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HUMANIZED HEALTH MANAGEMENT AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR QUALITY OF LIFE AT WORK

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ABSTRACT

This research aimed to analyze how the implementation of humanized management in the health sector impacts the quality of life at work (QWL) of professionals in the area. A qualitative and field approach was used, with data collection through semi-structured interviews with 21 health professionals from different categories (physicians, nurses and technicians), in order to understand their perceptions about humanized management practices and their effects on the work environment. The results indicated that effective communication practices, valuing professionals, psychological support and the promotion of a more collaborative and ethical work environment resulted in a significant improvement in worker satisfaction and in the quality of patient care. However, the survey also pointed out

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challenges, such as work overload and scarcity of resources at certain times, which still negatively impact QWL. It is concluded that, although humanized management has generated important advances, a continuous commitment of institutions is needed to deal with the remaining issues, ensuring a more balanced and sustainable work environment for health professionals.

Keywords: Humanized Management. Health. Quality of Life at Work.

INTRODUCTION

Humanized health management is a concept that has gained relevance in recent years, as the health area recognizes the need for comprehensive care, which is not limited only to technical aspects, but also takes into account the emotional, social, and cultural dimensions of individuals. In a scenario where health professionals are constantly overloaded, and where the humanization of care is often seen as a distant goal, humanized management proposes a more sensitive and welcoming model, both for patients and for the workers in the area. It is, therefore, an approach that goes beyond the simple compliance with medical protocols, seeking to promote a healthier, more cooperative and more ethical environment within health institutions (Marinho; Carrião; Marques, 2019).

The insertion of humanized management in the health context involves a reflection on leadership practices, organizational communication and work relationships. Traditionally, the health system has been marked by great pressure on professionals, with long working hours and the demand for quick results. This can lead to emotional distancing, both in patient care and in the interaction between team members. Humanized management proposes that care and respect for human beings are the center of all actions, from interaction with patients to the conduct of the institution's internal policies, always aiming at the well-being of all those involved (Ovando; Bourlegat; Pavon, 2023).

In addition, humanization in health management implies the recognition of the importance of the worker as a fundamental part for the proper functioning of institutions. The focus is not only on the relationship between the patient and the health professional, but also on the work environment itself, which must be healthy, respectful and collaborative. Active listening, the development of interpersonal communication skills, and the construction of a welcoming culture within health institutions are central aspects of this approach (Pacheco; Magalhães, 2023).

Organizations that adopt humanized management are those that invest in the continuous development of their employees, providing them with adequate resources for the exercise of their profession in a full and satisfactory way. Within this context, quality of life at work (QWL) emerges as an important indicator to measure the success of humanized management. QWL refers to the balance between the demands of the job and the well-being of the worker, encompassing physical, emotional and psychological aspects (Silva; Chagas, 2020).

In the health sector, constant pressure, long hours, and exposure to situations of human suffering can generate emotional exhaustion and even burnout, directly affecting the ability of professionals to offer quality care. Therefore, improving the quality of life at work is

an effective way to ensure that health professionals feel valued, motivated and, above all, prepared to deal with the challenges of the profession. Investing in humanized management also involves the implementation of policies that seek to value the health team. These policies can include training on stress management to actions to recognize and value professionals, which contributes to the creation of a more harmonious work environment (Ovando; Bourlegat; Pavon, 2023).

Humanized management proposes that the health institution is not only a place where medical services are offered, but also an environment that prioritizes the development of human capital, creating conditions for workers to perform their functions more satisfactorily and with a lower level of exhaustion. The humanization of management also implies a more democratic and participatory approach. Health teams, when they feel heard and respected, tend to present better results in terms of performance and job satisfaction. This is because, in an environment where the needs and desires of professionals are considered, motivation and commitment to work increase. In addition, the active participation of teams in decisions related to the management of the work environment and the implementation of new service protocols strengthens the sense of belonging and appreciation (Silva; Chagas, 2020).

Thus, the objective of the research was to analyze how the implementation of humanized management in the health sector can directly impact the quality of life at work of professionals in the area, considering the implications of this approach for the well-being and performance of workers. The research sought to understand the practices that promote a healthier and more balanced environment, highlighting the benefits for both health professionals and the quality of care provided to patients.

METHODOLOGY

The research was conducted in a qualitative and field manner, with the aim of understanding the perceptions and experiences of health professionals in relation to humanized management and its influence on quality of life at work. The qualitative approach was chosen for its ability to explore the depth of individuals' experiences, allowing the capture of subjective and contextual aspects that would not be easily identified by quantitative methods (Lima; Domingues Junior; Gomes, 2023; File; Domingues Junior; Silva, 2024; File; Silva; Domingues Júnior, 2024). The field research, in turn, allowed the data to be collected directly in the professionals' work environment, providing a real overview of the conditions and practices observed in the daily life of health institutions.

The research sample was composed of 21 health professionals, including physicians, nurses, nursing technicians and other members of the health team, who work in different areas of a hospital institution. The choice of a relatively small sample aimed to provide a more detailed and in-depth analysis of the individual experiences of each participant, focusing on their perceptions of the work environment and humanized management practices. The selected professionals were invited to participate in the research based on their time of experience at the institution and their availability to share their experiences.

Data collection was carried out through semi-structured interviews, conducted individually with each participant. The interviews were conducted in private places, to ensure the confidentiality and freedom of expression of the professionals. The interview script was elaborated based on central themes related to humanized management, quality of life at work and health practices in the workplace. The questions were formulated in order to encourage participants to reflect on their experiences, challenges and perceptions about the application of humanized practices in management and patient care, as well as the impact of these practices on their well-being in the workplace.

During the interviews, aspects such as the relationship between the teams, the institutional support received, the working conditions, the balance between personal and professional life, and the policies of valuing the worker were explored. In addition, participants were encouraged to share practical examples of situations in which they felt that humanized management made a difference in their performance and job satisfaction. The open nature of the interviews allowed the professionals to express their opinions more freely and spontaneously, providing a richer view of the topics addressed. After data collection, the interviews were fully transcribed and organized for analysis.

Data analysis was performed using the content analysis technique, which involved the identification of categories and recurring themes in the participants' statements. Based on this analysis, it was possible to group the answers into different dimensions, such as factors that promote humanization in the work environment, the main difficulties faced by health professionals, and suggestions for improving the quality of life at work. This methodology allowed for a deep interpretation of the information, in addition to enabling the construction of a broader panorama of the reality experienced by health workers.

RESULTS AND DATA ANALYSIS

The results of the research indicated that, despite the difficulties faced in the day-to-day work in the health area, the implementation of humanized management practices has generated positive effects on the quality of life at work (QWL) of professionals. The analysis

of the collected data revealed a series of aspects related to internal communication, working conditions, psychological support and appreciation of professionals, which were identified as determinants for the increase in the well-being and motivation of workers.

According to respondent E03, a nurse with 10 years of experience in the institution, the improvement of internal communication was one of the most important factors observed in the last year, after the implementation of humanized management practices. He stated that, before, there was a great distance between the different hierarchical levels within the team, which made it difficult to exchange information and coordinate activities. "Today, the weekly meetings and open channels of communication make everyone feel heard, regardless of the position," he said. This increased transparency and exchange of information between team members resulted in a significant increase in mutual trust, which in turn contributed to a more collaborative and productive work environment.

Valuing the team was also highlighted by other respondents as an essential element for improving QWL. Respondent E11, a nursing technician, mentioned that, until the implementation of humanized management, the health team was constantly demotivated due to the lack of recognition and rewards for daily efforts. "I felt invisible, as if my work had no value. Now, the simple fact of receiving a compliment or being included in important decisions makes all the difference," he said. This change in perspective, according to him, contributed to an increase in job satisfaction and, consequently, to an improvement in the quality of patient care.

Another point frequently addressed by the participants was the issue of psychological and emotional support offered by the institution. Respondent E05, a physician with 12 years of experience, commented that, before the changes implemented by humanized management, the emotional pressure generated by the suffering of patients and the workload was very difficult to deal with. "I even had anxiety crises and burnout syndrome. From the moment the institution began to invest in psychological support programs, with psychologists available for listening and guidance, I noticed a big difference," she said. The professional highlighted that offering this support helped reduce stress and emotional overload, improving his performance and his ability to serve patients in a more empathetic and attentive way.

In addition, the professionals recognized that the implementation of practices aimed at improving the balance between personal and professional life was an important advance in improving the quality of life at work. According to E07, a nurse, the possibility of having more flexible work schedules, especially in on-call situations, was a fundamental factor for her satisfaction. "Before, the workload was so heavy that I felt I didn't have time for my

family and my own care. Now, with the possibility of adjusting schedules and offsetting shifts, I feel that I can maintain a better balance between professional and personal life," she said.

The change in the organizational environment was also observed by other participants, who perceived a significant improvement in the management of the work environment. E09, a physiotherapist, mentioned that, with the implementation of the new management practices, the physical structure of the institution also underwent improvements. "Before, the rest spaces were inadequate, and this directly affected our disposition during the shift. Now, we have more pleasant and suitable spaces to relax between appointments, which helps a lot to recover energy", he explained. This improvement in the physical environment was associated with the creation of a more welcoming organizational climate, which favored interaction between co-workers and the feeling of well-being.

The promotion of mental health in the workplace was another point highlighted by the professionals. According to E10, a psychologist who has worked at the institution for 8 years, the mental health of health workers is often neglected. He reported that, before the changes, professionals found themselves in situations of constant pressure, which generated high levels of stress and low productivity. "Humanized management has brought a more careful look at the emotional needs of professionals. Having a space where we can talk about our difficulties has been fundamental", reported E10, highlighting the importance of creating support groups and activities that promote self-care among health professionals.

Regarding the interaction between the teams, many interviewees mentioned that humanized management helped to promote greater cohesion among members of different sectors. E06, a physiotherapist, reported that, before the change in management, there was a great fragmentation in teamwork, which generated conflicts and friction between professionals from different areas. "Today, communication is much more fluid. We participate together in trainings, discussions on protocols, and feedback meetings. This has greatly improved our ability to work together and solve problems collaboratively," said E06. This feeling of unity and belonging to the team was highlighted as an important factor for increasing productivity and improving the patient experience in care.

In addition to the changes in organizational and psychological aspects, some respondents also mentioned the importance of continuous training actions, which have become more valued within the institution. E08, a physician, explained that, before humanized management practices, professionals felt neglected in relation to updating their knowledge and skills. "Now, there is a greater investment in training, courses and

workshops. This not only increases our knowledge, but also demonstrates that the institution cares about our professional development," said E08. This investment in training was associated with an increase in the confidence of professionals in their abilities, which reflected positively on the quality of care provided to patients.

Humanized management has also brought a greater emphasis on ethics and respect in the work environment. E04, a nurse, reported that, before the change, there was a work environment marked by competitiveness and disrespect. "The professionals often competed with each other, which generated a climate of tension. Now, the humanized approach has fostered a culture of respect, where differences are respected and valued. This has made all the difference in the team's atmosphere," said E04. This focus on work ethics was seen as an essential component of improving workers' well-being and strengthening the commitment to quality of care.

The reduction in turnover, or turnover of professionals, was also an indicator that humanized management was promoting significant changes in job satisfaction. E12, a physician with 15 years of experience at the institution, highlighted that, before the implementation of humanized management practices, the high turnover of professionals was a major challenge. "We saw a big change after humanized practices began to be adopted. Many colleagues who were dissatisfied with the working conditions and were thinking of leaving decided to stay. The quality of the work environment made all the difference", reported E12.

While the positive results are evident, some professionals still highlighted the need for further advancement in specific areas. E02, a nursing technician, mentioned that work overload, especially at peak times, is still a challenge that needs to be improved. "Despite all the positive changes, there are still times when demand is very high and we don't have the necessary support. This ends up generating additional stress," said E02. However, he acknowledged that, despite these challenges, the improvements brought about by humanized management already have a positive impact on their quality of life at work.

In summary, the data indicate that the implementation of humanized management has generated significant advances in the quality of life at work of health professionals. Communication practices, valuing workers, psychological support, and improving working conditions were pointed out as essential factors for the creation of a healthier and more collaborative environment. However, some challenges still remain, especially regarding the workload and the need for more resources at certain times. The analysis revealed that, for humanized management to be fully effective, it is essential that improvements are continuous and that the needs of professionals are constantly monitored and met.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The present research allowed an in-depth analysis of the relationship between the implementation of humanized management and the quality of life at work (QWL) of health professionals, highlighting both the advances and the challenges faced in health institutions. From the qualitative data collected through interviews with 21 professionals from different areas, it was possible to perceive that humanized management has generated significant impacts on the improvement of working conditions, the promotion of the well-being of employees and, consequently, the quality of care provided to patients.

One of the main findings of the research was the importance of internal communication and the strengthening of interprofessional relationships. The creation of open and transparent communication channels has contributed to greater trust and cohesion between work teams. Professionals such as E03 and E06 highlighted that, before humanized management, there was great fragmentation and lack of interaction between the different areas, which hindered collaboration and often generated conflicts. With the implementation of more inclusive communication practices, these professionals reported a significant improvement in the work environment, with a greater ability to solve problems together and a sense of belonging to the team.

Another relevant aspect identified was the appreciation of workers. The research showed that the adoption of practices that recognize the effort of professionals has a direct effect on motivation and job satisfaction. Professionals such as E11 and E07 stated that the simple recognition of daily effort, whether through praise, inclusion in decision-making processes or adjustments in working conditions, generated a positive impact on their self-esteem and their commitment to the quality of care. Appreciation, therefore, is not restricted only to financial recognition, but to the creation of an environment where professionals feel respected and recognized in their capabilities and efforts.

The provision of psychological and emotional support has also emerged as an essential component of humanized management. Professionals such as E05 and E10 highlighted that, before the changes, many faced serious mental health problems due to the high workload and stress associated with caring for patients in situations of suffering. The implementation of psychological support services and listening spaces for workers was seen as a fundamental change, contributing to the reduction of stress, the prevention of burnout and the increase of job satisfaction. Humanized management, therefore, when looking at the mental health of workers, contributes directly to the creation of a more balanced and productive environment.

In addition, the survey showed that humanized management not only affects the well-being of professionals, but also directly reflects on the quality of patient care. The improvement in the quality of life at work, resulting from practices such as strengthening communication, valuing professionals and psychological support, has a positive impact on workers' performance. More satisfied and motivated health professionals tend to offer more humanized and effective care to patients, which is essential in a health environment, where emotional interactions and comprehensive care are fundamental.

However, despite the advances observed, the survey also revealed persistent challenges. Many professionals pointed to work overload, especially during periods of high demand, as one of the main factors that still negatively affects the quality of life at work. The constant pressure and scarcity of resources at certain times continue to be an obstacle for humanized management practices to be fully effective. Professionals like E02 pointed out that, even with the improvements, the management of working hours and the equitable distribution of tasks still need attention to prevent workers from feeling overloaded and stressed.

Thus, although the implementation of humanized management has demonstrated significant advances in improving the quality of life at work, the research suggests that a continuous commitment from the management of health institutions is necessary to face the remaining challenges. It is essential that humanized practices are not seen as one-off initiatives, but as a continuous process of improvement, with the constant engagement of professionals and leadership. This includes, among other actions, expanding psychological support, managing the workload more efficiently, and promoting a work environment that encourages work-life balance.

The survey also reinforces the need for regular monitoring of QWL, with the implementation of mechanisms that allow for the continuous evaluation of working conditions and the adaptation of management practices according to the needs of professionals. The creation of feedback spaces and the inclusion of workers in the decision-making process on changes in management practices are fundamental for humanization in the work environment to remain aligned with the real needs of health professionals.

In conclusion, humanized management proved to be an effective strategy for promoting quality of life at work in the context of health, with positive impacts both for professionals and for the quality of patient care. However, the results of the research indicate that, for the benefits of this approach to be sustainable in the long term, a continuous commitment to improving working conditions, investing in the development of professionals and constantly adapting to the demands of the health environment is

necessary. With this, humanized management can consolidate itself as an effective and transformative model, both for health workers and for patients who depend on increasingly sensitive and integrated care.

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