Objective: analyzing the feelings experienced by masters students of nursing. Method: a qualitative research, exploratory and descriptive conducted with 25 students of a Master's degree in nursing of a public university in Paraná. Data collection took place from October to December 2014 using semi-structured interviews that were audio recorded and transcribed in full. Data were analyzed using content analysis. Results: an analytic category has emerged << Feelings experienced by master’s students of nursing >> that originated four subcategories: << Conquest, privilege and dream come true; << Opportunity of professional and personal growth >>; << Doubts about the importance of mastership >> and << Difficulties in reconciling the mastership with private life >>. Conclusion: mixed feelings are experienced by students. Thus, the adoption of measures is suggested to reduce the factors that cause dissatisfaction.

Descriptors: Graduate Nursing Education; Students; Emotions.
INTRODUCTION

The strict sense post-graduate nursing main purpose the scientific and technological development aimed at strengthening the profession as a science, deepening knowledge and qualifying nurses for teaching, research and nursing care.\(^1\)

The masters and doctoral nursing area are booming, a fact that can be verified by increasing the number of courses and programs, graduates and scientific productivity with publication of articles in journals with high impact factor.\(^2,3\) With relation to scientific production, Brazilian nursing occupied in 2013, the 7\(^{th}\) position in the production area in the world rankings, surpassed only by the US, UK, Australia, France, Canada and Germany.\(^4\) This scenario demonstrates the quality of science Brazilian nursing and can be compared to international excellence standards.\(^5\)

Considering the purposes of training, the Graduate Programs in Nursing (PPGEnf) the master's level has in its curriculum proposal to include theoretical subjects that provide solid didactic and pedagogical training and research; insertion of the student in undergraduate classes in undergraduate research orientation and completion of course work under the supervision of mentor teacher; participation in research groups; participation in research seminars; and activities that enhance the writing, encourage reading and the production of the dissertation.\(^1,5\)

In the face of all these activities, in the strict sense formation causes changes in habits and routines, requiring adaptation of the individual to this new reality. It is noteworthy that students still faced with pressures of objective and subjective order, such as deadlines and targets, competitiveness and success, which may favor feelings: suffering, dissatisfaction, fatigue, depression, among others, but can also trigger feelings of pleasure, satisfaction, achievement, challenge and new knowledge.\(^6\)

In view of these considerations, the following research question arises: “What are the feelings experienced by the students during the process of training at Master’s level in a PPGEnf? The intention of investigating the feelings of those students emerged from the fact that the first author to be attending master’s and often hear from other master’s mixed feelings related to being enrolled in master’s degree. Also analyzed the Brazilian and international scientific literature about the feelings experienced by masters and doctoral students is scarce, it is necessary to develop further research in this area, since the process of researchers formation is considered stressful.\(^7\) Therefore, this article intends to produce content that can contribute to the development of strategies aimed at minimizing the feelings of dissatisfaction and consequently reduce stress among graduate students at the master level, as well as other levels and subsidize by the results, other studies on the subject.

In this context, this study aims to analyzing the feelings experienced by masters in nursing students.

METHOD

There was extracted the manuscript from the dissertation “Burnout Syndrome and quality of life among students of post-graduate studies in nursing”, Graduate Program in Nursing, State University of Londrina/UEL. Londrina (PR), Brazil.

This is an exploratory and descriptive qualitative study, which sought to deepen the understanding of the phenomenon under investigation, with emphasis on processes experienced by the subjects.\(^7\)

The study was conducted in a PPGEnf of a public university in the state of Paraná, Brazil. It is an academic master’s that began operations in 2010, offering places exclusively to graduates in nursing. Preliminarily been offered 12 seats and over the years these have been expanded. In the second half of 2014 had 33 master students enrolled in this program. To obtain the master's degree the student must attend 76 credits (1125 hours), distributed in 26 credits on theoretical courses and 50 dissertation credits, in addition to passing the qualifying examination and the dissertation.

The study Master's students enrolled in that course. The criteria for inclusion of participants were limited to regular student of this program and consent to participate.

For determining the number of participants there was used the data saturation criterion. Thus, the interviews were conducted until the time that there was convergence/repetition of statements in relation to the studied phenomenon which occurred with 25 masters.\(^7\)

The technique of collection of narratives of research participants for the production of oral sources was the semi-structured interview with closed questions for sociodemographic characteristics, occupational and academic participants, and, in order to reveal the purpose of the research used the following open question: “Tell me
Nursing mastership: feelings experienced...

satisfaction with the achievement, considering that entered through an arduous and intense selection process in which they are assessed in several intellectual questions and only a few are selected, as shown by the lines of fragments:

Being in mastership is a very great achievement [...] because I know there are few who can go through the selection process [...]. It’s a dream come true. (M2)

Able to attend a master's degree is a privilege for me, where I can be part of such a select group. (M19)

Being a master's student is a big dream and an achievement that I cannot scale. (M21)

The speech of a graduate student explains that the advance in every phase of scientific research and the dissemination of results through the publication of a scientific article also sets as conquer:

The pleasure that has every stage of the research that is won is inexplicable, as well as publishing an article of my research, I think was the greatest achievement lived in the master [...] so that not even defended. (M10)

The data show that students experience feelings of satisfaction because they consider the master's experience as the realization of a dream or a significant achievement and feel privileged to be studying at this level of education. Authors state that satisfaction with the training happens when the individual reaches a result according to his expectations.10

The conquest begins from passing the selection process for such selections are often crowded and restricted the fittest by the reduced number of offered vacancies; but also for the dissemination of the results of their research in scientific circles crowded: Periodicals. Other research has shown that the publication of articles in scientific journals has become one of the most important moments for the postgraduate student, as currently configured as a recognition certificate from his scientific talent.5

It adds that the Brazilian graduate is presented as a way to achieve professional success. So it’s a reason to celebrate as an achievement. Besides, it is characterized in an area of practice that enables the development and improvement for the construction of new knowledge.11

Subcategory 2: Opportunity for professional and personal growth

In this subcategory students mentions that the master is an experience that promotes professional and personal growth. What can be evidenced in the following speeches:

...
I have realized how much I research [...], how much like to seek the best scientific evidence related not only to my research topic, but also to incorporate into my practice in assisting [...]. I understand things he did not understand. [...] I am growing professionally and I am learning to do science and become a researcher. (M6)

The Master is to complete the professional growth through the pursuit of theoretical and practical deepening in the research area and the possibility of important experiences in my professional and increments and salary job. (M12)

Learning is constant throughout the program is recycled; it is new every time and has been the cornerstone of learning for my professional life. [...] By means of the studies I realize that I can change the reality of a patient. [...] The experience that the graduate shows is that we can change realities [...] (mainly) disease. (M17)

Regarding the professional growth opportunity and provided by the master personnel, the results are similar to a study of master's students from Ribeirão Preto College of Nursing that to seek to understand the meaning of being master student identified which constitutes one of the ways personal and professional growth.12

In this second subcategory, also emphasized that the professional growth enables the improvement in the assistance provided by the introduction of a practice based on scientific evidence produced, as well as fostering innovation for health care.2

Denotes that this growth represents an opportunity for improvement in the income and professional recognition are factors related to job satisfaction among nurses.13 It is believed that one of the motivations for looking at that level qualification relates to the ability to climb better employment opportunities that provide satisfaction and higher financial returns.

♦ Subcategory 3: Doubts about the importance of mastership

Students show that the requirements of the master generate feelings of physical and emotional exhaustion, these feelings that lead to inquiries about its importance, as revealed in the narrative:

The emotional toll is heavy and it makes me wonder how much it's worth. (M3)

It has many days that I do not want to do "nothing"! But it's been a year, I think suffering with expiry date only not yet know if it will be worth it. (M4)

Sometimes I come across situations and unnecessary requirements unrelated to teachers and humiliation that I come to think about: What is the purpose of all this? Worth is it? (M7)

It takes great strength and focus to endure suffering. I wonder if it's worth, teachers often do not hear us, ignore us and do not understand us. (M16)

I doubt if it's worth, but when I realize that other colleagues are the "suffocation" as I then get quieter. (M24)

The Master is being very intense, requiring much of my time to studies. I'm interested in reading and learning, but sometimes I feel consumed and exhausted by the studies. Many times I find myself thinking, is that all this will be worth it? (M25)

These feelings can be characterized as dissatisfaction and/or distress. Entry into the graduate is considered a transition and is configured as a unique experience in the lives of students. Therefore, students can at any time be questioning about the importance of being enrolled in master's degree due to various situations and within them there is the relationship between teacher and student.14

To occur the consolidation of scientific knowledge is essential to establish a good relationship between mentor and guide, and this to be harmonious or minimally satisfactory.15-16 As with any interpersonal relationship, disagreements and conflicts can happen and arouse feelings of suffering and dissatisfaction to the student. However, the support, availability and encouragement from the supervisor stimulate the dedication, motivation, improvement and progression of students in this process.17

Some students suffer high wear in during the strict sense training process either at the doctoral level or master's degree, this happens when they cannot adapt to the many demands of graduate due to charges for productivity, great dedication to research, reading and writing requirement, concern about deadlines and intense pace of life.17-20 It is of note that no individual's adaptation to the routine may be among the causes that lead to abandonment of the course.15

In the words of a student of this research it can identify the questioning of the relevance of the master, but realized that his feelings were also experienced by his colleagues which made her more quiet. Study in the United States with 60 doctoral six graduate programs at the university revealed that colleagues constitute an important source of support for graduate students, since, the couple may find themselves in similar life situations and so they can understand each other and help each other in difficult situations.21
However, to address their emotional problems, the graduate students need continual social support not only of his fellow students, their supervisors or other program faculty, as well as their family and friends.22

Subcategory 4: Difficulties in reconciling the master’s with private life

Students pointed out that experience difficulties to reconcile the academic life of master’s degree with its private nature activities, especially work and family, as shown by the lines:

Weariness to work the night discouraging, because it is difficult to reconcile both at the same time. (M13)

The master influenced both in the relationship with my family and at work, [...] it is difficult to reconcile. (M18)

It’s too hard because at the time of day I take care of my son and my husband works and night I work and he takes care of it and whenever I need to go out to class or to collect [data] have to get a family member to stay with him. (M22)

With regard to work and attend the master data identical to those of the present study were found in a research developed with graduate students in nursing revealing that combine work with academic activities negative impact on student satisfaction and therefore satisfaction with course and the institution. In addition, the maintenance of concurrent work activities to complete the course can lead to an intense and exhausting life, in breach of academic activities, and this compromised the process training.23

Other research shows that the coexistence of work and study can lead to sleep deprivation, fatigue, excessive aimed hours for studies and issues related to the educational environment, situations such it can be stressful and the fail individual’s coping methods or insufficient contribute to development Burnout.24

In the latter subcategory can be inferred that among some female masters face a threefold role: work, studies and family, which plays chores traditionally assigned gender, such as look after the house and children. Thus, this wear and exhaustion can be enhanced. Thus, we can see how important is time management in the adjustment process, and if that does not happen occur implications for mental health and quality of life of graduate students.6,25

CONCLUSION

The mastership was characterized as an ambiguous experience, in which emerges feelings of satisfaction and dissatisfaction experienced by the master’s students, and the satisfaction was related to achievement, privilege and dream come true; professional growth opportunities and personal and feelings of dissatisfaction were present through the doubts about the importance of master’s students and difficulties in reconciling the master with private life, factors that can lead to stress and physical and mental illness.

Although the objectives of this research have been achieved, it is necessary to consider the results in its particularity, since investigate emotions involves the singularity and subjectivity of each graduate student.

Still represents limit the scarcity of studies on the subject difficult comparison and discussion with other research, it was then used studies with undergraduate and graduate students from other areas. Therefore, it is suggested that further researches be conducted on this topic.

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