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Teaching of Integrative and Complementary Practices in Nursing Courses in the State of São Paulo

ABSTRACT | Objective: to analyze the offer of disciplines on Integrative and Complementary Practices in undergraduate nursing courses in the State of São Paulo. Method: described and retrospective study with a quantitative approach. Data collection was carried out by searching the institutions' web pages to collect data from the curriculum. Descriptive data analysis was performed. Results: 172 higher education institutions were selected in the State of São Paulo, 102 (59.3%) located in the interior of the State, 152 (88.4%) private educational institutions, 31 (18%) presented subjects in the curriculum related to Integrative and Complementary Practices, of these disciplines 17 (9.9%) were mandatory, 66 (38.4%) in person and with an average workload of 403.6 hours (SD = 411.8). Conclusions: there is still a shortage of public and private institutions in the State of São Paulo that offer disciplines in undergraduate nursing courses on Integrative and Complementary Practices.

Keywords: Complementary Therapies; Integrative and Complementary Practices; Complementary Medicine; Teaching; Nursing.

RESUMEN | Objetivo: analizar la oferta de disciplinas Prácticas Integradoras y Complementarias en cursos de grado en enfermería en el Estado de São Paulo. Método: estudio descrito y retrospectivo con enfoque cuantitativo. La recogida de los datos se realizó mediante la búsqueda en las páginas web de las instituciones para recopilar datos del plan de estudios. Se realizó un análisis descriptivo de los datos. Resultados: 172 instituciones de educación superior fueron seleccionadas en el Estado de São Paulo, 102 (59.3%) ubicadas en el interior del Estado, 152 (88.4%) instituciones educativas privadas, 31 (18%) presentaron materias en el plan de estudios relacionadas con las Prácticas Integradoras y Complementarias, de estas disciplinas 17 (9.9%) eran obligatorias, 66 (38.4%) en persona y con una carga de trabajo promedio de 403.6 horas (DE = 411.8). Conclusiones: todavía hay una escasez de instituciones públicas y privadas en el Estado de São Paulo que ofrecen disciplinas en cursos de grado en enfermería sobre Prácticas Integradoras y Complementarias.

Palabras claves: Terapias Complementarias; Prácticas Integradoras y Complementarias; Enseñanza; Enfermería.

RESUMO | Objetivo: analisar a oferta de disciplinas sobre as Práticas Integrativas e Complementares nos cursos de graduação em Enfermagem no Estado de São Paulo. Método: estudo descrito e retrospectivo com abordagem quantitativa. A coleta de dados foi realizada por meio da busca nas páginas web das instituições afim de coletar os dados das grades curriculares. Foi realizada a análise descritiva dos dados. Resultados: foram selecionadas 172 instituições de ensino superior no Estado de São Paulo sendo 102 (59,3 %) localizadas no interior do Estado, 152 (88,4%) instituições privadas de ensino, 31 (18%) apresentaram na grade curricular disciplinas relacionadas a Práticas Integrativas e Complementares, destas disciplinas 17 (9,9%) eram obrigatórias, 66 (38,4%) presenciais e com carga horária média de 403,6 horas (DP=411,8). Conclusões: ainda há uma escassez de instituições públicas e privadas do Estado de São Paulo que oferecem disciplinas nos cursos de graduação em Enfermagem sobre Práticas Integrativas e Complementares.

Palavras-chaves: Terapias Complementares; Práticas Integrativas e Complementares; Ensino; Enfermagem.

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INTRODUCTION

The Unified Health System (SUS) with Law 8,080 / 90 transformed health care in Brazil with its principles of universality, equity and integrality, and with the idea of decentralizing administrative policy, in addition to inserting society as integral part of this system⁽¹⁾.

With SUS's proposal for assistance focused on prevention, promotion and not only on curing the disease, new perspectives for care have emerged. The

National Policy of Integrative and Complementary Practices (PNPIC), in 2006 through Ordinance GM / MS No. 971, approved practices in assistance with the main focus on preventing diseases in chronic diseases, promoting, protecting and recovering health, based on the model of humanized care and centered on the integrality of the individual. The PNPIC, proposed in 2006, started the program with five therapeutic practices: homeopathy, traditional Chinese medicine / acupuncture, medicinal plants and phytotherapy and the anthroposophical medicine observatory and social spa / crenotherapy⁽²⁾.

Ordinance No. 849 of 2017 added 14 new Integrative and Complementary Practices (PICs) to this policy: art therapy, ayurveda, biodance, circular dance, meditation, music therapy, na-

turology, osteopathy, chiropractic, reflexotherapy, reiki, shantala, integrative community therapy and yoga⁽³⁾. In March 2018, 14 more PICs were implemented through Ordinance No. 702, being: aromatherapy, apitherapy, bioenergetics, family constellation, chromotherapy, geotherapy, hypnotherapy, laying on of hands, anthroposophical / anthroposophy medicine applied to health, ozone therapy, flower therapy and social thermalism / crenotherapy⁽⁴⁾. Therefore, currently, SUS, through the PNPIC, regulates 33 types of PICs with the objective of guaranteeing humanized, preventive care with an emphasis on health recovery.

With the PNPIC, the population can have access to several PICs, strengthening one of the principles of the SUS, as it serves users individually in a humanized assistance, and this user becomes co-responsible for their health-disease process⁽²⁾.

The Federal Council of Nursing (COFEN), through Resolution No. 0500 of 2015, recognized alternative therapies as a nursing specialty guaranteed to nurses the right to act as long as they are qualified and qualified⁽⁵⁾. On July 11, 2018, COFEN, through Resolution No. 581/2018, considers the registration of nurses' *Lato Sensu* and *Stricto Sensu* postgraduate degrees mandatory in their regional councils within their jurisdiction. Thus, PICs become a specialty of Nursing⁽⁶⁾. Although PICs have been considered as a nursing specialty, there is still a deficiency in teaching on this topic in undergraduate courses.

A study evaluated the disciplines on PICs offered in Nursing courses at public educational institutions in Brazil and found that among the 87 institutions, 23 (26.1%) offered disciplines related to PICs, the majority being of an optional nature, totaling 17 - 73.9%⁽⁷⁾. This study revealed that there are many gaps in the offer of courses, and there are still many professionals who finish



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their academic training without having contact with the topic about PICs⁽⁷⁾.

In 2018, a study evaluated the undergraduate and graduate courses of public institutions in the State of Rio de Janeiro and found that among the 15 health areas surveyed, 46 discipline options were found, 39 undergraduate courses and seven were linked to graduate studies in the State of Rio de Janeiro⁽⁸⁾. The Medical course stands out with the highest number of options reaching 31%, while Nursing ranked third with 14%, of which 17 are mandatory, 19 are optional and 10 are elective⁽⁸⁾.

This study focused on undergraduate nursing courses at public and private higher education institutions in the State of São Paulo in order to identify the current picture of the supply of disciplines with a focus on PICs. Thus, this study aimed to evaluate the offer of disciplines on PICs in undergraduate and graduate *lato sensu* courses in Nursing in the State of São Paulo.

METHODOLOGY

This is a descriptive and retrospective study with a quantitative approach.

The list of institutions in the State of São Paulo was extracted from the website of the Ministry of Education - MEC⁽⁹⁾. Data collection was carried out from July to August 2019 through the web pages of public and private institutions in the State of São Paulo to identify the curriculum of undergraduate nursing courses. In addition, it was verified whether the institution offered a *lato sensu* postgraduate course and the curriculum of these courses.

For data collection, a form was used with the following data: name of the institution, type of institution (public or private), name of the subject, date of creation of the subject, type of subject (mandatory or optional) and workload.

According to Resolution 510 of 2016 of the National Health Council - CNS⁽¹⁰⁾, a study does not require

evaluation by an Ethics Committee on Human Research, as it uses information in the public domain.

The collected data were entered into Microsoft Excel® version 2016 and

analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences® (SPSS) version 20 for Windows®. Descriptive analysis of the data was performed using absolute and relative frequencies, measures

of central tendency (mean) and dispersion (standard deviation).

RESULTS

One hundred seventy-six educational institutions were identified in the State of São Paulo, among which four did not make the information available on the website.

Thus, there were a total of 172 institutions that offered the Nursing course in the State of São Paulo. Among the institutions found, 102 (59.3%) were in the interior of the State, 151 (87.8%) offered a bachelor's degree in Nursing and 152 (88.4%) were private educational institutions (Table 1).

Regarding the characteristics of the subjects on PICs offered by the institutions, only 31 (18%) presented subjects related to PICs in the curriculum of the course, of these subjects offered, 17 (9.9%) were mandatory, 66 (38.4%) and with the average workload of 403.6 hours (SD = 411.8) (Table 2).

Among the disciplines offered, 16 (51.6%) were from *lato sensu* postgraduate courses, among which 11 were on acupuncture, two on clinical herbal medicine, one on aromatherapy, a Chinese herbal medicine, one on naturopathy and one on integrative practices and complementary in health. In undergraduate courses, 15 (48.4%) subjects were identified, among which nine on integrative practices in general, two on Mindfulness for Quality of Life and Stress Reduction, one on acupuncture and one on palliative care and alternative therapies. Among the undergraduate courses that offered disciplines on PICs 14 (93.3%) were bachelor's in Nursing and one (6.7%) bachelor's and bachelor's degree in Nursing.

DISCUSSION

With the results of this study it was possible to identify that despite the implementation of PNPIC since 2006 in

Table 1. Distribution of the characteristics of the universities selected in the study (n = 172). Guarulhos, SP, Brazil, 2019.

Variáveis	N	(%)
Região		
Capital	47	(27,3)
Região Metropolitana	23	(13,4)
Interior	102	(59,3)
Tipo de curso		
Bacharelado	151	(87,8)
Licenciatura	1	(0,6)
Bacharelado e Licenciatura	1	(0,6)
Pós - Graduação	17	(9,9)
Sem informação	2	(1,2)
Tipo Instituição		
Privada	152	(88,4)
Pública Estadual	10	(5,8)
Pública Municipal	6	(3,5)
Pública Federal	2	(1,2)

Table 2. Distribution of the characteristics of the disciplines on integrative and complementary practices (n = 172). Guarulhos, SP, Brazil, 2019.

Variáveis	N	(%)	Mediana	(Intervalo)	Média	(DP)*
Oferecem a disciplina						
Não	139	(80,8)				
Sim	31	(18,0)				
Sem informação	2	(1,2)				
Tipo de Disciplina						
Obrigatória	17	(9,9)	11		15	5,7
Optativa	15	(8,7)				
Sem informação	140	(81,4)				
Modalidade						
Presencial	66	(38,4)	1		35,5	48,8
EAD†	1	(0,6)				
Sem informação	105	(61,0)				
Carga Horária (em horas)	21		360	(36 – 1200)	403,6	411,8

Note: * Standard deviation; †Distance learning

SUS, the theme of PICs is still incipient in disciplines of undergraduate nursing courses in the State of São Paulo⁽²⁾. Since the results of this study show a deficit in the supply of disciplines on PICs in undergraduate nursing courses in the State of São Paulo, as well as in lato sensu postgraduate courses, since of the 172 educational institutions identified, only 31 (18 %) offer courses on the subject.

With regard to lato sensu postgraduate courses in the field of Nursing, the number of institutions that offer disciplines with a focus on PICs differs little from the results presented in undergraduate courses, since of the 31 identified institutions that offer disciplines on PICs 16 (51.6%) were from lato sensu postgraduate courses.

A study carried out in 2014 evaluated the offer of disciplines on PICs in public universities in Brazil for courses in Medicine, Nursing and Physiotherapy. Nursing institutions were the ones that most offered disciplines, and among the 87 public institutions of undergraduate nursing in Brazil 23 (26.4%) presented disciplines on PICs, among which eight (35%) are located in the northeast of the country , in six institutions (26.1%) the subjects were mandatory and the average workload was 44 hours⁽¹¹⁾.

A study carried out in the State of Rio de Janeiro evaluated 15 sub-areas of Health, among them 39 (85%) undergraduate and seven (15%) post-graduation, three lato sensu specialization courses, five extension projects and two academic leagues with a total of 56 institutions that offered courses on PICs. Among the areas evaluated, Medicine had a higher frequency of subjects on PICs with 31%, then the Pharmacy course with 22%, Nursing with 14%, Occupational Therapy with 7%, Physical Education, Psychology and Public Health with 5 % each and Veterinary Medicine with 4%. The courses of Speech Therapy,

Dentistry, Biomedicine and Biological Sciences together presented 7% among the courses of the public institutions of the State of Rio de Janeiro that offer subjects on PICs. The results of the present study demonstrate that compared to the results of the study carried out in the State of Rio de Janeiro, the State of São Paulo has a greater number of undergraduate courses in Nursing that offer disciplines on PICs with 15 (48.4%) institutions. However, it is important to highlight that the number of educational institutions in the State of São Paulo is higher and that private educational institutions were also included⁽⁸⁾.

In Spain, it was identified that in the Nursing course, in the degree mode, among 94 Nursing schools, centers and colleges analyzed, in 20 (21.28%) had subjects on the PICs. However, ten of the 20 subjects were approved, but had implementation pending for future school years. Regarding the content of the subjects on PICs, they addressed foot reflexology, Bach flowers, relaxation and hydrotherapy, acupuncture, massage, therapeutic touch, laughter therapy, aromatherapy, herbal medicine, Reiki, Yoga and music therapy⁽¹²⁾. Comparatively, in the present study, disciplines on acupuncture, palliative care and alternative therapies and Mindfulness for Quality of Life and Stress Reduction were identified in undergraduate courses.

An integrative review on the teaching strategies of complementary therapies in undergraduate nursing courses identified that the proposals for insertion of this theme in the academic area occur in general through lectures, theoretical courses and discussion group, optional subject, as well as insertion of discipline in the curriculum and encouraging research. It was pointed out by the authors that for the inclusion of PICs in the Political Pedagogical Project of the undergraduate Nursing course to be feasible, further

studies are needed to prove the effectiveness of these therapies⁽¹³⁾.

In general, training on the different PICs takes place throughout the nurse's career, in courses of different formats, but with a continuing education and specialization character, therefore, there is no specific moment that may indicate a possible association with the questions of the professional qualification. In the five nursing schools evaluated in the study, it was identified that the process of introducing PICs followed the following flow: exposure to practices, personal use and the possibility of teaching and research. It is relevant to consider these aspects, mainly because they encourage students and future nursing professionals to learn about PICs with less skepticism and prejudice⁽¹⁴⁾.

As it is not a widespread practice in the hospital environment, most educational institutions do not include PICs in the curriculum, even though these practices have been regulated by SUS, with the main focus on preventing diseases of chronic diseases and one of the means strategies of primary care to prevent these diseases. The lack of investment in courses on PICs can cause a deficit in the number of professionals trained to carry out such practices. The Ministry of Health manifests this difficulty in its manual for the implementation of the PICs service in SUS, emphasizing that one of its strategies is to develop the offer of courses for health managers and professionals to improve support in this area⁽¹⁵⁾. A study carried out in the State of Paraíba evaluated the knowledge of nurses working in primary care about the PNPIC, identifying that most are unaware of this plan due to the gap in the training process and the lack of permanent education through courses, which reflects the lack scientific basis for PICs⁽¹⁶⁾.

Although the training of nurses in Brazil, according to the National Curriculum Guidelines, is based on generalist

training, it would be relevant to include this topic in nursing education, as the shortage of trained professionals is pointed out as one of the challenges faced by the Ministry of Education. Health in the effective implementation of PICs in the SUS primary care network^(15,17).

Therefore, it was identified in the present study, as well as in other studies^(8,11) that most undergraduate and graduate courses do not offer disciplines that provide basic knowledge about PICs for nurses to work in this area. Although nursing in integrative and complementary practices is one of the lato sensu graduate courses re-

cognized and regulated by COFEN, covering the following practices: phytotherapies, homeopathy, orthomolecular, floral therapy, foot reflexology, reiki, yoga, therapeutic touch, music therapy, chromotherapy, hypnosis and acupuncture⁽¹⁸⁾.

This study has limitations, as it evaluated the online database and, many times, the data may not be up-to-date or not available, mainly from private educational institutions.

CONCLUSION

Through this study it was possib-

le to identify that although PICs are advocated in the policies of SUS and COFEN, there is still a shortage of public and private institutions in the State of São Paulo that offer disciplines in undergraduate courses on these practices, in addition to courses lato sensu graduate school. Although the curricular guidelines of undergraduate nursing courses aim to train nurses with generalist training, the relevance of including disciplines on PICs is emphasized, even though they are optional courses in order to offer students the opportunity to learn about this area acting. 🐦

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