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NURSING MANAGERS TRAINING: LIMITS AND POSSIBILITIES OF EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

FORMAÇÃO DO ENFERMEIRO GESTOR: LIMITES E POSSIBILIDADES DAS PRÁTICAS EDUCATIVAS NO ENSINO SUPERIOR

FORMACIÓN DEL ENFERMERO GESTOR: LÍMITES Y POSIBILIDADES DE LAS PRÁCTICAS EDUCATIVAS EN LA ENSEÑANZA SUPERIOR

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ABSTRACT

Objective: to reveal the limits and possibilities of educational practices used in disciplines involving administrative aspects of the nursing course. **Method:** a descriptive and exploratory study, with a qualitative approach anchored in the Historical and Dialectical Materialism, conducted from October 2013 to March 2014 at a university of Paraíba State with professors, students and graduates of the Nursing Course. Data were collected through interviews and analyzed using Speech Analysis Technique. **Results:** four empirical categories were identified: "Nurses' performance as managers in the labor market"; "Educational practices of teachers: overcoming traditionalism"; "Reflections of training in nursing administration" and "Importance to arouse the interest of students for nursing administration." **Conclusion:** it was observed that the educational practices used by professors of administration and management disciplines in Nursing try to overcome traditionalism. **Descriptors:** Education; Nursing; Health Services Administration.

RESUMO

Objetivo: desvelar limites e possibilidades das práticas educativas utilizadas nas disciplinas envolvendo aspectos administrativos do Curso de Enfermagem. **Método:** estudo descritivo e exploratório, com abordagem qualitativa ancorada no Materialismo Histórico e Dialético, realizado no período de outubro de 2013 a março de 2014 numa universidade da Paraíba, com docentes, discentes e egressos do Curso de Enfermagem. Os dados foram coletados por entrevistas e analisados pela Técnica de Análise de discurso. **Resultados:** identificou-se quatro categorias empíricas: "Atuação do enfermeiro gestor no mercado de trabalho"; "Práticas educativas dos professores: superação do tradicionalismo"; "Reflexos da formação em administração em enfermagem" e "Importância em despertar o interesse dos discentes pela administração em enfermagem". **Conclusão:** observou-se que as práticas educativas utilizadas pelos docentes das disciplinas de administração e gestão em Enfermagem tentam superar o tradicionalismo. **Descritores:** Ensino; Enfermagem; Administração de Serviços de Saúde.

RESUMEN

Objetivo: revelar límites y posibilidades de las prácticas educativas utilizadas en las disciplinas envolviendo aspectos administrativos del Curso de Enfermería. **Método:** estudio descriptivo y exploratorio, con enfoque cualitativo basado en el Materialismo Histórico y Dialéctico, realizado en el periodo de octubre de 2013 a marzo de 2014 en una universidad de Paraíba, con docentes, discentes y egresados del Curso de Enfermería. Los datos fueron recogidos por entrevistas y analizados por la Técnica de Análisis de discurso. **Resultados:** se identificaron cuatro categorías empíricas: "Actuación del enfermero gestor en el mercado de trabajo"; "Prácticas educativas de los profesores: superación del tradicionalismo"; "Reflejos de la formación en administración en enfermería" e "Importancia en despertar el interés de los discentes por la administración en enfermería". **Conclusión:** se observó que las prácticas educativas utilizadas por los docentes de las disciplinas de administración y gestión en Enfermería intentan superar el tradicionalismo. **Descriptores:** Enseñanza; Enfermería; Administración de Servicios de Salud.

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INTRODUCTION

The study of Administration and Management in Health and Nursing Services permeates, among other knowledge bases, the densification of the training processes of human resources in nursing to work in managerial positions in health services at various levels of complexity, investigating how the educational practices of teachers involved in this process have an impact on the formation and placement of professionals in the labor market as managers of health services, and identify the limits and possibilities of expansion of this this insertion¹.

In this context, this study is justified by the fact that the teaching of undergraduate disciplines that support the administration and management of health and nursing services have, today, the possibility of implementing new theoretical and teaching trends, with changes in their teaching strategies due to the advent of the National Curriculum Guidelines (DCN), which provided to universities the right to set the curriculum structures of their courses, explaining the skills and abilities they wish to develop with their students, from a Pedagogical Political Project able to meet the educational needs at the local level².

It is assumed that the teaching of disciplines involving administrative and managerial aspects in health and nursing, supported by their educational practices, is at odds with the requirements of the new professional praxis presupposed for nurses as managers of services and human resources, in line with current health policy in the country³.

In the teaching planning, the specific objectives anticipate results and expected process of the team work between professors and students, expressing knowledge and skills (syllabus) to be studied in accordance with the methodological requirements (strategies with procedures and resources) to finally suffer the assessment of their validity¹.

The development of educational practices involving teaching and assessment for the training of human resources leads to the graduation teachers the need to opt for one of two positions: being limited to the transfer of knowledge already established, investing in the development of some very general capacity, outside of any reference to social situations and practices, here called **Non-Emancipatory Teaching Planning**, or they may assume all responsibility in the choice of social practices opting for theoretical and practical frameworks, focusing on issues that can be discussed both at the individual level

and collectively, potentially for the formation of a professional profile that meets the needs of the current health policy, which we call **Emancipatory Teaching Planning**¹.

In this sense, teaching processes, in particular the disciplines that involve administrative aspects, must be presented with transformative potential, especially after the advent of the National Education Plan - PNE, which established the National Curriculum Guidelines - DCN. This means that the new approach also requires new technical and pedagogical trends, and changes in teaching strategies in the training process².

The administrative role of nurses in the context of SUS is based on management of human, environmental and material resources. In the face of the administrative routine, these professionals should be prepared to act as critical thinkers and managers, able to face changes and establish the linkage with the team⁴.

The realization of the current health policy in the nursing practice requires not only the technical skills of the profession, but above all that the professional recognizes themselves as a social and historical subject capable of contributing to the transformation of the classic dominant model of health care. For this purpose, the nurse needs training that contributes to the domain of argumentation and critical, reflective and questioning positions, in order to establish effective working relationships with other members of the interdisciplinary team, aiming benefits to the community's health³.

The challenge ahead for the renewal of the educational process in universities and higher education institutions, particularly in disciplines involving administrative aspects in nursing, is to consider the technical aspects necessary for making the specific work without giving up the educational and political dimensions, as components able to support a praxis intervention in the activities of future professionals⁵.

In face of the possibility of realization of new theoretical and pedagogical trends of educational practices in nursing and the consequent changes in teaching strategies and evaluation of the training process, the question is: are the educational practices that underlie the processes of teaching and evaluation of courses involving Administration and Management in Health and Nursing Services in line with the administrative praxis of the nurse, in the context of service management and training of human resources for the Unified Health System? To answer this question, it was designed as objective:

- To unveil the limits and possibilities of educational practices used in disciplines involving administrative aspects of the Nursing course.

METHOD

This study was conducted under the Institutional Program for Scientific Initiation Scholarships (PIBIC), during 2013-2014. It is descriptive and exploratory, of qualitative approach, carried out from October 2013 to March 2014 in an educational public institution of higher education in the city of Cuité - PB, with the theoretical and methodological support of Dialectical Historic Materialism (DHM).

The DHM proposes that the empirical world is just a phenomenal manifestation of reality, that is, they are primary representations arising from its projections in the consciousness of men developing to the surface of the essence of the phenomenon itself. The essence of the phenomenon is not explicit in its *pseudo-concreteness*, i.e., the apparent concreteness, but in the unveiling of its mediations and its fundamental internal contradictions⁶.

In order to know the *pseudo-concreteness* and their interfaces and internal contradictions, object of the study are the educational practices used in academic training of the nurse as manager in higher education. Educational practices are the various pedagogical approaches used by the teacher to guide their teaching and assessment strategies, specifically in disciplines that deal with administrative aspects of health and nursing services⁷.

Research subjects were: 1) four Professors (P), whose selection was made by consulting the academic control records of the Nursing Course (referring to semesters: 2012.1, 2012.2, 2013.1 and 2013.2), which identified those who taught the administration and management disciplines; 2) seven Graduates of the Nursing Course (GNC), selected after consulting the graduates record existing in the Course Coordination; 3) 10 Nursing Students (NS) involving administration and management in health and nursing services; and 4) 10 Concluding Students (CS), both selected after consulting the records of academic control of the Nursing Course at the semester 2013.2.

According to the inclusion criteria, participants were those teachers who were in full exercise of their activities, not in vacation or leaves; those graduates of the nursing course trained by the institution, acting professionally for at least six months in management positions in nursing, not enjoying

holidays or leaves; those students who were attending disciplines involving administration and management in health and nursing services, who had regular frequency and outcome of the first summative evaluation above 7.0 (seven); and those concluding students who maintained regular attendance, approved in disciplines involving administration and management of health and nursing services with final average equal or higher than 7.0 (seven).

After previous contact with the participants, meetings were scheduled, in which the collection of empirical material was made. For this purpose, it was used a semi-structured script to guide the interviews, containing questions that elucidated the educational practices used during the training of nurses to work in management activities in the various health care levels. To record the interviews, authors used a mp3 player device. Because it is an investigation with human beings, the project was submitted to the Ethics Committee of the University Hospital Alcides Carneiro, in Campina Grande - PB, under protocol No. 397,483 and CAAE 17412213.5.0000.5182, as recommended by Resolution No. 466 / 12 of the National Health Council.

The analysis of the empirical material was performed using speech analysis technique, whose basic principle is to receive a text where everything seems more or less dispersed, process the more abstract level (thematic) that gives consistency. In this sense, the texts from the transcripts of the speeches were read and reread, listed the themes and formed the empirical categories⁸.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The speech analysis of the interviews allowed the emergence of four empirical categories: *"Nurse manager's role in the labor market"*; *"Educational practices of teachers: overcoming traditionalism"*; *"Consequences of nursing administration training"*; and *"Importance to arouse the interest of students by nursing administration"*.

♦ Nurse manager's role in the labor market

Educational practices are teaching and assessment procedures used by teachers that are determined by social, political and ideological purposes and demands, being carried out in various sectors of society, far beyond the classrooms⁹. In this regard, nursing graduates were asked whether the disciplines related to the administration and

management of health and nursing services had prepared them for their performance as nurse managers in the labor market.

Certainly, especially in the development of schedules and operation of the nursing staff. (GNC 1)

In my current responsibility in the institution I am responsible for various professionals, including, and especially the nursing technicians, which requires a knowledge of distribution for the quality of care. Added to this, I am responsible for all the material used in the unit. So, the disciplines Management I and II contributed as a basis to manage the sectors. (GNC 5)

The management disciplines contributed a lot because, regardless of where the nurse is inserted, they need to have a good knowledge of administration, in view of the administrator role that they develop both with the nursing staff as well as the paperwork in the profession. (GNC 6)

By the listed testimonies, it was possible to elucidate that academic training has been converging with the requirements of the National Curriculum Guidelines (DCN) that guide the development of administrative competences based in educational practices to develop a set of skills such as planning, decision making, interdisciplinary interaction and management of human resources, since the work activities of nurses are concentrated mainly in the dimensions of care and management¹⁰.

Educational practices used during the academic nursing training are essential to provide the ability to think of knowledge as a way of developing the skills that are so valued today, especially with regard to the managerial character that the profession has been taking in health services and the importance of any manager in achieving the purposes for which the organization is intended¹¹.

The importance of professionals recognize themselves with skills and abilities to develop the profession's demands in the labor market and, above all, clarify that the Federal training Institution provided academic knowledge convergent with the labor market that guarantee a training that is concerned in updating their pedagogical plans and, above all, using updated and emancipatory educational practices¹¹.

♦ Educational practices of teachers: overcoming traditionalism

To elucidate the educational practices of teachers who teach disciplines involving managerial aspects of nursing, it was collected testimonies from students of the 5th period, who are currently coursing the

discipline that covers the administration and management of health and nursing services:

It was three hours of class, so in the first class (one hour, one hour and a half) we discussed on the subject, the theory, the whole theory and for the class does not get so tiresome, as she even spoke [the teacher] we made up a kind of dynamics, often, or then we simulated a given situation, and how we, as nurses, would act before the knowledge we had acquired. Speaking of theories and the limits you can have, before the management and the sector where you work. (NS 1)

The evaluation method was with seminars and tests. (NS 2)

Assessments were conceptual. Not an assessment that gave us situations for us to manage, but more conceptual. (NS 3)

Educational practices that are based on emancipatory pedagogical approaches advocate a teaching process that does not deposit or transfer knowledge, but a teaching process in which the knowable object also mediates the knowing subjects. The speech of ND 1 shows a professional attitude that tries to facilitate dialogic relations using emancipatory educational plans when the teacher chooses to use dynamics and case studies not to leave the lesson tiresome¹².

However, the same professor, in his assessments, grounded his teaching planning in non-emancipatory pedagogical approaches by prioritizing cognitive and technical aspects in health care, especially nursing. By using seminars and conceptual tests, as described by the NS 3, elucidating that they did not include fictitious situations involving administration and management in health and nursing services, it is marked out the need for students taking the role of deposit of information received and reproduced without questioning. It is a kind of evaluation in which students demonstrate that do not participate actively in the human resources training process and in most cases, are only agents of alienated repetition of what was taught¹.

While attempting to use educational practices based on emancipatory pedagogical approaches, it is also perceived the use of non-emancipatory pedagogical approaches in teaching disciplines involving the administration and management of health and nursing services as it is taught based on the teacher performance only, in a vertical relationship between teacher and student, in which the first has the power to decide on the teaching and evaluation process, and leads students to the goals, which are often influenced by the interests of higher

education institutions and / or the capitalist society¹².

♦ Consequences of nursing administration training

When questioning the concluding students about educational practices used by teachers in the classroom and the consequence of this training for professional practice, it was possible to hear the following statements:

About my training, I believe it was good, I could understand how being a nurse manager is, what they do and I feel qualified to work as a nurse manager. (CS 6)

The nurse is the manager of the unit and therefore, I think I am well qualified to work, as in the university we study that a lot, management, the only thing is that the management of each sector varies greatly and I think, depending on the routine of each sector, over time I will go through each routine, so I think that will give more skills. As much as the theory has been satisfactory, I'll just get by practicing. (CS 7)

I think this preparation, this qualification, you will acquire in the day-to-day, when you are already inserted in the labor market, when you are already dealing with the public, patients, you will become increasingly skilled. (CS 5)

It is seen that the nursing course provides foundation for nurses to become managers, however, the management action only consolidates with experience, in the everyday practice. The professional practice of experienced nurse is at a level that is beyond disciplines. The professional knowledge results from the junction of disciplinary knowledge and experiences as nurses, providing a comprehensive view of reality, solidifying the ability to manage¹⁰.

The preparation of graduate degree is the beginning, because the professional should be constantly learning, seeking to develop the skills, knowledge, attitudes and experience required for the qualification of nurses. Thus, the transition to the world of work can be enjoyable, rewarding and exciting, stimulating the professional to overcome the challenges and the limits of their professional training, as expressed by the testimonials from graduates, although they have not yet had the maturity provided by the insertion in the labor market¹³.

● Importance to arouse the interest of students by nursing administration

When verbalizing the educational practices used, teachers ensured that they propose, in the micro-space of the classroom, teaching and evaluation processes marked by values, norms and characteristics of the social

structure that nurses can experience. For this reason, they explain the importance of awakening the interest of students for the administration and management of health and nursing services, showing alternatives for this to happen.

But I find it interesting to raise critical thinking in the student, how is the administration that they want? How is the administration that they think that nursing needs? (P 1)

We know that the very Pedagogical Project has been transformed. And this is positive, but there is still a very strong focus on the specific aspect of care and assistance. So we still need more space in this Pedagogical Project. Not only in specific disciplines, but also in other disciplines and teachers themselves need to have an approach related to the management. More often it is emphasized the aspect of direct patient care. (P 2)

If I want to encourage a student to be a health manager, I have to make them free themselves of this dependence on me, in education. They need to seek some things, most of the time, will add. It will add the knowledge that the teacher brings to the classroom and the knowledge that other classmates have, too. (P 3)

The statements indicate the need for more commitment on the part of teachers who must teach administration and bureaucracy within specific disciplines of the Nursing course that focused on practice, assistance, as well as in specific disciplines of administration and management. There is also the need for the student to be an active subject in the teaching-learning process, so that they can arouse interest in being health managers and build methods to acquire knowledge together with teachers¹⁴.

The effectiveness of the student as an active subject in the teaching-learning process is necessary once the education is a process in which there is no way to transfer knowledge, because it means a new apprehension of the object, involving active subjects in the process of learning¹⁴. The testimonies of teachers demonstrate their concern in ministering important disciplines that address the administration and management of health and nursing services by strengthening non-emancipatory teaching plannings, excluding the student in the teaching-learning process and recognizing themselves solely as agent and principal actor of this process that prepares human resources to the labor market.

CONCLUSION

This study made it possible to draw relevant considerations about the theme, timidly considered in the literature, in order to expand the knowledge of readers in the area of administration and management in health and nursing services and stimulate new discussions regarding the educational practices implemented for training human resources for the Unified Health System with competence and management skills and in line with the administrative practice in the context of the management of health care services.

With regard to management, regardless of the nursing area of expertise, it is necessary that nurses use the skills and competencies necessary to the demands of the service, based on administrative principles, whose academic training directly recoils for this purpose. Therefore, it is important that teachers implement emancipatory educational practices, able to form critical and thinking students.

Developing the teaching-learning process based on emancipatory educational practices offers the teacher a new action, with the possibility to review concepts, overcome traditional paradigms and set new values that make educational practice significantly more committed to student learning.

According to the results, aspects of academic training has been exposed favorably, disciplines have positively contributed to the performance of students as reported by graduating nurses, since the content addressed was crucial in enriching the academic training and allowed the strengthening of practice during the work experience in the labor market.

It is not known to what extent the testimony of those graduating nurses and other academics tend to elucidate the politically correct discourse, the conservative ideology and aspirations of the ruling class. The reflection presented in this study makes it clear that the training of nurses must contribute with the construction of knowledge geared to the exercise of functions and activities of management and health planning, and although the teachers have tried to apply emancipatory educational practices, they continue forming passive students in the teaching-learning process, conducting such educational practices to the interests of the ruling classes in a capitalist social context.

Authors believe that this study may contribute to future research that support health professionals, teachers and students

regarding the theoretical development of educational practices carried out during the formation of human resources for management at graduate degree of nursing courses.

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