

# Political Pedagogical Project: conception, construction and evaluation in nursing

PROJETO POLÍTICO PEDAGÓGICO: CONCEPÇÃO, CONSTRUÇÃO E AVALIAÇÃO NA ENFERMAGEM

PROYECTO POLÍTICO PEDAGÓGICO: CONCEPCIÓN, CONSTRUCCIÓN Y EVALUACIÓN EN ENFERMERÍA

Silvia Maria Nóbrega-Therrien<sup>1</sup>, Maria das Graças da Silva Guerreiro<sup>2</sup>, Thereza Maria Magalhães Moreira<sup>3</sup>, Maria Irismar de Almeida<sup>4</sup>

## ABSTRACT

Nursing education and nurses' articulation with the working market are guided on the premise that the quality of nursing service is related to training workers to be reflexive subjects. The main object of the study was to understand nursing education based on the current political pedagogical projects (PPPs) of nursing courses and, more specifically, to verify with coordinators and/or former-coordinators of the referred nursing courses the conception, construction and evaluation of the PPPs and the inclusion of the reflective subject as a proposition when developing the PPPs. An analysis was performed on the PPP of nursing courses of the State (UECE) and Federal (UFC) Universities of Ceará, and interviews were performed with nine coordinators and/or former-coordinators of those courses. Data showed that the PPP is considered a guiding element of educational activities and that its construction results from collective but not permanent initiatives. There is much concern about the critical-reflexive character of nursing education, as well as the evaluation of the PPP.

## KEY WORDS

Nursing.  
Education, nursing.  
Curriculum.

## RESUMO

A formação de enfermeiros e sua articulação com o mercado de trabalho pautam-se na premissa de que a qualidade do serviço de Enfermagem relaciona-se à formação do profissional como sujeito reflexivo. Este estudo teve como objetivo geral compreender a formação do enfermeiro com suporte nos atuais projetos políticos pedagógicos (PPPs) dos cursos de Enfermagem e, especificamente, verificar junto às coordenadoras e/ou ex-coordenadoras destes cursos a concepção, construção e avaliação do PPP e a inserção do sujeito reflexivo como proposta de formação. Foram analisados os PPPs dos Cursos de Enfermagem das Universidades Estadual (UECE) e Federal do Ceará (UFC), e realizadas entrevistas com nove coordenadoras e/ou ex-coordenadoras dos referidos cursos. Os dados revelaram que o PPP é considerado elemento norteador da ação educacional e que sua construção parte de iniciativas coletivas, mas não permanentes. Foram destacadas a preocupação com a formação crítico-reflexiva do enfermeiro, bem como relativa à avaliação do PPP.

## DESCRITORES

Enfermagem.  
Educação em enfermagem.  
Currículo.

## RESUMEN

La formación de enfermeros y su inserción en el mercado de trabajo se basan en la premisa de que la calidad del servicio de Enfermería se relaciona con la formación del profesional como sujeto reflexivo. Este estudio tuvo como objetivo general comprender la formación del enfermero con respaldo en los actuales proyectos políticos pedagógicos (PPPs) de los cursos de Enfermería y, específicamente, verificar junto con las coordinadoras y/o ex coordinadoras de estos cursos la concepción, construcción y evaluación del PPP y la inserción del sujeto reflexivo como propuesta de formación de tales PPPs. Fueron analizados los PPPs de los Cursos de Enfermería de las Universidades Estatal (UECE) y Federal de Ceará (UFC), y realizadas entrevistas con nueve coordinadoras y/o ex coordinadoras de los referidos cursos. Los datos revelaron que el PPP es considerado un elemento orientador de la acción educativa y que su construcción parte de iniciativas colectivas, pero no permanentes. Fue relevante la preocupación por la formación crítico-reflexiva del enfermero, así como relativa a la evaluación del PPP.

## DESCRIPTORES

Enfermería.  
Educación en enfermería.  
Currículo.

<sup>1</sup> Nurse. PhD. in Sociology. Adjunct Professor at Ceará State University. Fortaleza, CE, Brazil. silnth@terra.com.br <sup>2</sup> Nurse at "Professor Waldemar Alcântara" Maternity Hospital. Itapiúna, CE, Brazil. mgsguerreiro@yahoo.com.br <sup>3</sup> PhD. in Nursing. Adjunct Professor at Ceará State University. Researcher with CNPq. Fortaleza, CE, Brazil.imoreira@uece.br <sup>4</sup> Nurse. PhD. in Nursing. Adjunct Professor at Ceará State University. Fortaleza, CE, Brazil. irismar@fortalnet.com.br

## INTRODUCTION

The current challenges of the educational sector lie in educating citizens to become competent in the application of knowledge, capable of understanding and fitting in the world, and also to find solutions for the everyday situations that they have to reflect upon in order to give meaning to said knowledge.

In Nursing, we observe that education has been predominantly articulated with the professional *world*. This articulated professional education was started in the 1960s, an initiative of the Brazilian Nursing Association - Associação Brasileira de Enfermagem (ABEn), which reported the situation and the challenges to be faced by the professionals<sup>(1)</sup>, including this one. In the current scenario of new curricular directives and political-educational projects, however, there is an evident possibility of not simply bonding this education to a work-related universe, but also to provide an adequate response to the current educational challenge of reflecting upon actions.

Therefore, the necessity of comprehending the education of the nurses, how the many interventions and mediations occur during amidst their work results in a field of studies that culminates with the beginning of a few comprehensions: conception of the nurse as a thinking professional and the realization that reflection-upon-action in Nursing seems to be a significant and defining component of adequate responses to ever-changing working-related scenarios<sup>(2)</sup>.

As such, the professionals are not the ones who painstakingly execute their occupation, but the ones who can think, redo and adequate their practices, as one of the most intensive senses of education is the transition from object to subject - which, among other factors, means the education in competence. This necessity seems to be directly linked to a multidisciplinary aspect, a reflection of the commandments that rule over the contemporary working relations: learning to learn<sup>(3)</sup>.

The realization that professional education courses in universities favor scientific and systematic knowledge in their curricula is not recent, since the knowledge resulting from *reflection-upon-action* seems not to find a space. In Nursing, for example, the situation is mostly the same as the situation that seems to rule the whole university education: restrained curricular organization, stagnation, with content-based courses, emphasis on technical subjects, little to no openness to other areas of knowledge and interdisciplinarity. The educational methodology is centered on explanative classes, there is a tendency to follow a pre-established program, test-based evaluations and other traditional methods of assessment, as well as a faculty made up of professors who, even though are holders of Master's or Doctoral titles, are not competent as teachers regarding the educational area and the political-social perspective<sup>(4)</sup>.

The new context of continuous changes in the professional world has encouraged a growing inquietude, in an attempt to break the dissociation between the rhetoric education regarding the demands of practical reality in order to meet the needs of society, educating professionals to work within a dynamic reality<sup>(5)</sup>. It is understood that teaching applied sciences and nursing education must be linked in order to provide them with reflection-upon-action knowledge, so that the new professional is prepared for the demands of work. Education must join technique with the application of theoretical knowledge, enabling the nurse to act even in contexts of uncertainty.

There is a gap in Brazilian literature, in the Nursing field, regarding studies and articles that investigate the elaboration of such intuitive knowledge<sup>(6)</sup>. This gap is evident, even though there are studies<sup>(7)</sup> that contribute to reduce it, understanding that the education of hospital nurses is related to their experience in healthcare. Therefore, the results of the educational process may be more or less yielding, according to the intensity and theoretical foundation that support reflection upon action.

Considering the importance of this comprehension for the education and the consequent performance of the nurse, the topic is of interest is justified and directed towards the political-educational project (PEP) of the Nursing undergraduate courses. Specifically, it verified the conception, execution and evaluation of the PEP with coordinators and ex-coordinators of Nursing undergraduate courses, as well as the insertion of the reflecting subject as a proposal of structuring these PEPs.

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## REFLECTIONS ABOUT THE TOPIC SUPPORTED BY THEORETICAL REFERENCES AND EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE

The study discusses knowledge, insertion and education of the nurse nowadays, based on the perception of coordinators of undergraduate Nursing courses who took part in the elaboration of political-educational projects in the area.

Nurses are reflecting subjects, and, as such, must base their reflection upon action, a necessary relation in professional education<sup>(8)</sup>, which must give the dimension of a political-educational project to their comprehension.

For a long time, it was usual to dissociate learning subjects and objects, fragmenting the formulation of knowledge. Nowadays, the predominant idea is that human knowledge is structured upon the relations that the individuals establish with themselves, with others and with the world in a system of exchanges, building knowledge according to relational and reflective perspectives, as they are related with social aspects, which imply on life and experience. Knowing has a temporary character, as what is known

may be *re-known*, *re-learned* and/or *re-configured* according to new intersubjective relations<sup>(9)</sup>.

Particularly, regarding the nurse, the individuals do not build knowledge simply with academic studies, but on an everyday basis, supported by the reality of their work. Theory offers what can be apprehended and understood by everybody, while practice, due to its singularity and complexity, results in a richer and more productive learning experience in terms of meaning for the professional<sup>(7)</sup>.

According to this comprehension, work is the link between thinking and practice, expressing the human capacity of re-elaborating reality through action, being capable of recreating and transforming it<sup>(10)</sup>. This reality of transforming actions is based on the education of the subjects that develop the actions. The ideas that characterize the initiatives focused on this topic are marked by the desire of an education that can give nurses with a questioning view of the world, transforming their way of seeing and reflecting on it.

By understanding that nurses are reflecting professionals, we understand that, when acting, they go beyond instrumental actions. As reflective subjects who build their action upon experienced situations, they are supported by an interactive reality<sup>(2,8)</sup>.

The concept of reflecting subject was developed in studies about knowledge hidden within the decision processes of professional actions<sup>(11)</sup> that identify and characterize the reflecting subject, but do not clarify the reflecting processes of such practice, understood according to the notion of rationality or *practical reasoning*, a mechanism to understand and explain actions<sup>(12)</sup>. This mechanism allows subjects to critically rebuild/change their reasons for action and improve their work according to these descriptive analyses. The process of rebuilding allows for the identification of knowledge that supports professional actions, expressed in the arguments that make up practical reasoning and justify actions. These arguments may be altered in order to redirect the actions<sup>(13)</sup>.

It is understood therefore that nurses are not restricted to the academic knowledge they were submitted to. Knowledge is built and rebuilt from day to day, according to the challenges of reality. As they work, the theoretical work acquires new meanings, so that they are restructured upon new pillars, stronger, more coherent and consistent<sup>(7)</sup>. Also, reflecting subjects have their actions directed by practical reasoning<sup>(13)</sup>, with the ability of justifying and explaining the reasons for their decisions or their actions, acknowledging this as a practical rationale. Therefore, the nurses could be identified as knowledgeable professionals, who, when faced with a complex or determined situation, reflect and decide accordingly. This way of thinking is named reasoning<sup>(14)</sup>.

It should be noted that education that seeks the development of reflecting subjects and understands knowledge

that stem from everyday practice as inductors of competences and skills acquired by reflection-upon-action is a topic to be considered. The importance of reflection-upon-action is a concrete fact that mobilizes epistemological resources/structures and knowledge. Matching these structures and knowledge in order to apply them, respond to a given reality and transform it becomes necessary. Thus, we understand that the way towards the execution of this process lies in education, and, as such, expressed in the PEP text.

The PEP becomes the main political and technical instrument to guide university actions that must be elaborated collectively within the scope of the institution. This participative elaboration allows the PEP to guide each university and each of its undergraduate courses. The PEP is an intentional action which must be defined collectively, with a consequent collective compromise<sup>(15)</sup>. We call it political because it reflects the options and choices of ways and priorities in the education of the citizen, as an active and transforming member of society. We call it educational because it expresses educational activities that help the school achieve its educational goals.

The Project must express an attempt of communication, interaction of subjective and objective aspects, reflectivity and creativity, whose triggering depends on initiative and involvement of the subjects implied in this process as a collectivity in action. Therefore, an interactive-collaborative process supported on reason and integration of pertinent knowledge starts, which is not an easy task.

It is not easy to build or to implant it, as it holds the key to an education based on professional training with competent professional, transforming, reflective elements that lead to reflection-upon-action.

This process, although difficult, must be persistent when facing obstacles, considering that the education of professionals to work nowadays must be based on the assumption of the necessity of subjects willing to intervene in the social reality, as they enjoy theoretical-political-epistemological instruments that place them in privileged conditions to face the challenges of the new world order, extracting advantages from it and using it in favor of man and humanity. In the case of Nursing, the healthcare system, the context we are inserted in, the profession and the population increasingly demand and deserve the attention and care provided by competent nurses.

## METHOD

Documental research was used in the first stage of the investigation of the PEP for undergraduate Nursing courses in Universidade Estadual do Ceará-UECE and Universidade Federal do Ceará-UFC. Later, in the second stage, interviews were used to supplement documental analysis. The analysis of the PEPs was paramount to subsidize the interview script used with the coordinators and/or ex-coordinators

of the courses studied. The interview scripts applied to the coordinators contained the following items: identification; conception, execution and evaluation of the PEP and insertion of reflecting subjects as the project's educational proposal. The item *conception* was made up of two questions related to the comprehension of the PEP; the item covering execution had two questions about the experience in the creation and implantation of the PEP; the item about evaluation had one question, as it sought the comprehension about this evaluative necessity, of assessment as a process; and the reflecting subject item aimed at identifying the articulation of this comprehension with the nurse.

Data collection occurred over a three-month period. The recorded interviews, guided with open-ended questions, were transcribed after being listened to repeatedly. Successive reading of the speeches allowed for the perception of categories present in them. Therefore, the presented categories are seen to have stemmed from the analysis. The author<sup>(16)</sup> who led the data analysis process defines the principle that categories are signatures or classes that gather a group of elements under a generic name, a grouping performed due to the common characters of said elements. The categoric organization occurred at three moments: 1.) pre-analysis, which is the organization of data for their systematization in meaning cores, referring to meanings and actions expressed by the patients about the topic in study, after the interviews have been processed by exhaustive readings and the points of similarity have been highlighted; 2.) exploration of the material, where the analysis itself is performed, results are coded according to the identified points of similarity, associated to concepts, in units surmised according to the organization of the speeches; and 3.) interpretation of the results, with inferences, making it possible to elaborate the areas of meaning and actions developed about the studied problem.

The categories of analysis respected the principles<sup>(16)</sup> of mutual exclusion, homogeneity, objectivity, adequacy or pertinence, exhaustion and productivity, as predicted by the author. The project was approved by the UECE Review Board, file #05058540-1.

## ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

UECE and UFC were the chosen institutions as they have the oldest Nursing undergraduate courses in Ceará.

Altogether, nine coordinators or ex-coordinators were interviewed, five of them from UECE and four from UFC. All of them are or were involved in the execution or implantation of the PEP in their institutions. The interviewees' working time in the position varied from seven months to four years.

The data were organized for analysis according to the following categories: 1) Conception of the political-educational project; 2) Execution of the political-educational project; 3) Evaluation of the political-educational project

and 4) Education of reflecting subjects. Such categories have emerged from the analysis of the coordinators' speeches instead of being established beforehand.

The PEP is considered by the coordinators as an instrument responsible for the structure and organization of the educational process, guiding its following:

[...] it is a guiding instrument of the professional education process [...] which brings the main guidelines, fundamentals and methodologies on how the professional education process should happen (E. 5);

[...] it is the teaching plan, the course plan, where the proposals of the curriculum contents are, as well as the curricular organization with contents, class hours, basic, mandatory and optional courses, and where the philosophical conception of the course is defined [...] the course method, class hours and the parts related to research and extension (E.5).

Therefore, the conception of the PEP is articulated to its importance, the fact that it becomes a direction, a pathway for the actions of the course. The PEP represents the result of a constancy in the discussion to collectively define guidelines, priorities and goals of the school, while, at the same time, defining the route on how to achieve them<sup>(17)</sup>, as seen in the following report:

[...] it is the structure and organization of educational and methodological guidelines. It includes the philosophical definition, conceptions and assumptions that would support the educational focus, and even more concrete issues such as curriculum structure and distribution of class hours. It will really guide the educational process (E.2).

One of the concerns associated with the PEP is the implementation of a way to organize the educational work<sup>(15)</sup>, overcoming conflicts and organizing institutions as a whole. This organization is conceived as the construction, as seen in the following report:

[...] it is a longer-term working plan, contemplating goals, institutional policies, goals, the current social-political context of the course, intended contributions, which type professionals it intends to educate, the courses that it intends to offer [...] It is a plan for the execution of the course, contemplating political and educational stages (E.4).

The establishment of goals, premises and ways of achieving them marks its construction, the moment that a project is elaborated, and, in addition to making it more consistent, helps the group to achieve the intended goals. This positioning is clear when they mention planning (organization and content) as guiding instruments of educational action.

An interesting aspect observed during the analysis was the pertinence of facing the PEP as a guiding, philosophical, political and social element. This is noted because, when asked about the objectives of a PEP, the interviewees mentioned the guiding aspect of the element, responsible for

directing the educational process, according to the dynamics and demands of the market and society, exposing its complexity and comprehensiveness, its political and social character.

Its goal is to establish harmony between professors concerned with education and the students. It carries the mission, the goals, the competences, the skills, the profile of the professional it intends to prepare (E.6);

[...] it is focused on clarifying the professional it intends to prepare, its target public and the type of professional one will become and which backgrounds are required (E.4).

Its conception and construction are articulated with its relevance in the educational process in many cases, not only by seeing the PEP as a facilitating element, but also by subsidizing education. The coordinators believe that without the PEP,

there would be no way of working, how to bring unity to the course. Each person works as they see fit, which would result in an unprecedented disorganization, making it difficult to organize teachers and students in the absence of such a planning (E.1.);

It is relevant because how are you going to plan something if you... don't have a plan? (E.4).

According to this speech, the PEP is seen as indispensable to educational planning. When well-built and managed, it can decisively help the school to meet its goals<sup>(18)</sup>. Its absence, however, may show a lack of commitment with the school, students and education, reflecting on the development of the society where the school is inserted.

Another interesting aspect identified in the speeches was the urgency for the PEP not to be simply a project, a goal, but to become an action in the educational scope, aiming to improve education from a collective perspective. Therefore, they state:

[...] therefore, for me, there should not simply be a document named PEP; it has to be known, used and elaborated collectively, and everybody must be involved in this process, which should constantly be re-evaluated (E.5).

When asked about the construction of a PEP, the most frequent highlight was the necessity of the project to emerge from a collective process. As such, the PEP demands a deep reflection about the goals of the institution, as well as the evidence of its social role and the clear definition of routes, operational aspects and actions to be undertaken by all those involved with the educational process<sup>(17)</sup>. Its elaboration will unite beliefs, knowledge from the school community, the social and scientific context, and will become a collective political and educational commitment. It is conceived according to the diversity among views of its authors, as stated by the coordinators:

Regarding the construction of a PEP, its precepts and practice have shown that it can only be important if it has been built collectively by the main actors involved in this educational process - teachers, students, professionals, community (E.5);

[...] it should be something built with the participation of everyone involved. Service, community and academy (E.7);

[...] the construction of the PEP must be collective, as it is a project to be developed by everybody. Otherwise, there is no commitment. So, either everybody takes part of it, or the project won't work (E.9).

It is paramount that the construction and the follow-up of the PEP are supported on a participative, collective administration, that decisions are achieved democratically and that its evaluation and revisions are constant collective practices<sup>(17-18)</sup>, opportunities to reflect upon changes in the direction and ways to reach its goals.

Asked about this collective participation in the elaboration of the PEP, the coordinators spoke about the methods used in each institution. Mostly, these were held as workshops, thematic seminars, discussions, formation of small workgroups for more specific questions. At this point, the importance of groupwork was evident, especially when the desired goal is the reflection of collective interaction. The following speeches show some of what happened, although somewhat unclearly, since only one of the coordinators mentioned it:

[...] we had to do it with several meetings, seminars, workshops and work each stage since the beginning of the educational conception up to putting together the curriculum (E.1);

this route had several alternatives, meetings at the University, seminars and discussion groups. We had three opportunities to leave the facilities and go to a beach house, to the ABEn headquarters, to a school, and we also had meetings with subgroups. Several strategies were used (E.5);

During the construction of the PEP we had workshops, discussions in the classroom with the students, several meetings with the professors, people from other Universities, guest Education specialists... (E.8)

we had many workshops, a forum with nurses representing the services of basic and specialized healthcare, we asked the tendencies and the current situation of Nursing. Afterwards, we worked with service managers and some specialized people [...] (E.8).

The speeches denote the registry of the pathways taken in the search for a conception for the construction of the PEP. They expose the attempts of integrating the academy with the services and a clear intention of performing groupwork. Even though this is one of the most important routes for consensus, and consequently, to obtain collective results, we know it is not a smooth process. We observed that this collective participation in the construction of the PEP was not the hallmark of the process, as confirmed by the speeches:

[...] it's difficult to work collectively because people place certain values that are not related to education... (E.6);

we see that large groups form and, at the end, there are few people left. Even in meetings that should have the whole faculty had a shortened participation of people. (E.2);

[...] engagement of the professors was difficult because, although the meetings were set for times where everybody would be available to take part, not all of them attended, and when they did the results were not as expected, and that was frustrating (E.1).

Having everyone take part is not an easy task. It is clear that discussions were marred by emptiness and small groups had to do the work. This is a negative aspect, because, if one does not participate, one does not commit. The discussion of projects, strategies such as management and planning tools, capable of showing a direction for the work to be collectively developed, commitment to action are all intended, although opposite movements, conflicts, difficulties to reach agreement and consensus are part of groupwork and express the diversity or divergence of opinions among its members, as well as the wealth of non-unanimity<sup>(18)</sup>.

It is worth noting that the PEP indicates a pathway, an explicit direction for a collectively-established commitment. The Project is concerned in establishing a new way of organizing the educational work, that will unveil conflict and contradictions, aiming to eliminate competitive, corporative and authoritarian decisions, breaking away with the routine of personal and rational orders of the bureaucracy and allowing for horizontal relations within the school. Therefore, we understand that the legitimacy of a PEP, as well as the possibility of achieving the intended goals, are directly linked to the participation of all those involved. It establishes an involvement and the personal growth of people, especially the educators, in the elaboration of the project, by means of the effective participation in whatever is essential for the institution. It also represents a more important commitment than having a well-written text<sup>(17)</sup>.

Still, regarding the participation of sectors/authors involved in the construction of the PEP, one of the points observed by the study was the participation of students. Here, the participation existed, although it hardly met the expectations.

We offered several workshops and the students took part in it. We have students that are part of the faculty and were allowed to take part, but it was open to any other student. At first there were 13 students, but it emptied out, and there were only 1 or 2 students at the end. Anyway, students were represented (E.2).

[...] the participation of the students occurred in assemblies, but their participation, even when requested, was small, due to lack of experience. Those in later semesters contributed a bit more, but those in their first semesters contributed little for the proposals being discussed [...] (E.1);

There were few students participating, which is a negative demand since they are the ones who are most implied in education, and were not being included in this construction. So, each workshop had three or four. Those representing the students' center were there (E.7).

Without effective participation of teachers and students, it is evident how committed they were with the elaboration and proposal of the course. One should not forget that changes do not occur only according to the law or the projects, but they take on a life of their own during the day to day routine, the cases, the classrooms and other spaces used for the education of nurses.

By understanding that the PEP is in a constant flow, therefore unfinished, we asked the coordinators what is being done regarding continuously updating this process. Since the project was implanted only recently, according to them, there are still no methods developed for its reassessment. In a few cases, although informally, this reassessment can be observed, as seen in the following speeches:

[...] we articulate and, within the Educational Project itself, we set a mandatory meeting or educational workshop one week before the start of every semester, to discuss how it is going, what will the semester be like... (E.9);

[...] we interviewed students to assess their learning... we have an institutional students' assessment instrument... these assessments have been performed at the end of each semester and in written form, requested by the teachers of the course (E.7).

We get together at the beginning of each semester to discuss the course program, what is being worked on, we have assessments every semester, we listen to the judgment of the students, teachers, we hold educational meetings with the teachers to discuss the problems of the course... (E.4).

We are aware that the PEP is constantly under construction. We try to watch it closely at the beginning and the end of each semester to assess the fields, hold teachers meetings, review the students' assessments, identify flaws in the semester and try to adequate it to the proposal. Is it difficult? No doubt it is, it's quite difficult, but we try (E.6).

Overall, the assessment may be understood as a criticism to the action, either short-term or long-term<sup>(17)</sup>. While planning defines the sizing of what will be done, the assessment subsidizes this elaboration, as it supports new decisions. Critical assessment is a necessary tool to human beings in the consolidation of the intended results, just as it is when the direction of the action needs to be resized. Regarding the need for the evaluation of the PEP, when one works within a PEP's perspective, it is inferred to point out a heading to be followed as the foundation for the planning of educational actions, structuring strategies and performing the proposed activities. The process, however, needs to be assessed<sup>(19)</sup> in order to check on its progress, what was accomplished and what was not, so that proposals for corrections could be received in order to achieve the intended goals.

Assessment is seen, however, as an indispensable action to guarantee the success of the project, since it is a primordial condition for significant decisions to be made.

It is also part of the process of construction of the project and understood as collective responsibility. Internal, systematic assessment is necessary for the definition, correction and enhancement of the project guidelines. Also, the whole extension of the educational act is considered, not only the educational dimension<sup>(17)</sup>. In the speeches, we observed that such a direction exists and that, although informally, the coordinators are concerned about reviewing how the PEP is progressing, even though more specific and objective mechanisms to develop the research and assessments already collected have not been identified. No assessment projects have been developed, but, due to its recent implantation, instruments with the purpose of measuring and assessing already exist.

Regarding the analyzed category, construction of reflecting subjects, there nurses were observed as in need to always re-think and reflect upon their practices and know-how, so that it is not reduced to merely technical aspects of the profession.

They have to reflect upon the practice so that they won't become repeaters of practices. They will reflect upon what the reality presents and what they want to change in said reality(E.6);

[...] if they reflect upon practice, it can only be done by inserting it in the daily routine, so they can do it according to a perspective of reflecting and improving their practices [...] (E.5).

We did not detect the comprehension of theory-based reflecting subjects in the speeches. A comprehension articulating the individual's professional education to a transforming, observing and questioning agent of its reality was observed, who strives to act according to each context it is inserted, as mentioned next:

Something that will suggest aspects beyond the merely technical... problem-situations... like, if you're faced with a given situation, how would you solve it? Instead of bringing the outcome of such a situation... (E.7);

[...] these reflecting subjects, who think about what they do, the values, consequences, adverse situations and, especially, who consider beliefs, ethics and citizenship, which are often the topic of conversation nowadays (E.1).

The educational process that aims at building the individuals' knowledge, must encourage reflective actions, developing their capacity of observation, analysis, criticism, autonomy of thoughts and ideas, making them active agents of social transformations, attempting to interact with their reality. In the educational process intended to be critical-reflective, the mobilization focused on knowledge, and this happens when spaces for its development are made available, when significant experiences are had in the classrooms, when there are opportunities to relate knowledge and education with professional, political, economic and social realities. One of the speeches states accordingly<sup>(2,8,17)</sup>:

It is the practice that stems from reflection about the profession and its knowledge, which you'll perform over time. This construction of people as social subjects and citizens takes the whole life [...] it becomes organized, flowing through each of its contexts (E.9).

A professional's autonomy and responsibility depend on the capacity of reflecting upon and about their actions. This capacity lies at the core of the permanent development, a result of experience, competence and professional knowledge<sup>(2,8,17)</sup>. This is why the image of the reflecting professional is at the core of any profession, at least when we consider it according to the specialization and intelligence of work.

The National Curricular Guidelines for Nursing Undergraduate Courses - *As Diretrizes Curriculares Nacionais do Curso de Graduação em Enfermagem (DCENF)* have guided the changes in the education of nurses, demanding education that is more flexible, critical, reflective, versatile, constant, and that seeks answers for the challenges of healthcare in the population. They indicate the necessity of educating capable professionals to work with a sense of social responsibility and committed to citizenship, as promoters of integral human health, supported on the principles of the Brazilian Sanitary Reform and the Single Healthcare System - Sistema Único de Saúde (SUS). Changes in the education of nurses cannot be executed without the visualization of ethical perspectives that make up the base of its development.

Therefore, the conception, structure and assessment of the PEP, containing the idea of educating critical-reflecting subjects, show their contribution when the speeches of the coordinators of the courses studied are analyzed.

## CONCLUSION

With the theoretical considerations about education, it is clear that, in this new century, it is not possible to educate professionals to focus on uncontested technical realities. Such a situation has occurred frequently in healthcare courses, such as Nursing, where we work, which requires adjustments in its educational project and teaching activities, in order to provide better educational conditions to students, as well as insertion in the job market to its ex-students, responding to the challenges posed nowadays. We understand that, in order to provide quality education, meeting the needs of students and teachers, new educational practices that will encourage the development of the scientific spirit and reflective thinking are essential characteristics to meet the contemporary demands of Nursing education.

As for meeting the goals, it was possible to observe the conception and construction of the PEP in the studied institutions, highlighting the types of pertinent methodologies the participation (or lack thereof) of interested sectors/authors, setbacks observed during this journey, a pro-

cess that was difficult to construct and consolidate, especially due to its collective nature, and, finally the assessment strategies of the PEP that have already begun by the courses in the universities.

The comprehension of the reflecting subject, inserted in the text of the PEP and present in the speeches, is evident and also relevant. However, the concepts present in the speeches of the coordinators are based and supported by the daily routine, lacking theoretical aspects.

The political-educational project intends to be an advancement that will allow for political-educational actions towards changes within the educational process of Nurses. However, it must be understood as something that is alive and dynamic, which can provide changes and transformations by proposing changes in conceptions. It should never be understood as a bureaucratic script or a document, but as a process that will subsidize the conduction of the actions toward perspectives.

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