68,5%) egressos de um curso de Enfermagem do sul de Minas Gerais que responderam a um formulário eletrônico enviado por plataforma digital. Foram realizadas análise estatística descritiva e análise temática. Resultados: os egressos indicaram como potencialidades da sua formação a tradição institucional da universidade, a capacitação docente, a facilidade de relacionamento professor-aluno e a experiência com atividades extracurriculares. Referiram satisfação com a profissão, mas destacaram que a remuneração está a quém das responsabilidades assumidas no trabalho, com consequente desvalorização profissional. Indicaram temas que podem ser fortalecidos durante o percurso acadêmico para inserção profissional, como ampliar a carga horária prática, aperfeiçoar o entrosamento entre academia e preceptoria dos serviços de saúde, fortalecer o ensino de gestão/gerenciamento, autonomia, liderança e tomada de decisão, empoderamento profissional, entre outros. Demonstraram a importância de se prepararem para o trabalho na própria vivência laboral e por meio da educação permanente. Considerações Finais: pesquisas com egressos permitiram avaliar o processo de formação, sendo relevantes para o planejamento e readequação das políticas de educação. Manter políticas de acompanhamento e um canal de comunicação efetivo com os egressos para o seguimento de sua trajetória contribui para que o currículo seja continuamente revisto e reformulado na dinâmica do processo formativo, facilitando a transição entre a academia e o mundo do trabalho.

Palavras-chave: Currículo; Educação Superior; Pesquisa em Educação de Enfermagem; Capacitação Profissional; Mão de Obra em Saúde; Educação em Enfermagem.

RESUMEN

Objetivo: identificar las potencialidades del proceso de formación de los enfermeros a partir de la visión de los egresados sobre su práctica profesional e inserción en el mundo laboral. Método: estudio descriptivo, exploratorio, con enfoque cuantitativo y cualitativo. Participaron del estudio 198 (68,5%) egresados de un curso de Enfermería en el Sur de Minas Gerais, quienes respondieron un formulario electrónico enviado por plataforma digital. Se realizó análisis estadístico descriptivo y análisis temático. Resultados: los egresados señalaron como

*potencialidades formativas la tradición institucional de la Universidad, la capacitación docente, la facilidad de relación profesor-alumno y la experiencia con las actividades extracurriculares. Mencionaron satisfacción con la profesión, pero destacaron que la remuneración está por debajo de las responsabilidades asumidas en el trabajo, con la consiguiente devaluación profesional. Indicaron temas que pueden fortalecerse durante la trayectoria académica para la inserción profesional, como extender la carga práctica, mejorar la relación entre la academia y la preceptoría de los servicios de salud, fortalecer la enseñanza de la gestión, la autonomía, el liderazgo y la toma de decisiones, el empoderamiento profesional, entre otros. Demuestran la importancia de prepararse para el trabajo en su propria experiencia laboral y mediante la educación permanente. **Consideraciones finales:** la investigación con egresados permite evaluar el proceso de formación, siendo relevante para la planificación y reajuste de las políticas educativas. Mantener políticas de seguimiento y un canal de comunicación eficaz con los egresados para seguir su trayectoria contribuye a que el currículo sea continuamente revisado y reformulado en la dinámica del proceso formativo, facilitando la transición entre la academia y el mundo laboral*

Palabras clave: *Curriculum; Educación Superior; Investigación en Educación de Enfermería; Capacitación Profesional; Fuerza Laboral en Salud; Educación en Enfermería.*

INTRODUCTION

Research with graduates allows the monitoring of alumni, especially when they start their professional life. Studies in the area of training nurses indicate the strengths and weakness experienced by professionals, which are related to the recognition of the chosen university, the knowledge acquired, the stimulus to the search for improvement and the good performance in selection processes. On the other hand, they experience difficulties related to the lack of experience and postgraduate courses required in the job market. In addition, weakness in the articulation and balance between theory and practice fragment the training, making the connection between thinking and doing difficult.[1,2]

The goal of healthcare work should be to care for human beings, in a holistic and multidimensional way, requiring professionals capable of understanding the principles and guidelines of Unified Health System (*Sistema Único de Saúde* - SUS), considering them in their daily practice, without losing sight of the articulation of the technician and the politician and social and the formation of a professional able to act critically in meeting the health needs of people and populations, encouraging the development of autonomy and the emancipation of the subjects.[3]

The curriculum of Nursing courses is guided by the National Curricular Guidelines (*Diretrizes Curriculares Nacionais* - DCN), which aim to strengthen the training of professionals for the Unified Health System (*Sistema Único de Saúde* - SUS) and reiterate that one of the principles refers to solid academic training, based on integrality of the actions offered to individuals and the community, allowing the professional to overcome the difficulties and challenges arising from professional practice, with the capacity to produce knowledge.[4]

Research by Costa *et al*[5] reveals the need for continuous reviews of the DCNs, aiming at the organization of knowledge and practices with a focus on interdisciplinarity and interprofessionality. The authors emphasize that an innovative curriculum must overcome the dichotomies between theory and practice, the predominance of information to the detriment of reasoning and the disarticulation between disciplines, favoring the teacher's practice as a learning mediator, articulating the teaching-learning process and the world of work, with a view to the implementation of the DCNs in the training of nurses.[5]

Considering the complexity of the teaching-learning process, the intersubjectivity of the actors involved in the preparation and execution of curricular proposals and the polysemy of curriculum definition, it is relevant to seek answers on the meanings of the term "curriculum" in a partial and historically contextualized way.[6]

It is understood that research with graduates contributes to this analysis, as it allows higher education institutions (HEIs) to value in the learning process and in the curricula, aspects indicated by the subjects who have already experienced the training process.

It is worth mentioning that in the context under study, the HEI was transformed, which went from federal autarchy to university in 2005, bringing several challenges in the experience of commissions and collegiate of the course. With the entry of students through the Unified Selection System (*Sistema de Seleção Unificada* - SISU), it was essential to have a new look at the training of nurses, raising several questions: what is the view of nurses who graduated from an HEI on the training received? What is the influence of training on professional insertion? Are the graduates satisfied with the profession?

Studies with graduates in the course in question did not exist, being relevant to outline a profile of the last 10 years of training nurses with benefits for the management of the Nursing course, which are guided by the demands brought by former students, thus justifying the accomplishment of the present study.

In addition, continuous and permanent evaluations make it possible to adjust, construct and reformulate the teaching-learning process. The disordered growth of Nursing courses without quality monitoring makes it difficult to evaluate graduates, especially if we consider the different Brazilian sociodemographic realities.[7]

In a study with Nursing professionals in Nigeria, gaps in training were found, emphasizing the need for continuing education in search of innovation and the acquisition of new skills to improve individual and population healthcare.[8]

Thus, the research aimed to identify the potentialities of the nurses'training process based on the graduates' point of view of their professional practice and insertion in the world of work.

METHOD

Descriptive, exploratory study with a quantitative and qualitative approach, which represents part of a larger study with graduates, developed in an HEI in the south of *Minas Gerais* with professionals trained between 2008 and 2018, in a total of 289 graduates.

Data collection took place from October to November 2019 and the validated instrument was used for the Evaluation of Graduates of Undergraduate Nursing Courses (*IAE-ENF*)[7]. Dimension I allowed the characterization of the graduate's profile in sociodemographic aspects in the academic and professional trajectories. Quantitative data were stored in the database in Excel and descriptive analysis was performed using simple frequencies.

To assess the participants' perception of academic training based on work experience, the instrument presents seven questions: 1. How do you feel about the training received in the undergraduate Nursing course and the requirements experienced in the labor market? 2. How do you evaluate the practical content (practical activities and internships) that you performed in undergraduate Nursing course in relation to preparation for professional practice? 3. What is your perception in relation to the type of evaluation of the teaching-learning process, both of the theoretical and practical contents adopted in the undergraduate Nursing course you took? 4. As a nurse, how do you evaluate the salary in Nursing? 5. How satisfied are you with the professional activities you perform in the Nursing area? 6. How satisfied are you with "being" a nurse? 7. Considering your current professional perspectives, how do you evaluate the undergraduate Nursing course you took? The instrument also contains the question about the strengths and weakness of the course. The possibility of giving graduates suggestions for improving the teaching process was added to the study.

The instrument was digitalized on the Survey Monkey platform and sent to graduates who, when they agreed with the IC, had access to the form. The contact was made by electronic address (e-mail) made available and authorized by the HEI. Predicting the outdated e-mail addresses of graduates, searches were also carried out on social networks, increasing the adhesion of participants.

Two-hundred sixty-nine responses were obtained, 71 of which were eliminated following the exclusion criteria, leaving 198 effective participants (68.5%), whose data were analyzed. Graduates who read the Free and Informed Consent Form (ICF) and chose not to participate were excluded; those who read the term, agreed to participate, and did not answer any questions about the instrument; graduates with duplicate names; graduated students before 2008; and those who were not on the official list of eligible to participate.

Qualitative data were analyzed from the perspective of thematic analysis[9], with the nuclei of meaning being defined *a priori* from the data contained in the IAE-ENF. After an exhaustive reading of the narratives, the material was organized relating it to the hypotheses and theories addressed, considering their representativeness, homogeneity, and relevance to the objectives. After the pre-analysis, the exploration of the narratives and treatment of results was carried out and, finally, the inferences and interpretations. In this context, four cores of meaning emerged: the meaning of the training received in the Nursing course and the experience at work; graduates'point of view on the development of the teaching-learning process; nurses' point of view of the profession; point of view of the course taken.

The data were collected after approval by the Research Ethics Committee of the *Universidade Federal de Alfenas* - MG, with Opinion Report nr. 3,572,542, according to the precepts that guide research with human beings. The TCLE was sent by the platform, being composed of clarifications about the research, objectives, confidentiality, voluntariness, risks, anonymity, and freedom to withdraw from participation at any time, without any burden to the participant, according to the ethical procedures recommended by the Resolution of the Brazilian National Health Council 466/2012. All participants agreed to the Free and Informed Consent Term, expressing acquiescence in the participation and awareness of any discomfort, risks, and benefits of the research. To guarantee anonymity, the participants were designated by colors. The recommendation for reporting qualitative research (SRQR) was used.[10]

RESULTS

Knowing the profile of graduates in their sociodemographic conception, academic training, professional trajectory and their perception of the training received is important to detect the potential and weaknesses of the academic path, enabling the rethinking of the meanings of the curriculum and training for SUS.[6,11]

The sociodemographic profile of the participants showed the predominance of female graduates (89.39%), place of residence with concentration in the Southeast region (91.92%), white race (81.31%), age range between 30 and 40 (56.57%) and wage income between two and seven minimum wages (59%).[1]

In characterizing the academic path, it was found that the majority participated in extracurricular activities, including extension programs and projects, scientific initiation, non-mandatory internship, among others. It was found that 7.09% had previous experience in the area as Nursing technicians/assistants and 75.25% attended postgraduate courses in the specialization, residency, master's, doctorate, and post-doctoral programs.

In the professional trajectory, the graduates got jobs within six months after graduation, with access through selection processes (39.47%) and public tenders (26.97%), working in a healthcare institution (80%). Still, most of them work 37 to 44 hours a week, mainly in healthcare and service management, in public or private hospitals and the Family Health Strategy unit. A percentage of 13.6% declared to be unemployed and 3.29% work as freelancers. These data are corroborated by research on the profile of Nursing in Brazil.[12]

The analysis of qualitative data followed the dimensions contained in the IAE-ENF, which will be discussed in the light of the assumptions of curriculum theory and scientific literature on the training of nurses for SUS.[6,11]

THE TRAINING RECEIVED IN THE NURSING COURSE AND THE EXPERIENCE AT WORK

Regarding the training received in the undergraduate Nursing course and the requirements experienced in the labor market, the graduates revealed a feeling of insecurity, incapacity, and unpreparedness for work, related to little practical experience, use of the academic as a workforce and difficulties with preceptors/supervisors in practices and internships, according to the following statements:

[...] More practice was lacking. I was very insecure [...] (MINT).

We are often used in the field of practice as cheap labor, not having the opportunity to exercise the role of administrator, team manager, as it has been increasingly demanded from nurses (MUSTARD).

[...] lack of preceptorship interested in the student's training [...] (GREEN).

Participants also reported difficulties in developing autonomy, decision making, management, administration, coordination, and leadership.

Few opportunities to perform nurse's private procedures (PASTEL).

[...] If the Nursing process is private activity of the nurse, why is the course not structured on it? (APRICOT).

Little emphasis on people management and none in risk management, [...] internship field of low/medium complexity hospital (PURPLE).

Issues such as the lack of advanced practice references and the incorporation of technological innovation and active teaching methodologies were reported by the participants.

Considering the current need of the market, especially in the public sector, which currently requires advanced Nursing practices; during the course I did not hear about this subject. In addition, I heard very little about the new teaching-learning methodologies, such as the active methodology [...] (APRICOT).

[...] I did not feel secure to deal with different technologies (GOLDEN).

The lack of professional empowerment during training was also reported by the graduates.

[...] This lack of Nursing empowerment since graduation makes us insecure in relation to multidisciplinary communication (GREEN).

It is noteworthy that many graduates responded that they feel prepared to face the world of work, understanding the importance of continuing their studies after graduation, emphasizing the possibility of personal development, facing the difficulties encountered at work and the relevance of learning in the professional experience.

I needed and wanted a specialization course to enter the labor market (OCEAN).

I feel empowered since professional experience is a constant learning process (SALMON).

GRADUATES' POINT OF VIEW AS TO THE EVALUATION OF THE TEACHING-LEARNING PROCESS

Regarding the evaluation process adopted in the undergraduate course, the graduates reported the inadequacy of the methods, considering them conventional, superficial, and distant from what was learned and evaluated.

The evaluation method used was more traditional, it was not the most fair and appropriate [...] (EUCALYPTUS).

[...] *the evaluation practices of internships were very superficial, with an intense approach in negative points and did not give space for the student to demonstrate his/her insecurities and difficulties, creating an authoritative and demotivating feedback* (CARAMEL).

There is a big gap between what is learned in theory and what is applied in practice (APRICOT).

Student support, humanization and empathy between teachers and students during the academic path were mentioned as important elements to feel safe and prepared for the world of work, developing personal values that allow the transcendence of the technicality inherent to the profession, according to the upcoming testimonials.

I believe that there should be more support for students, I developed several problems during graduation [...] (METALLIC).

[...] *The lack of support and concern for the students' mental and physical health has considerably affected my performance and evolution within the undergraduate course and, even today, it affects my personal and emotional performance with the issues experienced in daily care* (CARAMEL).

NURSE'S POINT OF VIEW ON THE PROFESSION

In the nurses' point of view about the profession, feelings of devaluation and lack of professional recognition emerged, and these themes brought narratives related to the overload of nurses' work and the lack of performance by class councils for the implementation of fair and national wage levels, culminating in with abandoning the profession.

We are very poorly paid, especially if we have no experience, that is, after graduating, having to expose ourselves to terrible jobs, with terrible remunerations (MUSTARD).

In view of all the work carried out by the Nursing team, the remuneration is not satisfactory for our class, making the majority of nurses supplement (sic) their monthly income with a second job, which leads to an ineffective assistance provided. And the professional dissatisfaction with being a nurse since we all need professional recognition and salary enhancement (PLUM).

I abandoned Nursing (YELLOW).

On the other hand, despite the recognition that the profession is poorly paid and undervalued, many graduates are pleased to be nurses.

I consider my remuneration today compatible with my dedication and my investment since the company is mine and I started from scratch. (sic) I feel very pleased to see my work generating a higher income than I expected and much higher than the hospitals in Alfenas. But I understand that Nursing suffers from low wages in the public and private sectors (MINT).

The challenge is huge, it is literally a lion a day, but at the end it is gratifying to see that everything went well (GREEN).

POINT OF VIEW OF THE COURSE TAKEN

For graduates of the Nursing course, training and the teaching-learning process are strengthened by the institution's tradition for entering the world of work, teacher training and the ease of relationship between teachers and students.

Public university with a highly trained faculty member (SEPIA).

Faculty member, opportunities to carry out extra-class activity, scientific initiation, incentive to involve teaching and research, empathetic, supportive teachers, and friends, who really contributed to the students' professional training (AQUAMARINE).

On the other hand, the graduates suggest improvements for the course, proposing an increase in the workload, curricular mobility, agreements for new experiences, in addition to curriculum evaluations carried out

by academics during the training for adjustments, as revealed below.

> *Increase the period of some disciplines for better use; start practical activities in the first periods* (OCHER).

> *Allow greater mobility in the curriculum so that the student can take optional courses from other courses* (CYAN).

> *Achieve new fields of practice for students to feel more prepared for professional life* (CARROT).

> *The course should be evaluated periodically by the students, during the learning process, so that possible changes could be made before the students graduate* (RED).

The course offered opportunities in the development of extracurricular activities, providing experience in teaching, extension, and research, which is seen by graduates as a positive point in training.

> *Insertion in programs and projects (scientific initiation, extension, monitoring, academic mobility, among others). Clear and frequent articulation between teaching, research, and extension. Rigor and ethical coherence in training. Possibility of practical productive environments* (SKY).

> *Knowledge acquired in extension projects/research/disciplines* (SILVER).

DISCUSSION

The results obtained in the study reveal the need to rethink the curriculum based on the contributions of graduates, understanding the complexity of the training process and the difficulties encountered in the world of work, which is reflected in the assistance provided to people and communities in the nurses' doing.

The graduates revealed a feeling of insecurity and unpreparedness to cope with the world of work, referring to the insufficiency of clinical practice, the use of the student to replace Nursing technicians/assistants and difficulties with preceptors/supervisors in internships.

In a similar study, the feeling of frustration when experiencing the profession is common in the initial phase of workers' lives, and since the implementation of the DCNs in Nursing courses, the theory/practice articulation has been very challenging, considering the tensions and contradictions between the proposal connection between them. Thus, it is necessary to think of the curriculum without fragmentation, in which theory and practice have the same hourly load distribution and its articulation is capable of taking the student to an assistance practice with criticality, scientificity and reflection in action, bringing it closer throughout the training process the world of teaching and the world of work. Thus, the student will be able to propose actions and reflections to change reality.

In this perspective, the study reinforces the need for commitment and involvement of teachers in the reformulation and changes of pedagogical projects, overcoming the dichotomies of the training process through complex thinking, which facilitates the interconnection between the parts and the whole, and vice versa.[2]

A research found that during the formative process, there is often incompatibility between the theoretical teachings and the reality found in the practice scenarios, hindering the development of the student's practice. When faced with the difference between theory and practice, they develop feelings of frustration, insecurity, incapacity and fear.[13]

In the relationship between preceptorship and healthcare services, there are conflicts and contradictions that must be overcome based on the clarity of each person's roles in the training process. The participation of nurses in training must function as the communication bridge between teaching and service, working as a two-way street, with benefits for both parties.[14]

Despite the DCNs of the Nursing course instituting the mandatory curricular internship in the last year of training, with the effective participation of nurses from the healthcare service where clinical practice is developed, there are many controversies between COFEN and educational institutions. It is defined that the activities of the curricular internship are the competence of the teacher, with monitoring by the teacher and the nurse of the healthcare service, through an agreement, effectively and articulated between the educational institution and the healthcare service in search of their objective.[4]

In accordance with a study carried out in a Nursing course, it is necessary to contextualize that the relationship between academia and healthcare services is not always easy, considering the intersubjectivity of coexistence between the actors involved. In addition, it is necessary to recognize the work overload of nurses in the service who, in addition to their activities, accumulate the function of preceptor.[13]

In this sense, it is important that educational institutions build relationships with the preceptor, recognizing their difficulties in mediating the teaching-learning process, the lack of knowledge and specific training to accompany students in the service and the very resistance of academics to receive guidance from the nurse in the service. The consolidation of teaching-service integration must be a search for the partnership to be effective.[15]

Another issue mentioned in the study refers to the difficulties in the development of autonomy, management, decision making and leadership, which are reflected in the work, highlighting the need to consolidate aspects foreseen in the DCNs of the Nursing course. The DCNs provide for the training of nurses with aptitude for leadership, decision-making, communication, and management in an effective and efficient manner, with commitment, responsibility and administration of the workforce, physical and material resources, and information.[4]

In a study on the professional identity of Nursing students, it is emphasized that the role of nurses is linked to their doing in private actions, such as Nursing consultation, which legitimizes the Nursing process and the Systematization of Nursing Care (*Sistematização da Assistência de Enfermagem* - SAE), providing the professional with autonomy, decision making, leadership and care management. In this process, professional work constitutes nurses' own knowledge, translated by a method that identifies professionals in a unique way, guaranteeing the visibility of the Nursing team and the legal and ethical support of their actions.[16]

The training of nurses should provide the student with the opportunity to appropriate private actions, strengthening visibility, professional identity, and the transition to the world of work.

Concerning these issues, it is necessary that new educational approaches occur in the teaching-learning process of management in Nursing, with improvement of the quality of pedagogical projects, articulating teaching, research, and assistance, favoring the critical capacity of the student through the problematization and emancipatory education, according to research results on teaching strategies in the teaching-learning process of Nursing management.[17]

In relation to the lack of references in advanced practices and technologies, it is necessary to contextualize the curriculum, addressing more emphatically the use of technologies specific to the development of the profession, based on light and light-hard technologies.

Hard technologies, in turn, must be addressed, however requiring specialized training.[18]

Nurses should be guided during their training to the diversity of their work, permanently seeking to update it with a view to articulating evidence-based practices and research, with investment in postgraduate courses at the master's and doctoral level, favoring the process of emancipation and intellectual autonomy.[19]

The Global Nursing Now Campaign, launched by the Federal Nursing Council in partnership with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and the World Health Organization (WHO), aims to present Nursing professionals as the true protagonists of healthcare, through their performance in settings where they act decisively and proactively, identifying needs for care, promotion, and protection of the population's health.[20]

The improvement of the student's critical point of view and professional future is likely to be developed during academic training from the immersion in practices in healthcare services from the first periods of training and insertion in research and extension activities and internships accessible to students from the beginning of the teaching-learning process.

From the point of view of graduates, the evaluation of the teaching-learning process is traditional, carried out with passive methodologies, especially through tests, which makes the process superficial, unfair, and not consistent with what has been lived and learned. The focus on negative points and the non-dialogical evaluation prevent the student from exposing his difficulties and insecurities.

Studies emphasize that students' development/evolution evaluations should be planned and thought through the curriculum, favoring teaching through constant action-reflection-action for the articulation between theory and practice. Evaluating is an act that implies the willingness to accept. Thus, evaluating should serve as a parameter for diagnosis and intervention in a dialogical and constructive perspective.[21,22]

In contrast to traditional teaching-learning models and student evaluation, a study with Nursing students suggests the use of active methodologies for the evaluation process. In this dynamic, the teacher leaves the teaching function centered on the teacher, in expository classes, which weakens the learning. Active methodologies are challenging, and teachers need to know their students' profile and have the desire to innovate. The adaptation to technologies, used with balance, can help to change the way of teaching/learning, enhancing mean-

ingful learning. Thus, the process becomes capable of developing the student's intellectual independence and the apprehension of competences and skills inherent to the exercise of the profession, favoring the formation of a critical, reflective, and independent professional.[23]

Regarding support for students during their training process, the graduates reported that the lack of empathy and support in physical and emotional difficulties impacted academic development. They understand that the concern with their mental health is important to strengthen their training.

It is relevant that student support permeates the student's academic life during the training process, with the attentive eye of teachers and course coordinators, without losing sight of the humanistic value imbued in the mission of the Nursing courses. Social inclusion policies and affirmative actions need to be constantly reviewed to promote social equity in a comprehensive and continuous manner.

The topic on remuneration is cited by the graduates as demotivating, as the nurse assumes diverse and complex functions, such as team coordination, management, assistance. The workload is exhaustive, and the remuneration is not compatible, generating the search for more than one job and professional dissatisfaction.

It is necessary to contextualize that, since the 1980s, precarious work has been occurring through neoliberalism, with the premise of avoiding the collapse of the capitalist system. Neoliberal policies influence cultural and psycho-emotional values, transforming life in society and the work relationships perceived in the Nursing profession through the deterioration of healthcare work conditions and precarious wages.[24]

The issue of the precariousness of the healthcare system brings political and important struggles for the class of healthcare workers, especially nurses.

On the other hand, they demonstrate satisfaction in being a nurse and identify with the profession. Professional recognition and appreciation should be discussed in the training spaces, from a historical perspective, composing the student's journey so that he/she is prepared to transform the context, enabling a critical collective space for the discussion of the issues of struggle with class councils union leaders.

According to Lima *et al*[16], the identity of a profession is given by its history and dynamics, punctuated by tensions, conflicts, representations and transformations experienced mainly by structural changes in society. Throughout the history of the profession, the contradictions, and difficulties in understanding nurses' knowl-

edge by society cause distortions of their image and devaluation of their practice. In Nursing, the profession's identity begins in educational institutions, experienced among students and teachers and among classmates, being built/deconstructed in the family, in the training processes and at work.[16]

Institutional tradition, teacher training and the relationship between teachers and students are seen as strengths of the course. In this regard, educational institutions consolidated in society have a character of tradition and are recognized and evaluated positively by graduates.

The testimonies of the graduates allow us to infer the need for the course's pedagogical project if we pay attention to the importance of training a critical, reflective student, centered on action-reflection-action and his own role, with periodic evaluations of the teaching-learning process. It is necessary for the curriculum to provide students with an active participation by listening to weaknesses and expectations, with a view to correcting/minimizing future difficulties or ways of solving and facing problems.

In a study on the point of view of the Nursing student regarding his/her performance in the SUS, it is emphasized that greater practical workload since the initial years of the course, insertion in non-mandatory stages, experience in the Unified Health System, teaching/service articulation, participation in extension projects, monitoring, research groups and scientific events favor a stronger link between theory and practice, deepening knowledge, promoting security and self-confidence, strengthening professional identity, increasing training experience, improving interpersonal interaction, learning team work and personal and social maturity.[25]

In the current moment experienced by Brazil, with the outbreak of an unprecedented healthcare crisis, the education sector, especially in healthcare, is the one that must undergo more curricular reformulations and changes in the teaching-learning process.

In this perspective, the curricular guidelines and the pedagogical projects of the courses must be rethought, with a view to the formation of critical, reflective professionals, prepared to face changes in society related to the country's epidemiological, political, and social transformation.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

When identifying the sociodemographic, academic, and professional profile of the graduates and their view

on the potential/difficulties to enter the job after the academic experience, it can be concluded that research with graduates allows the evaluation of the training process of nurses, being relevant to the planning, definition, and readjustment of education policies. The curriculum is the normative axis of the formative process, constantly constructed and reconstructed, considering the changes in society and the evolution of public education and healthcare policies.

It is necessary that undergraduate Nursing courses maintain policies to monitor graduates through an effective and institutionalized communication channel to maintain the link, both to listen to them and to continue attending university in events and graduate courses.

The academic path of graduates can be conflicting and marked by difficulties that are not always perceived by teachers. Opportunity for dialogue can facilitate the continuous review and readjustment of the educational process so that training is effective and prepares the professional future for the world of work.

The weaknesses of the curriculum mentioned by the graduates can contribute to the strengthening of the training of nurses as they overcome the difficulties and prepare to train citizens capable of facing the complexity of the profession and work scenarios. The nurse, in addition to technical-scientific training, must be able to seek his identity and give visibility to the profession through action-reflection-action and criticality.

It is expected that the study will provide indications for the discussion of the implementation of curriculum guidelines for Nursing, in the process of review in the country.

This research brings contributions to a little researched area. As a limitation, it is considered that it was carried out in an educational institution, that the researchers participate in management committees of the course and that the data collection was carried out in an online form, which may influence the results. Thus, further research is needed to confirm the gaps in the training process, with effective proposals in improving the teaching-learning process, with a consequent improvement in the quality of care provided by nurses. We emphasize the possibility of this study being replicated in other institutions in order to seek comparative and more comprehensive results.

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