LEADERSHIP IN NURSING DISCIPLINE PRACTICE: PERCEPTIONS OF ACADEMICS

ABSTRACT

Objective: to understand the perceptions of nursing students about leadership, in practice of the discipline of Nursing Administration. Method: a descriptive study with a qualitative approach, conducted with 11 nursing students of a higher education institution in Southern Brazil. Data were collected in September and October 2012, through semi-structured interviews and analyzed by content analysis technique. Project of research was approved by the Committee of Ethics in Research with CAAE 05044512.9.0000.5523. Results: from the analysis of the interviews two categories were revealed << Exercising leadership in disciplinary practice >> and << Essential Skills for the exercise of leadership >>. Conclusion: the undergraduate teaching has maintained greater emphasis on learning techniques, and there is a devaluation of the aspects of management, such as leadership, despite that competence is of extreme importance in the practice of nursing. Descriptors: Leadership; Nursing; Nursing Education; Nursing Students.

RESUMO


RESUMEN

Objetivo: comprender la percepción de los estudiantes de enfermería sobre el liderazgo en la práctica de la disciplina de administración de enfermería. Método: se realizó un estudio descriptivo con abordaje cualitativo, realizado con 11 estudiantes de enfermería de una institución de educación superior en el Sur de Brasil. Los datos fueron recolectados en septiembre y octubre de 2012 a través de entrevistas semiestructuradas y analizadas por la técnica de análisis de contenido. La investigación fue aprobada por el Comité de Ética en Investigación con CAAE 05044512.9.0000.5523. Resultados: el análisis de las entrevistas revelaron dos categorías << Ejercicio de liderazgo en la práctica disciplinaria >> y << Habilidades esenciales para el ejercicio del liderazgo >>. Conclusión: la enseñanza universitaria ha mantenido un mayor énfasis en el aprendizaje de las técnicas, y hay una desvalorización de los aspectos de gestión, tales como el liderazgo, a pesar de que la competencia sea de extrema importancia en la práctica de la enfermería. Descriptores: Liderazgo; Enfermería; Educación en Enfermería; Estudiantes de Enfermería.
INTRODUCTION

The nurse performs functions of various kinds, among which we highlight the performance of care, the provision of care of nursing services, the nature of pedagogical practices of lifelong education, and administrative and managerial. The daily leadership has been required of nurses and beyond the technical and scientific knowledge of health practices, knowledge of administrative processes, which is responsible for the coordination and supervision of your nursing staff.1

Leadership is a group process, which influences occur, aiming goals to be achieved, where the leader must engage in the practice influencer, be adept to change, visionary, critic and conductor. At this juncture, the leader must have time and space to show them, also need to have basic features and a lot of transparency to become a good leader, with trial and error.2

The knowledge to lead as well as other skills must be developed and perfected during teaching lifelong professional. In this sense, means that schools and health institutions in general have a key role in this process, first in training in the second place in the continuing education of professionals.3 However, it is clear that, at the time newly trained professionals engage with the reality of work, begin to feel insecure, it seems to them that lack the technical knowledge and skills essential to practice their profession, plus feel insecure face the challenge of coordinating and leading a group.2

In hospitals, the nurse needs to assume the role of leader, and this is the basic condition to seek changes in their daily practice, with the guarantee of the quality of care provided to patients, combining organizational objectives with the needs of the nursing staff.4 The leadership has been considered the phenomenon which influences certain groups, it is extremely important joint efforts in order to achieve the goals shared by the group.5

Leading a group requires personal leadership; one has to know first lead his own life, becoming aware of their own abilities, limitations, strengths and weaknesses. The individual must be independent and then creatively lead a working group, always taking into account that leadership is more than an art, is a technique that can be assimilated, adapted and improved.2

In this context, it is considered that there are very important condition for the nurse leader is: you have to want, because the leadership needs of learning, so there are people who have more ability to exercise it than others, because each person is unique and has its own values, knowledge, experiences and behaviors. Therefore, for the nurse to exercise leadership in the workplace is of paramount importance that he cultivates certain characteristics, among which are: communication skills, possess specific technical knowledge, responsibility, self-knowledge, commitment, namely teamwork and good humor.

In the academic world of nursing, in everyday disciplinary practices, sometimes there is no clarity about teamwork and about the perception of students about leading a team. The motivation for choosing this theme emerged during the undergraduate degree in nursing, especially from the experiences of one of the authors of this work during the disciplinary practices that led to the formulation of the research question of this study: What is the perception of academics nursing leadership about? Thus, research aimed at understanding the perception of nursing students about leadership in practice the discipline of Nursing Administration.

METHOD

Descriptive study with a qualitative approach to encompass the universe of meanings, motives, aspirations, attitudes, beliefs and values, which allows the description of the experience of reality and phenomena that cannot be reduced to the operationalization of variables.6

The research was conducted in an institution of higher education philanthropy, located in southern Brazil. Participants were 11 nursing students in the discipline of Nursing Administration during the first semester of 2012. Such a course is offered in the sixth semester of the Bachelor of Nursing, divided in four hours a week of stage-four hours of lectures per week, thus making total workload of 144 hours/class.

To determine the number of participants, we used the criterion of saturation data, ie, when the data became repetitive in content, ended the collection.7 For selection, we used the following inclusion criteria: be academic nursing, and have taken the course of Nursing Administration in the semester immediately prior to the completion of the research. Exclusion criteria were: having completed or be enrolled in another undergraduate degree.

Data collection took place in the period September-October 2012, using a semi-structured interview technique, using an
The speeches of the students interviewed in this research are in the position that is in the literature. Graduation is having his training focused only on learning the techniques and particularly in hospitals, there is a devaluation of the aspects of management, such as leadership, which is often remembered only when the nurse is already inserted in professional practice needs and resolve conflicts that arise in everyday life. It is inferred from this study that the nursing learning is more focused on technical activities, which may be related to the large number of nursing technicians who attend following graduation and end up with the same care and professional nursing staff. Thus, it remains a care performed often by rote, guided by tasks that rigidly follow rules and regulations.

It is known that educational institutions have a great responsibility to train leaders, critical, reflective, politicized, and able to act coherently in order to create and recreate a reality. The training of nurses is constantly moving and construction, increasingly seeking development. Desired profile of graduates contains not only technical skills and biological knowledge, but also training of nurses for critical and creative society, seeking to base ethics and leadership. Leadership must be worked at graduation from the beginning, in every discipline, and because this will be necessary, regardless of the area. However, a study of 11 newly graduated nurses aimed to know the importance of a higher education institution in the training of nurses, and hospital leaders in continuing education for nurses, leaders showed that most participants were unhappy about the role institutions of higher education in the training of these nurses. The results of this study showed that the graduate nurses perceive themselves alone, generating insecurity, and hamper the management of nursing actions and commit before his leadership team. The authors of this study considered extremely important that teachers know the trajectory of the student's life, as some may have features that facilitate the exercise of leadership, while others need more stimuli to develop. These findings corroborate the statements D1 and D3:

\[\ldots\] As nursing students we do not have as much exercise leadership \[\ldots\] because sometimes they [coaches] do not take themselves too seriously. (D1)

Leadership, I think very little, I realized, one class per week [theoretical] \[\ldots\] As it

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the characterization of the participants was found that there were nine females and one male, aged between 23 and 45 years old. Of the 11 students participating in this study, eight acted as nursing technicians.

After reading and content analysis, two categories emerged: exercise leadership in disciplinary practice, and essential skills to the exercise of leadership.

- Exercising leadership in disciplinary practice

A thorough reading of the interviews allowed us to infer that during graduation there is an emphasis on learning techniques, and only at the end of the academic course is presented the real role that nurses will play in health care. The respondents in the research topic has generated reactions characterized by a lack of opportunity, the work focused only on the aspect of care, proving to be a complex and difficult to be worked as weights depict the following:

\[\ldots\] Did not have much insight to \ldots I was in the recovery room and had things care, could not develop leadership. (D1)

\[\ldots\] Did not have much chance on stage. Thus, taking the part of leadership. We got almost all the time watching and trying to do a different procedure \[\ldots\]. (D4)

\[\ldots\] Does not like practicing. You only works with procedures and leaves the leadership side. (D5)

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next class [practice] will get you having autonomy to lead! (D3)

It is expected that the preparation for leadership is objective and is expressed in the educational programs in nursing. The nurse training aims to equip the individual with skills required for the profession, such as health care, decision making, communication, continuing education, administration and management. The training of these professionals is permeated with diverse skills and competencies, which are being built throughout the process of their academic background, which includes a plethora of knowledge and practice, linking theory with practice. It is emphasized that the attitude of educators and professionals who interact with the students is of great importance and they should encourage them to develop the skills necessary to become leaders.

It is understood that it is necessary for graduation is characterized as a means of delivery and provision of essential opportunities for learning and development of skills and competencies from theoretical and practical experiences. However, reports of students infer that the way the subject is available in the institution setting of this study, may constitute a factor that hinders this process of interaction between theory and practice and own ambiance with the care team at the institution where they experience the academic practice.

In this sense, denotes the difficulty of providing an education that encourages critical reflection, self, and consequently, the ability to lead. It is extremely important the nurse’s role as promoter of their education and quality of life at work. Can only be a team leader who promotes the self, outlines strategic goals for your personal and professional growth, as well as their employees, in order to strengthen the potential of the group and overcome their own weaknesses.

It is known that the educational process should promote critical thinking and the teacher is effective in this pedagogical practice. Its role is to promote this process, he is a creator of chances to teaching situations to create opportunities and experiences necessary intense enough, appropriate, able to arouse in the students a way to justify its investigative influence on reality. However, it was realized that the process of teaching and learning leadership during graduation is not occurring as it persists in the academic view that one has to work only in the aspect of care. Teachers need to focus on the importance of formal leadership throughout the undergraduate program, as well as stress to the students the importance of leadership in the work process and the facilities that it brings to the nurse-leader in the management unit and his team.

The participants in this study reported that when they enter the training field, are faced with many stressful situations arising from the lack of convergence between what is learned in graduate and find that in practice. These findings corroborate the literature, which emphasizes that newly graduated nurses cannot combine their knowledge acquired in their training with professional practice everyday. Often, the model of care employed in institutions is what most disagree theoretical orientation of the academy. However, it is known that the formation of professionals needs to be rooted in approaches that enhance not only rationality, but mostly subjectivity in which the nurse is involved and which do not feel ready.

Nursing students spend most of their time watching or performing undergraduate health care practice, reducing the learning in this context to a micro view, cannot engage in any moment with macro issues such as institutional policies, inter-relationships and the exercise of leadership. To be integrated into the labor certainly realizes that reality will present itself with another structure, often greater than that experienced during graduation. Thus, it is noted that education institutions are responsible for enabling specific content in curricula and using tactics that allow the exercise of leadership, such as professional competence.

- Essential skills to the exercise of leadership

This category seeks to understand what competencies scholars consider necessary for the exercise of leadership. In the analysis of the data showed that the participants cited patience, empathy, being a good listener, take responsibility, autonomy and attitude, as core competencies for the exercise of leadership. As is explicit in the speech:

[... Need to have patience to deal with different people, knowledge and responsibility[...] Empathy not only with your team, but with everyone listening. (D6) [... Being a good listener, you have to empathize with employees, be neutral in some situations, and seek to manage in general. (D7)

Nurse leaders need to be perfect communicators, speaking and acting according to their beliefs. To exercise leadership, communication is a key factor and must be
clear, transparent and understandable. In this sense, to listen and keep the dialogue is a procedure enticing and educational, which investigates and explores the values with the led, which is to facilitate the leader clarify their own values.2

The nurse who is motivated to do a job can also influence your team to do it. Although it sounds easy, it is not, it depends on your understanding of what motivates all team members and what can be done to stimulate each, and motivated nurses know what you want and what you need to achieve goals related to his work, explaining what to expect from each, explaining the objective to be achieved by listening to each member of your team and to facilitate their work, always seeking ways to achieve those goals.12

In this sense, the nurse leader who loves what he does can contribute much to change the situation at all times when interacting with patients and colleagues of the multidisciplinary team, showing their competence and positioning itself autonomously. The leader must be careful to understand, meet and be connected to the needs of the working team. This reinforces the feeling of belonging and nurtures self-esteem of everyone in the group, in order to meet the excellence in clinical practice.13

According to the study participants for the exercise of leadership is needed:

 [...] Vision. Enjoy. You have to get a place and enjoy what you’re doing so you can get a sense of how you will deal with people … Having a knack for getting them to do what you need, talk gently. (D8)

Autonomy space because this space is not enough for us, academics, attitude is also required. (D9)

The actors of the leadership are all people who are part of the nursing staff and multidisciplinary team, at any time, given the situation, each can exercise leadership care. It is understandable that there is a unique style of lead, it is believed that a good leader does not work by itself, it is necessary to have the involvement of the entire group and also that the lead is directly associated with a particular situation.2

It is known that the actions of nurse leaders significantly affect the structural factors and work processes of the institutions, which, in turn, are greatly benefited by the increase in the creation of links with lower employee turnover, less conflict, greater involvement of people in the labor process and better utilization of resources.14 Thus, the leader of the future must seek effective leadership, valuing the needs and expectations of personal and professional staff headed.2

Lead becomes a skill that nurses must develop to influence his team to work with enthusiasm, always taking into account the goals to be achieved, and inspiring trust through his character. Thus, it is important to remember that leadership does not mean power but authority before his team won with love, dedication and respect to the people around them, as expressed in speech fragment of D2:

 [...] Attitude, good relationship with his own team. (D2)

Leadership is an essential skill for professional nursing practice, which is essential gear in a hospital. The nurse takes the challenging task of coordinating their nursing staff, and therefore need to develop skills that foster balanced handling, always conveying safety in their decision-making.16

For the students interviewed in this study, management and leadership are intertwined, as expressed in speech:

 Being a good manager is aware of the management. (D10)

In a desktop increasingly competitive every day nurses must be prepared to take numerous activities assigned to it. The nurse leader must possess qualities such as commitment, responsibility, empathy and ability to make decisions, communication and management efficiently and effectively. So your service qualifies and meets the expectations of the team.16 this context, the ability of management, to establish relationships of trust and respect among team members can help each one to understand that will be supported in difficult times, the leader will fight for all that is ever present.17-8

Therefore, it is understood that the nurse must have vision to play this leading role, being future-oriented, and be flexible, dynamic, with goals and desire to change the administrator profile of care for the creation of new types of leadership motivating the team to act correctly, earning the trust of their subordinates.

CONCLUSION

This study allowed us to understand the perception of students practice the discipline of Nursing Administration on the exercise of leadership. The findings show that nursing students in this study did not practice leadership in disciplinary practice. However, had knowledge of the skills necessary for such as: patience, empathy, being a good listener, take responsibility, autonomy and attitude.
The present study demonstrated that the undergraduate teaching has maintained greater emphasis on learning techniques, and there is a revaluation of the aspects of management, such as leadership, in spite of this competence is of extreme importance in the practice of nursing.

It is considered that no limitations in this study that could bias the results. However, it is important to note that it was conducted in a single institution. Accordingly, it is suggested that further studies be carried out in different methods in different institutions, able to show how leadership is being developed in nurses regarding the contribution of higher education institutions.

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Corresponding Address
Elisiane Lorenzini
Rua Felipe dos Santos, 77 201 A
CEP: 93020-180 – São Leopoldo (RS), Brazil