

Pleasure-suffering duality in *stricto sensu* graduate programs in nursing: between bridges and walls

Dualidade prazer-sofrimento na pós-graduação stricto sensu em enfermagem: entre pontes e muros

Dualidad placer-sufrimiento en el postgrado stricto sensu en enfermado: entre puentes y muros

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ABSTRACT

Objectives: to understand the pleasure-suffering duality experienced by students in *stricto sensu* Graduate Program in Nursing. **Methods:** qualitative, integrated single-case study based on the Psychodynamics of Work. The setting was the *stricto sensu* Graduate Program in Nursing in Brazil. Two Graduate Programs were chosen. Data collection took place between May 2017 and April 2018, with 23 students, through interviews guided by semi-structured script and Documentary Analysis. Content Analysis was carried out. **Results:** two analysis units emerged: Situations generating pleasure: bridges built by the Graduate Program and Situations generating suffering: walls of the Graduate Program. They were discussed in two dimensions - organizational and socio-professional relations. **Final considerations:** the results can contribute to the planning of actions capable of potentiating the creation of "bridges" that lead to reach of pleasure in the Graduate Program. It impels the confrontation of suffering-generating situations for the student. **Descriptors:** Nursing; Education, Nursing, Graduate; Work; Stress, Psychological; Pleasure.

RESUMO

Objetivos: compreender a dualidade prazer-sofrimento vivenciada por discentes na Pós-Graduação *stricto sensu* em Enfermagem. **Métodos:** pesquisa qualitativa, do tipo estudo de caso único integrado, fundamentada na Psicodinâmica do Trabalho. O cenário foi a Pós-Graduação *stricto sensu* em Enfermagem do Brasil. Como subunidades de análise, elegeram-se dois programas de Pós-Graduação. A coleta de dados ocorreu entre maio de 2017 e abril de 2018, com 23 discentes, por meio de entrevistas guiadas por roteiro semiestruturado e Análise Documental. Realizou-se Análise de Conteúdo Temática. **Resultados:** emergiram duas unidades de análise: *Situações geradoras de prazer: as pontes construídas pela Pós-Graduação e Situações geradoras de sofrimento: os muros da Pós-Graduação*, ambas discutidas em duas dimensões - organizacional e relações socioprofissionais. **Considerações finais:** os resultados podem contribuir para o planejamento de ações capazes de potencializar a criação de "pontes" que levem ao alcance do prazer na Pós-Graduação, impulsionando o enfrentamento de situações propulsoras do sofrimento discente. **Descritores:** Enfermagem; Educação de Pós-Graduação em Enfermagem; Trabalho; Estresse Psicológico; Prazer.

RESUMEN

Objetivos: comprender la dualidad placer-sufrimiento vivenciada por los estudiante en el Postgrado *stricto sensu* en Enfermería. **Métodos:** investigación cualitativa, del tipo estudio de caso único integrado, fundamentada en la Psicodinámica del Trabajo. El escenario fue el Postgrado *stricto sensu* en Enfermería de Brasil. Como subunidades de análisis, se eligieron dos programas de Postgrado. La recolección de datos ocurrió entre mayo de 2017 y abril de 2018, con 23 estudiantes, a través de entrevistas guiadas por guión semiestructurado y Análisis Documental. Se realizó Análisis de Contenido Temático. **Resultados:** emergieron 2 unidades de análisis: *Situaciones generadoras de placer: los puentes construídos por la Postgrado y Situaciones generadoras de sufrimiento: los muros del Postgrado*, ambas discutidas en duas dimensões - organizacional e relações socioprofissionais. **Consideraciones finales:** los resultados pueden contribuir a la planificación de acciones capaces de potenciar la creación de "puentes" que lleven al alcance del placer en el Postgrado, impulsando el enfrentamiento de situaciones propulsoras del sufrimiento de lo estudiante. **Descritores:** Enfermería; Educación de Posgrado en Enfermería; Trabajo; Estrés; Psicológico; Placer.

INTRODUCTION

Stricto sensu Graduate Programs contribute significantly to the development of science, technology, and innovation⁽¹⁾. They transform the lives of students and constituting an interface between the production of knowledge and the collections generated by the development agencies⁽¹⁻²⁾. In the Brazilian Graduate Program, one can see that these requirements are a reflection of changes that have occurred in the last decades, regarding the established metrics and the lack of time for the master's and doctoral courses⁽³⁾.

The Brazilian Graduate Program in Nursing's growth has been translated in the increase of the scientific production in the field, reaching in 2016 the 7th position in the international ranking⁽⁴⁾. However, quantitative development is not sufficient to achieve the sustainability of scientific production. Increased investment in quality in productions is essential, with a view to increasing international visibility⁽⁵⁾.

Due to the context portrayed and the object outlined for the present study, we sought theoretical foundation in the assumptions of Psychodynamics of Work (PdW) through the look of Brazilian practices that are increasingly adapting theory and method to the demands of our reality. PdW can be analyzed on two slopes, one clinical and the other theoretical. As a clinical discipline, it focuses on the relationship between work and mental health. Nevertheless, in its theoretical approach, it seeks to inscribe the results of clinical research in a theory of the subject that integrates psychoanalysis and social theory⁽⁶⁾.

In the case of a work context, it may exalt or mortify the individual's subjectivity⁽⁶⁾. Thus, this reality is reproduced in the scope of research, being recognized as an intellectual task⁽⁷⁾ capable of being more pathogenic than manual tasks⁽⁸⁾. Given this, considering the intellectual load required to the graduates, the activity developed by them as a synonym of work was assumed⁽⁹⁾.

Pleasure and suffering at work are influenced by the three dimensions of the work context - work organization, working conditions, and socio-professional relations - resulting from the interaction between subjective and objective conditions⁽¹⁰⁾. In this sense, suffering occurs in the face of real, unexpected, unknown work, being able to keep the individual alive in and out of work, but also to cause denial and illness⁽¹¹⁾.

The relevance of this study can be evidenced by the need to understand the situations generating pleasure and suffering in the student work, contributing for institutions and professionals themselves to produce a more collaborative environment in which the experiences of pleasure stand out. Organizational and interpersonal changes contribute to the increase of humanization at work, reducing suffering and the risks of illness⁽¹²⁾. In view of the above, the following question arose: how are the experiences of pleasure and suffering of students configured in the *stricto sensu* Graduate Program in Nursing?

OBJECTIVE

This study aims to understand the pleasure-suffering duality experienced by students in *stricto sensu* Graduate Program in Nursing.

METHODS

Ethical aspects

The research was approved by the Research Ethics Committees of the *Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais* and the *Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina*. It was developed based on Resolution 466/2012 of the Brazilian Health Board (*Conselho Nacional de Saúde*). All participants were informed about the study and signed the Free and Informed Consent Term (FICT), in two copies, one for the participant and the other for the researcher. In order to guarantee the anonymity of students, these were identified by letters (STU), followed by numbers.

Type of study

It is a qualitative, integrated single-case study⁽¹³⁾ based on Dejours' Psychodynamics of Work. The integrated single-case study allows the researcher to develop a more complex project, since the analytical subunits can favor insights⁽¹³⁾.

Study setting

The study setting was the *stricto sensu* Graduate Program in Nursing in Brazil. As subunits of analysis, two Graduate Programs in Nursing were intentionally chosen, one located in Santa Catarina State and the other in Minas Gerais State.

Methodological procedures

The choice of analysis subunits was due to the representativeness of the programs at the national level and the current institutional partnership. The invitation to students to participate in the research was sent by e-mail, having been informed that the interview would be held in the universities and in a restricted place.

Data source

23 students participated. At the time of the research, the programs had, in total, 147 doctoral students and 103 master's degrees, comprising 250 students. Students who were properly enrolled and who were not in a sandwich doctorate during data collection and who had more than six months in the Graduate were selected, considering the experience acquired.

Participants were selected by lottery, using the site "drawer". Due to the non-scheduling of some students, the "snowball" strategy was also used to reach data saturation. Regarding the Documentary Analysis (DA), the reports sent by the programs to the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Level Personnel (CAPES - *Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior*), available on the Sucupira Platform⁽¹⁴⁾.

Collection and organization of data

Data collection took place between May 2017 and April 2018. As proposed by the case study, data triangulation was employed, using two sources of evidence, being a guided interview by semi-structured script and DA. The interviews were carried out by the

researcher, individually, and recorded in two electronic devices. The interviews' duration was 19 minutes and 38 seconds on average. The time for transcription was approximately 27 hours.

Data collection was interrupted, following the saturation criterion that allows the researcher to reach an ideal number of participants⁽¹⁵⁾. To meet this criterion, the interviews were transcribed by the researcher shortly after the realization, enabling pre-analysis of the material. With regard to DA, this allowed to corroborate and increase the evidence of the reports⁽¹⁶⁾.

Data analysis

The data were analyzed through Content Analysis. The organization of content analysis occurs through three chronological poles: pre-analysis; exploitation of the material; treatment of the results, inference, and interpretation⁽¹⁷⁾. Pre-analysis is based on the organization of the material. In the following phases, the material is explored with more insight through coding, decomposition or enumeration and the treatment of the results. Once these steps have been completed, it has become possible to make data inferences and interpretations, correlating them with the expected objectives⁽¹⁷⁻¹⁸⁾. In this study, Atlas.ti 8 software was used as an operational tool for the analysis of interviews and contributed to the construction of semantic networks⁽¹⁹⁾.

RESULTS

The study participants were 23 students, 20 of whom were female and most were nurses (17). The most frequent age profile was between 30 and 39 years old (60.9%). Most of them were studying Master's degree (12) and working as a fellow (13).

Considering the framework used, data analysis made it possible to categorize two units: *Situations generating pleasure: bridges built by the Graduate Program* and *Situations generating suffering: walls of the Graduate Program*. In both are discussed two dimensions of the work context - organizational and socio-professional relations.

Situations generating pleasure: bridges built by the Graduate Program

In this study, organizational and socio-professional relationships emerged identified as "bridges" that indicate a direction in order for students to achieve their pleasure in the Graduate Program. Among these factors, knowledge, work recognition, university concept, research, disciplines, and teaching are discussed in the organizational dimension of the work.

Regarding the knowledge acquired in the Graduate Program, participants mentioned the opportunity for professional and personal growth and the possibilities of learning, beyond what is achieved, through their entry and experience in the labor market.

All the knowledge that you acquire, for those who like to study, like me, it generates pleasure. And I feel happy and very accomplished with everything I'm learning and because I feel like I'm growing up, you know? Not only as a researcher, but also as a person. (STU 23)

I think it's new knowledge. Everything that we live here, we do not live in the labor market, we do not live in our day to day, in our daily life. Research is a world apart. Everything that we learn here

is something extremely new. So, I think this new is what generates the most pleasure in being here today. It's the new one that we only know here, we do not know it out there. (STU 22)

The recognition of the work developed in the Graduate Program emerged as a factor generating pleasure by making it possible to return the student to the tasks developed and also to provide gratification and motivation.

There are some moments that surely make us feel happier, especially when the work is recognized. I recently received an email from an international congress, inviting me to speak [...]. And colleagues of mine have already sent emails, messages, talking about what they read about my master's work. Seeing this return of what we do is rewarding and motivates us to improve and build more and more knowledge. (STU 18)

The recognition of when they call you a professor, "Wow, I'm a professor". Or when you talk about what you are researching, "ah, I research about such thing". Then the person is interested in what you are researching. I think this is pretty cool. (STU 11)

Another point unveiled was the value attributed by students to the concept of the university expressed by its visibility in society. For them, taking the course in recognized institutions provides pride, sense of well-being and, consequently, pleasure.

I think that today being in a university with a concept that it has generates a sense of well-being, of great pleasure, [...] our work will also help to maintain the quality level [...], it gives me great pride to be doing masters in a school that is very well recognized nationally. (STU 22)

The mere fact of being in the master's program already brings a pleasure, because it already translates a dream that I came seeking for more time. So this, for me, is already a gift, it is already a gift and a pleasure to be in the program by its competition, by the social representativeness of the university. (STU 13)

Institutional concern to provide a qualified education was explicit in the DA. One of the programs aimed to provide consistent and high quality training for the practice of education, research and health care" (DA).

Still on the aspects that provide pleasure, was mentioned by students the act of doing research. According to STU 16, the ability to fill knowledge gaps boosts work in the Graduate Program. STU 15 reported the phase of data collection as pleasurable, by approximation with social reality.

I think it's beautiful when you start reading something and you begin to understand why. You find the holes in that research and you see that yours can fill in and this I think is something that encourages me a lot. (STU 16)

Data collection, when you come across a person lacking everything, devoid of appeal, devoid of being heard and the person thanks you. These are the small pleasures of today. (STU 15)

Another factor recognized as capable of providing students with pleasure was participation in disciplines. For them, discussions, reflections, and exchanges between the professor and the class induce search for knowledge.

When you are in a class, in discussions that are broader discussions, more open reflections, to hear opinion. When you are faced with a discipline, a professor who is open to listen to the opinion of the other and those discussions, they go beyond the classroom, it gives me pleasure. (STU 15)

The rich discussions in the classroom, [...] Sorry for the term, but it's "orgasmic." I take great pleasure in the discussions that take place. I be like "my God, I've never stopped to think about it, how amazing, how beautiful". We leave thirst for knowledge, this is very important for me. (STU 12)

The last point to be presented in the organizational dimension of pleasure is the opportunity to practice teaching. Students reported liking to teach and the relationship with the student. Moreover, recognition on the part of the class is seen as rewarding, as it shows the graduate that he is walking the right path.

First, it's having the pleasure of playing with teaching, I love to teach, I like students [...]. I am a person who likes to create relationships with new people, I like teaching. (STU 16)

Another time is teaching, when students, this was until last semester, "wow, what made the difference here in internship, was you because you left us free to express ourselves". So it was not to earn a good grade, because in addition to saying this to me, he opened to the class. So it was very gratifying, because we see that it is on the right track, we are doing a good job and this motivates us more. (STU 18)

DA converges with the reports presented, pointing out the relevance of teaching for training of masters and doctoral students, as presented in the following section: "The Teaching Internship for CAPES grantees, under the adviser's supervision, has been an important pedagogical strategy for the training of graduates and assists in the exchange of activities and expertise between the Graduate Program and the Undergraduate Program" (DA).

Continuing the discussion on pleasure-generating factors, the socio-professional dimension of the work context emerged from the data analysis, in the relations between student/student, student/adviser and student/professor. The statements represent these findings.

The contact with colleagues both during the disciplines and the colleagues in the research group. To be able to share ideas, to talk about some [...]. This part I think would be the most pleasurable. (STU 21)

I have my adviser who helps me a lot and who is supporting me and I know that I will finish very happy this doctorate, with the objective fulfilled. (STU 18)

I think the professor is someone who makes the student want to stay in the middle. I think he can be both a retractor and an approver, but my experiences were as an approximation, of wanting to be even more inserted in that environment. (STU 7)

Situations generating suffering: walls of the Graduate Program

Like "bridges", the data reveal the existence of "walls" considered as difficult to generate students suffering.

In the organizational dimension, the situations considered to generate suffering include the collection of the Graduate

Program, the productivity and the disciplines studied. According to participants, charges for meeting deadlines and requirements impact on social life.

I see other colleagues running, this tension too, deadlines, demands are part, but you, as a person, need to have that time. I'll be very sincere, there was a moment there from my master's and last year also that I practically had no more social life. (STU 3)

I remember on the first day of school, the professor who was then the coordinator of the program, she went so far as to mention "if you need to separate from your husband to take care of your master's degree, you do so" [...]. I think this is very shocking. Because the Graduate Program it has to exist to add up in your life, it is a something more. (STU 17)

Through DA, it was possible to identify that the students' delay in meeting deadlines can result from health problems and from enrollment. The following fragment portrays this finding: "it should be noted that there has been an increase in the number of joint publications of students and professors and a flow of entries and exits according to what was foreseen in the time of the courses, with few exceptions and postponements due to health problems and enrollment for one semester" (DA).

With regard to productivism as a source of suffering, it was noticed that the publication of articles is recognized as the main activity of the student work.

It's the only thing the university and the adviser wants from me. If I publish one, two, three articles in a good, well-respected journal, I can be the worst person, I do not have to develop anything for society [...]. If you have one or two articles published before the defense, you rock. Now if you go in those more distant places, marginalized to collect tiresome data, listen to people, help people and is not able to publish, say that you are not good and I believed in it, I believed that I was not good. (STU 15)

The issue of this requirement of productivity in terms of quantity, not quality, [...] that loses a lot of the pleasure of doing things, because I'm doing, "oh, no, I have to produce so many articles a year." It is not simply because I wanted to produce that with a good quality to sustain those articles, so it frustrates me a lot, because we are here to generate a quality knowledge, not to do something junk. (STU 12)

DA demonstrates the close link between production and the visibility of programs. The reports indicate that "publications of articles in international journals with a high impact factor in the areas of Nursing and Public Health show the concern of faculty and students to contribute to increasing visibility"; and that there is a need to "increase the number of scientific publications in A1 journals, especially in co-authoring with international partners" (DA).

Studying disciplines is also a source of suffering for some students participating in the research. According to STU 9, the compulsory subjects are very closed. STU 5 highlighted that the high number of seminars.

I think the disciplines are very closed, the compulsory subjects, so I do not consider them pleasurable, I consider them compulsory, literally. (STU 9)

There was a discipline that we had that seminary every week. In addition to that discipline, you have the others, but even so, in that you had to always be ready for a seminar, that was a little

exhausting. [...] I always slept late, but I never had it as a routine, to get into the night. After this discipline, I got used to doing it. (STU 8)

With regard to the socio-professional dimension, suffering was associated with the student/adviser relationship, student/professor and student/student, and solitary work. The findings regarding the first two relationships were expressed by STU 15, STU 20, respectively.

It seems to have become the rule. You have to suffer to be in the Graduate Program. That's the way it is, not sleeping, taking black stripe, anxiolytic, antidepressant, it's all normal. [...]. A very aggressive criticism of a job you did, of not trying to choose the words, not trying to choose the tone, is pure disrespect. I have been through these situations and the disrespect is so great that you are treated that way in front of everyone. [...]. By e-mail is less, because e-mail is saved. (STU 15)

I think the Graduate Program makes us build bridges, although in many situations here, some professors are building walls. [...]. There are many professors who experience academic vanity and they do not value what you bring back, they want you to accept the ideas that are imposed by them. (STU 20)

With regard to the student/adviser relationship, there is added the suffering experienced due to the lack of recognition for the work developed.

Due to lack of maturity, or maybe because I have always had recognition in the things I did and not have had recognition from my advisor, I did not have feedback throughout my master's degree. This was suffered, I started to do therapy because of the masters [...]. Thank God I did not think of suicide, but it was a lot of suffering that my relationship with my parents had changed, my relationship with my siblings changed, my relationship with my husband. (STU 2)

In here, as a fellow, I do not feel very well. In fact, I feel that despite how much I can do, I feel like I'm not doing enough. I feel that I do not have much value for the things I do, I feel that I always have to give satisfaction to people even in a moment of leisure, for my adviser, or whoever, is superior to me. (STU 10)

As for the student/student relationship, students made reference to the competitiveness capable of generating a comparison between the research projects developed and causing stress situations.

There is a certain competitiveness. Sometimes you notice among students, "My idea is innovative, your idea is not." "Oops, mine is going the other way, is that right? Or not?". (STU 7)

I know there are going to be some situations of interpersonal relationship that can happen, egos fight. [...]. So this egos-fighting thing is something in the Graduate Program that ends up stressing. Among colleagues, sometimes, there is competition. (STU 2)

Competitiveness in institutions is an objective reality and requires the development of strategies to reach the metrics established by the development agencies. This was identified through DA, as described:

"[the name of the program] proposed to initiate a broad reformulation of its structure, research lines and curricular matrix, understanding that internal fragilities needed to be revised in order to prepare with greater potential [...] to be guaranteed greater competitiveness to meet the metrics defined by the CAPES evaluation" (DA).

Another factor cited as the driver of suffering in the socio-professional dimension was solitary work. According to students, the beginning of the project elaboration is carried out without the collaboration of other people. Moreover, the lack of partnership was mentioned.

And now on the project too, especially last month. About a month or so ago, when I started drafting, you start on your own. (STU 3)

I think this collective spirit is lacking ... because the more people who come in, they can do different jobs, and this group can add to other works. (STU 2)

DISCUSSION

This research revealed organizational factors and socio-professional relationships that influence students' experiences of pleasure and suffering. Regarding the organizational aspect of pleasure, the knowledge acquired in the Graduate Program was reported as significant. The results indicate that the possibilities found provide knowledge that goes beyond the practical dimension. Such knowledge is fundamental to ensure the teaching-service integration⁽²⁰⁾.

Recognition of student work is a necessary condition for the transformation and resignification of suffering into pleasure. Through it, it becomes possible to demonstrate to the individuals their usefulness for the organization of work and to bring to the surface the sensation belonging to a group⁽¹⁰⁾. For PdW, the retribution expected by the individual is fundamentally symbolic and integrates the recognition of individual contribution and gratitude for the contribution of workers to the organization of work. Recognized work brings benefits to identity, subjective expectations, and self-realization⁽²¹⁾.

The participants' reports show that the student's satisfaction is also related to the recognition acquired by the institution. It is highlighted that the recognition and success of organizations are determinant for satisfaction, resulting from several cognitive and behavioral processes and mechanisms⁽²²⁾.

This research was recognized as a source of pleasure, because it is an end-activity of student work. In this perspective, it is emphasized that the adaptation of work to the needs of the worker, making it closer to what he wants, can occur in the space between the prescribed organization and the individual himself. For the student, research is inserted in this field of freedom by allowing negotiations, inventions and modulation actions of the operative mode⁽²³⁾. It is in the act of researching that the student finds space to put into practice the imagination, the creativity, the desire to overcome barriers and, most important, to (re)do and (re)build as a thinking individual through a construction that expresses your identity.

Disciplines infer that the classroom context is considered pleasurable because it is endowed with an intellectual dimension that allows the mobilization of creative and inventive intelligence. Moreover, it allows the construction of the authentic meaning for the individual in a Graduate Program. Bibliometric research

developed with students of *stricto sensu* Graduate Program in Brazil revealed as generating aspects of pleasure, the opportunity to learn, to participate in academic life and intellectual autonomy⁽²⁴⁾.

Pleasure provided by teaching emphasized that the fact that future professors take internship practices provides motivation and better performance in the course. This motivation is related to obtaining experience and the feeling of being closer to the field of teaching and the labor market⁽²⁴⁾.

On the socioprofessional side of pleasure, in the context of work, a study developed with masters of a federal institution also demonstrated the importance of healthy interpersonal relationships, since in situations in which the individual identifies with the group and feels himself to belong to it, the psychic health is maintained and the meaning of the work is concretized⁽⁹⁾.

A research conducted in six Graduate Program programs in the United States has revealed that fellow students are an important source of support in training. Moreover, because they find themselves in similar situations of life, the exchange and help relationship is fundamental for coping with challenging situations in academic daily life⁽²⁵⁾.

Students' balance through experiences of suffering, is anchored not only in the relations with colleagues, but also in the support offered by professors⁽⁹⁾. Added to this is the value of the recognition of the work developed, the daily incentive and the exchange of knowledge, primordial factors to feed the desire of the student to remain in the Graduate Program.

Regarding the situations considered as sources of suffering, we include, in the organizational aspect, the collection experienced by students in the Graduate Program. Excessive control by imposing deadlines and quantitative performance appraisal may restrict workers' freedom. In this way, the work environment becomes devoid of feelings, producing the depersonalization and dehumanization of individuals that do not identify with the product of work⁽¹¹⁾. It is inferred that by not responding to the demands of Graduate Programs, students may present emotional, social, and affective problems⁽²⁰⁾.

The configuration of the Brazilian Graduate Program reproduces the productivist logic, considering that professors and students incorporate certain rules and criteria for achieving success⁽²⁰⁾. A study carried out with graduates in Dentistry, from a Brazilian public university, presented data similar to the present study. According to participants, the growing need for production constitutes a dilemma that generates suffering⁽²⁶⁾.

Although bibliographic production is one of the most important indicators of the quality of the programs and of the researcher himself, it should be emphasized that the quantitative collection breaks with the pedagogical purpose, affecting students' training and ideals⁽⁹⁾. Research evidenced students' dissatisfaction with the pressure they had to comply with the formal requirements of the program, especially the charges for publication of articles. Such practices are considered to have a negative impact on scientific production, as they are fundamentally based on quantitative criteria⁽³⁾.

According to the PdW, suffering can only be transformed into pleasure when the individual manages to contribute to the company through his experience and development of his practice, according to his principles and beliefs. In organizations that adopt Taylorist logic, there is no thinking about action. In

this way, the mental activity of workers is neutralized and doing so becomes repetitive⁽¹⁰⁾.

Precariousness of universities and programs, as well as constant pressure on students, contribute to the manifestation of suffering expressed in anxiety, fear and insecurity⁽³⁾. Furthermore, pressure for results impacts on the daily life of students who need to organize their daily demands, in the quest to ensure a good quality of life⁽²⁾. Time management for the development of activities is necessary in training, because, at times when time is compromised, students' mental health may be affected⁽²⁷⁾.

Socio-professional aspect of suffering was associated with the student/adviser relationship, student/professor, student/student, and solitary work. Support, availability and encouragement of the adviser are important to encourage dedication and motivation, improvement in academic performance and desire for permanence of students. On the other hand, when the relationship becomes conflicting, it can arouse feelings of suffering, insecurity and dissatisfaction for the student⁽²⁸⁾.

In the *stricto sensu* Graduate Program, the student/adviser relationship can become conflicted in the face of the demands and obligations imposed. In this perspective, a study conducted with 424 graduates found that low self-esteem and negative relations with the adviser increase the chance of the student developing Burnout⁽²⁹⁾.

Regarding the impasse in the student/professor relationship, this also emerged in a study developed in the undergraduate program that aimed to identify factors perceived by nursing students as stress triggers in the training environment. Pressure on the required level of knowledge, coupled with professor dissatisfaction, has triggered negative feelings among students because they believe they never meet expectations⁽³⁰⁾. A freely organized work allows the reduction of the psychic load, being considered balancing and relaxing. Nonetheless, when the organization of work is authoritarian, it prescribes a precise working mode and limits the spontaneous project of the worker⁽³¹⁾.

Other authors found similar results when interviewing graduate students. For students, the demands during the course provide learning, but, on the other hand, the non-recognition of the efforts dispensed results in sadness. Furthermore, students stated that they could have learned in another way, without so much pressure and feeling of being punished⁽⁹⁾.

An essay developed in the environment of the Graduate Program in Administration showed that students are considered as exchange coins. The one who publishes the most, has more value. This reality contributes to spaces of competition, in the quest for quantitatively superior curricula. The cycle of productivism, to the detriment of professor education, can cause students to lose their charm through the academic environment⁽²⁰⁾.

In the Graduate Program, the lack of cooperation among the group means that the developed knowledge is not shared. Scholars claim that scientific production is favored by interaction among workers, in view of increased information exchange. In this sense, non-collaborative researchers end up not contributing, effectively, to the development of works of their area of expertise⁽³²⁾.

A study that aimed to understand the influence of training experiences in research on the performance of beginning university professors from a federal university in the extreme south of Brazil

showed that the fragmented model adopted by the institutions favors solitary work. This reality can be a portrait of the training acquired during the Graduate Program, when the course does not allow the construction of work networks⁽³³⁾.

Considering the above, this research revealed that the experiences of pleasure and suffering in the student work are interconnected and are strongly influenced by established relationships and work organization⁽³⁴⁾. Thus, it becomes possible to perceive that the aspects pointed out as suffering enhancers can affect student performance and bring about social, affective, and psychological consequences.

Study limitations

The limitations of the research are related to the scarcity of studies that have as central theme the pleasure-suffering relationship in the *stricto sensu* Graduate Program, especially in nursing, considering the personal and professional consequences of this duality.

Contributions to Nursing, Health, and Public Policies

The understanding of the pleasure-suffering duality experienced by students in the *stricto sensu* Graduate Program in Nursing can provide the creation of strategies and actions in order to enhance the pleasure in the academic environment. Furthermore, it provides reflections on the daily life of the Graduate Program, with emphasis on the reorganization of work and collective work.

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FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The approach to Dejours' Psychodynamics of Work favored the understanding of the pleasure-suffering duality experienced by students in the *stricto sensu* Graduate Program in Nursing. In this study, the thematic categories were discussed under two dimensions of the work context - organizational and socio - professional relations, which unveiled the actual work.

The results obtained with this research can contribute to the planning of actions capable of promoting the creation of "bridges" that allow the achievement of pleasure in the Graduate Program and of coping strategies for the suffering experienced by students. It is essential that the institutions implement spaces for listening to professionals and provide discussions on the subject matter. In addition, is the opportunity to rethink the teaching/research logic in the Brazilian *stricto sensu* Graduate Program.

The theme raises new studies, mainly in the Brazilian context, to further deepen the pleasure-suffering duality of students in the *stricto sensu* Graduate Program.

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