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REVIEW

In a world where events occur and change at the rhythm of a second, the formation of nurses as professionals with ethic and social responsibilities, duly empowered to take care of those who, for some reason, cannot take care of themselves, presupposes the exigency of a culture of commitment with changes and transformation.

Although university teaching is widely studied in all its dimensions, there are not many available studies which offer a comprehensive vision that embraces the reality in which the formation of nurses who teach falls into.

In that perspective, I am pleased to make a review of this book, not only because I am a nursing teacher, but also because its pertinence is indisputable nowadays.

Throughout the pages of this book I feel that I share with the authors the fact of being a nursing teacher, which makes me feel a growing complicity with those who ask themselves about the reason, the sense and nature of everyday practice of nursing teaching and, namely, about nurses who may not be duly empowered to practise nursing.

The evolution and construction of knowledge in the different fields, among which nursing is included, have in its origin the crossing of different

and complex areas connected to dimensions, such as: know-know, know-how and know-be, in a dialectic between problems and its contexts.

Today all educational practice belongs to a particular space and time. The result of our personal history and pathway makes that every nursing teacher approaches his/her practice from an individual point of view. That practice may be either positive and mechanistic or more understanding and concerned with processes and contexts.

In order to meet social and health needs and to respond to other societal challenges, nursing teaching made advances to accompany global changes. However, despite all the developments, nursing still seems to be academically weakened as it lacks the traditional background found in other academic communities already settled. In spite of that, it is undeniable that evolution has been taking place, more or less in a logics of having the contexts as development scenarios, the actors involved in the processes, and knowledge built from evidence of what we do.

This book is a practical example of someone who, by his/her experience, is worried and questions about teaching identity, about nursing formation and about what must sustain it. It takes the reader along the path of university teaching and it is critical in relation to nurses who teach, leading us to discover integrality as an essential support of the Health Universal System (SUS) and of its close relation with the formation of nurses. It intends to understand, more specifically, if the nurse who teaches integrates and associates the basic categories of University teaching: *professional formation, teaching-learning process, teaching knowledge, and interpersonal relationships, all of them related to the principle of integrality.*

We face a reflection that makes possible a reading where practical/assisting and pedagogical experiences intersect, which, when analysed, reflect the need of rethinking higher education teaching, particularly nursing teaching.

Believing that education is a factor of excellence and the key to success and to individual and professional growth, once faculty development and

empowerment will lead to students development and empowerment, the authors walk along a theoretical and methodological path in which the complexity of a worrying topic appears clearly and bluntly – university teaching and the practice of nurses who teach.

This book is organised in three central chapters, one of which is theoretical and the other two methodological ones. The first one intends to handle university teaching by contextualizing formation and professionalization. It approaches the problem of poor initial formation that, according to the authors, is mainly the result of loopholes in the Directives and Bases for National Education Law (9394/96), which invites to think that there is no need to have pedagogical formation to be a teacher. The responsibility of Higher Education Institutions (IES) and teaching with no tools at an initial level is considered, as institutions will have to support the pedagogical formation of those who teach, once they merely survive instead of considering teaching as a social practice.

This chapter also approaches the construction of a teaching identity as a way to go and as a complex challenge that extends beyond the technical rationality which is at the origin of base formation of nurses who teach. The authors also allude to the teacher's need to embody an attitude of self-questioning and of questioning students through continuous reflection strategies and discussion, together with evidence transferability into practice, in a perspective of making sense and being important to students.

Educating in a world in transformation presupposes making way to creativity, establishing theoretical-practical relations, reflecting about the relationship between teaching and searching, among others, questioning pedagogical practice, that is to say, fulfilling the objective of teaching: teaching and learning.

In this journey of constant questioning and teacher-student relationship improvement, students will find the sense of what they study following an active knowledge-learning dialectic, which will tend to the

construction of their self-learning and to exercise their right of ethical citizenship.

The fact that nursing teaching is inseparable from health, the complexity of being a teacher in that area, more specifically to health professionals, fits in an intricate variety of intervention contexts: teaching, learning and practice (assistance), in which “specialization” takes the leading role, filling out the imagination of those who think that this “specialised know-how” is the solution and the key to respond to situations.

Thus, the authors consider that the continuous systematic self-evaluation and reflection must lead teachers and institutions to ask themselves about the value of qualification and spread a change paradigm which adopts transformation as a common denominator.

The adoption of a problematizing methodology of reality seems to be a tool that allows observing and solving problems from its origin –reality– as it is where students learn to learn. Innovating by transforming is a continuous restructuring process of relationships, knowledge and practices which allow “an opening to the wider world” that cannot and must not be reduced into a “specialization”. Likewise they cannot yield to merely transmissive passive teaching-learning methods nor to the lack of participation by students.

In the section entitled “From the nursing teacher to the nurse who teaches: a possible construction”, the authors revisit and explore the evolution of curricula in Brazil and the underlying legislation, which tries to respond to the purpose of thinking “health” as a social practice. Thus university doctrinal basis cannot be set aside, being one of them the principle of integrality, which implies, in its essence, individuals as biopsychosocial human beings. Therefore the authors understand that the principles herewith defy not only the Health System, but also the formation organizations, public or private, as the professionals they train will give expression to the principles set out in it.

In the meanwhile, changes in Health teaching occurred. Those changes were not always directed to empowering skills to integrality, including a confrontation of health needs and the development of the university system. Regarding nursing, it is understood that formation should not be “slaved” by specialization. It must go beyond scientific updating and focus in pedagogical formation. Evidence confirms that in relation to the practice of the nurse that teaches, the lack of systematized pedagogical formation will have been responsible for the curricular characteristics of many courses in which there is a lack of room for academic debate on pedagogy.

Rethinking the pedagogical practice of the nurse who teaches from professional nursing formation is imperative if integrality of the assistance and of present social transformations are considered. Scientific knowledge from evidence, thinking and reflection processes by students, in action and to action, are therefore starting points and not arrivals, essential to the identity formation of reflexive autonomous committed teachers and students.

Once the “problematic” is explained, we encounter a second chapter where the authors go along a research path. Participants (nurses that teach) and contexts in the teaching and health area integrate a descriptive study entitled “The principle of integrality: pedagogical associations”, where it is intended to reveal the biographic and social profile of participants and to expose the importance they give to their teaching practice in higher education institutions (IES) in relation to categories the following categories: professional training, teaching-learning process, teaching knowledge, and interpersonal relations associated to the principle of integrality.

In the third chapter, “The nurse that teaches revealing pedagogical concepts”, the authors suggest a triangulation of methods and data to make the process and results stronger and to provide a wider and comprehensive approach to the study object and the surrounding world. The study about the explanation on the relationship between the four categories and the

principle of integrality deepens previous analyses. The narratives that allow the participants to respond in relation to the open question of the data collection instrument complement the results by using content analysis.

Eventually, the authors create a sub-chapter entitled “Education and Health –a Horizon to Come”, in which final considerations are commented on. As professional university teaching nurses, the authors privileged throughout the book the study of the importance of the professional formation, process teaching-learning conception, teaching knowledge and interpersonal relationships, as well as the relation of these categories with the principle of integrality.

Faculty, like other professionals in the area of health, responsible for the formation of future nurses, must reconsider their practice to rethink the curricula of nursing graduation. A changing world demands that we are open to relate to others and willing to change. It also requires an open dialog between higher education institutions (IES) and Health Services, bearing in mind preventive and promoting health activities.

In a short reference to main data, it can be said that, from the point of view of the biographic and social profile, the field of action of most nurses who teach and object of study goes beyond the teaching field. There are less nurses whose sole activity is teaching.

Although we recognise the importance of perfection and graduation, there are still rooted conservative conceptions about pedagogical practices and, at a lesser scale, the acceptance of the teacher’s hegemony in class and the importance of memory capacity. The results lead to think that teaching-learning may be dissociated from research according to 23,3% of the respondents, while 39,5% maintains a neutral position.

In relation to the teachers’ knowledge, participants prefer knowledge from experience, as it is considered a key factor of practice development. Concerning the interpersonal relationships category, data evidence that the authoritarian figure of a distant teacher is vanishing, which implies a nice

healthy interaction between the teacher and the student under a pleasant working atmosphere in nursing higher education.

The qualitative dimension of the study complements the answers given to more structured questions. The narratives suggest a lack of disciplinary language knowledge in relation to education science which, according to the authors, may have generated wrong confusing information.

The *corpus* analysis organization as a result of the subcategories: teaching formation, teaching-learning processes, teaching knowledge, and interpersonal relationships, allowed the authors to infer the presence of different conceptions associated to the principle of integrality. It was possible to observe that, according to inquiries, this principle is still incipient in the speeches of nurses who teach.

Teaching formation, confusing to participants, is thus associated to the principle of integrality by some of them. This principle was understood by the nurses who teach as something “sporadic” which should have been object of attention in their formation process. It is something which is still to be reached, built and reinforced on each situation. The authors consider that the consolidation of the Universal Health System (SUS) and its assistance integral model will demand from nurses who teach more organization and strengthening of their formation regarding planning and higher education objectives, bearing in mind the present health system as a motor for the development.

Besides these results, it is also observed that some participants are concerned about formation. However, they have considered the importance of training or the need to revise their practice in spite of the difficulties encountered when reconciling their professional activity as nurses with teaching formation.

Students appear as prominent figures in the framework of the teaching-learning process allied to a new social actor –the community. It is worth mentioning the importance given to the student and to Nursing in a more participated logics by using more interactive and reflexive strategies

orientated to the subject construction, without forgetting the student as a citizen and a professional with a sense of ethics.

Although teaching knowledge may not be understood as such, some participants affirmed that they had tried to improve their pedagogical knowledge by giving priority to the knowledge acquired by experience. It should be highlighted that, despite nurses who teach do not have specific formation in educational issues, they are interested in the construction and valorisation of the different areas of knowledge.

The interpersonal relationships support the pedagogical practice of those nurses who teach. Most of them recognise that they are learning to: recognise the student as a whole, strengthen durable bonds and establish a relationship of mutual respect.

The relationship that nurses who teach establish between the categories above in accordance with the main results and the principle of integrality is the second problem to which the authors tried to respond. Apparently there is not a collective thought about these categories and the fact of existing individual work without multi and transdisciplinarity. It is also observed a lack of perception concerning educational terminology and in relation to the principle of integrality and of the Universal Health Service (SUS) as a whole. The idea that some of those nurses who teach orient themselves to be more skilled nurses comes from the oriented proposals for training and improving in the area of Nursing. Bearing in mind the results obtained, the authors conclude that establishing a relation between the categories under study and the professional activity of nurses who teach is a path to follow.

Once this brief review is concluded, I must say that I did not privilege a critical analysis of the content of the book, but a confirmation of what it intends to convey. I tried to be faithful, avoiding misinterpretations or imposing my own ideas.

Nursing as a practical discipline of knowledge has been historically conditioned by the reductionist ideology of the biomedical model with negative repercussions in the formation of nursing and in care pedagogy.

If I may express my feelings, I would say that the construction of the nursing identity as a profession in its different dimensions implies evidence-based practice and reflexive thought practice as well as cultural creation, which will allow following, anticipating and building developments.

Research assumes an important role in the formation of nurses and in the construction of the Nursing science as it becomes a vehicle for the transfer of knowledge and evolution of this subject area. Thus, it guarantees the profession visibility and the quality of healthcare through the use of results. On the other hand, and because the construction of the teaching identity is still a path to go, this reality must demand from higher education institutions (IES) in general, and from Nursing Schools in particular, the “notion” of the role played by an educator as someone skilled and responsible for forming, not only technicians, but critical individuals, scientifically and humanly competent, with ethics and social responsibility, based on an emancipatory learning process in which the student appears as an actor of his/her own formation and the teacher as a facilitator.

Thus, and because educating and nursing education demand changes, thought transformation, willingness and pedagogical sensitivity, the path in this book is an allusion and a permanent challenge to obligation and to the need to give sense to what we do, rethinking and redefining, whatever personal and professional practices they are, professional teaching, teaching and assisting or only assisting practices. The pedagogic and social interest of this work relies on the possibility of questioning the formation and the professionalization in nursing by pointing out some alternative ways, as well as understanding the relation among Nursing, Education and Health. This relation is absolutely necessary, inseparable and complementary. It is the opportunity to question and look into the nursing teaching reality to better understand, without any recipes.

The world rapidly changes, globalisation and multiculturalism are here to stay and changes are an imperative. Thus, our task as educators is to make that students, and ourselves, become autonomous professionals, enlightened and responsible, capable of understanding societal needs, of promoting pedagogical quality and, consequently, healthcare improvements for people, groups and communities.

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