PSYCHOSOCIAL INTERVENTION IN DIALOGUE WITH ACTIVITY THEORY: EXPERIENCE REPORTS IN A PRIVATE ORGANIZATION IN BELO HORIZONTE – MG

INTERVENÇÃO PSICOSSOCIAL EM DIÁLOGO COM A TEORIA DA ATIVIDADE: RELATOS DE EXPERIÊNCIA EM UMA ORGANIZAÇÃO PRIVADA DE BELO HORIZONTE – MG

INTERVENCIÓN PSICOSOCIAL EN DIÁLOGO CON LA TEORÍA DE LA ACTIVIDAD: RELATO DE EXPERIENCIAS EN UNA ORGANIZACIÓN PRIVADA EN BELO HORIZONTE – MG

Alex Fernandes Magalhães[1], Henriqueta Regina Pereira Couto[2] and Karinne Regis Duarte[3]

ABSTRACT
Many impasses, contradictions, and challenges have emerged in professional practices aimed at social subjects within organizational spaces. Therefore, research and intervention practices for human development depend on critical reflection and the formulation of strategies that enable individuals to generate their own positive and meaningful interpretations of their activities, fostering satisfaction, motivation, and self-fulfillment at work. This, in turn, ensures the achievement of the organization's strategic objectives without neglecting the worker's subjective dimension. The purpose of this study, therefore, is to present a reflection on the application of psychosocial intervention in dialogue with Activity Theory as a clinical approach to work relations within organizations. The goal is to uncover fundamental contradictions in the way human labor is organized and enable social subjects to achieve emancipation and, consequently, improved quality of working life. Based on experiences in a private company in Belo Horizonte, MG, the study aims to support the argument that activities within organizations develop within a complex web of historically embedded elements that control and articulate discourse, rationalities, and subjectivities. These elements interfere in both the quality of work and the workers' lives, often contradicting and challenging the narratives promoted by development actions. The study assumes that strategies guided by psychossocial intervention and the historical-cultural perspective underpinning Activity Theory can contribute to raising critical awareness

---

[1]Dr. in Administration from UFMG;
Adjunct Professor at the Department of Administrative Sciences and at the Center for Graduate Studies and Research in Administration (CEPEAD) at FACE/UFMG.
E-mail: alexfm@face.ufmg.br
[2]Doctorate student in Education at FAE/UFMG;
Professor of the undergraduate course in Psychology at FAMINAS.
Email: henriquetacouto@yahoo.com.br
[3]Dr. in Psychology from PUC-MG;
Adjunct Professor of the Department of Psychology of the Institute of Biotechnology of UFCAT.
Email: karinneduarte@ufcat.edu.br

of work, (re)orienting social subjects toward emancipation and empowerment in socio-organizational relations.

Keywords: Psychosocial intervention. Activity Theory. Work relations. Social subject.

RESUMO
Muitos impasses, contradições e desafios têm emergido nas práticas profissionais voltadas aos sujeitos sociais nos espaços organizacionais. Portanto, as práticas de pesquisa e intervenção para o desenvolvimento humano dependem da reflexão crítica e da formulação de estratégias que possibilitem aos indivíduos gerarem suas próprias interpretações positivas e significativas sobre suas atividades, fomentando a satisfação, a motivação e a autorrealização no trabalho. Isso, por sua vez, garante o alcance dos objetivos estratégicos da organização sem negligenciar a dimensão subjetiva do trabalhador. O objetivo deste estudo, portanto, é apresentar uma reflexão sobre a aplicação da intervenção psicossocial em diálogo com a Teoria da Atividade como abordagem clínica das relações de trabalho nas organizações. O objetivo é desvendar contradições fundamentais na forma como o trabalho humano se organiza e possibilitar aos sujeitos sociais a emancipação e, consequentemente, a melhoria da qualidade de vida no trabalho. A partir de experiências em uma empresa privada de Belo Horizonte, MG, o estudo visa sustentar a argumentação de que as atividades nas organizações se desenvolvem em uma complexa teia de elementos historicamente imbricados que controlam e articulam discursos, racionalidades e subjetividades. Esses elementos interferem tanto na qualidade do trabalho quanto na vida dos trabalhadores, muitas vezes contradizendo e desafiando as narrativas promovidas pelas ações de desenvolvimento. O estudo parte do pressuposto de que estratégias pautadas pela intervenção psicossocial e pela perspectiva histórico-cultural que sustenta a Teoria da Atividade podem contribuir para a formação de uma consciência crítica sobre o trabalho, (re)orientando os sujeitos sociais para a emancipação e o empoderamento nas relações socioorganizacionais.

Palavras-chave: Intervenção psicossocial. Teoria da Atividade. Relações de trabalho. Sujeito social.

RESUMEN
Han surgido numerosos impasses, contradicciones y desafíos en las prácticas profesionales dirigidas a sujetos sociales dentro de los espacios organizacionales. Por lo tanto, las prácticas de investigación e intervención para el desarrollo humano dependen de la reflexión crítica y la formulación de estrategias que permitan a los individuos generar sus propias interpretaciones positivas y significativas de sus actividades, fomentando la satisfacción, la motivación y la autorrealización laboral. Esto, a su vez, garantiza el logro de los objetivos estratégicos de la organización sin descuidar la dimensión subjetiva del trabajador. El propósito de este estudio, por lo tanto, es presentar una reflexión sobre la aplicación de la intervención psicosocial en diálogo con la Teoría de la Actividad como un enfoque clínico para las relaciones laborales dentro de las organizaciones. El objetivo es revelar contradicciones fundamentales en la forma en que se organiza el trabajo humano y permitir que los sujetos sociales logren la emancipación y, en consecuencia, una mejor calidad de vida laboral. Basado en experiencias en una empresa privada en Belo Horizonte, MG, el estudio busca sustentar el argumento de que las actividades dentro de las organizaciones se desarrollan dentro de una compleja red de elementos históricamente arraigados que controlan y articulan el discurso, las racionalidades y las subjetividades.

Estos elementos interfieren tanto en la calidad del trabajo como en la vida de los trabajadores, a menudo contradiciendo y cuestionando las narrativas promovidas por las acciones de desarrollo. El estudio asume que las estrategias guiadas por la intervención psicosocial y la perspectiva histórico-cultural que sustenta la Teoría de la Actividad pueden contribuir a generar una conciencia crítica del trabajo, (re)orientando a los sujetos sociales hacia la emancipación y el empoderamiento en las relaciones socioorganizacionales.

Palabras clave: Intervención psicosocial. Teoría de la Actividad. Relaciones laborales. Sujeto social.

INTRODUCTION

The research and intervention work with workers in organizations has a series of practices already established in the scope of Human Resources Administration and Organizational and Work Psychology, areas that, among others, stand out in terms of care for the person, its application, integration and development in work contexts. at least as a foundation. It is known, however, that these practices of "care" for the human in organizations can also be taken as strategies for modeling or manipulating the subject, in order to undermine their power of reflection and action in the face of the coercion they may suffer in socio-organizational exchanges, since such practices have as their real purpose the financial return to owners and shareholders. who coordinate and act strategically in these socialization spaces, in order to avoid events that have proven harmful action to the organization and the business, such as absenteeism, *turnover*, abandonment, illness, etc. In this sense, practices such as training, development programs – such as tutoring, awareness laboratories, *coaching*, *mentoring*, etc. – are increasingly expressive, always seeking to adapt the interests of the worker to those of the organization, in an attempt to mitigate any forms of conflict or impasse that may bring obstacles to the work (Tragtenberg, 2005; Pagès *et al.*, 2008).

In terms of articulation with the discourse of development, however, we note an essential contradiction, since in the midst of the practices of people management – especially those aimed at development – there would be, in theory, the possibility of critical awakening that would make it impossible to manipulate the consciousness and the strategies of alienation of the worker, by conceiving development as the expansion of the potentialities of social subjects based on reflexivity, of self-emancipation and self-knowledge, with their (re)direction beyond the ties that institutionalities bring them, undermining their power to act and eliminating the so-called instituting movement (Baremblitt, 2021).

Many scholars of Critical Theory[4] have already explained that there are negative effects on workers and their subjectivity, since companies are interested, above all, in the commitment to results and consequent profit. It is therefore important to understand that the processes of human resource management and, in particular, the actions of socialization and integration of the worker and the training provided can constitute powerful mechanisms

---

[4] In Brazil, authors such as José Henrique de Faria, Ricardo Antunes, Giovanni Alves, Marcus Vinícius Siqueira and Roberto Heloani have significant works that deal with the issue raised.

of ideological imposition, which seek to adapt the subjects to the ideals proposed by the organization, in addition to validating (or not) their place in the organizational structure according to their potential for delivery and subordination.

Thinking, therefore, of new possibilities for research and intervention in organizational spaces in order to promote reflexivity and self-knowledge is fundamental for the promotion of quality of life at work. The subject, even if aware (even if partially), is faced with the impossibility of totally detaching himself from ideologies (Faria; Meneghetti, 2007), of concrete working conditions. From this emerges the need to promote work that allows them to make choices that are more coherent with their desires and with the senses that guide their daily practices, in addition to enhancing lines of flight for the strategies of domination that may be masked in the practices of people management.

The *so-called Labor Clinics* emerge as a series of theoretical and methodological perspectives that try to break with functionalism, the pragmatism of the productive context and with the perspective of the worker's application to organizational interests, since his interest is emancipatory, which brings to the practices a necessarily critical character (Paes De Paula, 2015). It does not seek a treatment of the subject, but the questioning and search for possible interpretations and clarifications of the relations in which he is involved, taking as a central point the human work and its ontological, dialectical and dynamic character in the formation of both the social subjects and the socio-organizational spaces themselves. The work clinics include the *Psychodynamics of Work* proposed by Christophe Dejours, the *Activity Clinic* proposed by Yves Clot, *Psychosociology* – an interdisciplinary area that brings together great researchers, such as Eugéne Enriquez, Max Pagès, Vincent de Gaulejac, Jacqueline Barus-Michel, etc. –, and *Ergology* by Yves Schwartz (Bendassolli; Soboll, 2011).

It is important to mention that the theories of clinical work share an interest in action, in the understanding of work in its objective and subjective sense, in addition to the defense of the emancipation of the subject. Despite these common assumptions, they present epistemological, theoretical and methodological divergences, which guarantees the specificities of each approach, on the one hand, but can also hinder fruitful dialogues regarding the ways in which professionals immersed in work organizations can act in favor of quality of life.

In this work, we seek to bring contributions from the application of a psychosocial intervention in dialogue with the theory of activity as a clinical approach to labor relations in

organizations, in order to unveil essential contradictions in the way human work is organized and enable social subjects to emancipate and, consequently, promote quality of life at work. From the experiences lived in a private company in Belo Horizonte-MG, arguments were sought that support the idea that activities in organizations are developed in the midst of a tangled web of elements that historically control and articulate discourses, rationalities and subjectivities, etc., and that interfere in the quality of work and life of employees, in a contradictory and controversial way to the discourses proclaimed by development actions. It is based on the assumption that, based on strategies guided by psychosocial intervention and by the historical-cultural perspective that underlies the theory of activity, it will be possible to contribute to the critical awareness of work, (re)guiding social subjects to emancipation and their empowerment in socio-organizational relations, in addition to awakening among professionals who turn to people in work organizations new possibilities of research and intervention in the face of limitations given in social labor relations.

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

Psychosocial intervention: foundations and methodological aspects

Throughout the century. There were several questions focused on psychological practice in social spaces. In part, because of the Cartesian and functionalist foundation to which experimental psychology turned when the laboratory proposed by Wilhelm Wundt was created in Leipzig, Germany, in 1879. In that context, psychological science, like the other sciences of the time, proved to be a useful tool to respond to the demands of bourgeois and liberal society, as a tool that made it possible to explain and propose solutions to the dysfunctions perceived by the subjects in their processes of development and social adaptation. Questions of a physiological nature, then, were central to psychological science, but they were not sufficient to explain the questions of the psyche – which, due to its subjective nature, received different conceptual delimitations, which led to the emergence of several psychological schools (Bock; Stolen; Teixeira, 2023). But it was also necessary to encompass its articulation with the social context with regard to questions of the psyche, which led Wundt to propose a bipartisan model of psychological science: on the one hand, psychology as a natural and experimental science; and, on the other hand, psychology as a social science, based on different epistemologies (Farr, 2012). Authors such as Freud, Gustave Le Bon, William McDougall, among others, also turned their

analyses to this articulation, even though there was, as a focus, a greater expressiveness of inner and intrasubjective causes in their propositions.

The question of the ideological dimension of the sciences then became the subject of discussions by epistemologists and philosophers in the 1920s and 1930s, marking the advent of Neopositivism with the so-called Vienna Circle (a group of philosophers and mathematicians who met in Vienna, Austria, in the 1920s and 1930s, with the aim of developing a rigorous scientific approach to knowledge in defense of the **logical positivism). In this context, approaches that criticized the positivist logical model, strongly oriented by its "utility", also flourished** in response to bourgeois society. There would not, therefore, be a single way to construct scientific knowledge, according to the arguments proposed by the movement, involving different approaches in philosophy, human and social sciences, among which phenomenology (Husserl, Heidegger), hermeneutics (Dilthey, Gadamer), and the Frankfurt school (Adorno, Marcuse, Horkheimer, Habermas) stand out.

Parallel to the epistemological discussions that were taking place in the European context, the proposal of a social psychology in the Chicago School emerged in the United States, with George H. Mead as the main exponent. The author argued that social interactions presuppose not only the "other" as a determinant in the positioning of the "I", but also the "I" representing a stimulus for the "other" – something that invited self-reflexivity. Mead thus studied the bases of the concepts of "self" in the midst of the practices of socialization of the individual, which, in turn, would depend on the understanding of the other as a reference to the difference within the individual's own "socializing" group (Ennes, 2013). In the American context, then, the understanding is established that the subject has primacy in social relations. In the movement of articulating the social, psychological and physiological dimensions, the reductionist view of the individual is discarded and human relations are inserted in a three-dimensionality, where the subject is constructed in consubstantiation with the other, thus forming the biopsychosocial model.

From then on, psychological science entered the field of research in constant articulation with social contexts. Themes such as perception, attitudes, group behaviors, motivation, among others, are central so that the knowledge coming from psychology could help in the correction of existing dysfunctions in socialization spaces, whether schools, work organizations, hospitals, etc. Researchers such as Kurt Lewin, for example, have made important contributions to the understanding of group dynamics in the North American

context. But from the 70s onwards and already as a result of the expressiveness of more critical currents that were developing in Europe and Latin America, the purpose of social psychology expanded: it is no longer possible to think about the application of psychological science without historical contextualization, without expressive analyses of social representations, ideologies and other symbolic aspects that guide the groups (Lane; Codo, 2012). And, above all, the application of psychology cannot be taken without politicizing the practices and their objectives in relation to the contextualities to which it is turned. The objective of critical social psychology is, then, the emancipation of groups that are often oppressed in the midst of historically established power relations, in order to awaken the instituting movement (Baremblitt, 2021), strengthen bonds, identity aspects, and assist in the empowerment of minority groups. Thus, the utilitarian aspect focused on the adaptations of subjects to the logic of contexts that are often oppressive and totalitarian is displaced.

In the French context, the proposal of a psychosociology is developed. Unlike American-based social psychology, psychosociology is an interdisciplinary field that combines elements of psychology and sociology to understand the articulation between the social and psychic spheres in interactions. Endowed with a transdisciplinary character, Psychosociology is inserted in the relationships of the subject with the socioeconomic, historical and cultural elements around him and his response to the delimitations experienced in the relational dynamics of social groups (Machado, 2004). It thus offers an area of resources and epistemological paths that use social action to investigate contemporary mediators: group, organization and institution (Enriquez *et al*., 1994). Based on human praxis, Psychosociology is based on different currents, including Psychoanalysis, Psychodynamics of Work, Socio-historical Psychology, Institutional Analysis, etc., considering contributions from psychology and social sciences, considering the individual and the collective in the processes of psychic and social constitution. It is essential to cite the studies of authors such as Max Pagès, Éugene Enriquez, Dominique Lhuilier, Vicente de Gauljeac, André Lévy, among others, in the development of psychosociology in the French context. In the Brazilian context, the works of Marília Novais da Mata Machado, José Newton Garcia, Ana Magnólia Mendes, Vanessa de Andrade Barros stand out, researchers in constant dialogue with collective spaces and European and Latin American research centers.

For psychosociology, the practical character is fundamental, in accordance also with the proposal of a critical and communitarian social psychology, proposed by Ignacio Martín-Baró in Latin America. Martín-Baró criticized traditional psychology and its ideological neutrality and experimental character, without considering fundamental elements and variables in the analysis and interventions in social spaces, such as power structures, the material reality of oppressed groups, the context and conditions of oppression, as well as their effects on the promotion of mental health, since psychological suffering was a reaction to such contexts of oppression and vulnerability. Social transformation, practicality, and commitment to minority groups should be the basis of critical psychology. Also in Brazil, authors such as Sílvia Lane and Wanderley Codo engaged in this movement, marking a reformulation of Brazilian psychological science, based on justice and social commitment in the various fields in which it is inserted (Lane; Codo, 2012).

It is this practical and emancipatory character that brings psychosociology and critical and community psychology closer together. If we consider their applications in work organizations, we can think of the approaches as clinical work proposals, since they mobilize collectives to reflexivity about the conditions of production of social and psychological realities, based on critical knowledge about the historical power relations that mark work organizations in our mode of material production of reality. It is necessary, therefore, to analyze and understand the various interests involved in labor relations, as well as possibilities of action given to the various groups involved in these relationships, which generate, as an effect of unequal and oppressive relations, psychic suffering and social injustice, often naturalized in the midst of reality, diminishing the perception of the power of oppressed groups to act, especially workers.

Psychosocial intervention thus invites collectives to perceive their historical and social reality; the analysis of the concrete relations of production of this reality; group involvement and the creation of possible defensive strategies in the face of oppression; and mobilization for change, as a way of promoting a new reality. It is a participatory methodology, with the engagement of the researcher with the reality of the groups researched (Machado *et al*., 2001).

As can be seen here, there are approximations between the proposition of a psychosociology and the bases coming from the Marxism of critical and community psychology and the proposals of work clinics, as mentioned by Bendassolli and Soboll (2011). In the following chapter, some elements of the Activity Theory will be presented.

The historical-cultural perspective and the Activity Theory

In order to understand the activity theory (AT), it is necessary to understand its history, its philosophical and epistemological origin. In the former Soviet Union, Lev Semenovitch Vygotsky[5] (1896-1934), Alexander Romanovich Luria (1902-1977) and Alexei Nikolaievich Leontiev (1904-1977) formed a working group that became known as the *troika*. These researchers worked together from 1924 to 1934 and built the theoretical basis of historical-cultural psychology.

Vygotsky, as the intellectual leader of the group, notes that the psychological theories existing at the time were not able to formulate a general theory of Psychology, nor to explain the human psyche. With this, he began to defend the thesis that Psychology would be in a methodological crisis, which would only be overcome through a methodology based on history. To solve such questions, Vygotsky proposes a Marxist-based Psychology. Starting from the dialectical conception and representation of man made by Karl Marx, this psychology begins to understand the social as a constituent part of the human psyche. With Marxism, a new conception of man emerges, as active, social and historical, and a new conception of science, concerned not with describing reality, but with explaining and transforming it.

Historical-cultural psychology, in understanding the social and material character of psychic phenomena, starts from the principle that typically human characteristics are not present from birth, are not biological or innate, but are the product of man's cultural development. This perspective leads Vygotsky to research the higher forms of behavior, the higher psychological functions, and to understand them from the social relations that the individual establishes with the world.

> Vygotsky understood that 'natural' development produced functions with primary forms, while 'social' (cultural) development transformed elementary processes into higher ones. Higher psychological functions are, therefore, a product of the socio-cultural environment in which men live immersed. Vygotsky states that the psychological nature of men represents the aggregate of internalized social relations that have become, for the individual, functions and forms of his structure (Aguiar, 2021, p.122).

---

[5] In Portuguese, there are several spellings found for Vygotsky: Vygotsky, Vygotsky, Vygotsky, Vygotsky and Vygotskii. In this text, it was decided to use "Vygotsky", respecting the spelling used by the authors of the works consulted.

The appropriation of the material world by men and their individual configuration occurs through human activity on the world. The category of human activity, linked to the Marxist concept of work, is a central category of the foundation of historical-cultural psychology. Work is understood as the activity appropriate to an end, it is what fundamentally makes us human. It is the ontological primacy for understanding the humanization of man, or, in other words, the universal condition for man to become human (Asbhar, 2011).

The Marxist category of work is assumed by historical-cultural psychology as an explanatory category of the psyche and expanded to the concept of activity. From Vygotsky's first propositions, activity appears as an explanatory principle of consciousness and of higher psychological functions.   Through activity, individuals appropriate the social world. But this relationship between man and the world is not a direct one, as happens in the relationship of animals with nature. Human activity, social by nature, is always mediated by objects created by men. Thus, the mediatized character of the psyche becomes central to historical-cultural psychology.

The main mediating elements of the activity are the instruments and signs. The instrument is the means that man uses to transform the external world. Signs, in turn, do not modify the object of the psychological operation, as they are internally oriented, but have the essential function of directing, controlling the internal activity of man, being a means of internal activity directed towards the control of the individual himself (Vygotsky, 2007). The development of higher psychological functions is processed by the internalization or conversion of the systems of socially produced signs. Language has a primary role in the formation of these functions to the extent that it is the mediating sign system par excellence, as it is through it that individuals organize, transmit and appropriate individual and collective experiences (Asbhar, 2011).

The constitution of the subject is seen, therefore, as the result of this process of conversion of the social into the individual, without the individual and society maintaining an isomorphic relationship between them. For Pino (1991), the concept of conversion that Vygotsky talks about refers to the process of discovering/assuming a new meaning of things by the subjects. Conversion would consist, therefore, in transforming concrete materialities into symbolic productions, as is typical of all human activity. Thus, progressively, through the mediation of social relations, man is constituted. This formation

of human consciousness, via conversion processes, should not be seen as a simply cognitive and intellectual activity, but as a fundamentally emotional one (Aguiar, 2021).

For Vygotsky, thought and emotion cannot be understood in a dichotomized way. For him, the cognitive process does not exist detached from emotion. By distinguishing between sense and meaning, Vygotsky highlights the dialectic of the constitution of consciousness, the integration between affective and cognitive, the social, historical, and unique character of the subject (Aguiar, 2021).

> The meaning of a word is the sum of all the psychological events that the word awakens in our consciousness. It is a complex, fluid and dynamic whole, which has several zones of uneven stability. Meaning is only one of the zones of meaning, the most stable and precise. A word acquires its meaning in the context in which it appears; in different contexts, it changes its meaning. The meaning remains stable throughout all the changes in meaning. The dictionary meaning of a word is nothing more than a stone in the edifice of meaning, it is nothing more than a potentiality that is realized in different ways in speech (Vygotsky, 2019, p.181).

Thus, to understand consciousness or the subject in its singularity, we must understand its thought and speech endowed with emotion, linked to subjective meanings. Through the apprehension of meanings and the search for determinations, we will be able to investigate the social-historical, unique and unrepeatable constitution of the subject (Aguiar, 2021), to sensitize him to the creation of defensive mechanisms against the forms of domination and social exploitation that are historically present during intersubjective exchanges.

The development of Activity Theory

According to Engeström (2015), three theoretical generations can be distinguished in the evolution of activity theory. The first generation is centered around Vygotsky and the concept of mediated action. This idea was represented in Vygotsky's triangular model and expresses the triad subject, object and mediating artifact (instrument).

FIGURE 1: The structure of Vygotsky's mediated action

S - - - - - - - - - - - - - R

X
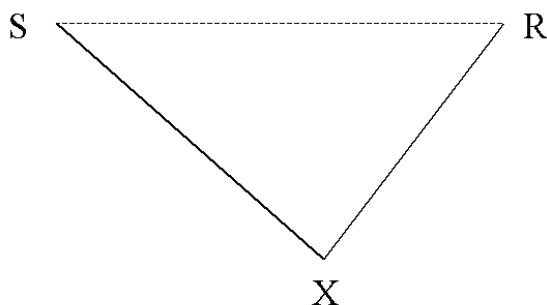
Source: Engeström, 2015.

The insertion of mediating instruments in the analysis of the relationship between subject and object was revolutionary in overcoming the Cartesian dichotomy between the individual and the social. From Vygotsky onwards, the individual could no longer be understood without his cultural means; and society could no longer be understood without the dynamics of its individuals who use and produce artifacts. This means that objects are no longer just raw material and have become guides for human action and the constitution of the psyche, at the same time that they are products of the action of creation and the power of transformation of social subjects.

The second generation is represented by Leontiev and is marked by the understanding of activity as a collective system of activity, in which the actions of individuals and groups are included. However, Leontiev did not graphically expand Vygotsky's original model (Engeström, 2015). He deepens the explanation of the relationship between activity and consciousness, postulating that they form a dialectical unity of the human psyche, and embodies the Activity Theory (AT).

For Leontiev (1988), motives, actions and operations are the structural components of the activity; Sensitive content, social meanings, and personal senses, in turn, make up consciousness.

> We do not call all processes activity. By this term we designate only those processes which, realizing man's relations with the world, satisfy a special need corresponding to it. (...) By activity, we designate the processes psychologically characterized by what the process, as a whole, is directed to (its object), always coinciding with the objective that stimulates the subject to perform this activity, that is, the motive (Leontiev, 1988, p.68).

A need is a requirement for any activity. In turn, the need can only be satisfied when it finds an object. This movement results in a motif. The motive is that which drives the

activity, since it articulates a need to an object. Isolated needs and objects do not create activity.

> The first condition of all activity is a necessity. But necessity in itself cannot determine the concrete orientation of an activity, for it is only in the object of the activity that it finds its determination: it must, so to speak, be found in it. Once necessity finds its determination in the object (if "objectified" in it), the said object becomes the motive of activity, that which stimulates it (Leontiev, 2021, p. 107-108).

When the motive is driven by a need and this can be objectified in the object, a relationship is established between meaning and meaning of the constitutive actions of an activity. The meaning for Leontiev (2021) is that produced by society, expresses the process of production of human knowledge and is subordinated to socio-historical laws. It is something, therefore, produced collectively, within a culture, and has an existence independent of the individual. However, meaning only manifests its existence within an activity performed by an individual. This socially shared meaning of being present in an activity performed by the individual will be appropriated, that is, it will be integrated into the individual consciousness of this subject.

As Leontiev (2021) points out, personal meaning is related to this movement of meaning in individual consciousness, expressing the subjective character acquired by meaning and, therefore, its partiality. This appropriation should not be understood as a purely individual act, but loaded with a social dimension constitutive of the subject from the social practices in which he is inserted. Thus, there must be a relationship between social meaning and personal meaning. However, Leontiev (2021) points out that, under certain conditions, there may be a discrepancy between personal meanings and objective meanings in individual consciousness, leading to the alienation of the subject in the activity.

Alienation, as highlighted by Duarte (2002), is a central theme in Leontiev's work. When considering activity as an explanatory principle of the psyche, it is important to be aware of two dimensions: activity as essentially social of human beings and a universal condition of the humanizing formation of consciousness; and the processes of alienation produced by the activities that give meaning (or non-meaning) to the life of human beings in capitalist society. In class society, characterized by private ownership of the means of production and the separation between intellectual and manual labor, human activity is not necessarily humanizing. On the contrary, as Oliveira (2006, p.13) points out, work ceases to be "a mediating activity that forms the essence of the human in man and becomes an activity that empties the being of man".

Alienation, Asbhar (2011) points out, is not an ontological trait of the human being, but constitutive of a historical-economic moment created by the capitalist organization of the mode of production, which can be overcome. Even though it is not an ontological characteristic, it is still necessary to consider it in the formation of the psyche, because, in our society, this is a phenomenon that forms activity and consciousness. According to Duarte (2002), studies that take the theory of activity as a reference and disregard this important part of Leontiev's theory end up operating an ideological asepsis, mischaracterizing it from its explicit and consistent philosophical affiliation to Marxism.

The third generation of AT is marked by the studies of Engeström (2015). The author understands human activity as constitutive of a system, which includes subject, object, community, mediating artifacts, rules and division of labor, and represents it graphically in the diagram of the activity system.

FIGURE 2: Representation of the activity system proposed by Engeström
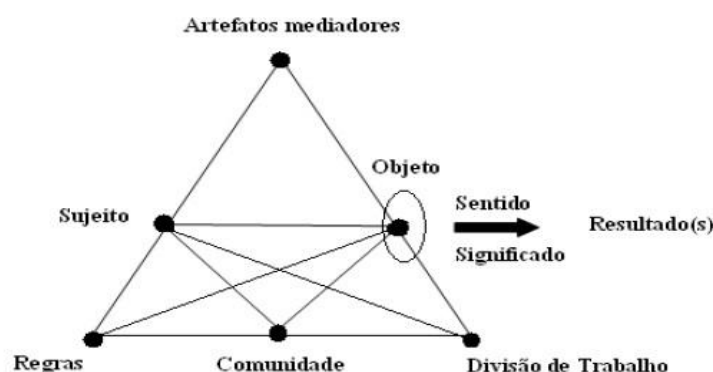
Source: Daniels, 2011, p.119.

In the representation proposed by Engeström (2016), the social and collective nature of the activity gains centrality. The individual is seen within a community, which has its own rules, division of labor and mediating artifacts. The actions performed by an individual, or by a group, are understood from the specific mediational artifacts of the culture/history of the community in which the activity takes place.

By representing activity as a system, Engeström (2016) points to its dynamic and systemic character. The relationship between its constituent elements is marked by tensions, contradictions, and continuous changes in its parts, in its relations and as a whole

(Moreira; Pontelo, 2009). Thus, we understand that a subject, when participating in an activity, transforms it and is transformed by it.

Daniels (2011) synthesizes Engeström's theory in five principles: the first of them concerns the basic unit of analysis: the collective activity system, mediated by an artifact and oriented by an object; the second principle refers to the polyphonic aspect of systems of activity, described as a community of multiple points of view, traditions, and interests; the third principle of historicity, systems of activity take shape and are transformed over long periods of time and their potential problems can only be understood in terms of this history; the fourth principle is the central role of contradictions/tensions, which are not seen as problems or conflicts, but as sources of change and development; Finally, the fifth principle brings the possibility of expansive transformations in the systems of activity. These occur "(...) when the object and motive of an activity are recontextualized to involve a radically broader horizon of possibilities than in previous modes of activity" (Engeström, 2015, p.137).

In Clot (2010), the activity is seen as addressed, directed, simultaneously, to its object and to the other activities that affect this object. The object of sociocultural study is events, activity and practice, "and it is methodologically necessary to study situated practices" (Daniels, 2011, p. 123). When analyzing the practical field of human action, Clot (2010) defines activity as a living unit, which undergoes metamorphoses over time. The analysis of the activity is allied to the possible development of objects, artifacts, the subject, the instruments of the subject and the collective activity. However, a certain care is needed, because as Clot (2006) warns, the activities are not "all ready" waiting for an explanation, because when they become language, the activities are reorganized and modified, and the activity itself is a relationship of transfiguration between the given and the created.

Clot proposes the activity clinic as a practice to help workers in the creation of strategies to understand their practices based on reflexivity and, thus, as a way to also enable defensive mechanisms and actions in the face of pressures and other forms of oppression in labor relations. The clinical perspective of the activity originated in 1990 and is based on the contributions of Vygotsky, Leontiev and Bakthin. In this clinical proposal, instruments are sought that enable the understanding of the real work situation to increase the power to act on the world and on oneself, collectively and individually (Clot, 2010).

Work is considered as a permanent activity of recreation of new ways of living and not only as a task, but as a conducted, historical and procedural activity. Thus, it is

understood that subjectivity is established by and in the activity and that collectivity refers to individual action. Thus, for the clinic of activity, recognition is in the subject's ability to recognize himself in the activity. Clot's (2010) proposal is an interest in the extension of the subjects' ability to act at work and create psychosocial conditions for the subjects to take ownership of their activity, either in the form of a reflexive feedback on it (thinking about it), or in the form of joint actions organized by the work collectives, which seek to face the issues or difficulties posed by the common activities.

Cross-self-confrontation has been the main method used by this clinical proposal (Bendassolli; Soboll, 2011). It corresponds to a dialogue between professionals, stimulated by a video of the activity, for example – with adaptations according to the conveniences and possibilities of the work contexts, as will be presented in this work – with the objective of recovering the contestations about the latter and stimulating its appropriation by the subjects and the production of meanings and significations.

Theoretical and methodological approximations between psychosocial intervention and activity theory

As can be seen in the previous sections, both the proposal of a psychosocial intervention and the proposal of a clinic of the activity have the purpose of mobilizing the subjects in a work organization for social change and emancipation, as a way of creating conditions for the production of meanings and strategies of defense against the adversities existing in the existing relationships, especially in contexts oriented to profitability, the basis of neoliberalism. There are, however, specificities in relation to the two proposals, namely:

Chart 1: Psychosocial Intervention X Activity Clinic

Dimension	Psychosocial Intervention	Activity Clinic
Theoretical Basis	Historical-Cultural Theory, Psychoanalysis, Psychodynamics of Work, Institutional Psychology	Historical-Cultural Theory, Activity Theory (Leontiev, Engeström, Yves Clot), Ergology
Object of Analysis	Social relations, subjectivity, suffering, power relations, labor relations, institutional ties	The real activity of work, subjectivity, suffering, power relations, labor relations
Intervention Focus	Conflicts, inequalities, vulnerabilities, meanings	Labor relations, contradictions of the activity, dilemmas and

	and belonging, power relations, labor relations	possibilities of changes in work contexts
Role of the Subject	Active participant, subject as protagonist in the construction of his social and psychic reality	Subject as protagonist of the development of the activity and the construction of new meanings for work
Central Objective	Mobilize critical awareness and social/collective transformation to promote health, development and emancipation	Transform the activity and, consequently, the reality of work and promote health, development and emancipation
Temporality of Action	One-off or ongoing interventions, focusing on group or community processes Continuous return to the field	Punctual or continuous interventions, with continuous return to the field and procedural analysis of the activity
Conception of Subjectivity	Produced in social relations, marked by institutional conflicts and contradictions	Produced in activity, arising from social relations and in the articulation between the prescribed and the real, between the individual and the collective
Methodological tools	Focus groups, workshops, conversation circles, qualified listening, institutional analysis	Single/cross self-confrontation, instruction to the double, dramatization of dilemmas, analysis of the real
Application example	Community strengthening projects, mental health practices, popular education, work analysis and forms of collective mobilization for social change.	Analysis of work in work organizations with a special focus on the concept of activity in order to mobilize collectively for social change.

Source: Prepared by the authors.

At these points of convergence, we note that there are more approximations than delimitations between the proposals, even though the psychosocial intervention focuses on themes and demands of groups, organizations and institutions beyond the reality of work and activity. Due to its broad scope, the dialogue between activity theory and psychosocial intervention applied in work organizations is understood as fruitful. First, because the

collectives are invited to think about themselves and their reality, based on the activity; In this reflection, the awareness of oneself and the world and the meanings of the activity developed in a given contextuality are articulated; second, because there is, from the critical perception of oneself and the meanings of one's activity, the awakening to the collective dimension of the activity and, consequently, of the labor relations, which marks the interdependence between the particular and the general, between the singular and the social; finally, for sensitizing practices of social change based on collective actions.

It is argued here that it is, therefore, not only possible but also appropriate to carry out a psychosocial intervention based on activity theory, since it offers a powerful lens to think about processes of social transformation and human development within work contexts. If the theory **of activity** proposed and developed by Vygotsky, Leontiev and Engeström clarifies that human activity is mediated by symbolic and material tools and that it develops in a complex system of articulation between social and particular elements (subject, object, rules, community, division of labor and instruments), it is a theory that, in its analyses of the subjective constitution, the formation of consciousness and higher mental functions, which encompasses the senses and the self and the activity according **to the historical-cultural context of human actions**, is an agenda for debating and intervening in the work contexts on the conflicts and contradictions of the system to transform collective realities based on critical engagement with the subjects, as proposed by psychosocial intervention.

From a practical and methodological point of view, for example, the analysis of the work context and the activity system (subjects, objectives, institutional dimension, division of labor, implicit and explicit rules) is considered; analysis of the main existing demands (whether related to the subjects of a specific group, or of a sector or even an organizational and institutional demand), considering contradictions, conflicts, asymmetrical relationships, silencing, limitations to the power of action and creativity, among other points); establishment of groups or nuclei for learning or sensitization to change (including techniques such as focus groups, operative groups, reflection groups, always mobilizing those involved in the dialogical elaboration of forms of action and strategies for solving perceived problems and demands, according to the theoretical guidelines that serve as the basis for the work)

It is important to remember, once again, the political and critical commitment that brings the approaches, both psychosociology and therapeutics closer to the activity, which

converges with the construction of meanings and subjectivities in social processes aimed at empowerment, awareness and collective transformation.

METHODOLOGICAL ASPECTS

This work is the product of an intervention carried out in a private hospital organization in Belo Horizonte and aimed to promote the learning of the subjects, in order to respond to the main demands perceived in the work reality, to promote the quality of life, helping them in the process of expanding the ways of acting, critical reflexivity and creativity, in addition to the elaboration of strategies to cope with forms of suffering, oppression and exploitation in labor relations.

It is, therefore, a research-intervention with a qualitative approach, characterized by the production of results that are not attainable through statistical procedures or other forms of quantification. In this sense, qualitative research "involves obtaining descriptive data about people, places and interactive processes" combined with the researcher's analysis of his direct contact with the object under study, aiming to "understand phenomena from the perspective of the subjects, that is, of the participants in the situation under study" (Godoy, 1995, p. 58).

As for the type of research in relation to the achievement of its objectives, it is an action research study, since it was characterized by the insertion of the researcher(s) in the social context in which the demand addressed to them to "look from within" the specificities was established and, thus, to have greater conditions to sensitize the subjects that constitute such contexts regarding the perception and proposition of possible responses to the demands they mobilized intervention research (Thiollent, 2011).

Far from a neutral proposal, the research presented here is characterized by its emancipatory interest and by the critical perspective regarding the epistemological nature, which seeks to analyze the contradictions inherent to the process of construction of concrete social reality – in this case, the labor relations in the spaces researched – with a focus on the emancipation of social subjects. The research-intervention process, as well as the presentation of its results, seeks to serve collectives, especially workers and professionals in organizational studies, as an instrument for social change (Paes de Paula, 2015).

The company that served as the basis for the work is a large hospital organization, created at the end of the 90s, with the objective of offering quality and comprehensive care to women, children and families, and is today one of the most modern and advanced hospitals in the context of Minas Gerais. The organization addressed its questions to the researcher-interveners as a way of seeking differentiated strategies to promote quality of life at work, given that absenteeism, turnover, conflictive interpersonal relationships and even illness at work were evident in the daily life of the organizational dynamics.

It is noteworthy that the sector responsible for supervising and monitoring data related to the health of the organization's employees, based on an annual survey, realized that the number of medical certificates presented was large and most of these certificates did not refer to physical illness, but to psychological impairments, which legitimizes the addressing of the intervention to the researchers, given the assumption of knowing about the perceived demand among psychology professionals specialized in organizational studies.

In order to understand the phenomenon and initiate a dialogical and participatory work that would lead to a reduction in the number of illnesses among employees, the process of psychosocial intervention for employees was initiated as a differentiated strategy – and still not very evident in private companies in Belo Horizonte – that could bring significant answers to the phenomenon and actually assist in the implementation of a more satisfactory work context that is appropriate to the needs of the employees. workers.

The usual development practices that appear in the human resources management manuals no longer presented positive returns to organizational purposes in relation to the problems described above, which is why the company opened up to diversified methodologies and practices, such as the case of psychosocial intervention, whose evidence is more expressive in socio-organizational contexts not so directly focused on the commitment to capital and profitability. as in the case of companies. Also, because, as already evidenced in the introduction of this work, the promotion of reflexivity and criticism can prevent the manipulation and control of subjectivity, ratifying expropriation by / in work.

The work described here took place over a period of 6 (six) months, with expected continuity, so that the results or notes that are presented here are necessarily partial. To carry out the research-intervention, the following practices were established to mobilize the context and to capture significant elements of the reality of work in the company, namely:

a) Presentation of the project

A first meeting was held with the company's coordinators and managers, in which the objectives and justifications regarding the relevance of the intervention project were presented. The general idea was to formalize the partnership with the management body and sensitize them to the project and its intentions, as a way to obtain commitment to the practice. As a form of presentation to the employees, an explanatory lecture on health and work was held, with dissemination of the practice to be implemented, in addition to the making and distribution of posters, also aficionados in the various sectors of the organization, as well as the sending of electronic newsletters so that all workers were aware of the intervention proposal.

b) Awareness-raising meetings with workers

Presentations of the work proposal were made in different sectors of the company, marking the objectives of the research-intervention with the workers in order to sensitize the registrations of those interested for the formation of the work groups. It is important to mention that participation was voluntary and not imposed on employees, as a way of engaging autonomy and protagonism with the category. This stage also aimed to smooth over any disagreements regarding political and ethical aspects.

c) Technical visits in the organizational context and participatory *on-site observations*

Daily technical visits were carried out over 4 (four) weeks to understand the reality of the activity in all sectors of the organization, focusing on ergonomic conditions (general working conditions, such as instrumental, environmental, technological, etc.) and social conditions (interpersonal relationships, hierarchical and power relations, communicational aspects, etc.) based on direct observation of the activity and interviews/conversations with the workers when performing their work work. The technical visits with participant observation practice were divided according to the sectors to which the intervention practice was first directed. From the observations in the sectors, it is possible to experience the workers' routines, their problems, emotions, difficulties, confrontations, motivations, etc., in addition to understanding the work performed by them, with the objective of collecting data for the intervention proposal.

(d) Application of collective sessions

Based on the registrations of interested parties, three working groups were set up, with about 15 workers in each group, organized by work sectors. 16 collective sessions

were held, one per week, with an average duration of 120 minutes. In each session, specific themes were listed, arising from and related to the work context and the activity carried out in the organization, in order to arouse reflexivity regarding the activity developed (in its individual and collective sense) and thus trigger a creative process of search for possibilities of coping and (re)signification of practices, as a way to alleviate the symptoms that led to the emptying of meanings, to the limitation of creativity and power of action and, consequently, to malaise at work.

The content that emerged in each session was collectively debated, punctuated and problematized through the researcher-intervenor. The proposal was for the participants, through the reflective process, to unveil the meaning of the statements and practices raised, in their manifest and latent aspect, and their explicit or hidden meanings, based on the detailed report of the practices and the use of techniques of simulation and representation of the work, as a way of adapting the method of cross-self-confrontation of Clot (2010) to the conveniences and possibilities in the company, since filming is not authorized in the sectors. Next, it was expected to seek the repositioning of workers, both individually, as a personal strategy of coping and empowerment in the face of adversities and obstacles at work, and collectively, strengthening the feeling of belonging and professional recognition.

The technique of analysis and interpretation of the content was, therefore, an important aid for raising awareness and promoting the debates in the working groups. Colbari (2014) points out that, when incorporated into qualitative methods, as in the case of collective action research sections, content analysis presupposes and realizes the postulates present in the interpretative paradigm, among which the following can be highlighted:

> resistance to the "naturalization" of the social world; the relevance of the concept of the lifeworld; the passage from observation to understanding; and the double hermeneutics, that of common sense and that of scientific explanation. In this enterprise, language is not only a form of expression, but also a form of production and reproduction of the social world (Colbari, 2014, p. 267).

ANALYSIS AND NOTES OF THE PROCESS

Participant observation

In general, it can be said that the company is adequate in terms of ergonomics, structure, resources and direction of work, both in terms of procedures and materials. According to the workers' reports and from what was inferred from the observations,

problems related to lack of material, lack of understanding of operational procedures, lack of access to information and other technical and instrumental aspects that hinder the daily activities to be carried out in the various sectors are rare.

With regard to the ICU sector – taken here as an example because it is one of the places with the highest absenteeism in the organization – it was noted that the absences of colleagues, although justified in most cases, generate an overload of work for the employees who cover these absences, causing conflicts and promoting dissatisfaction. According to the workers, this procedure of covering the absent colleague is not something imposed by the company, but that the workers themselves feel obliged not to leave patients without help. It is evidenced here that aspects of the formal culture are internalized by the employees and that starts to mark the organizational routine, since the activity is mediated by sociocultural elements that directly influence the consciousness of the subjects, as proposed by Engeström (2015), but which need to be monitored, given the impacts on the subjectivity of the employees.

During observation visits in the ICU sector, it was observed that there is a strict routine that is complied with daily following medical guidance and that is passed on to the patient's medical record, so that they have control of everything that happens to them. During the treatment of patients, nurses are zealous and careful, treating them by name, for example, and not by the name of the disease, which evidences the promotion of bonding and, consequently, brings greater quality to care, given humanization. However, some nurses report that, as much as they are used to dealing with the disease, they always suffer and feel the loss when a patient dies, for example, which shows that the work activity carries tensions between the practice and the results achieved.

An important point that should be evaluated more carefully was obtained through an informal conversation with one of the nurses, who revealed that there is a certain prejudice that nurses from other sectors have against ICU nurses, given the belief that they (ICU nurses) have a calmer job because each one is responsible for only two patients. This fact signals the need to investigate whether there are different statuses among employees. This differentiation of status is linked to the political dimension – if we consider the power relations that may emerge – and also psychological, since recognition and empowerment at work are important factors for the promotion of quality of life. The rules and the division of labor that historically underpin organizational practices should be taken as fundamental

elements of analysis as a way of elucidating the hierarchization of practices, generating asymmetrical forms of power in socio-organizational spaces.

In some sectors, there is a significant climate of greater integration, obtained even through the use of simple materials and resources, such as murals containing the employees' birthdays, and, on one of the tables, a safe for raising funds for birthday parties and end-of-year get-togethers. The use of such artifacts is analyzed in the light of the meanings they serve in intersubjective exchanges in a given sector, marking its dynamic and relational dimension beyond technicality in the midst of management practices.

In sectors that require more physical work, as in the case of general hotel services, it is possible to perceive the existence of some obstacles that may arise due to work organization criteria, such as the availability of materials, which depends, according to employees, on greater integration among colleagues. It is also necessary to point out here the need to be sensitized to care in relation to the valorization of the cleaning professional, which can often go unnoticed by other workers who are hierarchically superior – among doctors and nurses, for example – in order to maintain the climate of greater integration and satisfaction at work. This devaluation is historically justified by professionals beyond health organizations, as can also be seen in classes of workers such as domestic workers and civil servants who work in urban cleaning, a point that deserves to be highlighted and that corroborates the positions of Engeström's (2015) theory of activity.

In relation to the expressed and formal elements of the organization's culture, discourses that focus on ethics, competence, quality and humanization in service, social responsibility and valuing human capital can be highlighted. Regarding the non-visible elements linked to the daily work, the apprehensions of the participant observations and the sessions showed that the fulfillment of technical and instrumental elements is not always sufficient for the effectiveness of such discourses, since they depend on how the subjects appropriate and make use of them in the organization, with regard to the production of meanings and the subjective dimension, according to Leontiev (2009).

It is important to remember that organizational culture goes beyond the elements expressed in the discourse formalized by the company and also encompasses cultural aspects arising from the macrocontext in which the institution is located. Considering the culture of Belo Horizonte, it is inferred that there may be a certain conservatism in social relations and a constant search for security and reduction of uncertainties regarding exchanges between subjects, which is why changes and innovations may come to be

strange in the context, according to the rules and other formalities of the community (Engeström, 2015). There is a very common contradiction here in business spaces: combining the institutional dimension that serves as a reference for workers to the demands of the market, marked by constant transformations, whether technological, technical, economic, etc., and the search for employee satisfaction and quality of life.

Collective sessions

Among the main demands perceived by the working groups during the work of on-site observation and survey of demands, the points listed below stood out, which served as a basis for the promotion of group debates, with the fortuitous use of activities, games and experiences that could serve as mobilizers for collective reflection on the reality of work, namely:

- Need for professional recognition and appreciation;
- Work overload due to absenteeism in some sectors;
- Conflicts in the affective relationships of workers, especially in the personal and family context;
- Discomfort in personal relationships, caused by the lack of integration and identification;
- Need for greater clarity in the organizational communication process;
- Conservatism and rigidity in some organizational practices;
- Asymmetrical power relations in intersubjective exchanges (such as issues of gender, professional training, status, ethnicity, social class, etc.).

The first group works focused on the promotion of bonds to mitigate resistance due to possible estrangements or conflicts between workers and, subsequently, sessions began with themes based on the demands presented by the category. Based on these themes, the workers began to reflect on their routines and activities, bringing to light explicit linguistic content that, once shared, mobilized the group in the search for actions that could preserve the subjects from possible situations of organizational malaise, given their needs and desires. After the collective reflection work, the participants suggested strategies to cope with the main demands, according to their individual and collective possibilities.

A point that deserves initial emphasis in the practice of intervention research is regarding the framing of the sessions. It was evident that the employees were initially resistant to adhering to the intervention proposal, but as the dissemination progressed, it

was possible to notice that the workers gradually joined the proposal in the search for mechanisms to avoid discomfort at work. They then engaged in the search for possibilities of change in relation to the perceived demands. The sessions began with a significant number, but at the end of the meetings the number of participants decreased, without harming, however, the possibilities of collective development.

There may have been several reasons for the evasion: a certain misunderstanding of the proposal; the insecurity of sharing personal information with co-workers; the political dimension inherent to organizational practices; the "sabotage" of the process by ill-informed managers; the adversities in the routines of the sectors involved; individualism and low social integration of teams; non-positive transfer in relation to the conductors of the work, among other factors. It is essential to be aware of such issues and monitor the increase in the effectiveness of workers' participation in the sessions, as well as the appropriate evaluations so that significant evidence can actually be obtained about the demands raised, mobilizing the working group to search for solutions.

Among the main elements discussed, the communication vector draws attention, which needs to be carried out in a more expressive way in intersubjective exchanges. We remember that, as a process, communication implies the exchange between subjects and is effective when, in fact, collective interests are achieved. There are many complicating factors in these cases, such as the possible "noises" arising from the truncated representations that some subjects may bring to the message, the resistance of some for issues that may be political, personal and even economic, etc.

In the case of the organization in question, it is considered that, as in most private companies, communication sometimes follows a hierarchical bias, which can promote discomfort and failures in understanding on the part of workers, a factor that requires attention for new interventions. In this case, it was suggested to think of strategies to work on the level of horizontality of communication relations (between subjects of the same hierarchical level, for example), in order to avoid misunderstandings that could compromise the work. Integration and greater group cohesion were mentioned as ways to alleviate communication problems, facilitating the opening of dialogue and mutual understanding among workers.

The occupational health sector, in partnership with the human resources sector, has sought solutions to the obstacles that may arise in the company, but the perception of the actions by the workers is not always clear. Thus, the workers highlighted the need for a

more participatory performance on the part of the sectors that focus on human care, beyond their bureaucratic routines and *staff* to managers.

Another point that was highlighted was related to the interpersonal relationships between employees, which in principle are satisfactory, at least as far as the formal aspect is concerned. They specify that they try to help each other, maintaining the politeness necessary for organizational coexistence, but affective bonds are not always evidenced, which is common in work organizations. It is hoped, however, that the level of integration, respect for differences and tolerance can also be worked on continuously in the following interventions, helping to promote a more satisfactory organizational climate, without incurring in exclusionary or asymmetrical practices. It is not intended to eliminate any and all forms of conflict, because in the historical-cultural perspective it is understood that contradictions are what allow the expansion of the system. What is sought is to prevent discriminatory practices that directly and unjustifiably privilege some workers to the detriment of others from becoming legitimate.

Another point to highlight is that many workers expect the company to give them favorable financial conditions so that they can carry out their personal purposes and there is recognition that the organization in question is a good place to work, especially when compared to other companies in which they have worked, which is expected, when it comes to the social function of work in our context. In the collective sessions, it was possible to observe how much the company, for most employees, represents opportunities that can favor them in the fulfillment of their professional and personal desires. Consequently, it translates into the need to feel perceived, loved and valued by the organization as a whole. It is worth emphasizing the necessary care regarding management and other hierarchical issues, as they can often make it impossible for information and/or desires to be met, lacking space for listening and dialogue.

Regarding the real conditions of the activities, the employees are aware of the reality of the work, and it is worth questioning the fact that work is stressful in some sectors, as it requires constant concentration, zeal and care, in addition to the binding losses that are formed in patient care, as in the case of the ICU. There is often a lack of spaces for reflection, such as the research-intervention proposal that serves as the basis for the elaboration of this article, so that the subjects can create more expressive conditions to cope with possible suffering in work relations, marked by elements that go beyond the subject-practice relationship, given its historical-cultural dimension.

In view of all the situations that were exposed, it is considered important to open the company to carry out this work, as it provided its workers with the opportunity to be heard, welcomed and to reflect on their activity, consequently promoting changes in the relationship between organization and subjectivity.

It is also interesting to note that capturing the understanding of what work symbolizes for employees is not a simple task and the process happened concomitantly with topics such as family, self-esteem, professional training and future projects. In the initial sessions, content related to the desires of the participants emerged, which, for various reasons, could not satisfy them in their personal dimension. Among the justifications exposed for not fulfilling these desires was the lack of time to dedicate themselves to achieving these goals and keeping them in their routine, adding that the work demanded a lot of time for them to be able to carry out other activities. Thus, a common and institutionalized discourse was reproduced by the workers themselves, which prevents them, in a way, from realizing their responsibility in relation to decision-making in their lives.

Questions were then asked about the priority they placed on these objectives, aiming to deconstruct institutionalized discourses in common sense to then provoke a self-reflection on the posture they adopted through these desires. Factors such as the feeling of lack of recognition and lack of autonomy in conducting certain activities, in addition to family aspects, stood out in the sessions.

With the *feedback* and evaluation of the research-intervention process with the participants in the last meetings, it was evident that, through the collective reflection space, it was possible to take care of oneself based on an analysis of one's relationships, achievements, expectations, desires and anxieties. The groups were able to make important inferences regarding the relationships that involve their activities in the organization, such as: a) despite having different ways of thinking and being, they all have as a common goal in the company the realization of their dreams through work; b) no one is the same as anyone else, but they complement each other based on their differences, making the company more dynamic; c) there is no perfect company, since they all have positive and negative points and these can be improved through dialogue and the creation of individual and collective coping strategies; d) it is necessary that the work provides the opportunity for the subjects to get to know each other better and expose their opinions, to vent, to relax, to be emotional, avoiding forms of oppression and malaise; e) it is possible and necessary to learn to deal with the qualities and defects of each person in a dialogical

and relational way, seeking to meet the interests, motivations and needs of each person involved in the intersubjective exchange; f) there are specificities in each activity proposed in the sectors and standardization is a way of guiding individual actions, but they should not be plastered, depriving spontaneous and creative actions for the demands that emerge in daily life and are not foreseen in the operational procedures. In any case, in the analysis of the real of the activity, it is necessary to share the content and meaning of the action for the promotion of learning, for the change of institutional practices that become limited over time and for there to be power of action in the activity and in work relations.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

At the end of the process, it was ratified, as proposed by the authors who served as a reference for the work, that working conditions impact personal life and personal life impacts working conditions, creating a cyclical condition. However, many workers are unable to make a critical reflection on their situation, due to issues justified by the way ideologies and social institutions act in the modeling of social subjects, which leads us to infer that collective sessions in the company are important resources for empowering and clarifying workers regarding decision-making. whether in his personal life or in the professional sphere.

It was then sought, through the activities carried out and listening, to create a space in which the subjects could reflect on their role in the family and work environment. It is believed that through the project it was possible to sensitize the worker to self-knowledge, understanding of himself and his activity, in addition to expanding his power to act at work. However, it is aware that a transformation process does not happen quickly and linearly, it involves oscillations and difficulties in relation to a possible change, hence the importance of research-interventions in work organizations being established as continuous processes.

Putting into practice what is proposed by cynical theories of work depends on a work of awareness/sensitization of the subjects so that they really understand the proposal and really get involved. We know that the results are still few, but significant, and here it is believed that sensitizations already make some difference in the lives of the subjects, since their expression does not end in a specific place or time, but in the course of their existence.

In view of the impacts of work dynamics on the lives of workers, it is necessary to have an environment conducive to engagement and a feeling of accomplishment,

understanding that work has a central role in people's lives as part of the subject's identification processes, because as identity constitutes the basis of mental health, We can realize how work can be a second opportunity to build our psychic balance.

As a practice of clinical intervention at work, the proposal presented here was based on collective word spaces and on the validation of records with the subjects, methods that allow workers to become aware of processes that they themselves describe, but that they were not clear about before explaining them to researchers (Dejours, 2004). This research model promotes a collective re-elaboration of what is experienced at work, transforming the subjective relationship of workers with their own work.

The work clinic is then configured as an opportunity to understand suffering and as a means of intervention in this process. It first seeks to understand the action at work, the power of the subjects to act in the work situation and, with this, aims to create psychosocial conditions for the subjects to take ownership of their activity, either in the form of a reflective feedback on it (thinking about), or in the form of joint actions elaborated by the work collectives, as a way of facing the issues or difficulties posed by the common activities. Activities are adopted that value the subjectivity of workers, in addition to stimulating participation, autonomy, self-knowledge and integration with other participants, through experiences that help to question their position, through their experiences and desires.

REFERENCES

1.   Aguiar, W. M. (2021). Consciência e atividade: Categorias fundamentais da psicologia sócio-histórica. In A. M. B. Bock, M. G. M. Gonçalves, & O. Furtado (Eds.), Psicologia sócio-histórica: Uma perspectiva crítica em psicologia (4th ed., pp. 117–135. São Paulo, Brazil: Cortez.

2.   Asbahr, F. S. F. (2011). "Por que aprender isso, professora?" Sentido pessoal e atividade de estudo na psicologia histórico-cultural (Doctoral dissertation). Universidade de São Paulo, Instituto de Psicologia, São Paulo, Brazil.

3.   Baromblett, G. (2021). Compêndio de análise institucional e outras correntes: Teoria e prática (6th ed.). Belo Horizonte, Brazil: Instituto Felix Guattari.

4.   Bendassoli, P. F., & Soboll, L. A. P. (2011). Clínicas do trabalho: Novas perspectivas para compreensão do trabalho na atualidade. São Paulo, Brazil: Atlas.

5.   Bockess, A. M. B., Furtado, O., & Teixeira, M. (2023). Psicologias: Uma introdução ao estudo de psicologia (16th ed.). São Paulo, Brazil: Editora Saraiva Uni.

6.   Clot, Y. (2006). A função psicológica do trabalho. Petrópolis, Brazil: Vozes.

7.   Clot, Y. (2010). Of trabalho e pode agir de. Belo Horizonte de *. Belazenda: Fabess.

8.   Colbari, A. (2014). A análise de conteúdo e a pesquisa empírica qualitativa. In E. M. Souza (Ed.), Metodologia e analíticas qualitativas em pesquisa organizacional: Uma abordagem teórico-conceitual. Vitória, Brazil: EDUFES.

9.   Daniels, H. (2011). Vygotsky e a pesquisa. São Paulo, Brazil: Edições Loyola Jesuítas.

10.   Dejours, C. (2004). Subjetividade, trabalho e ação. Produção, 14(3), 27-34. Retrieved April 20, 2025, from http://www.scielo.br/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0103-65132004000300004&lng=en&nrm=iso

11.   Duarte, N. (2002). A teoria da atividade como uma abordagem para a pesquisa em educação. Perspectiva, 20(2), 279–301. Retrieved April 18, 2025, from https://periodicos.ufsc.br/index.php/perspectiva/article/view/9767

12.   Engeström, Y. (2015). Learning by expanding: An activity-theoretical approach to developmental research (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

13.   Engeström, Y. (2016). Aprendizagem expansiva (2nd ed.). Campinas, Brazil: Pontes.

14.   Ennes, M. A. (2013). Interacionismo simbólico: Contribuições para se pensar os processos identitários. Perspectivas: Revista de Ciências Sociais, 1(43), 63-81. Retrieved April 20, 2025, from https://periodicos.fclar.unesp.br/perspectivas/article/view/5956/4859

15. Enriquez, E., Lévy, A., Nicolaï, A., & Dubost, J. (1994). Psicossociologia: Análise social e intervenção. Petrópolis, Brazil: Vozes.

16. Faria, J. H., & Meneghetti, F. K. (2007). O sequestro da subjetividade. In J. H. Faria (Ed.), Análise crítica das teorias e práticas organizacionais (pp. 45–67). São Paulo, Brazil: Atlas.

17. Farr, R. M. (2012). As raízes da psicologia social moderna (11th ed.). Rio de Janeiro, Brazil: Vozes.

18. Godoy, A. S. (1995). Introdução à pesquisa qualitativa e suas possibilidades. Revista de Administração de Empresas, 35(2), 57-63. Retrieved March 10, 2025, from https://rae.fgv.br/rae/vol35-num2-1995/introducao-pesquisa-qualitativa-suas-possibilidades

19. Lane, S. T. M., & Codo, W. (Eds.). (2012). Psicologia social: O homem em movimento (14th ed.). São Paulo, Brazil: Brasiliense.

20. Leontiev, A. N. (1988). Uma contribuição à teoria do desenvolvimento da psique infantil. In L. S. Vigotski, A. R. Luria, & A. N. Leontiev, Linguagem, desenvolvimento e aprendizagem (pp. 59–83). São Paulo, Brazil: Ed. Ícone.

21. Leontiev, A. N. (2021). Atividade, consciência, personalidade. São Paulo, Brazil: Editora Mireveja.

22. Machado, M. N. M., Castro, E. M., Araújo, J. N. G., & Roedel, S. (Eds.). (2001). Psicossociologia: Análise social e intervenção (2nd ed.). Belo Horizonte, Brazil: Autêntica.

23. Machado, M. N. M. (2004). Práticas psicossociais: Pesquisando e intervindo. Belo Horizonte, Brazil: Edições do Campo Social.

24. Moreira, A., & Pontelo, I. (2009). Níveis de engajamento em uma atividade prática de Física com aquisição automática de dados. Revista Brasileira de Pesquisa em Educação em Ciências, 9(2), 148–167. Retrieved April 24, 2025, from https://periodicos.ufmg.br/index.php/rbpec/article/view/4004

25. Oliveira, B. A. de. (2006). Fundamentos filosóficos marxistas da obra vigotskiana: A questão da categoria de atividade e algumas implicações para o trabalho educativo. In S. G. de L. Mendonça & S. Miller (Eds.), Vigotski e a escola atual: Fundamentos teóricos e implicações pedagógicas (pp. 3-26). Araraquara, Brazil: Junqueira & Marin.

26. Paes de Paula, A. P. (2015). Repensando os estudos organizacionais: Por uma nova teoria do conhecimento. Rio de Janeiro, Brazil: Editora FGV.

27. Pagès, M., Bonetti, M., Gaulejac, V., & Descendre, D. (2008). O poder das organizações (11th reprint). São Paulo, Brazil: Atlas.

28.   Pino, A. (1991). O conceito de mediação semiótica em Vygotski e seu papel na explicação do psiquismo humano. Caderno Cedes, 24, 5-16. Retrieved April 12, 2025, from https://www.scielo.br/j/ccedes/a/VwVYvSrXMVqRp8TSpqW44Lm/

29.   Thiollent, M. (2011). Metodologia da pesquisa-ação (18th ed.). São Paulo, Brazil: Cortez.

30.   Tragtenberg, M. (2005). Administração, poder e ideologia (3rd ed.). São Paulo, Brazil: Editora Unesp.

31.   Vygotsky, L. S. (2007). A formação social da mente: O desenvolvimento dos processos psicológicos superiores (7th ed.). São Paulo, Brazil: Martins Fontes.

32.   Vygotsky, L. S. (2019). Pensamento e linguagem (3rd ed.). São Paulo, Brazil: Martins Fontes.