

Nursing Volunteering: Student Satisfaction in a Teaching Hospital during the pandemic.

Voluntariado de Enfermería: Satisfacción de los estudiantes en un Hospital Escuela durante la pandemia.

Alan Berduc^{1*} RM, Irma Martínez², Marcela Mariano³ and María Sanabria⁴

¹ Doctor. Teaching and Research Coordinator Hospital Nacional A. Posadas, Buenos Aires, Argentina (HNAP); alanberduc@gmail.com, ORCID ID: 0000-0001-8379-3103

² Degree in Nursing. Headquarters Coordinator HNAP School of Nursing UBA, irmamartinez031@gmail.com, ORCID: 0000-0002-6217-2735

³ Degree in Statistics. Head of the HNAP Biostatistics area, marcemariano@hotmail.com, ORCID: 0000-0003-0060-5221

⁴ Degree in Nursing. Director of the Nursing Program National University of Hurlingham (UNAHUR), maria.sanabria@unahur.edu.ar, ORCID: 0000-0002-2943-9055

* Correspondence: alanberduc@gmail.com

Received: 11/23/22; Accepted: 2/16/23; Posted: 2/20/23

Abstract: In Argentina, on March 20, 2020, the "social, preventive and mandatory isolation" is installed and the cessation of face-to-face educational activities. With the aim of dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic, the Hospital launches a volunteer proposal for Nursing students, interrelating an educational institution and a health institution. Prior to the pandemic, nursing students could not attend health institutions as volunteers, but they did so within the framework of their professional practices. The general objective was to determine the degree of satisfaction of nursing students who volunteered at the Hospital Escuela during the pandemic. A cross-sectional observational descriptive study was carried out where data was collected through a survey as a research method. A total of 376 responses were collected and analyzed. The results of the analysis allow elucidating the satisfaction of the volunteers in the sample in the three dimensions, those related to the organization, with the infrastructure where they volunteered and with the teaching-learning process. 95.4% of the students rated the experience as positive and would recommend volunteering. We must highlight as important the learning acquired, the experience, knowing the labor reality and the motivation to continue developing the activity.

Keywords: COVID19; volunteering; satisfaction; medical School; pandemic

Resumen: En la Argentina, el 20 de marzo de 2020, se instala el "aislamiento social, preventivo y obligatorio" y el cese de las actividades educativas presenciales. Con el objetivo de hacer frente a la pandemia de COVID-19, el Hospital lanza una propuesta de voluntariado para los alumnos de las carreras de Enfermería interrelacionando una institución educativa y una institución sanitaria. Anteriormente a la pandemia los estudiantes de enfermería no podían concurrir a las instituciones de salud en carácter de voluntarios sino que lo hacían en el marco de sus prácticas profesionalizantes. El objetivo general fue determinar el grado de satisfacción de los estudiantes de enfermería que realizaron el voluntariado en el Hospital Escuela durante la pandemia. Se realizó un estudio descriptivo observacional transversal donde se recogieron los datos a través de una encuesta como método de investigación. Se recopilaron y analizaron un total de 376 respuestas. Los resultados del análisis permiten dilucidar la satisfacción de los voluntarios de la muestra en las tres dimensiones, las relacionadas con la organización, con la infraestructura en donde realizaron el voluntariado y con el proceso de enseñanza aprendizaje. El 95.4% de los alumnos/as valoraron la experiencia como positiva y recomendarían el voluntariado. Debemos destacar como importante el aprendizaje adquirido, la experiencia, conocer la realidad laboral y la motivación para seguir desarrollando la actividad.

Palabras clave: COVID19; voluntariado; satisfacción; hospital escuela; pandemia

1. Introduction

On December 31, 2019, Wuhan Municipality in Hubei Province, China reported a cluster of pneumonia cases with unknown etiology. On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared the outbreak of the new coronavirus a pandemic, after the number of people infected by COVID-19 globally reached 118,554 and the number of deaths reached 4,281. up to that moment affecting 110 countries (1). In Argentina, on March 20, 2020, “social, preventive and mandatory isolation” is installed and the cessation of face-to-face educational activities. With the aim of dealing with the pandemic, the Hospital launches a volunteer proposal for Nursing students, interrelating an educational institution and a health institution.

Prior to the pandemic, nursing students could not attend health institutions as volunteers, but rather they did so within the framework of their professional practices. These are mandatory training strategies and activities that, as part of the curricular proposal of educational institutions, are intended for students to consolidate, integrate and/or expand the skills and knowledge that correspond to the professional profile in which they are being trained. . The volunteering format is proposed as a strategy and optional training activity, with the same purpose as professional practices. Some of the factors that influenced the implementation of volunteering include the need for students to finish their degree, the need for educational institutions to have practice spaces for their students and the support of professionals in training due to to the increased demand for care.

Volunteering promoted by the State, Universities and companies constitutes a fundamental engine for the generation of immediate solutions to problems of diverse magnitude (2). In the context of the pandemic, Hospital Posadas established agreements with public universities so that nursing students could, as volunteers, carry out hospital practices in intermediate progressive care services. Initially, these agreements were established for 6 months with the possibility of renewal. The days and hours of attendance were initially agreed upon between the university and the nursing department, to later be managed through the coordination of teaching and research in order to organize and establish the number of students per service. In most cases, students attended with teachers. In this instance, the nursing staff of the Hospital played a leading role in monitoring the students who attended as volunteers. The hospital volunteering of the nursing students in our institution meant the possibility that they could attend to carry out their hospital practices in various hospitalization services of intermediate progressive care. The Hospital determined the care activities to be carried out in accordance with the objectives determined by the Educational Institutions.

According to Peter Drucker (3), “organizations must assume social responsibility; there is nobody else in the society of the organizations that can take care of the society itself.” Sometimes it is thought that the mission of the university is exclusively to train competent and effective professionals to satisfy the labor demand. However, reality says that it is necessary to go further. Satisfaction is a concept considered theoretically relevant by almost all the studies that have investigated volunteer programs (4-6). However, it is observed that both in the theoretical principles and in the evaluative practices, the satisfaction and perception of the users suffers from a precise conceptualization and from an absence of the dimensions of analysis that should guide the collection of information. When evaluating volunteer satisfaction, there is no consensus on the dimensions to be evaluated or on the number and type of items to be used, although all agree on the need to evaluate it as a quality index. For Jiménez González (7), student satisfaction is a key element in assessing the quality of education, since it reflects the efficiency of academic

and administrative services: their satisfaction with the learning units, with the interactions with their teacher and classmates, as well as with the facilities and equipment. The student's vision, product of their perceptions, expectations and needs, will serve as an indicator for the improvement of the management and development of academic programs.

The present work was carried out to analyze the planning from some university educational aspects, to investigate the experiences of nursing students from both institutions, to know the level of satisfaction they have with the voluntary practice and to evaluate if they have had the opportunity to integrate the theoretical knowledge with the practical ones for your professional training carried out during the pandemic. As positive characteristics we must highlight the "learning acquired, the experience, knowing the labor reality and the motivation to continue developing the activity".

2. Methods

A study was conducted observational, descriptive and transversal through a survey as a research method. The study subjects were students from the Nursing School of the University of Buenos Aires (UBA) based at the Hospital Escuela and students from the National University of Hurlingham (UNAHUR) who attended the hospital to volunteer. The sampling was carried out through a census because the necessary data to carry out the survey could be accessed through emails. It is estimated that between both institutions there are more than 390 students who meet the inclusion criteria, accepting a NO response from the surveys of 30%.

As a measuring instrument, a survey carried out *ex profeso* for the investigation was applied. To avoid biases and errors, it was taken into account to make a clear and precise definition of the object of interest. It was taken into account that the questionnaire measures what it has been designed for, accurately and rules out errors, validating the content by experts to assess its correct understanding. To carry out the evaluation of the instrument, the sample was made up of 7 experts, with a specialist or master's degree in education. These experts were asked for their support to classify each of the items, according to the following available options: 1) Essential, 2) Useful and 3) Non-essential. Once this evaluation was carried out, we continued to calculate the content validity ratio for each of the items. From this, and considering that the validity of the acceptable items was 0.80, it shows that 80% of the items that comprise the measurement instrument are within the acceptability range (8-9). The questionnaire uses a Likert scale to measure student satisfaction with volunteering. It is designed in Google Forms and sent by e-mail. It has 15 closed questions with single and multiple options on sociodemographic data, dimensions of student satisfaction (Motivation, Volunteer organization, Infrastructure, Teaching-learning process) and an open question about the volunteer experience .

Ethical aspects: The confidentiality of the personal data of the people involved was ensured according to Law 25,326 on the Protection of Personal Data (Habeas Data). This information was recorded in the questionnaire at the time of sending, considering the acceptance to participate in the study by sending the complete questionnaire in its entirety. The study was approved by the ethics committee under the approval code 494 / LUPoSo/2021.

3. Results

Of a total of 397 surveys carried out, 53.9% (214) belong to the UBA career and 46.1% (183) to the UNAHUR career. 94.7% (376) responded that they were able to finish volunteering and 5.3% (21) did not finish it for various personal reasons. Therefore, the

latter are excluded from the sample. It should be clarified that the Nursing Degree at UNAHUR lasts 5 years and the Nursing Degree at the UBA, based at Hospital Posadas, lasts 3 years. Of the total of 376 respondents, 109 (29%) were first year, 126 (33.5%) were second year, 101 (26.8%) were third year, 20 (5.35%) were fourth year and 20 (5.35 %) were in the fifth year (figure 1). Regarding gender, 86.7% (326) belonged to the female sex, 12.2% (46) to the male sex and 1.1% (4) were non-binary. The average age was 32.22 ± 9.32 years, with a minimum of 20 and a maximum of 56 years.

Alumnos que realizaron el voluntariado en el HNAP según institución universitaria

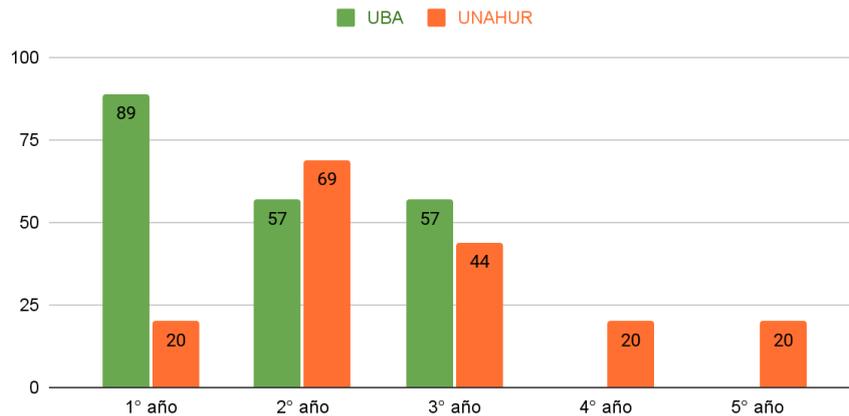


Figure 1. Students who volunteered at the HNAP.

The results of the survey on the degree of satisfaction regarding aspects of the teaching-learning process are shown in Table 1. Regarding the degree of satisfaction of the "support of the assigned nursing staff during volunteering", 189 (50.2%) student/ As they were completely satisfied, 127 (33.8%) were satisfied and 24 (6.4%) responded neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. And regarding the degree of satisfaction of the "accompaniment of the nursing staff assigned during volunteering", 179 (47.6%) students were totally satisfied, 138 (36.7%) were satisfied, and 35 (9.3%) responded neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (figure 2).

Table 1 . Results of the degree of satisfaction survey

Questions and answers	Absolute frequency	Relative frequency
What was the degree of satisfaction regarding "the information on the objectives of the internships" received by the educational institution prior to volunteering?		
Totally satisfied	176	46.8%
Satisfied	144	38.3%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	41	10.9%
Dissatisfied	10	2.6%
Totally dissatisfied	5	1.4%
What was the degree of satisfaction regarding "the evaluation instruments" received by the educational institution prior to volunteering?		

Totally satisfied	138	36.7%
Satisfied	172	45.7%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	48	13%
Dissatisfied	10	2.6%
Totally dissatisfied	8	2 %
What was the degree of satisfaction about "the activities that could be carried out in volunteering" received by the educational institution?		
Totally satisfied	121	32.2%
Satisfied	141	37.5%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	82	21.8%
Dissatisfied	24	6.4%
Totally dissatisfied	8	2.1%

Apoyo y acompañamiento del personal de enfermería asignado durante el voluntariado

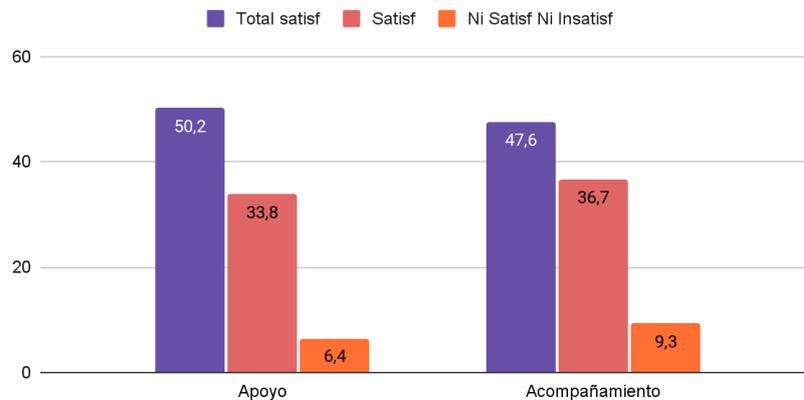


Figure 2. Satisfaction of the students regarding the support and accompaniment received by the assigned HNAP nursing staff.

Regarding the degree of satisfaction of the "accompaniment of teaching staff during volunteering", 162 (43.1%) students were totally satisfied, 114 (30.3%) were satisfied and 65 (17.4%) responded neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. Regarding the degree of satisfaction of the "teaching follow-up during volunteering", 138 (36.7%) students were totally satisfied, 131 (34.9%) were satisfied and 35 (9.2%) responded neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. Regarding the degree of satisfaction of "teaching support during volunteering", 159 (42.2%) students were totally satisfied, 111 (32.1%) were satisfied and 65 (17.4%) responded neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

In relation to the degree of satisfaction of the "Student/Patient relational factor" during volunteering, 252 (67%) students were totally satisfied, 117 (31.2%) were satisfied and 7 (1.8%) responded neither satisfied nor dissatisfied . Regarding the degree of

satisfaction of the "Student/Teacher relational factor" during volunteering, 172 (46.8%) students were fully satisfied, 128 (34%) were satisfied and 51 (13.8%) responded neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. Regarding the degree of satisfaction of the "Student/Student relational factor" during volunteering, 199 (54.1%) students were totally satisfied, 159 (42.2%) were satisfied and 14 (3.7%) responded neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (figure 3).

4. Discussion

Satisfaction is a concept considered theoretically relevant by most of the studies that have investigated the permanence of volunteering (5). The results of the analysis allow elucidating the satisfaction of the volunteers in the sample in the three dimensions, those related to the organization, with the infrastructure where they volunteered and with the teaching-learning process.

Sometimes it is thought that the mission of the university is exclusively to train competent and effective professionals to satisfy the labor demand. According to Peter Drucker (3), "organizations must assume social responsibility; there is nobody else in the society of the organizations that can take care of the society itself." University volunteering arises from University Social Responsibility, for which the institution must reward society for its contribution that allows the support and very existence of the public university. Given the context of the pandemic, this volunteering was marked by uncertainty and dynamism.

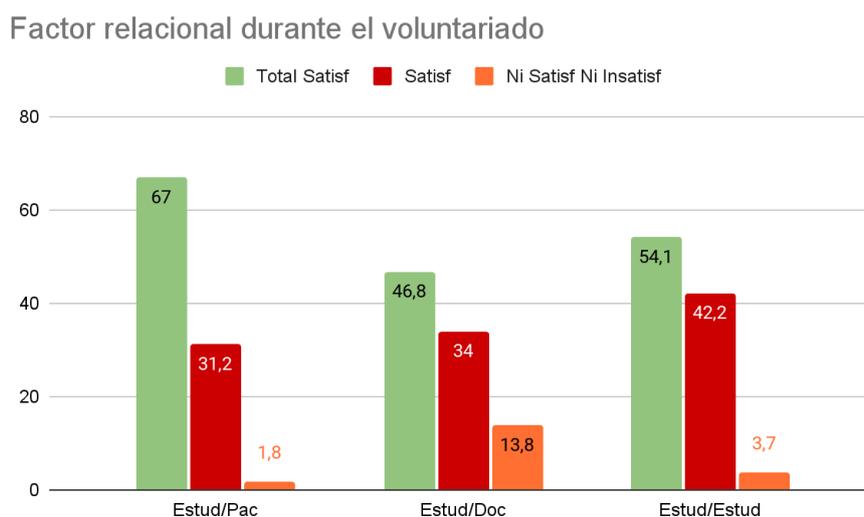


Figure 3. Student satisfaction on relational factors during volunteering.

As an opportunity, we can highlight the accompaniment from the Nursing Career coordination, which involved a process of constant feedback between the structure and the objectives of the proposal, and the particular situations of each call, the individual trajectories and the imprint of each group of students. They are also an opportunity to develop personal, social and occupational skills and strengthen the sense of belonging and community, by working in real scenarios, as proposed by "service-learning" (10-11).

The volunteer format as a strategy and optional training activity, with the same purpose as professional practices in the context of the pandemic, was generally highly regarded by the participating students. The expressions of the Volunteers reflected satisfaction in the theoretical and practical learning they achieved, the meanings they gave to their task within volunteering, the experiences developed in the scenarios where they traveled. According to Peter Drucker, (3) "organizations must assume social responsibility; there is nobody else in the society of the organizations that can take care of the society

itself." In this sense, the concept of University Social Responsibility made it possible to strengthen the social and civic sensitivity of the students, allowing their knowledge and abilities to be put at the service of the community to respond to some social need, going beyond the university environment to promote a social change.

As highlighted by some research (12-13), participation in university volunteer experiences is an opportunity to develop personal, social and occupational skills and strengthen the sense of belonging and community, from service learning. In the field of health sciences, the training of professionals has historically been traversed by a biologist and fragmented perspective of knowledge, based on the hegemonic medical model, with few opportunities for contact with social reality. In this sense, participation in volunteering allowed students to satisfactorily assess the experience during the pandemic, coming into contact with patients, and being able to generate dialogues between theory and the different situations that they had to accompany. The systematization process allowed us to reflect on the ways of teaching and learning in health, where the curricular design often takes time to meet the more traditional practice of the nursing profession.

As limitations, we will mention that the data collected reflects the experience of student volunteers from two universities. Likewise, the number of students in the last three years is very low, so it cannot be extrapolated to other geographical areas that do not have similar characteristics.

5. Conclusions

- Almost all nursing students rated the experience as positive, considering that 95.4% would recommend volunteering.
- As positive characteristics we must highlight the learning acquired, the experience, knowing the labor reality and the motivation to continue developing the activity. Regarding the negative characteristics of volunteering, the volunteers argue that during the weekends they did not have teacher follow-up, only the nursing staff.
- Volunteering as an educational strategy had a positive influence on the attitudes of nursing students as a result of direct contact with patients, with the accompaniment and support of their teachers and peers.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has affected university training programs for future nurses, mainly in the acquisition of skills. Similar situations must be taken into account by the health and educational authorities to avoid deficiencies in the training of future health professionals.

Supplementary material: survey in annex I.

Funding: There has been no funding.

Declaration of conflict of interest : The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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Annex I. Additional Information. Nursing Volunteer Survey: Satisfaction of students in a Teaching Hospital during the pandemic.

- 1-Institution to which it belongs
- 2-Sex
- 3-Age
- 4-Year of the degree
- 5-Have you fully volunteered at Hospital Posadas?
- 6-What reasons led you to choose to volunteer?
- 7-How satisfied are you with the days planned (duration) for volunteering?
- 8-How satisfied are you with the space allocated to volunteering within the hospital?
- 9- What was the degree of satisfaction regarding the information received by the educational institution prior to volunteering?
- 10-What was the degree of satisfaction regarding the theoretical contents acquired in the educational institution prior to volunteering?
- 11-Regarding the support and accompaniment of the nursing staff assigned during volunteering, what was your degree of satisfaction?
- 12- Regarding the support, accompaniment and follow-up of the teaching staff assigned during the volunteering, what was your degree of satisfaction?
- 13-Regarding the relational factor during volunteering at the Hospital, what was your degree of satisfaction?
- 14-How would you rate your overall level of satisfaction with regard to volunteering?

15-Would you recommend volunteering?

16-Do you have any comments or suggestions about the volunteer experience that you would like to add: