

The promotion of health in university courses: a documentary analysis
A promoção da saúde em cursos universitários: uma análise documental
La promoción de la salud en cursos universitarios: un análisis documental

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The objective of this investigation was to understand how the promotion of health is present in Pedagogical Political Projects (PPP) of a University Center in the city of Sao Paulo, Brazil. This is a documentary study that used the analysis of content in the thematic mode interpretation of the data. We search for the promotion of integral, physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual health in the university environment in focus. The promotion of health was evident in a mandatory curriculum component, and in a research or extension project in the courses investigated. Health and healthy lifestyle are not present in the formation profiles of the graduates in the Projects in general, which demands attention and reflection of educational managers and policymakers for the sector. We suggest new research that discusses the role of health promotion in Higher Education.

Descriptors: Documents; Higher education; Health promotion.

O objetivo dessa investigação foi entender como a promoção da saúde se apresenta em Projetos Político Pedagógicos (PPP) de um Centro Universitário na cidade de São Paulo. Este é um estudo documental que utilizou a análise de conteúdo na modalidade temática interpretação dos dados. Houve uma busca pela promoção da saúde integral, física, mental, emocional, social e espiritual no ambiente universitário em foco. A promoção da saúde ficou evidente em um componente curricular obrigatório, acrescido de um projeto de pesquisa ou extensão nessa direção nos cursos investigados. Já a saúde e o estilo de vida saudável não estão presentes nos perfis de formação dos egressos nos Projetos em geral, o que demanda atenção e reflexão de gestores educacionais e elaboradores de políticas para o setor. Sugerimos novas pesquisas que discutam o papel da promoção da saúde na Educação Superior.

Descritores: Documentos; Educação superior; Promoção da saúde.

El objetivo de esta investigación fue entender como la promoción de la salud se presenta en Proyectos Político Pedagógicos (PPP) de un Centro Universitario en la ciudad de São Paulo, Brasil. Este es un estudio documental que utilizó el análisis de contenido en la modalidad temática interpretación de los datos. Hubo una búsqueda por la promoción de la salud integral, física, mental, emocional, social y espiritual en el ambiente universitario en foco. La promoción de la salud quedó evidente en un componente curricular obligatorio, agregado de un proyecto de investigación o extensión en esa dirección en los cursos investigados. Ya la salud y el estilo de vida saludable no están presentes en los perfiles de formación de los egresados en los Proyectos en general, lo que demanda atención y reflexión de administradores de educación y elaboradores de políticas para el sector. Sugerimos nuevas investigaciones que discutan el papel de la promoción de la salud en la Educación Superior.

Descriptores: Documentos; Educación superior; Promoción de la salud.

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INTRODUCTION

The individual valuing and health can only be promoted in societies that understand the importance of living with quality. The education system is created in all organized societies and its guidelines and norms aim to guarantee integral education. The university environment is able to build and accelerate the development of any social organization and its action is planned and described in the university documents. Among these rules and documents, there is the institutional Pedagogical Project (IPP) that guides the projects of the course.

The Pedagogical Political Project (PPP), whether in the formation of the student in the basic education or in the professional preparation in higher education, will have as greater intention their full training, because:

The political-pedagogical project aims at the effectiveness that must take place from the technical application of knowledge. It has the empirical-rational or political-administrative imprint. In this sense, the political-pedagogical project is seen as a programmatic document that brings together the main ideas, fundamentals, curricular and organizational orientations of an educational institution or a course¹.

Understanding the role of the Pedagogical Political Project (PPP) is essential to develop it well, to achieve the objective to which it is intended. It exists to give a north, be a guidance counselor, a constant reformulation planning that can and should be modified according to the needs:

The Pedagogical Political Project is the global plan of the institution. It can be understood as the systematization, never definitive, of a participatory planning process, which is perfected and objective in the walk, which clearly defines the type of educational action that is to be carried out, from considering its intentionality and reading the reality².

The PPP will always have an ideological intention on its horizon and may or might not serve democratic ideals and improve the quality of life, education, citizenship for many, projecting the formation of university students with fairness and balance. It is a key element for planning and developing a course, and therefore it should be constituted as a proposal for collective construction continuously re-imagined and improved. In this way, as part of a master's program in Health promotion we

wonder how the health concern in the professionals training in different areas of practice is present in these documents.

In November 1986, the first International Conference on Health Promotion in Ottawa, Canada took place and, its document contributed to begin a movement of a new public health worldwide, so that health is an essential asset and considered the greatest resource for social, economic and personal development of being. In addition, it is an important dimension of the quality of life³.

In this scenario arises the need for health promotion that has the role of enabling conditions to obtain health and achieve the proposed objectives. "The use of the concept of health promotion arises before the Ottawa conference, in the Lalonde report, the first official document to use the term health promotion⁴".

Could health manifest itself without promoting or stimulating it within the university environment or in other training spaces? This is one of the ways that we can present the problematic of this research, by analyzing the PPP with a focus on the promotion of health and its developments and perspectives.

The promotion of health in the university can be considered as a relevant factor to realize the projects developed by the professors.

The university mission, including health promotion, is presented in publications as an essential element for achieving full objectives, especially in institutions that want to become health promoters:

All these roles offer opportunities for a university to influence the health and quality of life of its members and the external community, contributing to the knowledge and citizenship strengthening. Health-promoting Universities integrate commitment to society in its broadest aspect, in university policies and practices⁵.

Promoting health requires dynamic actions, that is, to move health to their own benefit initially. And then, promoting the other's health. Any negligence in this direction would lead to a gradual loss of health values in practice, even if it is a knowledge or science. Studies show that illicit drug abuse and exposure to risk factors increase mortality and

morbidity in university students, so that they deserve considerable attention on the part of the competent institutions^{6,7}.

A key component when evaluating the higher courses lies in their pedagogical project and whether it meets the National Curriculum Guidelines (NCG) of undergraduate courses in the field of specific vocational training, according to normative processes of the Ministry of Education and Culture.

One of the roles of the university includes stimulating the awareness of local communities about their needs, as well as helping collaborate work to achieve better results in strategies of health promotion⁸. The university space is characterized by being a dynamic, interactive environment and marked by a set of predictable and unpredictable actions. Therefore, the ability to adapt and self-manage in the face of physical, social and emotional challenges is indispensable both in health and in education⁹.

Health education tends to receive greater attention in teaching, research and extension environments in the coming years, with a view to its direct relationship with the growing actions of health promotion within the framework of the Unified Health System (SUS) that has invested efforts to achieve an intersectoral effect. However, this incentive is still incipient to what is intended to develop, especially in developing countries. The central idea and the main challenge is to maintain the focus on the socio-economic and environmental health determinants, contributing to health promotion⁹.

To promote healthy habits in the population it is necessary not only to convey information about healthy habits. This information must involve the understanding and adaptation of these habits in the face of each person's environment. To better understand the complexity of the factors that are related to health promotion, we should consider the role that an individual occupies in their environment, as well as the psychosocial and cultural demands that each sector implies¹⁰.

In Brazil, health education has focused on the safety issue, since insecurity pervades the atmosphere in various schools and universities independent of the development of

the country¹¹. The feeling of security in the school environment seems to interfere positively with the commitment of students in their school activities¹² being an effective strategy in the promotion of health in education. Therefore, academic institutions must reach their local communities to, together, deal with health issues that are specific to that location and affect the community⁸.

The objective of this investigation was to identify how health promotion is presented in pedagogical political projects of the courses at a Higher Education Institution in São Paulo.

METHOD

It is a documentary research in three PPPs of a HEI, developed with a qualitative approach, which used in the first instance the method of documentary analysis followed by the analysis of content in the thematic mode.

The Educational Institution researched in this study is in the southern part of São Paulo, Centro Universitário Adventista of São Paulo (UNASP).

The documentary analysis was the instrument triggered to confront the researcher's hypothesis, basing their findings by means of contextualized information which requires great investment of time and attention of the researcher to select and analyze data with care and scientific rigor¹³.

It selected a *technical academic document*, named as Pedagogical Political Project of the Course (PPC) in the research institution, that in this paper was designated as Pedagogical Political Project (PPP).

The criteria for the inclusion of institutional documents, i.e. the pedagogical political projects (PPP) in higher education, was belonging to the areas of health, education and exact sciences and, among them, the first course of each of the three areas officially set in the institution searched.

In view of the courses present in the institution and the criteria described above, the pedagogical political projects for study were identified as:

- Pedagogical Project of the Computer Science course (CS);
- Pedagogical project of the Nursing Course (N);

- Pedagogical project of the Pedagogy Course (P).

The thematic analysis in the Pedagogical Political Projects was organized from the following axes: contextualization (social need of the course), justification (philosophical, technical and official foundations) and operationalization with the pedagogical-didactic formation and training profile of the professional in focus specified on the syllabus, excluding the bibliographic references.

In this way we opted to carry out content analysis in the thematic mode. In other words, we must understand the message analyzed in its broader context¹⁴. From the selected theme in the Context Unit (CU) the Registration Unit (RU) was taken.

In the first step we follow what the technique provides: pre-analysis, floating and detailed reading that occurred several times with the text marker of the computer activated to demarcate topics of interest in the field of health promotion even though the term health was not found written in the registry. From reading and rereading the pedagogical projects we delimited three key words: "Health", "Healthy" and "Integral development".

In the stage of material exploration, it selected and rearranged the complete excerpts that contained the key words. These excerpts composed the Context Units (CU) in their first version. After reading and rereading again, we eliminated the CUs whose sense related to secondary health issues. This latest version of the CUs gave rise to the Registration Units (RU), which highlight the meaning cores of the larger contexts selected. RU highlighted the smallest portion of the selected content by means of the key words present on each of the proposed axes.

The research institution made available the projects in its entirety through the pedagogical advisory of higher education and the authorization of the Academic board.

RESULTS

The analysis of the Pedagogical Political Projects of the institution considered

contextualization, operationalization and justification. Through the analysis of representative RU, we observed that the University Center promotes health in the higher education documents investigated under the preventive and curative approach.

In this way, through the thematic analyses of the Pedagogical Projects of science, nursing and pedagogy courses it was possible to identify the insertion of health promotion in Higher Education.

Pedagogical political project of the Computer Science course

The promotion of health is present as an implicit factor in the social mission of the University Institution. Expanding its performance and influence beyond its walls and thus collaborating with the quality of life of the community, especially in its surroundings.

It is interesting to unveil this intention in practical aspects linked to the methodological principles, understanding a formative evaluation process, that is, a dialogic, participatory evaluation that communicates advances and setbacks to the student, in the service of learning and reorientation in process, with a horizon of integral development of the student trained:

{...} "The Computer Science course seeks a formative evaluation proposal committed to the **integral development** of the human being". (URCC5).

Even being a course in the field of exact science, we observed in the Computer Science course PPP a line of institutional research focused on health that permeates all other courses of the institution: {...} "Education for **Health**, style and quality of life" {...} (p.23) (URCC3).

The holistic formation of the human being advocated in the Pedagogical Political Project in discussion reveals an intention focused on the integral development of the human being that harmonizes with the philosophy of education and health of the university environment studied.

Pedagogical political project of the Nursing Course

In the Nursing Course documents there is a strong social commitment related to health promotion:

"The nursing course of the University Centre, since its creation in 1968, has contributed to transform social and health reality, especially in its surroundings" (p. 8) (URCE1).

The objective of the Nursing Course of the University Centre studied is to transform and impact society, especially the surroundings where the university campus is located.

The document recommends that nurses in their vocational training need to be able to take care of health either in the university environment or in another region of the country in an integral way:

"The nurse is the health professional who directs their actions to the individual's nursing assistance {...} In the levels of promotion, prevention, treatment, recovery and rehabilitation of health, with emphasis on the integral attention" (p. 19) (URCE4).

*{...} "The Nursing Course of the University Center educates Nurses to act throughout Brazil {...} By returning to their home states they reinforce the local contingents of **health** professionals, contributing to improve local **health**"(URCE7).*

The curricular design of the course, more integrated and innovative, aims at aligning itself harmoniously with a conception of health service that meets the Brazilian complex challenges:

{...} "The nursing course has, over the years, sought to innovate and adapt to, always maintaining the quality of teaching, the new realities of the educational, social and health context of the Brazilian population" {...} (URCE 13).

The Nursing Course of the University Centre is permeated by the following beliefs and values:

"Man, as a divine creature and citizen, has a right to health," {...} (URE18).

"Health-disease is a dynamic process, determined by multiple factors and by man continuously acting in the physical, mental and social universe in which they live; global health assistance comprises the integration of preventive, curative and rehabilitation actions carried out by various professions, including Nursing" (URE19).

The profile of the egress of this health professional in the PPP provides the ability to think, reflect and act assertively in the face of the complex reality, with a sense of social responsibility and commitment to citizenship, as a promoter of the integral health of the human being, and knowledge to interact with

the multidisciplinary health team.

However, when describing essential characteristics for this professional, the document does not forget self-care, that is, a professional who will exercise the profession of health promoter needs to start taking care of their own personal health, being consistent with what they live and teach:

{...} "Assisting organs, companies and institutions in health projects; Taking care of their own physical and mental health and looking for their well-being as a citizen and as a nurse;"(URCE50).

It is observed, in the dimension of university extension and in the exchanges, that it allows to carry out with the university environment the possibility of dissemination and sharing knowledge produced by the research, built with the popular knowledge or even rebuilt through teaching. This dialogue with the internal and external community to the educational institution allows them a participatory and citizen growth.

Pedagogical political project of the Pedagogy course

There is a clear intention in the future teacher that a healthier lifestyle is part of the profile of the egress student for the teaching area in the investigated document, that instigates the course to follow in the direction of that commitment, aimed at promoting the health of the under graduate student, in such a way that the principles are internalized, experienced and follow the personal and professional path in harmony with the Christian philosophy of education and health.

The profile of the egress provided in the PPP of pedagogy provides an explicit care with health and healthy lifestyle as characteristic of the professional training in education:

"Acquiring basic knowledge of physiology and deciding on a healthy lifestyle" (URCP3).

The subject Principles of Healthy Living is present in the three Pedagogical Political Projects, investigated in this research, part of the institutional theoretical-philosophical body, independent of the student training area. It is a philosophical policy of the institution of a community and confessional nature:

"The subject {...} Principles of Healthy Living {...}

complements the graduate profile, contributing to educate professionals capable of working harmoniously within the social context "(p. 28 and 29) (URCC4).

The program of this curricular component also involves:

*"Study of the principles of **healthy** living and implications in the development of the Quality of life" (URP4).*

DISCUSSION

University is an opinion-forming space and a vehicle of social transformation⁵. Its degree of influence transcends the institutional walls and impacts from its surroundings to society, because theory and practice walk together in all actions developed by scholars and educators:

At the same time, universities also constitute strategic social spaces for HP for their potential contribution to the health of specific population groups related to them, with a consequent impact on the general population. Promoting health, whether in academia or in services, implies providing the population with the necessary conditions to improve and exercise control over their health, involving "peace, education, housing, food, income, a healthy ecosystem, social justice and equity"⁵.

The assumption of an integral development of the human being present in the Pedagogical Political Project of the Computer Science course seems to follow the direction of a speech that appreciates the quality and efficiency in external large-scale national exams that are often guided only by competitive and economic values and the alert for educators to be attentive because this culture can put the evaluation process in the opposite, that is "in a place of integral formation of the professional citizen"¹⁵. This intention matches with what is recommended:

Fundamentally, the very formation process of new professionals for society can occur, since the beginning, linked to the concepts and practices of HP; In other words, as well as an internalized experience individually lived by the professional in their learning, the very learning environment would act as a contextual exterior influencing the absorption of values and practices⁵.

From the statement that the reason for the Nursing course existence is to transform social aspects, it agrees with researchers who advocate the premise that:

Health professions should be measured first by

the health level of the population that depends on their services and not the complexity of the scientific and technological preparation of their professionals. Thus, what was observed in health professions higher education, over the years, was a profound dissociation between their dynamics and the needs of the majority of the population, a true divorce¹⁶.

In this way the Pedagogical Political Project points to an integrated and innovative curricular proposal for the health professional training, in conjunction with the other curricular components, integrating teaching, research and extension with the development of a healthier lifestyle, not only of the individual, but of the group in which it is inserted:

A curricular proposal should therefore articulate the knowledge to overcome the theory/practice and basic/professional dichotomy, knowledge fragmentation, the curriculum oversize, the pedagogical disarticulation of the teachers, the almost exclusive presence of conceptual knowledge and the breakdown between teaching, research and extension, chronic health training problems. In other words, it is necessary to have a theorization and a practice that can inform/transform the present pedagogical practices in health professionals training¹⁷.

From the analysis of the CPP of the Nursing Course, which registers a constant search for dialogue with the community, the university extension appears as a strong link between higher education and social space:

The university extension is understood as an academic activity that presupposes the integration between the university community and the society, in the form of programs, projects, courses, events, publications among others. As an academic function of the university, the extension aims to integrate teaching-research focused on providing services with the community¹⁸.

Discussing assumptions outlined in the Pedagogical Political Project of the Pedagogy course, it is understood that:

Adventist Pedagogy advocates that the profile of the Christian educator must include, among other aspects, the care of physical and mental health in a specific way. In this way you are expected to always seek in your life the experience of health laws¹⁹.

Considering the healthy life principles are pointed out in the profile of the graduate of the Pedagogy Course in the light of extensive research in Brazilian degrees, it can

reflect on some relevant aspects.

The research took as a sample set 71 courses of Pedagogy, 32 Portuguese, 31 Mathematics and 31 Biological Sciences courses, equally distributed throughout the country in different administrative categories and academic organizations. Pedagogical projects were analyzed with their set of disciplines and programs²⁰. The specific mapping of the curricular components of the Pedagogy courses in the study composed 3,513 subjects (3,107 mandatory and 406 elective) and pointed out as a result that only one group of electives explicitly presented questions related to health in the future teacher training:

“Around 25% of the elective subjects offered fit in “other knowledge” [...] They dealt with issues such as “Nutrition, Hygiene and Health”, “school and drugs”, and others²⁰.

It is noted that the initiatives to insert health training as a curricular component is still timid in teacher training courses programs. In the case of the Higher Education Institution here researched, there is a mandatory discipline for all courses, related to the formation of healthy living principles. It is assumed that this training is relevant to the personal, professional and citizen training of educators in training and to other areas of knowledge. A curriculum decision was implemented in favor of the common good even without official and legal obligation:

School assumes the autonomy to trace its own paths and defines the actions necessary for the training it wants to offer to the citizens. This refers us to the axes that must compose the pedagogical political project, whose purpose is to allow the relations of power and authority in the school space to be shared²¹.

CONCLUSION

The promotion of health is present in the three Pedagogical Projects in the pedagogical organization of the courses of the institution in their programs of institutional research, extension projects and through the subject Principles of Healthy Life that is included in all the projects as a mandatory subject.

On the institutional research programs, it stands out that “[...] education for health, style and quality of life” are present as

options of study and research in different areas of knowledge. University Extension is present in the Pedagogical Political Projects of the Course in its contextualization, explaining the concern of the Institution of Higher Education (IES) to promote health through projects and in socio-cultural programs open to the community and as an inseparable part of the social function of IES.

The curriculum component Principles of Healthy Living is part of the philosophy of the University center that is concerned with promoting the health and well-being of the student as their life reality and make them multipliers of that knowledge in the environment where they are inserted. Promoting health in the personal and professional field is the goal of the institution that considers the Pedagogical Political Project one of the means to do so. After all, the PPP is a guide the course wants to follow linked to the project of the institution and the official guidelines.

There is a long way for universities to follow for health promotion. This research can and must have impact and be expanded to other university training centers as an incentive for further studies and analysis of pedagogical projects so that institutional policies are rethought in behalf of health promotion at the university, and the professionals certified there, become health promoters, from the beginning of their life.

It conclude from the documentary analysis that the three Courses of Higher Education investigated are exercising in their guiding pedagogical projects, a training space acting in the profile of their graduates in training and in society as vehicles of education and health promotion.

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CONTRIBUTIONS

Rosemeire Braga Lopes participated in the design of the research, collection and interpretation of data and paper writing. **Cristina Zukowsky-Tavares** collaborated in the conception and design of the study, writing, and critical review.

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