

The violence theme in professional training: a study based on teaching plans

A temática violência na formação profissional: um estudo com base nos planos de ensino

El tema violencia en la formación profesional: un estudio basado en planes de enseñanza

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Abstract

This study aimed to analyze whether the contents covered in undergraduate courses in health, education and law areas, from a Federal Higher Education Institution in Brazil, enable the

training of students to deal with violence and sexual exploitation in professional practice. This is documentary research with teaching plans of six undergraduate courses, namely: Nursing, Physical Education, Medicine, Psychology, Pedagogy and Law. The project derived from this research was approved under CAAE register: 49775415.8.0000.5324. Twenty-four teaching plans were analyzed, according to the variables: discipline, course, workload, semester offered, and content covered. Only six plans include the theme of violence. We conclude that there is an urgent need for more significant commitment by universities in training and professional qualification regarding situations of violence against children and adolescents. The content referring to the legal obligation of the professional to identify, diagnose, notify and forward violence cases that reach children and adolescents assistance services, should be introduced already in academic education; however, this practice does not occur in most courses.

Keywords: Violence; Education; Curriculum; Professional training.

Resumo

Este estudo teve como objetivo analisar, se os conteúdos trabalhados no curso de graduação das áreas da saúde, educação e direito de uma Instituição Federal de Ensino Superior do Brasil, possibilitam a formação do estudante de graduação para lidar com a violência e exploração sexual na prática profissional. Trata-se de uma pesquisa documental em planos de ensino de seis cursos de graduação, a saber: Enfermagem, Educação Física, Medicina, Psicologia, Pedagogia e Direito O projeto derivado dessa pesquisa, foi aprovado sob parecer CAAE: 49775415.8.0000.5324. Foram analisados vinte e quatro planos de ensino, segundo as variáveis: disciplina, curso, carga horária, semestre ofertado e conteúdo abordado. Pode-se constatar que, apenas seis planos contemplam a temática violência. Conclui-se a necessidade premente de um maior comprometimento das Instituições de Ensino Superior, na formação e qualificação profissional, em relação ao enfrentamento de situações de violência contra crianças e adolescentes. O conteúdo referente à obrigatoriedade legal do profissional em identificar, diagnosticar, notificar e encaminhar os casos de violência que chegam aos serviços que atendem crianças e adolescentes, deveria ser introduzido já na formação acadêmica; observou-se, entretanto, a partir dos resultados que essa prática não ocorre na maioria dos cursos.

Palavras-chave: Violência; Educação; Currículo; Capacitação profissional.

Resumen

El estudio tuvo el objetivo de analizar si los contenidos trabajados en el curso de pregrado en las áreas de salud, educación y derecho de una Institución Federal de Educación Superior en Brasil permiten la formación del estudiante de posgrado para enfrentar la violencia y la explotación sexual en la práctica profesional. Se trata de una investigación documental en planes de docencia para seis carreras de grado, a saber: Enfermería, Educación Física, Medicina, Psicología, Pedagogía y Derecho. El proyecto derivado de esta investigación fue aprobado bajo el dictamen CAAE: 49775415.8.0000.5324. Se analizaron veinticuatro planes docentes, según las variables: disciplina, curso, carga de trabajo, semestre ofertado y contenido cubierto. Se puede observar que solo seis planes incluyen el tema de la violencia. Se concluye que existe una necesidad urgente de un mayor compromiso de las Instituciones de Educación Superior, en la formación y capacitación profesional, en relación con el enfrentamiento de situaciones de violencia contra la niñez y adolescencia. Los contenidos referentes a la obligación legal del profesional de identificar, diagnosticar, notificar y remitir los casos de violencia que llegan a los servicios que atienden a la niñez y adolescencia, deben ser introducidos ya en la formación académica; sin embargo, de los resultados se observó que esta práctica no ocurre en la mayoría de los cursos.

Palabras clave: Violencia; Educación; Currículo; Capacitación profesional.

1. Introduction

Studies on intrafamily violence against children and adolescents have drawn attention to the need for more significant commitment from training and qualifying institutions in the preparation of professionals regarding the phenomenon since the care of children and adolescents who are victims of violence has been an increasing challenge for professionals in their different areas of activity, who have been confronted with the difficulties arising from professional training (Pereira, Conceição & Nery 2015; Bonfim, 2015; Calza & Dell’Aglia, Sarrieira 2016; Bennett et al., 2018).

Since there is a legal obligation for the professional to identify, diagnose, notify and refer cases of violence that reach children and adolescents assistance services, this intervention should be introduced in the academic formation, early in the graduation period, making it opportune to contemplate, in the curricular matrix, contents related to the theme (Bonfim, 2015).

Likewise, strategies should be included in the planning of educational and health services, aimed at training professionals in addressing issues involving violence against children and adolescents, to fill possible gaps in their approach (Egry et al., 2017). Thus, to think of effective intervention actions, it is necessary to urgently rethink the curricular matrix for the training of professionals who attend children and adolescents.

Considering that higher education institutions have the premise of attending the populations' health needs, it is up to them to offer conditions for the university student to acquire skills aimed at working with the public health, education and guarantee system (Edwardsen et al., 2011).

Facing reality found in Brazil, whose data indicate the country as a leader in the ranking of high-risk violence against children among the 13 countries in Latin America (Agência Brasil 2018) and, given the need for a professional qualification, this study seeks to analyze whether the contents covered in the undergraduate courses of health, education and law areas at a Federal University in the South of Brazil, enable the training of students to deal with violence and sexual exploitation in professional practice.

2. Methodology

This is descriptive and documentary research, with a qualitative approach. The choice for this approach is justified because it is based on the data recorded in the teaching plans of Nursing, Medicine, Psychology, Law, Physical Education and Pedagogy courses from a Higher Education Institution in southern Brazil. According to Pereira et al. (2018), this type of study aims to formulate a consistent knowledge base.

To obtain information on the programs addressing the violence and sexual exploitation against children and adolescents' theme, the institution's Dean of Undergraduate Studies was asked to copy the teaching plans. Data collection took place in February and March 2019.

As inclusion criteria, the teaching plans of programs whose content was aimed at children and adolescents and/or family were considered. It was also considered those implicitly or explicitly directed to the theme of violence and sexual exploitation against children and adolescents. All plans that were not related to the theme were excluded.

A data collection instrument was elaborated with the following variables: information on discipline/course, workload, semester offered, and the content covered. The Research Ethics Committee approved the project derived from this research under the CAAE opinion: 49775415.8.0000.5324.

3. Results

According to Table 1, twenty-four teaching plans, from six undergraduate courses with programs were analyzed, according to the inclusion criteria, namely: children and adolescents, family, and violence.

Table 1 - Disciplines offered by undergraduate courses, according to the study's inclusion criteria. 2019.

Courses	Disciplines/teaching plans
Medicine	Pediatrics; Legal Medicine; Family and Community Medicine
Nursing	Psychology of Health and Development; Nursing in the health of children and adolescents I; Mental health
Physical Education	Public policies of teaching and education I; Psychology; Public Health
Law	Psychology applied to Law; Constitutional Right; Family Right
Psychology	Family Psychology; Developmental Psychology I; Developmental Psychology II.
Pedagogy	Socio-anthropological studies of Childhood and Youth; Educational Psychology; Child and Youth Psychology; Quotidian Childhood Education; Education of children from 0 to 3 years old; Fundamentals and methodology of early childhood education I, II, III; Public Education Policies

Fonte: o autor (2020).

The (in) visibility of violence and sexual exploitation against children and adolescents in teaching plans

From the analysis performed in Table 2 of the complete plans analyzed, only six include the theme as teaching content in undergraduate courses. It should be noted that the other plans, although aimed at children and adolescents, do not address the topic and, therefore, were not analyzed.

Table 2 - Description of the disciplines in which the topic is formally included in the teaching plan. 2019.

Discipline	Course	Thematic content described in the teaching plan
Psychology applied to Law	Law	Violence against children and adolescents; Sexual violence - sexual abuse and exploitation; the victim's hearing; The role of the judiciary in cases of violence; violence committed by the adolescent
Child and Youth Psychology	Pedagogy	Contemporary issues of adolescence: violence, drugs, and risky behaviour
Clinical diagnosis and intervention planning	Psychology	Sexual abuse - Evaluation; instruments/scales and intervention strategies
Public policies of teaching and education I	Physical Education	Child and Adolescent Statute
Child and Adolescent Health I	Nursing	Child and adolescent protection policies; Intra-family violence against children and adolescents
Paediatrics	Medicine	Intentional and unintentional injuries

Fonte: o autor (2020).

The disciplines are offered between the first and the sixth periods of the course and are characterized by a high number of hours, with more than 90 hours, except for the discipline of Psychology applied to Law, which has 60 hours, but it was the one that presented a more significant workload directed to the theme.

Those that include the violence theme in their teaching plans have theoretical-practical classes with exclusive dedication to the theme. Its approach includes concepts, management, diagnosis through workshops, case studies, expository-dialogued classes, reading of laws, discussions of articles and scientific texts on the subject.

Thus, it appears that the competencies and skills provided in the education process does not appear in most of the analyzed teaching plans. In the menus of the disciplines that deal with violence, it can be inferred that the focus persists on the disease, except for courses in Law and Psychology where the violence content is directed to the victims' care.

4. Discussion

Due to the magnitude and the consequences for the victim, family, and society, intrafamily violence against children and adolescents is a significant challenge for professionals (Alrimawi, Saifan & Aburuz 2015). This challenge requires knowledge about the phenomenon.

The consequences of violence silenced by the victims, and the path taken by the professionals for the identification, referral, notification, and guarantee of rights, has been little discussed during graduation. This blocks the student from receiving a minimum basic education, a prerequisite for their professional training in the provision of quality care, including appropriate referral to specific services.

Studies carried out in several countries have evidenced the positive influence of professional training on the violence phenomenon, showing the need for the themes' inclusion in undergraduate courses, based on content that addresses violence (Bonfim 2015, Potter & Feder 2018; Bravo et al., 2019).

According to the results of this study, formal education does not correspond to the real needs imposed by society in recent years. Corroborating with the results presented, the curricula, although contemplating the theme in some way, have a workload that does not allow the professional to be qualified for the appropriate performance regarding the problem (Bonfim, 2015).

This statement indicates the need to insert specific content during graduation, as a facilitating condition for professionals to carry out their activities in the management of victims (Silva et al., 2020).

When the progression of violence happens silently within the family environment and reaches a level where its effects require the assistance of health professionals, it is the nursing that, in general, receives its victims, providing an interpersonal interaction that allows them to obtain details that other professionals cannot detect it (Maffisoni et al, 2020).

However, distance from professional qualifications, insufficient knowledge about the identification of violence and the procedures for its notification, as well as the lack of theoretical and technical competence on the subject have been pointed out as possible obstacles for health professionals (Egry et al., 2017).

We emphasize that the subject has not been taught in most curricular matrices of undergraduate courses, which contributes to the unpreparedness of many professionals to offer care that has a significant impact on the health and protection of victims. ECA foresees

the creation and investment in qualification and training of professionals to welcome and be able to attend the demand for care, as well as a set of services, which it calls the “network” to be activated by victims of violence (Santos, Lima & Carvalho, 2020).

The articulation of academic institutions with the assistance services for children and adolescents through the integration of people who work directly in assistance with the teaching staff and students of higher education institutions and basic education is a possible way to envision improvements in the service provided in different areas of activity, to families that daily face a problem that represents a permanent threat to life (Grosseli et al., 2017).

Education and health professionals have the possibility and capacity to observe and identify possible signs of violence, favored by being inserted in a privileged place to locate and notify cases of violence by the physical, emotional and behavioral indicators presented by the child and adolescent, and for sharing more time with potential victims (Garbin et al. 2015; Cascardo & Gallo, 2018).

Law professionals, in turn, for complying with the legislation in guaranteeing the rights of children and adolescents and the judicial accountability of people who violate the rights of children and adolescents (Barbiani, 2016).

Therefore, it is essential to prepare these professionals to face violence and sexual exploitation against children and adolescents, even at graduation, as it is characterized as a topic that requires knowledge about their duty to protect victims, through legislation, but also as an ethical issue, of its evidence, in addition to technical and emotional preparation.

5. Conclusion

We conclude the need for greater commitment by Higher Education Institutions in professional training and qualification, regarding facing situations of violence against children and adolescents. The content referring to the legal obligation for the professional to identify, diagnose, notify and forward the cases of violence that reach the children and adolescents' assistance services, should be introduced already in academic training; however, the results shows that this practice does not occur in most courses.

Thus, it is essential to train professionals to work in the socio-economic and political context, extrapolating skills beyond clinical care, reaching the user in their environment, understanding them as an integral being, with their characteristics and needs.

We reinforce that professional training can be the significant differential to face violence, because, if adequately committed to the defense and protection of children and adolescents, it can encourage the involvement of professionals, to provide them with the preparation and qualification required.

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