ABSTRACT

Objectives: To identify the motivations of students to study Nursing, as well as the factors that influenced the choice. Method: Descriptive and exploratory study with a qualitative approach, with 11 Nursing students of the Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte/UFRN. The production data was collected with the focal Group Technique, and from the transcription of the data was performed the analysis by the Analysis Technique of content. The research project had the approval of the Committee of Ethics in Research, CAAE 0037.0.051.000-10. Results: Students have reported difficulties in the perception of what it means to be a nurse, since most chose Nursing without prior knowledge of the profession. Conclusion: The booming labor market and the opportunity of a better pay are factors that attract students to the Graduation Course in Nursing.

Descriptors: Nursing; Nursing Students; Education in Nursing.
INTRODUCTION

Nursing has been developing itself as a profession based on empirical and theoretical knowledge founded on multiple professional skills: assistance, teaching, management and research, it is considered, in this development, the working process of the nursing staff, in order to provide a safe and risk-free assistance or of damage to the clientele. ¹

The nurse must be a professional of generalist education, critical and reflective, able to meet the problems/situations of health-disease more prevalent in the national epidemiological profile and intervene in them, with emphasis on their region of operation, identifying the bio-psychosocial dimensions of their decisive according the established in the Ordinance n°. 1518, from 5/14/2000. ²

Similarly, the pedagogical political project of the Nursing course, from the Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte (UFRN), also emphasizes that the nurse's skills go beyond the technique and establishes how indispensable skills for this professional the technique, the science, the educator and ethical to intervene-assist, manage, teach and search, acting on distinct levels of complexity in the community, at home, in the ambulatory and hospital as coordinator/manager of nursing work process, both in individual and collective health. ³

To ensure the training of nursing professionals in relationship to autonomy and to ensure the completeness of competences, teaching nursing in Brazil passes through changes in search to add the desired skills to the critical conscience of the student, considering all aspects of education, both formal as well as learning acquired and built in the context of the individual, research or extension. ⁴

The critical conscience should be stimulated by the academy and to approach the understanding of academics on the nurse's role in society, as he visualize the profile of these professional and what motivated him to the choice for graduation in nursing. Therefore, the students need to have a correct concept about the professional identity of the nurse in the middle of the changes and challenges of the work world of current nursing. It demands a reflection, since their motivation to be a nurse at the beginning of the course or even until before the course, about the delineation of the professional profile, that want to be. As well as in what aspects their perspectives were changed to ingress the course.

To study the motivation in the workplace and in nursing education is extremely important given the characteristics of the profession, since it involves human beings, in the figure of the nurse, employee, patient and student. ⁵ Despite the relevance of the theme, there are few studies about the factors that motivated the choice of graduation in nursing by students, most quantitative studies, ineffective for the analysis of subjectivity inherent to the subject.

From the exposed, it is essential to reflect about the motivations for the choice of graduation in nursing, aiming at a growth process, to explore potential and professional ID, which will reflect in a professional quality, which perform their actions with security.

In this way, the object of this study contemplates the motivations of the students to study nursing, as well as the factors that influenced the choice. Has as guiding question: What motivated you to study nursing?

To answer this issue, the study presents as objectives:

- To identify the motivations of students to study Nursing, as well as the factors that influenced the choice.

METHODOLOGY

This is a descriptive and exploratory study, with a qualitative approach. 11 undergraduates of the Nursing course of the Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte/UFRN were investigated by this research, enrolled in the discipline of Nursing Professional Practice of the eighth period, inclusion criteria to participate in the study. Soon, students who were not present during the execution of data collections were excluded.

The group was selected in order that, at that moment of the course, students experienced a deepening perception about the professional identity of the nurse, because they have already experienced the nursing curriculum, largely, and realize this subject in the course of the discipline and its final stages.

Data production used the focal Group Technique, understanding that the use of this instrument can contribute to respect of the addressed thematic and their availability in collective application. Two focus group meetings were performed, within one month.

The use of the focal group is the possibility of the researcher to instigate discussions, perceptions and trends shared by the group or even disagreement. The focus group can be
understood as an innovation, since it proposes overcoming the reducers dualisms that oppose subject/object. It's a chance to show that, in the course of investigation, the subject/object of observation becomes cognitively, because of the reciprocal relations that are established in the operationalization of the technique, (re)creating, and consequently, emancipating themselves.  

Two focus group meetings were performed after the end of the class of the discipline Professional Nursing Exercise, in a classroom of the Nursing Department/UFRN, within one month. The collected information were analyzed by the Technique of analysis content, in the thematic analysis mode. The analysis is intended to be held in three moments: pre-analysis (floating reading of the transcribed data of the recordings); material exploration (selection of the lines of the subjects and organization of categories or thematic nuclei) and results treatment (interpretation). So, we conduct the floating reading of the empirical material and the constitution of the corpus, which takes place from their validation criteria completeness, representativeness and pertinence in order to elaborate the thematic categories.  

In the analysis process, the lines of the nurses have been examined with regard to the Motivations of Students to study Nursing. In this issue were addressed the factors that led students to opt for a degree in nursing. The survey was conducted in accordance with the Resolution in 196/96 of the National Council of Health of the Health Ministry and had the research project approved by the Research Ethics Committee of UFRN by opinion paragraph. 120/2010 and CAAE paragraph. 0037.0.051.000-10.  

All the participants signed an Informed Consent Form. To maintain the confidentiality of the participants of the study, we used the pseudonyms Ana Neri and Wanda Horta as group 1 and 2, respectively.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The admission in the nursing course, which refers to the professional choice, comes from random options, without prior knowledge of the profession. Most often, students opt for healthcare and not the profession. The professional choice cover the social image about the desired area, such image is reflected in the quest for realization of desires and projects for personal life, moreover, brings self-actualization and social status.  

My choice was for elimination, but despite not being familiar with nursing, I knew I wanted the health area. I searched to know superficially each course and among them I chose nursing. (Wanda Horta)  

At the height of my immaturity, I thought I wanted something in the biomedica area, then I was eliminating several courses and remain nursing. (Ana Neri)  

I thought - I'm not sure if I want to be, just know that I want the area of health, then I'm going to do nursing. (Wanda Horta)  

The essay for choosing professional, in contemporary society, starts very early. The pressure exerted by some relatives and by the current education system requires that the student chooses a higher course early, being that choice made from the affinity with disciplines, in the health area, with materials, for example, as biology. It can be shown that affinity through the opinion of the participant:  

At the end of my high school, was when I situated myself on the issue of University. I was very young, was where it started to fall the chip that in fact I should begin to reflect on that and make a decision of what I really wanted for my professional life. So when I got to the third year I stumbled upon the vocational test, and I thought to myself: what am I going to do? I had a notion that I liked the healthcare. Humanities for me has always been a stigma in my life, I don't identify much with it and, even in College, I did not took good notes. So, I began to realize I'd opt for the area of health, because I liked "Sciences". I was torn between pharmacy, physiotherapy and nursing. I opted for nursing. (Wanda Horta)  

The commented perceptions during the interviews showed that the students were unaware of the course at the moment, in joining at the graduation and the motivation to study for nursing was the affinity with the area of health, factor chosen by means of elimination that followed vague criteria. The labor market was also a guiding point for choosing nursing as a profession, according to students. When asked about the choice for nursing, some respondents mentioned the broad labour market and better remuneration, compared to other courses. Students' opinion is correct according to research that showed that 84% of students who graduate in Brazil will work in the area, while the overall average of careers is around 47%.  

The choice for Nursing career can be a conflicting process, since the profession is laden with social stereotypes, such as broad labour market.
This vision that is present in society illustrates:

- Always said the good possibilities of employment for nurses, so the job market was the deciding factor for my choice. (Wanda Horta)

This issue of the labour market was very important too, because that’s when I realized. Because, I was going to talk to a professional dentistry and physiotherapy and they kept telling me how difficult it is to assemble an office, of being too expensive […]. So I was informing me and realized that nursing was easier to establish in the labour market (Wanda Horta)

In addition to the broad labour market, the opportunity of salary associated with employability was cited by the students. Nursing students aims, in addition to a placement in the labour market as nurses, financial independence.

- I confess that this question of the labour market, wages, stability and a promising career in nursing was what attracted me. (Wanda Horta)

Such findings suggest that students, to join the course, recognize the profession a lucrative opportunity since the offer of employment can be considered as satisfactory throughout the national territory.¹³

The University must provide academic knowledge, skills and ideas consistent with the role that they will play when entering the job market.¹⁴

It is necessary to stimulate these scholars, not only the financial question, but also the professional valuation, to pleasure for the profession and if nursing provides well-being to the individual, i.e. whether it will positively influence the quality of life.

The ease of approval in the selection process, compared to other courses of the health area, was also a point that guided the choice for nursing. Among the courses of the health area, the Medicine course is the busiest in UFRN, i.e., has the largest number of candidates per vacancy, having, on average, 30 candidates per vacancy. In addition, the level of preparation of the candidates is very high and the amount of vacancies limited. This research is based on the opinion of the students interviewed:

- I’ve always wanted to do medicine, but I wanted the area of health, not “medicine”, in the case. But, is that stigma of Medicine […]. I tried to learn a little of the professions. There are some that I would do: nutrition, dental […]. Then I tried once to medicine and I did not pass, I put in my head that I wanted to do nursing. (Wanda Horta)

Motivations of students to study for…

As most students coming from high school, always encourage doing medicine, I still tried twice to vestibular medicine and didn’t pass, and the third time I did for nursing and pass. (Wanda Horta)

The high demand for medical studies leads many candidates to seek other health professions as a second option. In a study with students enrolled in the nursing course, 70% joined in gradations for failing to rank in another course; mostly, Medicine appeared as first option.¹⁵

The demand for Nursing, as an option for not joining in Medicine, should be a subject discussed at the beginning of the course to show students the role and importance of differentiated nurses in multidisciplinary team of health.

CONCLUSION

The interest of this work was to meet the students’ motivation to study Nursing, reporting the factors that led them to opt for course. To achieve the goal, 11 students from eighth period of the course of nursing from UFRN were interviewed through the Focal Group technique.

The results indicated that students chose Nursing because of the affinity with the area of health, the labour market, opportunity of good pay and easy approval in the selection process. All participants stated that they were not aware the professional profile of the nurse before entering the college.

It is necessary to make broad dissemination of Nursing as a career, not only for the students of pre-entry examination, but also by the society, seeking to demystify the stereotypes of the profession.

We believe that this study brought valuable contributions to think about Nursing education and suggest future research work with undergraduates who are in their first year of college, so that data are constructed compared and correlated.

REFERENCES


Motivations of students to study for...