

UNVEILING ACTIONS AND INTERACTIONS OF NURSING PROFESSORS IN TEACHING MANAGEMENT¹

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ABSTRACT

Objective: To understand the actions and interactions developed by nursing professors in the management of university education. **Method:** Qualitative study, with a theoretical-methodological contribution in the Grounded Theory, developed in an undergraduate nursing course of a public university. The data collection took place through interviews, from April to October 2017, the theoretical sample was composed of 18 participants, between teachers and students. Data analysis was performed using open, axial coding and integration. **Results:** The data revealed that the teaching nurses, faced with the lack of preparation for teaching management activities, develop their knowledge and skills through experience, relationships with all involved and develop participatory management as a management strategy. **Final considerations:** The movements made by teaching nurses in their practice are focused on the commitment of quality student training.

Keywords: Faculty. Nursing. Education. Higher. Nursing Administration Research.

INTRODUCTION

As scientific and technological advances that increasingly permeate the processes of human living, knowledge has become one of the differentials for people, demanded by society. Consequently, in the last 20 years, universities have undergone a significant process of expansion and remodeling in Brazil and in the world. Guided by public policies, the configuration and reconfiguration of these institutions is an eminently constant reality, even if at different intensities between countries⁽¹⁾.

Universities have contributed significantly to the development of reflexive, critical thinking in the production and dissemination of science, technology and culture, in personal, professional and social formation through teaching, research and extension, which are in constant agreement with the social demands⁽²⁾.

Along with the advances of the universities, undergraduate nursing courses, governed by the National Curricular Guidelines for Undergraduate Nursing Courses, also underwent significant expansions, characterized by a growth of more than 800% (from 108 to 900

nursing undergraduate courses in Brazil) in the last 22 years (from 1995 to 2017) evaluated and published by the census of higher education in Brazil. This growth occurred mainly after the promulgation of the National Education Guidelines and Bases Law in 1996⁽³⁾.

Nursing has undergone multiple and complex transformations in its different action contexts. A significant range of nursing professionals has been taking over the classroom spaces, which, firstly, are used for the training and qualification of nurses. Thus, the teaching of technical and higher education in nursing becomes an opportunity for frequent action among the different possibilities that nursing provides⁽⁴⁾.

In the context of universities, nursing professors are responsible for developing teaching, research and extension activities, as well as university management activities and positions, especially in the context of the country's public universities⁽⁵⁾. The activities related to university management concern three distinct and complementary management spheres: departmental and institutional, defined as macro management; and education, defined as micromanagement. The management of

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education, the sphere chosen for the present study, is characterized by a set of integrated and articulated actions developed by the nurse professors in undergraduate nursing courses. It is developed individually, collectively and consciously through participation in decision-making processes on the orientation and planning of their work⁽⁶⁾.

International studies indicate that the development of activities related to teaching management in teaching practice is insufficient, except for those directly related to university management positions. As a consequence, some weaknesses may arise and reflect on all other activities of these professionals, above all, because management promotes higher quality in teaching. In addition, publications in Brazil and in the world about teaching management^(7,8) are incipient, which justifies the need for further studies to understand the current scenario in higher education and especially in nursing.

Considering the above, this study aims to understand what actions and interactions are developed by teaching nurses in the management of university education.

METHODOLOGY

Qualitative research, with theoretical-methodological contribution of Grounded Theory (GT). This method seeks to investigate the perception of the phenomena and their meanings in the most diverse dimensions, considering the constant and important dynamicity, guided by a systematic data analysis⁽⁹⁾.

This study is a cut of the research entitled "Teaching Management Process in an Undergraduate Nursing Course of a Public University". The study was developed in a nursing undergraduate course at a public university in the South of Brazil. Study participants were recruited by email, all interviews having been scheduled and subsequently performed in their work environment privately. Data collection took place from April to October 2017, through open, individual interviews recorded in digital audio recording, with an average duration of 35 minutes.

The theoretical sampling was composed of 18

participants, distributed in two sample groups. The first sample group was intentionally chosen and composed of 10 participants, respecting as inclusion criteria: to be a teacher of the nursing department for at least three years, because this is the probationary period, and to have worked for at least six months in subject coordination.

The question that led to the start of the dialogue with the first sample group was: "Tell me about your experience as a subject coordinating teacher". Based on the analysis of the data of the first sample group, it was possible to identify that the teachers, facing the challenges, seek support to develop the activities inherent to the management of teaching, as there is a strong relationship between the teachers and the students regarding the concern with the quality training of new nurses, and their activities as managers of the education fit to the students needs.

In order to understand this hypothesis, the second sample group consisted of eight students, respecting as inclusion criteria: being a student of the undergraduate nursing course and having completed at least 50% of the course. The question that led to the start of the dialogue with this group was: "Tell me about your relationship with the subject coordinating teachers". The other questions, in both sample groups, were directed from the participants' answers, leading them to reflect on the theme. The exclusion criteria adopted for the two groups were: participants on medical leave, maternity leave or vacations (the last one only for the first sample group).

The analysis of the data occurred in three distinct and interdependent moments: open, axial coding and integration⁽⁹⁾. In open coding, the data are processed and analyzed with the intention of identifying and grouping categories according to the similarities of facts and events. In the axial codification, the categories were related, with the purpose of obtaining a more detailed explanation, going through a process of comparison and connection. Finally, in the integration, emerged the phenomenon: "Developing participatory management in nursing teaching with a view to promoting the necessary skills for the training of nurses".

The theoretical saturation of the data was reached with the repetition of information about

the phenomenon and the absence of new elements relevant to the study objective. Notes and diagrams were written on the records and insights in the process of construction of the phenomenon. NVIVO@10 software was used for data organization and analysis. In the present study, it was decided to deepen the “action-interaction” component, due to its relevance to the nurse teaching practice. This component concerns the answers expressed by the participants, teachers and students, to the different situations experienced in the teaching management process.

The research was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the institution in which it was developed (Opinion 63198716.2.0000.0121). The precepts of Resolution 466/2012 of the National Health Council were followed in order to guarantee the principles of voluntariness, anonymity, confidentiality, fairness, equity, risk reduction and benefit enhancement. The Free and Informed Consent Form was signed by those who agreed to participate in the study, a copy was given to the participant. In order to preserve the identity of the research participants, the statements were identified by the letters DO, when they refer to the teachers, and DI, when referring to the students, followed by the order number of the interview (DO01, DO02, DI01, DI02 ...).

RESULTS

Through the data analysis of the action-interaction component, the two categories emerged: *Developing knowledge and skills for teaching management* and *Using participatory management as a strategy for teaching management*. The first category reveals that the teaching profession requires nurses beyond profession and didactic-pedagogical specific knowledge, knowledge and skills linked to the management of teaching, which are inherent and indispensable to teaching practice. However, nursing professors, even though they had a vocational training based on management, reported that teacher training does not provide subsidies for management performance in the context of higher education and often they did not feel prepared for the development of activities linked to this reality.

It needs prior preparation, a prior knowledge, because this management is very complex and involves many dimensions, several dimensions that connect. It seems small because it is one subject only, but it is central. It articulates the whole structure of the course, is the cornerstone. It's in a context. So you need this management knowledge that teacher training does not give you. Or, by post-graduation, or by courses, even by our [Nursing] training that gives you management bases. You do need it. (DO04)

It is complicated for people who are teachers, we are teachers, we are managers, managers of our own practice, and we suddenly have management positions. Because course coordinator is management, where it involves many people, involves a group of teachers, involves a group of students, involves other coordinations, processes, is something that is complicated, we are coming out of the blue in the administrative functions of teaching and of the university's. (DO01)

In this sense, the skills required for activities related to teaching management are developed in the exercise of teaching itself. This happens through the actions, the experiences acquired in day to day, between the errors and correctness, of the constructions, of the dialogue, of the search for the overcoming of challenges and deconstructions of being a nursing professor.

I learned and am learning among mistakes and successes, daily. Now I'm more experienced. So I am able to further develop my activities. It was and is challenging because we are not prepared for it. We are prepared to watch the patient and teach what we do. So [,] with the experience that I end up learning. And [,] of course, I talk to colleagues, we have a cool relationship. (DO09)

I studied to be a nurse, to take care of people and to be a teacher, to work in teaching-learning, and in teaching-learning there is a management dimension, but the bureaucratic part has grown so much that I often think: My God, am I a secretary? Administrator? I needed to understand that this is a function of the teacher and to learn from my daily life. (DO03)

Often they ask us how the course of the subjects, if we want to contribute with something, give our point of view. This opening is very important because it does not characterize something stiff, right. It is being shaped throughout the semester. Very good. (DI04)

Another aspect evidenced from the experience of being a nursing professor is the

ties built with the peers in the most varied spaces of teaching practice, which enable the exchange of experience through relationships and interactions, in order to contribute to the development of knowledge and skills for teaching management.

I really like asking a few things for the older ones because they've been around longer than I have. We have this bond with some of them, we take several moments for this exchange. Others are new like me, and from there, sometimes we change. But, those who are around longer, it turns out that it is better, because I learn more, I can develop more. It is usually with whom we have more affinity, or who knows that it is more open to answer, then we go and ask. I think it is like that. (DO01)

The second category, entitled '*Using participatory management as a strategy for teaching management*', showed that in the development of their activities, the teaching staff relies on students to recognize them as a central part of teaching management. There is evidence of a constant feedback in the relationships and interactions between these persons, characterized mainly by the work of the teaching staff, thinking about the quality nurses' training process for the society and the feedback given by the students through evaluation processes during the course.

Teaching Management, teaching, our practice only exists because of the student. Without a student there is no university. It is part of the course, it is part of the process, it is and is a part of our activities as a teacher and as a subject coordinator. He/she shares that. It is for them and to them and consequently for society. I develop teaching management, thinking about it and society. So he/she is part of it. (DO05)

We review, reorganize, remake, include people as well, try to include differentiated activities that the students themselves ask for. Then, at the end of the course, a meeting is held, not only at the end, at other times, but especially at the end, because they have already taken all the content, an evaluation is made with these students, asking for what worked and what did not give, what are the suggestions. So many changes are made at the request of what the students experienced that semester. (DO05)

I think that when we have that last day of the class, that we talk about everything we've learned

about the subject we've been through, our department tries to change the dynamics of things, quite a lot. I think there are things that have improved a lot, and we listen to other people [in different semesters] saying that it has improved. (DI06)

The relationships and interactions of the nursing professors with the peers and with other administrative instances, such as coordination of undergraduate course and head of nursing department, is mainly due to the collective commitment to quality student training.

We are very supportive. That is how our teachers are, very responsible, they are very responsible teachers. Is it 5 hours of class? It's 5 hours of class then! So this I think helps the stage management. At the same time, if a teacher is having a problem, everyone is already trying to help to see how they will solve it. (DO01)

We have support, yes, from the coordination of the course of the department's leadership, and when they cannot solve it, we search for larger instances in the university. But we have support, each position with its responsibilities, but yes, and we have moment for that too, usually in the meetings, with the coordination, with the leadership. As teachers and as subject coordinators. (DO07)

Although most of the subject's administrative activities are under the responsibility of subject coordinators, all teaching nurses are involved in teaching management. Thus, meetings become important moments to strengthen ties among all involved, especially for the promotion of participatory management as a model of teaching management.

We have support, especially at meetings. I see that this issue of periodic meetings, integrate us, I do not see meeting as an overload, I think they are necessary for integration of all involved, right. To mobilize the teaching activity, guide our activities, approach teachers, students. (DO03)

In fact, the organization of the schedule itself, the discussion is done with all the teachers, then the discussion, we have meetings and then, over the course of the year these meetings are already organized, so we will discuss. This is with all teachers, it is done in meeting, and everyone participates. The management is participative, although we have the coordinator of subject. (DO10)

We, as students, participate in some meetings,

such as the meeting of subjects, for example. Always have a class representative at subjects meetings. At the beginning of each semester they [the teaching members] question who the class representative is, and include this person in the meetings. I think it's great, because they listen to us, and they re-adapt what they need and can be re-adapted. (DI06)

Thus, the skills and knowledge for the teaching management practiced by teaching nurses are developed through the experiences of the teaching staff and the relationships and interactions with the peers, with the students and administrative instances, in order to promote participatory management and strengthen the management of teaching in nursing, contributing to the training of nurses for society.

DISCUSSION

The nurse acts in multiple and complex dimensions, going through care, management, research and education. The process of educating seeks, above all, to contribute to the training of nurses based on ethical, human, technical, relational, scientific, critical and reflexive aspects depending on the current social, economic and political context⁽¹⁰⁾.

In this way, it is required of the teaching nurse, especially in higher education, not only the practical knowledge of his area of practice, but also the understanding of being a guide, facilitator and manager of the instructional and institutional processes of teaching, learning and evaluation, which follow the reorientations of university education⁽¹¹⁾. It is important that daily teaching practices go through a continuous process of reflection, since this posture reflects on possible and necessary changes in the context of nursing teaching⁽⁶⁾.

The results of the study pointed out that it is necessary for the teaching nurse to have strategies to improve and leverage teaching management. In this sense, a study evidenced the commitment of teachers with the adoption of strategies that would allow improvements in the teaching process in nursing, such as: independent and group work, method of exposure and joint elaboration, and other educational technologies⁽¹²⁾. Thus, it is up to the teaching nurse to act with the purpose of implementing strategies, instrumentalizing and

articulating with their peers to, increasingly, evidence the responsibility and the commitment in expending efforts to minimize the difficulties in the formative environment⁽¹⁰⁾.

In addition, for the purpose of teaching management, it is hoped that relations will be established in a horizontal way, based on dialogue, respect for individuality, understanding the role of each involved in the process of teaching and learning to be, to live, to understand and to do, subsidized by the awareness and the commitment of an offer of a quality education management for a training of excellence⁽¹⁰⁾. On the other hand, the diversity and plurality that permeate relations and interactions in the process of teaching management enable the mutuality of opposites and, at the same time, the construction and production of management and formative practices from the perspective of the collectivity⁽¹³⁾.

The testimonies elucidate that, in addition to didactic-pedagogical knowledge, those related to teaching management are also considered important, in order to better identify the demands, both in the individual context of each student, as well as in the collective and institutional context. In the academic context, the teaching nurse uses a range of theoretical, practical, technical, scientific, relational and human resources in favor of a unique teaching-learning process that meets student needs, congruent with its social context⁽¹²⁾.

The management of teaching implies directly in the teaching-learning process and vice versa. There is a close relationship between both, and the teaching nurse has the mission to strengthen this process. Corroborating, a study evidenced the importance of the training of students and especially teachers in the use of strategies that improve teaching-learning in the university context, so as to reflect on the effectiveness of this process⁽¹⁵⁾. The importance of main character of the students in the teaching-learning process and in the teaching-student relationship is highlighted⁽¹²⁾.

The findings of this study also point out that teacher training does not provide subsidies for the management of teaching specifically and sometimes they do not feel prepared for the development of activities related to

management. Unpreparedness to act in this context can have repercussions on teaching activities and, consequently, on the teaching-learning process. Thus, it is noted that the management exercise in the academic scenario is complex and requires specific skills and knowledge to contribute effectively and promote changes in this reality⁽¹³⁾.

The constant changes that reflect in new approaches of teaching and management in the educational scenario imply in the necessity of the university teachers to reach skills to teach, to research, to watch and to manage in this new context. The teaching staff, as an important resource for consolidating the efficiency and quality of higher education, plays an irreplaceable role in promoting the development of universities⁽¹⁶⁾. Thus, it is up to the teaching nurses to employ strategies that contribute to coordinated and integrated development among the multiple dimensions of teaching management⁽¹⁷⁾.

To corroborate the findings of this study, research with university managers emphasizes that, when carrying out the activities inherent to the position, based on the construction of relationships and horizontal interactions between students, teachers and university managers, grounded in dialogue, respect and understanding of the role of each involved, this has repercussions on the ultimate purpose of ensuring the training of qualified, humanly ethical and nurses responsible for caring and for life⁽¹⁸⁾.

The statements indicated that there is the involvement of all teachers in the management of teaching. Similarly, a study on the management skills of undergraduate nursing course coordinators emphasized that participatory management and an effective interpersonal relationship between teachers have a direct impact on the training of students and strengthen the development of leadership for the management of an undergraduate nursing course⁽¹⁹⁾. The management exercise in the academic context requires social and moral commitment, since the activities are developed in professional training courses and that, in the future, students will carry out their actions taking care of other human beings⁽¹⁰⁾.

Another study showed that the use of

participatory strategic planning, as a strategy of teacher accountability with university management, was a tool for articulation among other teachers in the administrative scenario, in order to become co-responsible with the participatory management model for the short-, medium- and long-term objectives⁽¹⁸⁾.

Thus, it is understood that, since macro-management in its specificities makes use of participatory management, micromanagement can and does use the same strategy in the teaching management process, since these spheres are interdependent in the university context and are strengthened through discussion, debate and dialogue to find the best deliberations in an inclusive, democratic and plural way⁽⁶⁾.

Teaching, as well as managing, requires co-construction of knowledge, relationships, interactions, skills that can be acquired and/or enhanced through dialogue, individual and collective experiences in the academic setting. Thus, the management of teaching mediated by the teaching and management nurse must provide that the classroom is a space of connection, dialogue, construction of knowledge, mediation of knowledge, from contextualization and problematization of reality, with active participation and thinking of both, teachers and students, through a mutual exchange, with moments of individual and collective production. In this way, it is imperative that teaching nurses feel committed to deepening and broadening their professional and personal skills and abilities from an ethical, social, pluralistic, humane and supportive perspective, and abandoning reductionist practices in order to advance the thinking and attitudes that encompass and integrate, in the sense of the shared construction of meanings and values^(20,21).

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The teaching nurses participating in the present study often did not feel prepared to develop, in addition to teaching, research and extension activities, activities related more specifically to university management, especially teaching. Although the training of nurses has bases for management, they are not enough for the practice of teaching management,

given the specific characteristics of this context. Thus, through the attitudes of being a teaching nurse, and the relationships and interactions that emerge from this practice, nurses create strategies for the development of knowledge and skills for their activities.

Among them, the development of knowledge and skills through the experience acquired in the daily life, in the construction of ties and exchanges of experiences with the other teaching nurses, and the development of participative management as strategy of management of the teaching involving students, nurses teachers and other administrative domains. All these movements performed by teaching nurses are consonant with the training of students and the

consequent insertion of highly qualified nurses in the labor market and society.

The present study was limited to a scenario with characteristics of a public institution of higher education. Thus, the need for other studies to promote the discussion, reflection and practice of teaching nurses is highlighted, mainly because there are few studies developed in the field.

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DESVELANDO AÇÕES E INTERAÇÕES DE ENFERMEIROS DOCENTES NA GESTÃO DO ENSINO

RESUMO

Objetivo: Compreender as ações e interações desenvolvidas por docentes enfermeiros na gestão do ensino universitário. **Método:** Estudo qualitativo, com aporte teórico-metodológico na Teoria Fundamentada nos Dados, desenvolvido em um curso de graduação em enfermagem de uma universidade pública. A coleta de dados ocorreu por meio de entrevistas, de abril a outubro de 2017, a amostragem teórica foi de 18 participantes, entre docentes e discentes. A análise de dados ocorreu mediante codificação aberta, axial e integração. **Resultados:** Os dados desvelaram que os enfermeiros docentes, frente ao despreparo para as atividades de gestão do ensino, desenvolvem seus conhecimentos e habilidades por meio da experiência, das relações com todos os envolvidos e desenvolvem a gestão participativa como estratégia de gestão. **Considerações finais:** Os movimentos realizados por enfermeiros docentes na sua prática estão voltados ao compromisso da formação discente de qualidade.

Palavras-chave: Docentes de Enfermagem. Educação Superior. Pesquisa em Administração de Enfermagem.

COMPRENDIENDO ACCIONES E INTERACCIONES DE ENFERMEROS DOCENTES EN LA GESTIÓN DE LA ENSEÑANZA

RESUMEN

Objetivo: comprender las acciones e interacciones desarrolladas por docentes enfermeros en la gestión de la enseñanza universitaria. **Método:** estudio cualitativo, con aporte teórico-metodológico en la teoría fundamentada en los datos, desarrollado en un curso de pregrado en enfermería de una universidad pública. La recolección de datos ocurrió por medio de entrevistas, de abril a octubre de 2017, la muestra teórica fue de 18 participantes, entre docentes y discentes. El análisis de datos ocurrió mediante codificación abierta, axial e integración. **Resultados:** los datos revelaron que los enfermeros docentes frente a la falta de preparación para las actividades de gestión de la enseñanza desarrollan sus conocimientos y habilidades por medio de la experiencia, de las relaciones con todos los involucrados y realizan la gestión participativa como estrategia de gestión. **Consideraciones finales:** las operaciones realizadas por enfermeros docentes en su práctica están dirigidas al compromiso de la formación discente de calidad.

Palabras clave: Docentes de Enfermería. Educación Superior. Investigación en Administración de Enfermería.

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