

Professional Education in Obstetric Nursing Training: Challenges and Innovations

Educação Profissional na Formação em Enfermagem Obstétrica: Desafios e Inovações
Formación Profesional en Enfermería Obstétrica: Retos e Innovaciones

RESUMO

A formação profissional em enfermagem obstétrica enfrenta desafios que impactam a qualidade da assistência materno-infantil. A integração entre teoria e prática, a atualização curricular e a capacitação docente são entraves que exigem estratégias inovadoras. Neste ensaio teórico, analisam-se as principais dificuldades da educação profissional na enfermagem obstétrica e as inovações implementadas, como metodologias ativas de ensino, simulação realística e tecnologias educacionais. A educação interprofissional e a humanização do ensino emergem como abordagens fundamentais para qualificar profissionais e aprimorar o atendimento obstétrico. A superação dos desafios e a adoção de estratégias inovadoras são essenciais para uma formação alinhada às demandas do sistema de saúde.

DESCRIPTORIOS: Enfermagem obstétrica; Educação profissional; Inovações pedagógicas; Simulação realística; Humanização do ensino.

ABSTRACT

Professional training in obstetric nursing faces challenges that impact the quality of maternal and infant care. The integration of theory and practice, curriculum updating, and teacher training are obstacles that require innovative strategies. This theoretical essay analyzes the main difficulties in professional education in obstetric nursing and the innovations implemented, such as active learning methodologies, realistic simulation, and educational technologies. Interprofessional education and humanized teaching emerge as fundamental approaches to qualifying professionals and improving obstetric care. Overcoming challenges and adopting innovative strategies are essential for training aligned with the demands of the healthcare system.

DESCRIPTORS: Obstetric nursing; Professional education; Pedagogical innovations; Realistic simulation; Humanized teaching.

RESUMEN

La formación profesional en enfermería obstétrica enfrenta desafíos que impactan la calidad de la atención materno-infantil. La integración de la teoría y la práctica, la actualización curricular y la formación docente son obstáculos que requieren estrategias innovadoras. Este ensayo teórico analiza las principales dificultades de la formación profesional en enfermería obstétrica y las innovaciones implementadas, como las metodologías de enseñanza activa, la simulación realista y las tecnologías educativas. La educación interprofesional y la humanización de la docencia emergen como enfoques fundamentales para la cualificación de profesionales y la mejora de la atención obstétrica. Superar estos desafíos y adoptar estrategias innovadoras es esencial para una formación alineada con las demandas del sistema de salud.

DESCRIPTORIOS: Enfermería obstétrica; Formación profesional; Innovaciones pedagógicas; Simulación realista; Humanización de la docencia.

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INTRODUCTION

Professional education in obstetric nursing training has undergone significant changes in recent years, driven by challenges and innovations that seek to improve the quality of maternal and child care. The World Health Organization (WHO) highlights the importance of qualified professionals in reducing

maternal and neonatal mortality, emphasizing the need for solid and up-to-date training for obstetric nurses⁽¹⁾. The evolution of educational practices and the incorporation of new technologies are fundamental to ensuring training that is aligned with the demands of the health system and the needs of the population served.

In the Brazilian context, obstetric nursing training faces challenges related to the integration of theory and practice, curriculum updating, and the incorporation of educational technologies. Recent studies point to the need for teaching methodologies that promote clinical competence and critical decision-making among students. Problem-based learning and realistic simulation methodology have stood out as effective approaches for strengthening the skills of future professionals, allowing them to deal with complex situations in a controlled environment before entering the practical field.

In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the adoption of digital tools in nursing education, requiring adaptations by educators and students³. The use of virtual learning platforms, teleconsultations, and remote laboratories has provided new possibilities for professional training, allowing teaching to continue even in the face of restrictions on in-person classes. However, this transition has also revealed challenges related to digital accessibility, the need for teacher training, and the evaluation of the effectiveness of remote methodologies.

Pedagogical innovations, such as realistic simulation and the use of virtual learning environments, have proven effective in preparing future obstetric nurses. Simulation allows complex clinical situations to be experienced in a safe environment, contributing to patient safety and the confidence of the professional in training⁴. On the

other hand, virtual environments facilitate access to updated content and promote autonomous learning⁵. In addition, active teaching methodologies, such as case-based learning and interprofessional education, have been incorporated to strengthen interaction between different areas of maternal and child health care.

Given this scenario, it is essential to discuss the challenges and innovations in obstetric nursing education to ensure more qualified training that is aligned with the demands of the sector. Based on this, this theoretical essay seeks to answer the following research question: what are the main challenges and innovations in professional education focused on obstetric nursing training in Brazil in the last four years? The overall objective of the article is to critically analyze the difficulties faced and the innovative strategies implemented during this period, providing input for the improvement of educational programs in the area. Thus, it is hoped to contribute to the reflection on new directions in professional education in obstetric nursing, promoting more effective teaching aligned with the needs of the Brazilian health system.

DEVELOPMENT

This study is a theoretical essay, a type of research that allows the author to develop a critical and reflective analysis of a specific topic without the need to follow a rigid methodological structure. Unlike other types of academic writing, the theoretical essay offers greater freedom to explore ideas and propose original interpretations, based on a comprehensive review of the existing literature⁶. The choice of this approach is justified by the complexity and dynamism inherent in the topic of professional education in obstetric nursing training, allowing for an in-depth discussion of

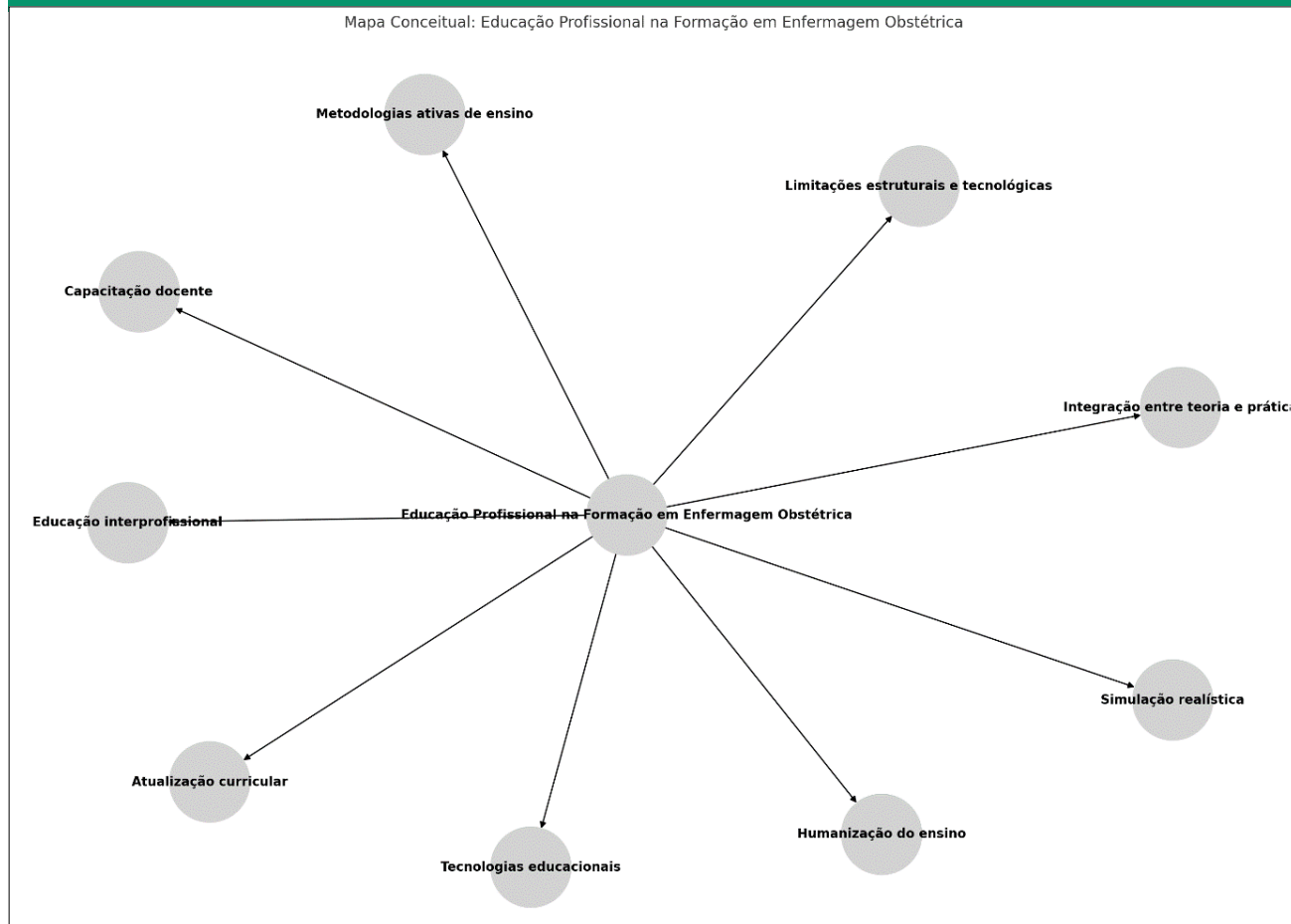
the challenges and innovations present in this field.

In the context of professional education in obstetric nursing, two central axes are fundamental to understanding the dynamics of its evolution: the challenges faced and the innovations implemented. Among the main challenges, the integration between theory and practice stands out. Effective articulation between the theoretical knowledge acquired in the classroom and practical experiences plays an essential role in the training of qualified obstetric nurses. However, many educational institutions face difficulties in providing experiences that reflect the reality of the labor market, either due to the lack of adequate spaces for simulated practices or due to the deficiency in the offer of supervised internships in health units⁷.

Another relevant challenge is curriculum updating, which needs to keep pace with constant changes in guidelines related to maternal and child care. The evolution of science and obstetric practices requires dynamic and up-to-date teaching, yet many undergraduate and graduate curricula are still based on traditional and outdated approaches⁽⁸⁾. In addition, resistance to institutional change and lack of investment in pedagogical reform make it difficult to incorporate new educational guidelines and evidence-based practices.

Teacher training and capacity building also present significant obstacles. The qualification of teachers and instructors is essential for them to apply innovative methodologies and prepare students for real challenges in the field of obstetric nursing. However, there is a lack of continuing professional development programs for teachers in this area, which compromises the ability to transmit up-to-date knowledge and implement effective pedagogical strategies⁵.

Figure 1: Key terms in obstetric professional education



Source: Research data, 2025.

On the other hand, there has been significant progress in the adoption of innovations in obstetric nursing education. One of the main innovative strategies has been the use of active teaching methodologies, such as problem-based learning and realistic simulation. Simulation has been widely used to allow students to experience critical clinical situations in a safe and controlled environment, promoting the development of technical and emotional skills essential for obstetric care⁸.

The integration of educational technologies has also driven improvements in the training of obstetric nurses. The use of virtual teach-

ing platforms, teleconsultations, augmented reality, and multimedia resources facilitates access to up-to-date content and enhances interactivity in learning⁽⁸⁾. These digital tools not only expand learning opportunities but also contribute to the development of student autonomy, allowing them to explore different resources according to their individual needs.

In addition, there has been growing investment in interprofessional education, which aims to integrate the training of obstetric nurses with other areas of health, such as medicine and physical therapy. This approach promotes teamwork and improves the coordination of maternal

and child care, promoting more humanized care based on collaboration between different specialties⁴.

Given the above, it is clear that, although there are significant challenges in professional education in obstetric nursing, there are also promising innovations being implemented to improve the quality of training for future professionals. Discussion of these issues is essential for improving educational programs and ensuring more qualified obstetric care that is aligned with the needs of the health system.

Furthermore, one aspect that is increasingly valued in the context of professional education in obstetric nursing is the humanization of teach-

ing. The humanized approach seeks not only to develop technical skills, but also to reinforce the importance of empathy, effective communication, and respect for the individual needs of pregnant women⁸.

“This is essential to train professionals who are better prepared to deal with the emotional and social complexities of obstetric care, ensuring more comprehensive care for women during the pregnancy and postpartum cycle.”

The figure presented is a Concept Map that illustrates the main aspects addressed in the article on Professional Education in Obstetric Nursing Training: Challenges and Innovations. The diagram was structured to demonstrate the relationships between the challenges and innovations that impact the training of obstetric nurses. At the center of the figure is the main node, which represents the central theme of the study: Professional Education in Obstetric Nursing Training. From this point, two main branches emerge, one focused on challenges and the other on innovations. Each branch contains fundamental elements that characterize the current dynamics of education in obstetric nursing.

The challenges presented on the left side of the figure highlight the main obstacles faced by educational institutions and students in the training process. They are:

Integration between theory and practice: There is a gap between the theoretical knowledge acquired in the classroom and its practical application in the hospital environment. The lack of supervised practice opportunities can compromise the professional qualification of future obstetric nurses.

Curriculum updating: Constant changes in maternal and child care guidelines require frequent updating of academic curricula. However, many institutions still maintain outdated programs, which hinders the training of professionals aligned with best practices.

Teacher training: The improvement of teachers and instructors is essential for the implementation of active methodologies and the effective transmission of knowledge. However, there is a shortage of continuing professional development programs focused on teaching obstetric nursing.

Structural and technological lim-

itations: The lack of well-equipped laboratories, innovative teaching materials, and access to cutting-edge technology negatively affects the quality of teaching. In addition, many universities still face difficulties in effectively implementing remote and hybrid teaching.

On the right side of the figure, innovations that have been adopted to overcome the aforementioned challenges and improve the training of obstetric nurses are presented. Among the main innovations are:

The use of innovative pedagogical approaches, such as problem-based learning (PBL) and clinical case studies, has promoted more dynamic and participatory teaching, allowing students to develop critical thinking and decision-making skills. The use of simulated scenarios in laboratories equipped with high-fidelity mannequins provides a safe environment for training clinical skills. This approach reduces student anxiety and improves their ability to respond to emergency situations.

The adoption of digital platforms, mobile applications, and multimedia resources has expanded access to knowledge and allowed for more flexible learning. The use of augmented reality and virtual reality has also been explored as an interactive teaching tool.

Integration between different areas of health, such as nursing, medicine, and physical therapy, has been encouraged to promote a more holistic view of maternal and child care. Joint learning strengthens communication between professionals and improves the quality of care. In addition to the development of technical skills, there is a growing focus on training professionals with empathy, sensitivity, and effective communication skills. This aspect is essential to ensure more humane and respectful care for pregnant women and new

mothers.

By understanding these relationships, it is possible to direct efforts to overcome difficulties and continuously improve the training of future professionals in the field. In this way, obstetric nursing education can evolve to meet the needs of the health system and ensure safer and more qualified maternal and child care.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Professional education in obstetric nursing training faces significant challenges that directly impact the quality of teaching and, consequently, the qualification of professionals who will work in maternal and child care. The integration of theory and practice, curriculum updates, teacher training, and structural and techno-

logical limitations are obstacles that require continuous attention from educational institutions and educational policy makers. Overcoming these challenges requires the adoption of innovative strategies, which have been progressively implemented to improve the training of obstetric nurses.

Among the main innovations are active teaching methodologies, realistic simulation, the use of educational technologies, and the implementation of interprofessional education. These approaches provide more dynamic, interactive learning that is aligned with the needs of the health sector, allowing future professionals to develop essential skills for humanized, evidence-based care. In addition, the emphasis on humanization in obstetric nursing education represents an important advance,

ensuring that professionals not only possess technical skills but also develop empathy and effective communication with pregnant women and new mothers.

Therefore, improving obstetric nursing education depends on a continuous effort to overcome challenges and consolidate innovative practices that strengthen the qualifications of professionals. Academic debate and the implementation of effective educational policies are essential to ensure that training keeps pace with scientific and technological developments, contributing to safer and higher-quality maternal and child care.

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