

Internationalization in Changing Health Contexts

Daniel Soares Tavares¹, Dirce Stein Backes^{2*}, Leris Salete Bonfanti Haeffner² and Alexandre Antonio Naujorks²

¹Student of the Professional Master's Degree in Maternal and Child Health at Franciscan University – UFN, Brazil.

²Professor of the Professional Master's Degree in Maternal and Child Health at Franciscan University, Brazil.

*Correspondence:

Daniel Soares Tavares, Nurse. Egress from Professional Master's Degree in Maternal and Child Health at Franciscan University, Brazil.

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ABSTRACT

This article aimed at discussing the phenomenon of internationalization and international cooperation in the context of the changes that are processed in the world scenario through nursing perspective. The theoretical discussions are based on documents published on the thematic, especially those of the Nursing, and based on achievements and challenges experienced, specifically, by students and professionals in the area, who have freely offered themselves to provide their testimony. In the process of internationalization, the Nursing has gradually assumed a more active, autonomous, interdependent and proactive intervention. Several studies, in Nursing, demonstrate achievements and challenges related to the growing number of undergraduate and graduate candidates participating in international exchange programs and partnerships. These recognize, in this process, the importance of the universal dissemination of knowledge produced by Brazilian nurses as indispensable to the internationalization of the Nursing know-how, which arises from publications in Brazilian journals indexed or from publications of national authors in periodicals of broad disclosure. As much as the process of internationalization of higher education and internationally cooperation has been stimulated worldwide to respond in part to the needs of the global market, the personal and professional benefits are unquestionable, since they overcome any contrary intent. Therefore, it is concluded that, despite its incipient insertion, Nursing has been gaining an important national and international space, from academic exchanges, advices, research networks and international publications, in addition to the International Classification of Nursing practices, among others. It is recognized that several challenges still need to be overcome, especially those related to the domain of the language, which have hampered the most proactive insertion in the candidate countries, but, above all, the creation of research networks and the production/publication of joint knowledge.

Keywords

Universities, Professions, Researchers, Health, Education.

Introduction

The internationalization of higher education and cooperation should be assumed today, no longer as a means, but as an end to move and relate in the globalized, boardless and knowledge-centered society. This commitment, therefore, in addition to the priority strategy of the Government agendas, should also be assumed by universities, professions and researchers, as a challenge to the impact of globalization.

Globalization has its focus on the worldwide flow of ideas, resources, people, economies, values, cultures, knowledge, goods,

services and technologies, while internationalization emphasizes the relationship between nations, peoples, cultures and different systems, from human resources mobility. In this direction, the internationalization of higher education is one of the ways to respond to the impact of globalization. Both concepts, although different, are at the same time complementary and antagonistic, that is, while the first is present as a catalyst, the second translates to the response, with both positive and negative influences [1-6].

The globalization of higher education is a complex concept. It may be related to international education, international cooperation, transnational education, frontier education, education without borders, among others. The World Declaration on Higher Education in the 21st century conceives the internationalization of

higher education as a technology capable of offering differentiated opportunities to reduce regional disparities. The UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Science and Culture Organization) visualizes, in this phenomenon, the possibility to promote justice and social equity, based on solidarity, mutual respect, promoting humanistic values and intercultural dialogue. Despite the terminology used, the process of internationalization of higher education, articulated to the globalization process, requires new competences of an international dimension, which generates a number of demands for higher education institutions, professions and researchers in general [7,8].

The thematic about the internationalization of higher education emerged, in Brazil, in the 90's, when it was conceived by CAPES (coordination of improvement of staff of the higher level), the necessity of establishing international standards for the evaluation of graduate and research activities carried out by the public institutions. In a strongly regulated and centralized system, the process of internationalization begins in an induced manner, in attention to the priorities of the State, and it is achieved with a concerted action between the Government and the institutions seeking to foster critical mass to boost national development [8,9].

Since that, Brazil has been seeking to establish itself in order to enable the expansion of the international mobility process. As initiatives, in this field, the Santander University Scholarships Program (Ibero-American Scholarships for undergraduate students – 2010 to 2015) can be cited; the Federal government program – Science without Borders, seeking to promote consolidation, expansion and internationalization of science and technology, Brazilian innovation and competitiveness through the exchange and mainly the financing of scholarships for the sandwich Ph.D, post Ph.D, bilateral research programs, participation in international scientific events, among others [10,11].

Because it is an irreversible and global phenomenon, internationalization has also created important impact in the way of designing healthcare, as well as in the way of educating and investigating nursing. In this process, it is important that nursing be prepared to provide culturally competent care, in which the singularities of individuals, families and communities are considered from a context in which languages, cultures, values and needs can be different. The requirement of common languages, respect for differences and valuation of social skills as essential care techniques require professionals with broadened and contextualized vision, which means professionals capable of going beyond their geographic space [12-14].

In this direction, it is conceived that internationalization does not consist only of knowing other realities but above all, feel and be part of the global community through common languages. It means to develop respect and solidarity with and from cultural differences in order to generate new questions and enlarge the interactive possibilities and ultimately with such knowledge, generating an effective and quality development of the science of care in nursing and health [14].

Therefore, in this work, it is aimed at discussing the phenomenon of internationalization and international cooperation in the context of the changes that are processed in the world scenario through nursing perspective. The theoretical discussions are based on documents published on the thematic, especially those of the Nursing, and based on achievements and challenges experienced, specifically, by students and professionals in the area, who have freely offered themselves to provide their testimony. The experiences of internationalization were conducted in eight different countries, such as: United States (USA), Canada (CA), Scotland (UK), Australia (AU), Portugal (PT), Spain (ES), Germany (DE) and Mexico (MX).

Nursing in The Context of Internationalization: Achievements and Challenges

In the process of internationalization, the Nursing has gradually assumed a more active, autonomous, interdependent and proactive intervention. Several studies, in Nursing, demonstrate achievements and challenges related to the growing number of undergraduate and graduate candidates participating in international exchange programs and partnerships. These recognize, in this process, the importance of the universal dissemination of knowledge produced by Brazilian nurses as indispensable to the internationalization of the Nursing know-how, which arises from publications in Brazilian journals indexed or from publications of national authors in periodicals of broad disclosure.

This process reflects on the production and dissemination of knowledge, the complementarity of forces and resources between institutions located in different realities, in the continuous and mutual enrichment of opportunities for new knowledge, in order to expand the horizons of Nursing and thereby make it more able to respond to the internal and external cultural demands of the profession [14,15].

Conquests Related to The Internationalization of Nursing

As regards the Brazilian Nursing, an additional impetus for the pursuit of internationalization should be credited to the process of evaluating postgraduate programs and, most recently, of graduation programs, which attributed an important weight to the movement of academic mobility. It is understood that the internationalization of Nursing knowledge provides a fruitful flow between countries, knowledge and practices, which promote the sharing of ideas and practices in order to broaden the horizons of the Science of Nursing and Health [10,15].

Among the testimonies of professionals who participated in some way of international exchange program, the following achievements stand out:

- broadening the field of vision and narrowing of new partnerships;
- institutionalization of cooperation between professors, students and research partnerships;
- the possibility of developing projects, as well as joint production and publication;
- the understanding that people have the same concerns and

problems, but that they can find different strategies for solving them and "getting to know each other", both in a personal, professional and institutional sense.

In this direction, it follows two statements:

"The opportunity to undertake an internship abroad allowed us to divulge who we are, what we do and our potentialities, as well as to know how researchers from major centers work, their easiness and difficulties, and the material and human resources they have to improve their work". (CA).

"In the first contact, I realized that the professors knew very little of the Brazilian Nursing. From Brazil, as a whole, they knew that there was carnival, soccer and the countless slums. At all moments, someone wondered if it was not too dangerous in Brazil, if it was possible to walk alone on the street and leave the house alone. Finally, they realized that they could also learn a lot from us. But it was a process of conquest, with a lot of personal effort". (AI).

Participating in an international collaboration exchange program in the Nursing area is an enriching experience, both at a personal and professional level. It is recognized that such opportunity allows students to meet other research groups, experience different academic work processes, learn alternative forms of research funding besides narrowing contacts and create partnerships with researchers in different countries [15].

Participating in an international academic Mobility program reveals gains from various orders [6]. These gains are associated with scientific production, especially in relation to the advancement of knowledge in relation to research methods and theoretical references; vocational training, the debate of ideas and contact with theoretical and methodological perspectives of the Centers of excellence, besides the symbolic cultural gains. In the institutional side, it contributes to strengthening relations with institutions of recognized academic merit, which foster the advancement and consolidation of scientific, technological and innovation knowledge of the area of interest [6].

In addition to highlighted gains and achievements, some studies show that the internationalization process in Nursing has already resulted in the materialization of several international cooperation programs, such as the creation of the International Council of Nurses (ICN), made up of representatives from 132 countries; the International Classification of Nursing Practices (CIPE in Portuguese); the creation of distance nursing education systems; the creation of the Nursing Network of Latin America (REAL); the participation of nurses in editorial boards and scientific committees of international journals; the International Nursing PhD Collaboration - collaborative program of Doctorate in Nursing in partnership with universities of several countries. The latter program stands out for developing a network of researchers, professors and students working on sustainable and long-lasting collaborations, sharing effective and innovative methodologies for Nursing studies, care and promotion of health from an international perspective [12,14,16].

Challenges Related to The Internationalization of The Nursing Field

The main challenges in relation to the internationalization process, as highlighted by the deponents and corroborated by studies already published in the area, relate to proficiency in another language, to the understanding of the political, economic, cultural and health situation of the country of destination, the design of the research and the limitation of time in the quest for a formation of excellence that meets the demands of the practice of the profession, among others. In this sense, it was evident that today, more than ever, we need to be active, innovative, pathfinder and scientific opening faced with the requirements of the international production of Knowledge in Nursing [16].

"I acknowledge that the greatest challenge, for me, was related to the domain of the language. In the scientific language, the meanings are generally very different and this hindered the development of the proposed activities. I think that this question needs to be taken into account by the applicant who wants to exchange" (USA).

"My adaptation was very difficult. I soon realized that the Brazilians are more welcoming in relation to the different. Sometimes I had to invest all my personal and professional resources to get closer to people and to make me understood. It oftens seemed we were not speaking the same language" (AS).

One study, in particular, pointed to difficulties related to the mobilization of the process of production and joint scientific dissemination. This highlights that joint production includes aspects of different natures, from the selection of themes that are linked to the contemporary and integrated demands of the nursing profession beyond its geographical boundaries, through the realization of studies with methodological delineates of unquestionable rigor and beyond the diagnostic phase, until the restriction on reading and writing in the English language [14].

The study also recognizes the shortage of centers that develop strategies to promote the internationalization of Nursing knowledge, in addition to the lack of mechanisms to share them open and widely with other colleagues. Thus, internationalization is a major challenge for Nursing, since it needs to cope evenly with the notion of external validation of what produces and the need for nurses to accompany the technical/scientific development for the full exercise of a profession that advocates the ability to meet personal needs in the most different spheres and in the most different contexts [14].

Other studies recognize, however, that the benefits of internationalization exceed their challenges and that it is imperative to keep focus on the different impacts of internationalization, both positive and negative. More specifically in the field of nursing, internationalization leads to new challenges, which must generate innovative and flexible training processes with the contextualized and efficient academic mobility in a global world, valuing cultural diversity, personal and professional ethics and social responsibility [16].

Strategies for Extending the Internationalization Process

Among the possible strategies to overcome the challenges of internationalization, considering both the deponents and already published studies on the subject, exchanges and more effective partnerships are recommended between national and foreign researchers, as well as the widespread disclosure of the impact of the results obtained. In this sense, national authors need to strive to deepen the analysis and discussion of the results of their research, as well as to clarify the implications of these results in the different situations. The results must be more attractive for international insertion, which does not imply the lack of social sensitivity to capture local problems. In order to overcome the challenges, the following strategies were highlighted in particular [12,14,16]:

- Compulsory learning of a second language since basic education;
- Inclusion, in the Nursing undergraduate program, of the study of foreign languages to strengthen and consolidate the internationalization in the Nursing area and, above all, facilitate the publication of research work in high-impact magazines;
- increased person-to-person communication, through the exchange of e-mails with nurses from other countries;
- Appreciation of the participation of students of all levels in research and extension projects, as well as encouraging the practice of the consumption of international scientific literature;
- Adoption of policies that are opportunities for international exchange by agencies/representatives/institutions;
- Greater investment in the infrastructure and professionalization of the work carried out by the editors of scientific journals, including their training and appreciation, as well as the evaluators, researchers, authors, in a permanent feedback process;
- Flexibilization of Nursing curriculum to facilitate the process of validation of disciplines;
- Encouraging to interactive methodologies, supported by new technologies, in order to overcome teacher-centric education methods, especially in disciplines in which international students participate;
- Expansion of the teaching and networking research process, through activities previously planned between the different actors involved;
- Fostering bilateral agreements to enlarge and strengthen joint research projects between groups, which is the collective production and the exchange of knowledge for the economic-social development of both sides.

In addition to the already mentioned strategies, it is necessary to highlight the effective involvement of the actors who play the role of cooperation and / or internationalization. It is important that you value and stimulate your commitment to the modes of cooperation, the effective planning in order to clearly need the objectives, results, targets to be attained and the deadlines for implementation, which must be rigorously fulfilled, in addition to the process of evaluating the proposed and implemented actions [8].

Final Considerations

As much as the process of internationalization of higher education and international cooperation has been stimulated worldwide to respond in part to the needs of the global market, the personal and professional benefits are unquestionable, since they overcome any contrary intent.

The analyzed studies, as well as the testimonies presented, demonstrate, in general, that internationalization seeks to enhance diversity and to know different characteristics of identity traits. Moreover, it confronts diverse and complex scenarios, elevate cultural and social capital, add value to vocational training, increase their autonomy and resilience, as well as contribute to the professional and cultural growth of all those involved directly and/or indirectly in the process.

In relation to the Nursing area, it is understood that its gradual insertion in the international sphere, even if the exit of candidates for other countries has been more significant than the coming of students to Brazilian universities. It has been noted that candidates have been inserted more frequently in American countries and, less frequently, in Europe and other continents, probably due to the lack of knowledge of the language.

Therefore, it is concluded that, despite its incipient insertion, Nursing has been gaining an important national and international space, from academic exchanges, advices, research networks and international publications, in addition to the International Classification of Nursing practices, among others. It is recognized that several challenges still need to be overcome, especially those related to the domain of the language, which have hampered the most proactive insertion in the candidate countries, but, above all, the creation of research networks and the production/publication of joint knowledge.

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