ELECTIVE SUBJECTS: INTER-PROFESSIONALISM EXPERIENCE IN THE TRAINING OF FUTURE HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Method: descriptive study, case studies type, about an experience with elective subjects offered to Nursing, Physiotherapy, Speech Therapy, Medicine and Occupational Therapy in the first half of 2013. The duration of the experiment was approximately five months, where the activities were developed with 4 hours per week. Results: the sample was composed of 32 students, of which 68.8% were women. It was found that these subjects tend to contribute to the best teaching and service interaction. Descriptors: Epidemiology; Health Education; Inter-professional Relations.

RESUMEN
Objetivo: relatar sobre la construcción, junto a los alumnos de los cursos de la Universidad de Ciencias de la Salud de Alagoas/UNCISAL, momentos de trocas de saberes e de reflexión acerca de la importancia de la educación en salud y epidemiología para el ensino y servicio. Método: estudio descriptivo, tipo relato de experiencia, acerca de una vivencia con disciplinas optativas ofrecidas a los cursos de Enfermería, Fisioterapia, Fonofoniatría, Medicina y Terapia Ocupacional en el primer semestre de 2013. La duración de la experiencia fue de aproximadamente cinco meses, siendo que las actividades fueron desvololvidas con carga horaria de 4 horas semanales. Resultados: la muestra fue compuesta por 32 alumnos, de los cuales 68.8% eran mujeres. Se verificó que estos alumnos vivieron momentos de intercambios de conocimientos y de reflexión acerca de la importancia de estas disciplinas en la formación de los futuros profesionales de la salud. Descriptores: Epidemiología; Enseñanza y Servicio; Relaciones Interprofesionales.

ABSTRACT
Objective: to report about the construction of moments of exchanges of knowledge and reflection about the importance of education in health and epidemiology for teaching and service, together with the students of the University of Health Science of Alagoas/UNCISAL, moments of interchanges of knowledge and reflection on the importance of this education in health and epidemiology for the education and service. Method: descriptive study, case studies type, about an experience with elective subjects offered to Nursing, Physiotherapy, Speech Therapy, Medicine and Occupational Therapy in the first half of 2013. The duration of the experiment was approximately five months, where the activities were developed with 4 hours per week. Results: the sample was composed of 32 students, of which 68.8% were women. It was found that these subjects contribute to the best teaching and service interaction. Descriptors: Epidemiology; Health Education; Inter-professional Relations.

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INTRODUCTION

The training model of the health professional has been guided to a biologist care based on the positivist paradigm of science, based on a particular ideology and in the description of parts to understand the human unit. This epistemological paradigm, guidance of the health professional model affects directly on its labor practice, because it shows little resolutive, impersonal, unrelated to the reality of the living conditions of the population and reductionist as its focus of attention for the disease and not the subject that get sick.¹

The current health care models indicated an integral and accessible perspective, with important modifications in the way of remuneration of health actions, in the way of organization of services, assistance practices at the local level and in the process of decentralization. Thus, it is observed that this model must rely on professionals capable of working with most individual health needs, developing a relationship with him a sustained and participatory relation, contextualized within the family and in the community.²

With the institution of the Ministry of Education inducing policies, National Curriculum Guidelines (NCG), from 2001, started the change in the paradigm in the curriculum of courses in the area of health. The focus is a professional profile with an interdisciplinary vision, based on a methodology problem, aiming at an effective and contextualized learning.³ ⁴

For the fulfilment of the tasks determinants of the health/disease process, in order to enhance the quality of life, in a teamwork context, it is necessary that these workers develop skills that will make them acquire a specific profile for the better performance of their functions, both on a collective and individual approach. In this way, new skills are required for this professional, valuing the integrated production systems.⁵

The integrated approach in the training of health professionals represents a reversal of the usual training with focus on specific professional practices. This integration ensures a form of articulation of knowledge, to learn and understand what matters most in each area, which the intercession between specific actions to promote interaction and build a teamwork.⁶

Each area will link on the specifics of each one and so facilitate the working together to improve health care of users. Integration into health education aims to teamwork, interdisciplinary and the commitment with the integrity of the actions that must be achieved with the broad recognition and respect for the specific nature of each profession. In this way, the objective of this study is to:

- Report about the construction of moments of exchanges of knowledge and reflection about the importance of education in health and epidemiology for teaching and service, together with the students of the courses of the University of Health Science of Alagoas/UNCISAL.

METHOD

Descriptive study, case studies type, about an experience in the first half of 2013, with elective subjects offered to the following courses: Nursing, Physiotherapy, Speech Therapy, Medicine and Occupational Therapy of the University of Health Science of Alagoas (UNCISAL). The duration of the experiment was approximately five months, where the activities were developed with 4 hours per week.

The elective subjects have emerged with the purpose of contributing to the formation of the students from this University, differentiated with a future perspective of insertion in the curriculum of such courses, contributing to inter-professionalism. Initially, meetings were held between the Core Coordination of Social Human Science and Public policies (CCSHSPP), which is the core in which the subjects are linked, members of the Pro-Rectory of Undergraduate Education (PRUE) and teachers of the subjects, aimed at outlining strategies for their internal information. As a result of these meetings, a meeting was held with the Core Structuring Faculty (CSF) and coordination of the courses, showing the objectives and possibilities of them in the context of the curriculum already established and of the future professions.

After structuring the teaching plan and schedule, the elective subjects were presented to students through internal information that happened via the University website, posters and advertising carried out in classrooms by teachers of the respective subjects. The subjects offered were Health Education and Epidemiology.

After the registration of students, a survey of the availability of day and time was performed so that there was no “shock” with the other subjects of the curriculum. In this way, classes were held under the coordination of teachers of subjects on different days and times, following the established schedule.
Academic activities took place through active teaching methodology involving seminars, directed studies, preparation of educational materials and self-evaluation, in addition to traditional methods of learning as the conventional test.

In the finalization of the subject, a multiple-choice questionnaire was applied on the day of the evaluation, aimed at establishing the profile of the students, their performance and their opinion about this experience for both academic and professional life.

It should be noted that there was no need for submission to the Committee of Ethics in Research, because it is an experience report with a proposal for a contribution from the experience of the implementation of the elective subjects, regarding the subjects of Epidemiology and Health Education having a deepen topic in the literature about the interprofessionalism process.

**RESULTS**

The sample was composed of 32 students, of which 68.8% were women (Figure 1). The students’ age ranged between 18 to 40 years old, with an average of 22.9 ± 5.67 years old and the period of the graduation course ranged between first and ninth period, with an average of 3.5 ± 2.89.

Table 1 presents the variables of characterization of the sample about: course, subjects studied, means of information informed, evaluation of subject and knowledge that they provided.

![Gender distribution of students](image-url)
It was observed a significant increase in female participation in the labor market, this fact appears in the present work, in which the vast majority of students participants of the elective subjects offered were female (Figure 1). Such a finding is confirming the strengthening of policies that promote equity between genders. It is worth mentioning that, for the United Nations Organization (UNO), to promote the expansion of educational opportunities and gender equality are among the eight objectives of the millennium. This strengthening of the female gender in the sense of empowerment is directly related to the increase in the income generating potential and public participation, in addition to promote autonomy in personal and professional issues.

Together with this characterization of the labor market, the age group is associated. According to data from the Institute of Applied Economic Research (IAER) from 2013, among the professionals over 24 years old in the year 2012, the recruitment index was 40%, and the termination of 39%, being the reflection of little professional experience, from low-skill, precarious working conditions. Comparing with the results found in the present study, the searching for professional qualification can be initiated upon starting the course or even near the completion of the graduation, so that the learning process is guaranteed and improvement before the entrance in the labor market, that is, the more qualified the professional is, the greater the tendency of youth in the labor market.

The State University of Health Sciences - UNCISAL has five bachelor courses: Nursing, Medicine, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy and Speech Therapy, of the five courses, the largest representativeness was the Nursing course students (37.5%). The globalized world with constant changes increasingly motivates students to seek knowledge, therefore, the percentage of students belonging to the nursing degree denotes a greater interest in seeking an improvement in their formation. The degree in nursing has demonstrated willingness to overcome daily difficulties, in order to achieve their goals, as well as a good portion of these students’ vocational technical courses, such as emanate also feel enthusiastic to seek to satisfy their desire profession. Thus, graduating in nursing becomes co-responsible for learning, with a view to improved effectiveness in their formation, being a course held by teacher and student, helped by a structure that can allow and promote skills of everyone involved in this process.

Table 1. Variables about course, subject and knowledge of the students of the elective subjects in the State University of Health Science of Alagoas, 2013.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course</td>
<td>Nursing</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>37,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>34,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Occupational Therapy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physiotherapy</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>21,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Speech Therapy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjects</td>
<td>Health Education</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>46,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informed by</td>
<td>Epidemiology</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>53,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Internal information</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>External information</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>75,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The student has already</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>40,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>did this course</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>59,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do they evaluate the</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subject</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>31,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very good</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>65,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where he practices his</td>
<td>Academic life</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>43,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>knowledge</td>
<td>Professional life</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>50,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enables integration of</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>81,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teaching</td>
<td>research and extension 1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have added knowledge</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>96,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of knowledge¹</td>
<td>Academic development</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>33,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personal development</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personal and academic</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>development</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>43,3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹12 nonrespondents
The practice of teachers of basic subjects offered for different graduation courses, having similar content, contributes to the negative vision of the student in that the content of the subject will not be helpful to his career. The content offered by elective subjects is part of the curriculum of several courses of the health area, usually inserted into another obligatory subject, as it was observed that 40.6% of students have already attended that subjects and that even not obligatories, they decided to study them again.

Despite the subjects being optional, and like this worked with students from different courses at the same time, the specificity given to content, to be worked in isolation and not inserted in another subject, allowed students to identify the application of knowledge in academic and professional life, and the possibility of integration between teaching, research and extension of knowledge acquired, which probably was associated with greater interest by the students to the studied subjects in this article, considering 96.9% of students evaluated the subjects as good and very good.

Regarding the application of knowledge linked in those subjects, 50% of students stated that they will be able to use both during the academic period, as a future professional. This brings up a relevant question and demonstrates the importance of the contents, but also the way that these were transferred therefore realizes the importance of inclusion of subjects in the curriculum required of UNICASAL.

The relevance of a new vision for the teaching-learning process, aiming at a teaching practice aimed at the reflective exercise on the action, devising learning as something constructed by the student and the constitution of meaning from the experienced knowledge bring positive results. Corroborating with the previous statement, a qualitative study was held, in which the students of the courses of the health area succeeded in establishing correlation of what they learned in the subject with the professional practice, motivating to a critical reflection and reflective about the contents learned in the classroom.

Regarding the possibility of the elective subjects to perform the integration between teaching, research and extension, (81.3%) of students reported that was noticeable and that might experience this three together.

Health education can be a strategy to promote social responsibility, providing opportunities for learning experiences by questioning, among the social actors, about the conditions that affect their health and the health of others, in the pursuit of building alternatives to problem solving. From this perspective, in the subject of health education, students built educational resources and applied in the community of UNICASAL, so that later they pass the content retrieved from the classroom, but also wrote an account of experience about this external experience, submitting to the III Congress of UNICASAL (CACUN).

In Epidemiology, the students experienced teaching through seminars and research/extension through the directed studies applied. The Brazilian Constitution, in article 207, states that there must be the inseparability between teaching, research and extension, being fundamental and must be a trade of all teaching staff in educational institutions, forming part of the pedagogical process of teaching learning of students.

A new proposal for education comes to suggest a call for change, which seeks to train professionals who value the feelings, the nature and the life of the human being as a whole. It is understood, therefore, that there is a need for the insertion of new proposals to allow the construction of professionals who possess not only the technical knowledge. Thus, it is important to perform research on the insertion of new disciplines in the curriculum, allowing changes to the construction of an appropriate professional to the new situations and needs of the human being.

**CONCLUSION**

After reviewing topics related to epidemiology and health education, it emerged that such subjects contribute efficiently to the new panorama experienced in curriculums of health courses, which introduced the distinctive view of the patient of inter-professional way. It is realized that, in fact, the demand for new issues is increasing, especially in the course of nursing and that these tend to contribute to the best teaching and service interaction.

As limitations of the experiment, it was possible to register the class levelling, once the subject is offered simultaneously to all periods of undergraduate courses and, for not being inserted into the curriculum, it becomes a priority for most students. It is noticed their lack of commitment because the subjects do not yet belong to the curriculum of the courses of Bachelor of UNICASAL, allowing students to not feel the obligation to comply

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faithfully with relevant activities to the elective subjects.

AKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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REFERÊNCIAS


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