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INTERDISCIPLINARY METHODS OF INTERVENTION AND RESEARCH IN WORK STUDY: NEW PRACTICES IN SCIENCE

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Summary

The objective of the text focuses on discussing French-speaking ergonomics and the psychodynamics of work as interdisciplinary methods of intervention and research. It is understood that interdisciplinarity aims to integrate what has been dogmatized by modern science, through criticism of disciplinary boundaries, the fragmentation of knowledge and the implications of specialization. As methodologies that emerge at the time of the crisis in modern science, the ergonomics of activity and the psychodynamics of work present themselves as new approaches to thinking about work, man and society in the face of the complexity of contemporary problems.

Keywords: work, activity ergonomics, work psychodynamics.

Introduction

The ergonomics of activity and the psychodynamics of work are contemporary methodologies for investigating the universe of work, with the clinic being the way in which ergonomics and psychodynamics understand and place work under analysis. The use of clinical nomenclature is not linked to habitual representations, the treatment of singular and/or individual problems, but to a conception that emphasizes the articulation of the psychic world with the social world (BENDASOLLI; SOBOL, 2011).

For the clinician, work is not in the first instance the salary or employment relationship, but it is what it implies from a human perspective, the fact of working: “the gestures, the know-how, the engagement of the body, the mobilization of intelligence , the

ability to reflect, interpret and react to different situations, is the power to feel, think, invent, etc.” (DEJOURS, 2012, p.24). Given this understanding, French-speaking ergonomics and work psychodynamics are interested in real work situations.

The real at work corresponds to the unexpected, incidents, conflicts and breakdowns that occur daily on the path taken between what is prescribed by the organization and what is effective, given that real work situations are dynamic, unstable and present constant unforeseen events and contradictions. In the distance between real activity and prescription lies intelligence, the human capacity to problematize work and invent solutions, elements that allow the production system to function in a cohesive manner (MOLINIER, 2013).

From the perspective presented and how the approaches depart from their understanding and analysis of work, this text will discuss Francophone ergonomics and the psychodynamics of work as interdisciplinary methods of intervention and research in the study of work. Through a theoretical visit, it will be possible to understand how each field of investigation focuses on work issues and proposes new science practices.

Ergonomics and Activity Ergonomics

Motivated by the needs of rebuilding the European industrial park decimated by the Second World War, the Francophone ergonomics project emerged in 1963 and came to fruition with the creation of the Société d’Ergonomie de Langue Française.

Unlike Human Factors Ergonomics, which seeks to solve practical problems through a better interface between people and technical systems - through experimental procedures in laboratories and studies on human efficiency - Francophone ergonomics presents itself concerned with work activities and the real issues of doing things.

The emphasis on the cognitive nature of work, on health promotion and on the view of a subject not only as a performer/operator of tasks, but as a controller of work processes, allowed the ergonomics of the activity to build its specificity in relation to Anglo-Saxon ergonomics. This demonstrated the overcoming of reductionist conceptions of focus on “physical work”, revealing the complexity of work and the multiplicity of aspects that make it up (ABRAHÃO et al., 2009).

As an interdisciplinary field, French-speaking ergonomics is a young discipline that takes roots in older disciplines, importing concepts from areas such as physiology and psychology (FERREIRA, BARROS, 2003), in order to analyze the phenomenon of work from different perspectives .

Aiming to understand and transform work by adapting it to human characteristics (GUÉRIN et al., 2001), French-speaking ergonomics studies the human being in a real work situation, using methodologies and theories aimed at understanding situated action (SZNELWAR et al. , 2004). Delimiting their object of study in work activity, French-speaking countries have developed heterogeneous methodologies, with Ergonomic Work Analysis (AET) being widely used.

As an open, inductive and notably interdisciplinary method, the usual data collection tools may vary, as their choice is made depending on the nature of the problems posed at the time the organizations propose the demands for solving the problems by it. faced. Ergonomic Work Analysis comes close to the researched reality as a flexible method and makes it possible to question the results obtained during the intervention, validating them throughout the process (ABRAHÃO et al., 2009).

Coming significantly closer to the human sciences (SZNELWAR et al., 2004), the ergonomics of the activity is concerned not only with bringing results, but analyzing the meaning of the actions for those who participate and interact in them, ensuring the satisfaction of workers with a focus reducing health risks and improving production.

The Psychodynamics of work

The origin of work psychodynamics is located in the roots of psychiatry and the emergence of work psychopathology (MOLINIER, 2013) in the context of the development of industrial capitalism. With Psychopathology of work, Dejours (1992), psychiatrist, psychoanalyst, occupational physician and with studies in ergonomics at the Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers (Cnam) in Paris, investigated the question of the genesis of mental pathologies at work and existing conflicts between work organization and psychic functioning.

Contrary to what was believed, it was observed that despite the rigid and demanding conditions in the work environment, there was no proof of the existence of work psychosis, proving that the causal link between work and mental illness was false (MOLINIER, 2013). No “noises” of the madness of work were found, but a state of normality (LANCMAN; USHIDA, 2003). In the 90s, faced with the failure of Work Psychopathology, Dejours moved to a new field of research and theory, Work Psychodynamics.

In Molinier’s view (2013),

By proposing normality as an object, the psychodynamics of work carries out the project of reaching the social sciences, but without psychiatry. The psychodynamics of work moves from psychiatry, towards clinical psychology, from medicine, towards the human sciences. It moves from a conception of science based on expertise to an understanding of science based on a comprehensive approach (p.67)

In effect, the psychodynamics of work focuses on understanding how workers manage to maintain a certain psychological balance, even when subjected to destabilizing working conditions. For this purpose, its object is the dynamic relationships between work organization and subjectivation processes (MENDES, 2007), based on the understanding that conflicts arise from the encounter of a subject with a singular history and a fixed work situation (MOLINIER, 2013).

For Dejours (1992), suffering is central and implies a state of struggle for the subject against the forces that push him towards mental illness. Mental suffering is understood by the psychodynamics of work as a drama experienced through feelings of unhappiness, personal and professional dissatisfaction, in the face of which subjects create defensive psychological strategies to protect themselves. On the other hand, pleasure is experienced when feelings of appreciation and recognition are experienced at work (MENDES; TAMAYO, 2011), elements that allow the worker to find meaning in their work, to be accepted and admired by the collective.

In this sense, the psychodynamic methodology aims to understand the subjective aspects of work through the workers' experiences of pleasure and suffering (Dejours, 2007), focusing on the analysis of real work. The work clinic in this approach translates reality through listening and speaking, making work situations intelligible (MENDES, 2007).

To study the relationship between work organization and workers, the method privileges the collective discourse of workers, addressing topics such as the work context, work relations, experiences of pleasure and suffering and defensive psychic strategies. As an interdisciplinary field with epistemological roots in existentialism, psychoanalysis and

psychosociology (FERREIRA, BARROS, 2003), the validation of the methodology is carried out together with the participants through a text produced with the collective.

Given this perspective, the psychodynamics of work understands that understanding work experiences, providing spaces for speech and reflection, can mobilize elaborations that enable subjects to follow paths towards self-realization and the transformation of the work organization.

Psychodynamics of work and Ergonomics of activity: New practices in science

It is evident that modern scientific knowledge triumphed and determined advances that culminated in profound transformations in society. From man's domination over nature, truths, ideals and beliefs of an unshakable science were created. In opposition to common sense and life experiences, 20th century positivism, whose roots are in empiricism, naturalism and mechanism, represented the apogee of the dogmatization of scientific knowledge. Based on the works of great modern thinkers such as Bacon, Galileo, Descartes and Darwin, the sciences were divided, specializing and adopting a conception that sees science as the privileged apparatus for representing the world (SANTOS 1989).

Unlike many positivist authors who define methodology as a scientific search for valid and true knowledge, Morin (2013) and Beck (2010) believe that science has an ambivalent role. The better science becomes, the more the progress of its uncertainty and knowledge about what science does not know grows, since the increasing presence of serious problems in the knowledge that science produces and in the action that it produces becomes evident. determines in society (MORIN, 2013).

For Giddens (1991), we are reaching a period in which the consequences of modernity become increasingly radicalized and universalized than before. The magnitude of insecurity and unquantifiable uncertainties (BECK, 2010) in the face of their environmental, social, political and economic effects, outline a process of demystification of science, showing the emerging need for new concepts to solve complex problems.

If reality is complex, it requires comprehensive, multidimensional and complex thinking, capable of understanding the tangles of information through the construction of knowledge that articulates the most diverse disciplines (MORIN, 2013).

In this sense and given the aspects presented, some authors such as Santos (1989), understand that this is a moment of crisis in modern sciences, characterized by a major paradigmatic change towards a post-modern science. For Pombo (2004, p.10), “[...] we are facing very profound epistemological transformations. It is as if the world itself resists his disciplinary shredding. Science begins to appear as a process that also requires a transversal perspective”.

As a response to the need, mainly in the fields of human sciences and education, to overcome the fragmentation of knowledge and the specialization nature of knowledge, interdisciplinarity emerges in the 20th century, given the transformations presented. For Fazenda (2008), interdisciplinarity was born announcing the need to construct a new paradigm of science and knowledge, in order to develop a new project for action in society.

In Japiassu's (1976) view, interdisciplinarity is not, therefore, a simple exchange of information between disciplinary organizations, but intercommunication between disciplines, and an interdisciplinary enterprise is recognized when it manages to incorporate the results of several specialties that borrow . For Pombo (2005, p.13), “there is only interdisciplinarity if we are capable of sharing our small domain of knowledge, if we have the necessary courage to abandon the comfort of our technical language and to venture into a domain that belongs to everyone and that no one has exclusive ownership”.

In the same century, the ergonomics of activity and the psychodynamics of work emerged in opposition to the dominant concepts of man and work in modern society, seeking

new perspectives and understandings of issues in the world of work. With interdisciplinary proposals, the approaches provided new questions about knowledge, man and society.

One of the criticisms that Morin (2013) presents about specializations is the way in which anthroposocial sciences crush and tear apart the molar concepts of man, individual and society. Acquiring and establishing communications with concepts from other disciplines, the ergonomics of activity and the psychodynamics of work propose to analyze the phenomenon of human work in a broader way, assuming, for this purpose, preference in the participation of more than one researcher in their interventions (ABRAHÃO et al., 2009; MENDES, 2007).

Although they present significant differences in relation to the methodologies used depending on the theoretical/epistemological approach that each of them makes of their object of study (SZNELWAR et al., 2004), the psychodynamics of work and the ergonomics of the activity establish theoretical, historical, epistemological and conceptual aspects that enable dialogue between them (FERREIRA; BARROS, 2003). The elements that bring the two approaches together allow them, as methodologies, to establish communications with each other, in an interdisciplinary way.

For Japiassu (1976), as interdisciplinarity is characterized by the intensity of exchanges between specialists and the degree of real integration of disciplines within the same research project, it is important that there is complementarity of methods, concepts and analyzes on the on which the different practices of scientific disciplines are based.

In the case of activity ergonomics and work psychodynamics, the point of intersection between the fields is in the work context, thought of as a factor that influences worker health (FERREIRA; MENDES, 2001). The experience of research that used both methodologies, as in Abrahão & Torres (2004) and Ferreira & Mendes (2001), revealed that ergonomics data add meaning to psychodynamic results, since the analysis of the activity makes it possible to understand the results obtained through experiences of pleasure and suffering at work.

The dialogue between two instruments enables the interaction of new practices, confronting and discussing perspectives and thinking about problems in a more contextual and broader way, contributing to the advancement of interventions and research into the world of work. However, in the view of Dejours (2004, p.57), the use of the two approaches in the same project is limited to their complementary nature to enrich the results, which does not mean that a mixture or sum of them should be proposed, “as the miscegenation could bring conceptual and methodological biases that would mischaracterize the disciplines and would not bring significant results”.

Interdisciplinarity provides great hope for renewal and change in the field of human sciences methodology (JAPIASSU, 1976), since the current moment of crisis in modern sciences favors establishing bridges to connect disciplinary borders, bringing together and integrating research and interventions on human sciences. human reality. As practices that reveal the possibility of overcoming the disciplinary character that preaches the standard-dominant paradigm, the ergonomics of activity and the psychodynamics of work present themselves as methodologies in search of a new scientific horizon and a change of attitude towards the problems of work.

Final considerations

As seen, the ergonomics of activity and the psychodynamics of work are methodological approaches that emerge at a time of crisis in modern sciences with the intention of abandoning old explanatory practices, approaching the human sciences to

understand the universe of work activities and the aspects subjective aspects that involve working.

Specifically, the ergonomics of the activity focuses on the transformation of tasks and working conditions, with the psychodynamics of work being a tool that seeks to expand subjective experiences, contributing to the emancipation and empowerment of workers. As interdisciplinary methodologies anchored in the reality of work, the approaches seek to transform the work and experiences of the subjects, producing knowledge in a way that dialogues with other disciplines.

Treating work as a singular human activity, the methodologies base their analyzes on different perspectives, in order to gain a broader understanding of contemporary work realities. According to the aspects they have in common, it is understood that the ergonomics of the activity and the psychodynamics of work can establish theoretical and methodological dialogues, complementing and enriching even more research and interventions in work contexts.

While modern positivist sciences are aimed at attempts to predict accidents and unforeseen events at work and focus, above all, on anthropometric and biomechanical aspects, the methodologies presented break with the requirements of prediction and control, focusing on issues of lived experience and to situations that emerge when the work actually happens. It is in this sense that the ergonomics of activity and psychodynamics, as agents interested in the social world and the psychic world, propose to overcome the reductionist paradigm of modern science, based on an integrative and more comprehensive view of human work.

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