

Strategies of health production at work and facing violence

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Abstract: In view of the countless contradictions present in the world of work and its deleterious effects on workers' health, we are often led to believe that in the daily lives of companies we must passively accept these effects. The losses experienced by workers point to the existence of violence at work. This article focuses on the construction of strategies to confront violence by expanding the worker's action in the development of the activity. In this way we recognize the importance of work for human life and we emphasize its possibilities to function as one who also operates health.

Keywords: health at work; coping strategy; violence at work.

1. Introduction

There are countless productions in the field of sociology of work, among the topics covered we find that of the importance of work for human existence. When work is given a central place in life and a space of sociability [1]. Because through work, we project dreams, imagine and draw plans to achieve, for example, professional training, building heritage, making trips or starting a family. Whether due to the need to attend to primary needs such as subsistence, due to its fulfillment, work is closely related to the very existence of humanity. According to the understanding of [6], work, throughout history, has occupied most of the time of human beings. What at first was to supply his basic subsistence needs, becomes, especially after the Industrial Revolution, the central point of man's life.

Work as a space for sociability is where many meetings take place. Workers from different places, cultures and experiences are in a common space and they need to establish relationships, they need to live together. In a more prospective orientation, we would say that they need to cooperate with each other to achieve the company's mission, whether public or private. In [22], the encounter is the experience of affection between people, that is, it is constituted of how much we affect and how much we are affected, touched by the experience of the other, by speech, by gesture, how much these exchanges potentiate us and they expand our action in life, and more specifically at work. For the philosopher, the best thing that a human being can do is compose with other human beings.

On the other hand, the work also presents its contradictions and conditions that are often dangerous and unfavorable. Whereas "[...] men and women depend exclusively on their work to survive and find themselves increasingly unstable, precarious situations, when none exist at work." [1]. Worldwide, in the last forty years, capitalism under the guidance of flexible accumulation has brought

a break with the Fordist pattern and generating a way of working and living based on the flexibility and precariousness of work, [...] changes imposed by the process of financialization and globalization of the economy, [...] because financial capital started to direct all other capital ventures, subordinating the productive sphere and contaminating all its practices and ways of managing work. [2]

In the context of precariousness, we find practical management organizations based on the introduction of fear, abuse of power, moral harassment and discrimination against outsourcing and its workers. It is among outsourced workers that these working conditions are worse, with longer hours, greater turnover, less access to benefits [2] and a greater number of accidents. We found different forms of work deterioration with negative consequences for workers' lives. As an example, we cite the phenomenon of "violence at work" present in the

psychosocial dimension of life, as we will see below. The International Labor Organization (ILO) expresses its concerns and actions regarding the seriousness of this issue. Given that,

annually, about two million men and women die from accidents and work-related illnesses. Worldwide, 270 million occupational accidents and 160 million work-related illnesses are recorded each year. The International Labor Organization has never accepted the idea that work-related accidents and illnesses are “leisure time”. Prevention works. Throughout the 20th century, industrialized countries have observed that serious injuries have decreased considerably, in part thanks to advances made to ensure a healthier and safer workplace. The challenge is to extend this positive initiative to the entire world of work [11].

Work-related diseases also point to the psychosocial dimension, the ILO highlights themes related to mental health at work in its annual campaigns. When in 2016 he promoted the Workplace Stress: A collective challenge campaign. In 2019, the year of its Centennial Conference, it adopted Convention No. 190 on Violence and Harassment, and Recommendation No. 206, calling for the prohibition and prevention of violence and harassment in the workplace and, in 2020, the Break the silence campaign: Let's end violence and harassment in the world of work [12].

In this complex environment in which, not infrequently, workers face precarious and unstable conditions, and we understand precarious conditions not only physical, but also those that point, as previously said, to the psychosocial and work organization dimension; We are, therefore, called upon to think about strategies to prevent and confront the phenomenon of “violence at work” in a scenario where there is an increasing incidence of illnesses, sick leave and suffering among workers. Let us think, then, of what violence at work consists of.

2. Violence at work

For Mendes and Araújo, violence is the attempt to submit or subjugate the other, to simply adapt him, undermining his ability to think, feel and act. This capacity is fundamental for human existence, since it is built through it, throughout life, a singular and active subject. The situations that involve aggression at work are configured in a constant game of domination-resistance. They happen when relations with work are deteriorated, when the meaning of work is lost, when relations of solidarity are degraded, as well as insensitivity and indifference to own and others' suffering [14].

We understand that “violence is difficult to be recognized and named” and, “even if it erodes workers' motivation, safety and self-esteem on a daily basis” the work continues to be carried out, and thus constitute the psychological damage and psychological suffering of the worker [8]. Violence is revealed by the practice of not questioning reality, it is the opposition to collective interests and rights through coercive instruments, which disqualify human criticism and reflection [9].

We see in organizations the impacts of violence on the lives of workers in different aspects, we will mention two:

- 1) physical suffering caused by excessive hours worked, intensification of the work rhythm, exposure to unhealthy, dangerous and unsafe environments, the appearance of diseases due to exposure to agents harmful to health or by repetitive efforts.
- 2) in the psychological suffering triggered by the threat of losing their job, in the pressure to reach goals often unattainable generating fear and insecurity, in the unbridled competitiveness that deteriorates collective relations, as well as by the moral and organizational harassment that expose the worker to embarrassing situations, vexing and humiliating. All of these practices are potent in leading workers to experience physical and psychological devastation manifested in health problems such as high blood pressure, coronary heart disease, ulcers, muscle pain, sexual dysfunction, stress, anxiety disorder, social isolation, depression, neurosis and ultimately analysis, suicide.

3. Preventive organizational practices and betting on strategies to fight violence

In developing this work, we are guided by the important conception of prevention and its interfaces at work. Whether in its physical or psychosocial dimension. We understand that there is constant dialogue and convocation between these dimensions in work situations. The worker when entering activity mobilizes his

whole body, his physical strength, emotions, certainties, uncertainties, desires, relationships, technique, without any possibility of fragmenting them. For us, it becomes strategic to establish conducts based on values of prevention to different forms of violence.

It has been known for a long time that production in corporate environments is increasingly stigmatized in numerical aspects, that is, it always seeks to quantify, to link what is done to numbers, goals and results. This way, the incessant search, without balance, for increments in the production and achievement of results can generate physical and mental overload to the workers, with possible consequent damages.

When talking about prevention, it is necessary to understand the concept of Risk. For [16], risk is defined by any possibility that any element or circumstance existing in a given process or work environment may cause damage to health, whether through accidents, illnesses or the suffering of workers, or even by environment pollution.

Another important concept is that of an accident at work, which occurs through the exercise of work, at the service of the company or the exercise of the work of special insured persons, causing, directly or indirectly, bodily injury, illness or functional disturbance that causes the death or loss or reduction, permanent or temporary, of the ability to work. [4]

For [19], the perception of what a risk situation is directly linked to several factors and should not be thought as something that is restricted to the work environment, as it is also present in the daily lives of professionals from various areas through the configuration of work in neoliberal society: salary, hours of work, food, leisure, etc.

Unfavorable conditions to individuals' freedom and control of work can generate insecurity, fear, despair and psychological suffering in workers, triggering anxiety, depression and other psychological problems, such as burnout syndrome or Burnout, resulting from the sum of difficulties faced daily and the interaction of these factors with individual aspects of workers [15], [13].

Therefore, seeking to understand what happens in both the technical and organizational aspects in a broader way can help the creation of preventive mechanisms, especially with regard to exposure to degrading work conditions and the neglect of organizations with the weakest link in the chain. productive, which once an accident victim will be unable to produce or forcibly re-adapted to another function for which he cannot widely perform his acquired skills and knowledge.

In the attention required by the universe of organizational practices, it is very important, in the psychosocial dimension, which we emphasize in this work, to go beyond the dual and binary relationship, that is, the one that places the aggressor on the one side and the victim on the other, wants to discuss whether or not we are facing aggression. This logic does not help us, since we often find the source of support for violence at work in practices structured based on management strategies, in the division of labor, in the rules and mode of work organization [21]. In this scenario, "there is no victim and aggressor, there is a perverse network of relationships that are built based on resignation behaviors" [14]. Violence in the organizational perspective is impersonal and anonymous, aggressive, often imperceptible [21], yet it profoundly affects the collectivity.

Against the logic of violence at work, we bet on the perspectives that help us to build and carry out the work based on respect for human existence, the ability to create and expand the worker's action, the emphasis given to work as a health operator and not only as a source of illness [17].

stating that work can be an operator and health is not trying to conceal the harmfulness of hegemonic ways of organizing work today. On the contrary, if we go deeper into the concept of health in Canguilhem [...], we will see how much it can help us in expanding the workers' power to act [20], [17].

In this sense, Clinic of Activity¹ helps us, through its conceptual toolbox, to build a strategic path to confront violence focused on the production of health at work.

Initially, it is fundamental to understand that the concept of health adopted comes from George Canguilhem, when considering "life, being not only submission to the environment but also the institution of its own environment, establishes, therefore, values, not only in the environment, but also in the organism itself" [5]. We found the idea that "living is a debate between different norms, in a dynamic and never predictable process" [17]. Normativity, a central concept in Canguilhem's doctoral thesis, is the human being's ability to generate new standards of life [10], to establish standards for (better) living.

¹The Clinic of Activity is one of the work clinics developed in the wake of Work Psychology with its own methods of intervention at work. It is understood by Yves Clot [7], the main author of this clinic, as a Historical-Cultural Psychology, affiliated with Vygotski's ideas.

It is understood that health resides "in the possibility of overcoming the norm that defines the momentary normal, the possibility of tolerating infractions to the usual norm and of instituting new norms in new situations." [5]. According to [3] "to be healthy is, then, to ask questions by breaking rules already given when they no longer serve oxygen for health; it is asking from the restlessness that takes us, getting sick is losing that restlessness". Thus,

work is the main health operator, since it is an activity of transformation of nature and the human being, a normative activity par excellence. However, it is necessary to analyze the current working conditions, which, in many cases, makes work not a health engine and translates into suffering. A collective analysis of work brings the anxieties and "creations" of workers to, from them, to manufacture other realities, other forms of work. [3]

A good start for building a strategy that breaks the silence of workers along the lines of Clinic of Activity is to recognize that the worker knows his work and has a repertoire of knowledge and experiences that allow him to think, act and transform work. And that even with the prescriptions every worker puts something unique in what he participates and produces [18], at work.

[...] the worker, however dominated, is always keeping some of his capacity for action. Thus, the proposed interventions seek more than to know, analyze or denounce the existing forms of domination and suffering, they seek an alliance, with the possibilities that workers must create and recreate their own relations with the world. [18].

Between prescription and real, there is an important path on which managers need to invest. This path is key to the (re) creation of the working rules of working teams in a situation, of the ways of being and existing, of the construction and updating of the singularities of the different collectives of workers and their ways of acting. It contains dialogues, controversies, conflicts, debates, doubts, criticisms and decisions. This path is the activity. For Clinic of Activity, conflict and controversy are essential drivers of the production of singularities and constitute work activity and, aiming at "the production of new subjectivities, without distancing thought from action: thinking differently is already acting in an innovative way" [18]. Therefore, dialogue, debate, criticism and conflict do not take place at the level of personality. This perspective is built from the activity, or rather, it is built in / in the activity, which is not only seen as an object of analysis for possible interventions, but as a means of action at work [7].

The subject's existence is woven into these vital conflicts, which they seek to revert to mental intentions, in order to detach themselves from them. The activity is a subjective ordeal through which the individual evaluates himself and others in order to have the opportunity to come to do what must be done [7].

Taking as an established practice an effective action of the worker in the development of activities and maintenance of workspaces of the workers' collectives to debate and dialogue about the work are fundamental in the expansion of the action.

Expanding action at work requires organizing it in order to move workers from the place of simple adaptation, subjection and reproduction to the call for (re) creation and (re) standardization of the ways of functioning, doing, thinking, being and existing in the workplace. job. It means workers to act feeling active [7]. We have self-recognition as an important subjective consequence of this practice, that is, workers see themselves in what they do [7], in the result of their work, in that product produced, in the updated standard, in the decision to adopt attitudes respectful that transformed relationships; he sees his effort, participation, sweat, creativity and knowledge of the experience employed. "While recognizing oneself in something, that is, also outside oneself and the other, it is undoubtedly the means of taking the changes in the organization of work as far as possible" [7]. This constitutes work as a health operator.

We are facing a bold strategy that seeks to expand the worker's action and points to human development² at work, to the protagonism of the worker in a situated activity and to the appropriation of the

²Regarding the concept of development, we assume the meaning of Levi Vygotski, as presented by [23]: "when

lived experiences in order to live, collectively, new experiences.

4. Conclusions

The scenario in which the world of work is designed is worrying. Violence at work is a tool for annulment, suffocation and alienation of workers in relation to different work processes, as well as leading to illness and the appearance of diseases. We understand that work occupies places in life that go beyond subsistence. It brings meaning, awakens yearnings, pleasure. It opens to the worker the possibility of investing in creativity, in the (re) creation of new worlds, new ways of being, thinking and relating.

We assume that work is also a health operator, not only a source of illness. For this reason, we are committed to facing violence through the transformation of work organization. To this end, we essentially aim at expanding the worker's action that will take place by emphasizing the procedural development of the activity. Allowing workers to talk about their jobs, produce questions, review successes and mistakes means sustaining constant movements to update the way they work (workers and work) in a unique way in specific situations. Keeping the worker active, recognizing his role and repertoire of knowledge and experiences, in the perspective proposed in this text, means health at work.

We believe in the introduction of prevention values for the construction of new practices that enhance the encounters at work, care for work and its ways of organization. Our bet is to face the different forms of violence at work, but to promote the development of the activity through the protagonism of the workers, the expansion of the worker's action and the maintenance of groups for the transformation of the work organization.

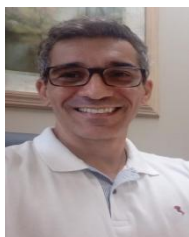
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producing the environment in which he lives, man produces himself; that is, man is historically determined, but he is simultaneously determinant of history. In this sense, Vygotski considers that development and learning are interrelated since the child's birth, that is, the constitution of the subject is a dialectical movement between learning and development?"

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