

USO DE DINÂMICA DE GRUPO COMO ESTRATÉGIA DE ABORDAGEM DO TEMA LIDERANÇA SAUDÁVEL

GROUP DYNAMICS OF USE AS LEADERSHIP THEME OF HEALTHY APPROACH STRATEGY

DINÁMICA DE GRUPOS DE USO COMO LIDERAZGO TEMA DE SALUD ENFOQUE ESTRATEGIA

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RESUMO

Objetivo: descrever a utilização de uma dinâmica de grupo como estratégia de abordagem do tema liderança saudável entre enfermeiros pós-graduandos. **Métodos:** trata-se de um relato de experiência vivenciado durante a disciplina Desenvolvimento de Competências para a Liderança na Enfermagem, em um programa de pós-graduação em enfermagem de uma universidade estadual do norte do Paraná. **Resultados:** a utilização da estratégia da dinâmica de construção da árvore temática sobre liderança saudável, realizada com 12 enfermeiros pós-graduandos, favoreceu a reflexão sobre as características necessárias para um líder saudável e suas implicações no processo de trabalho. Além disso, permitiu estimulá-los a analisarem sua prática profissional e os motivarem para mudanças. **Conclusão:** evidenciou-se que o uso de metodologias ativas pode subsidiar a atuação de docentes e gestores na abordagem de temas gerenciais, pois permite superar a dimensão física da sala de aula e contribui para a reflexão na perspectiva da prática profissional dos participantes e, não somente, do ponto de vista teórico.

Descritores: Liderança; Enfermagem; Educação de pós-graduação em enfermagem.

ABSTRACT

Objective: it describes the use of a group dynamic as healthy leadership theme approach strategy among graduate nurses. **Method:** it is an account of lived experience during the Skills Development course for Leadership in Nursing, in a graduate program in nursing at the Northern State University of Paraná. **Results:** Using the strategy of the dynamics of the thematic tree construction on healthy leadership held with 12 graduate nurses favored the consideration of the characteristics necessary for a healthy leader and its implications in the work process. It also provided encouraging them to analyze their professional practice and motivate for change. **Conclusion:** it was demonstrated that the use of active methodologies can support the work of teachers and administrators in addressing management issues because it allows overcoming the physical dimension of the classroom and contributes to the reflection from the perspective of professional practice of the participants and not only, from a theoretical point of view.

Descriptors: Leadership; Nursing; Education nursing graduate.

RESUMEN

Objetivo: este estudio tuvo como objetivo describir el uso de un grupo dinámico tan saludable estrategia de enfoque tema del liderazgo entre enfermeras graduadas. **Método:** es un relato de la experiencia vivida durante el curso Desarrollo de Habilidades de Liderazgo en Enfermería, en un programa de postgrado en enfermería de la Universidad Estatal del Norte de Paraná. **Resultados:** el uso de la estrategia de la dinámica de la construcción del árbol temático sobre liderazgo sano celebrada con 12 enfermeras graduadas a favor de la consideración de las características necesarias para un líder saludable y sus implicaciones en el proceso de trabajo. También proporcionó alentándolos a analizar su práctica profesional y motivar para el cambio. **Conclusión:** se demostró que el uso de metodologías activas puede apoyar el trabajo de los maestros y administradores para abordar las cuestiones de gestión, ya que permite la superación de la dimensión física del aula y contribuye a la reflexión desde la perspectiva de la práctica profesional de los participantes y no sólo, desde un punto de vista teórico.

Descriptorios: Liderazgo; Enfermería; Educación de posgrado en enfermería.

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INTRODUCTION

The management exercise is among the functions assumed by the nurses in their work process, requiring the adoption of leadership behaviors, being necessary that the professional develop the capacity of empathy and influence people, to act ethically and with the institution's objectives. Thus, the one that provides more assistance and guidance to employees, and helps them to find the best solutions to their problems, is more likely to be considered a leader⁽¹⁻²⁾.

Therefore, a leader must know how to be positioned and developed within the team and the organization. Leadership has a profound effect on the quality of the results achieved, from the guidelines elaborated by the leaders, the results achieved by them, to the values and the way they motivate their team⁽³⁾.

Thus, the importance of practicing healthy leadership becomes evident, which consists of forming a well-selected team, continuously training and developing its people. Also, it is necessary to maintain a high level of skills and knowledge, to achieve commitment to goals, individual, group and organizational goals and, above all, to motivate people to raise their self-esteem and sense of accomplishment⁽⁴⁾.

In this sense, emotional intelligence is one of the main characteristics required in health management, related to self-awareness, adaptability, empathy, mental flexibility, determination and optimism, self-control and emotional balance. This depends on the determination of the leaders, the establishment of appropriate objectives for the institution, conflict management, teamwork and their collaboration for the performance of daily activities^(3,5).

It is emphasized that emotional intelligence is not an intrinsic ability of the individual or easy to obtain. However, it is something learned and can be improved through permanent education, effort, and persistence⁽⁵⁻⁶⁾.

Considering the relevance of the theme, it was approached in a subject taught during a post-graduate nurse course, belonging to the masters and doctoral levels in nursing. The authors applied the pedagogical strategy of group dynamics through the construction of the thematic tree on this theme to promote interactive reflections on healthy leadership. The

use of this active methodology aimed to favor the motivation and effective participation of the students in the discussion.

Active methodologies have the potential to arouse curiosity as they insert individuals into the theorizing and allow them to bring elements of their experience into the discussions. Also, they can use the problematization as a teaching and learning strategy to motivate the participant, because, with the problem, he pauses, examines, reflects and resigns his discoveries, and as a result, he produces new knowledge and promotes his development⁽⁷⁻⁸⁾.

It is emphasized that in adult education, learning is driven by overcoming challenges, solving problems and building new knowledge based on previous experiences of individuals. This process favors the understanding of the theme, as well as contributing to the development of skills and competencies necessary for health work⁽⁹⁻¹⁰⁾.

Therefore, this study aimed to describe the use of a group dynamics as a strategy to approach the healthy leadership theme among postgraduate nurses.

METHODS

This is a descriptive study reporting the experience of the use of group dynamics in the construction of a thematic tree on healthy leadership, held in one of the meetings of the subject called Development of Skills for Nursing Leadership, offered by the graduate program in nursing of a state university located in the north of the State of Paraná. Besides the subject studied, this course included the development of skills for nursing leadership, competence and interpersonal communication, new leadership styles: transformational and servant, group roles, the importance of feedback in interpersonal relationships and the relationship between the environment, organizational culture, and leadership.

The dynamics used to construct a thematic tree on healthy leadership was adapted by the authors from the Manual of Pedagogical and Ludopedagogical Techniques for the Operationalization of Educational Actions in the Unified Health System of São Paulo⁽¹¹⁾. Resilient paper designs, sequentially affixed to the wall in the course of dynamics were used in tree trunk

formats, representing the nurse as a team leader; *Green leaves*, as characteristics favorable to healthy leadership; *Colored flowers*, as the effects of healthy leadership; *Brown colored papers* corresponding to the soil, representing the work institution as a support for healthy leadership; *Red fruits*, symbolizing the contributions of the dynamics and the knowledge that would incorporate in the professional practice; And a *sun*, understood as an instrument of personal motivation of each participant.

The authors acted as coordinators of the activity that lasted three and a half hours. They divided the 12 graduate students into two subgroups and then distributed the cutout materials and atomic brushes for each subgroup.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The cutouts of two tree trunks were placed on the wall, one for each group. Participants were

informed that the images represented the nurse as a leader. The group discussed the need to insert green leaves into the trunks, so the participants were asked to write the characteristics they considered essential for nurses to exercise healthy leadership in a green leaf format. The group did not hesitate to carry out the task and most participants chose to write on more than one sheet, demonstrating the desire to express their knowledge on the subject.

Sequentially, the green leaves were glued to the wall next to the trunks enabling the visualization of two trees that “came to life.” At that moment, it was possible to observe the participants' satisfaction when they saw their work produced.

Figure 1 presents the characteristics that participants reported to be necessary for a healthy leader.

Figure 1. Characteristics of a healthy leader in the opinion of postgraduate nurses from the Nursing Leadership Skills Development subject. Paraná, Brazil, 2014.



Source: The authors, 2014.

The diversity of characteristics described in Figure 1 demonstrates that graduate students who participated in the activity were aware of the factors leading to healthy leadership. It is noteworthy that the characteristics of balance, self-knowledge, and emotional self-control were reported by more than one nurse.

These characteristics have a strong relationship with emotional intelligence, characterized as the leader's ability to recognize feelings in himself and in others, being able to

handle them while working with the other. For this, it is necessary to have the ability to work in teams, to practice dialogue and self-analysis frequently, allowing the subject to keep in balance with himself and with others. In this way, it becomes possible to interact with others, work in groups, tolerate difficult situations and conflict, strengthen affective bonds, empathize, control impulses and maintain adequate levels of humor⁽⁵⁾.

The ability to effectively self-manage and to manage the relationships is the use of personal and social skills. Emotional perception, self-assessment, self-confidence, self-control, reliability, adaptability, innovation, motivation, optimism, and engagement are some of the personal skills. Social skills include empathy, influence, communication, leadership, change catalysis, conflict management, bonding, collaboration and cooperation, and team capacity⁽⁵⁾.

Besides the positive traits, the participants reinforced factors involved in the work environment that could interfere with the exercise of healthy leadership. Among them, some difficulties are highlighted such as the inadequate staffing, which causes overloading of activities, fatigue, and demotivation of the professionals and the leader, due to low remuneration and recognition within the institution.

It should be noted that other determinants interfere directly or indirectly in the behavior of the leader, such as political, cultural, institutional and personal factors⁽¹²⁾. Also, the personal determinants related to maintaining emotional control and managing personal problems are directly related to team leadership and leadership performance.

The difficulties exposed by the participants reinforce the need for healthy leadership, requiring the leader to recognize and evaluate influences that interfere in the work process. For this, they can use alternatives that minimize the risks of such influences, such as providing support from supervisors and co-workers; allowing, where possible, flexibility in the workplace; timely, open and honest communication; sensitize and

empower workers in relation to conflict prevention⁽¹³⁾.

It is up to the leader to observe psychosocial influences that may generate motivation in the team, and it is important that the nurse seeks information on motivation, since many of them have a distorted perception of this concept. When well used, it becomes a fundamental tool to instigate the development of the potentialities of their team and reduce deleterious consequences of psychosocial influences⁽¹⁴⁾.

Faced with the difficulties by the nurse leaders in their work process, the participants reinforced in several moments that these professionals need to have the self-control to face satisfactorily the daily difficulties, as characteristics of healthy leadership. It is emphasized that self-control does not mean blocking or smothering emotions, but learning to express them not so immediately and skillfully⁽¹⁵⁾.

Thus, it is evident that when the leader performs healthy management, with the aforementioned characteristics and allied to the ability to motivate his team in the face of adversity, there are positive consequences in the work process and, consequently, in the quality of the assistance provided to the patients.

After applying the leaves to the trees, representing the characteristics necessary for a healthy leadership, the group advanced in the discussion about the effects that such leadership brings to the leader, his managed and the institution. These results were exposed through records in colored paper flowers and described in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Consequences of healthy leadership in the opinion of postgraduate nurses in the Nursing Leadership Competency Development subject. Paraná, Brazil, 2014.

Reflection	Professional satisfaction	Respect
Quality	Motivation	Achievement of goals
Team Satisfaction	Knowledge	Productivity
Adjustment	Integration between people	Commitment

Source: The authors, 2014.

Professional satisfaction, cited by several participants and selected for discussion in this

article were highlighted among the consequences of healthy leadership illustrated in Figure 2. The

importance attached to this component demonstrates that nurses believed that the adoption of this style of leadership makes the work process satisfactory to the team.

Job satisfaction occurs when the leader is able to offer professionals opportunities to meet their needs and expectations⁽¹⁶⁾. The worker with a high level of satisfaction presents positive attitudes and behaviors, while the dissatisfied person presents negative attitudes⁽¹⁷⁾. These implications were observed in the other positive consequences of healthy leadership cited by the participants, with the team's commitment and commitment among them.

In the course of the dynamics, a brown paper was added to the scenery below each tree, representing the soil. The participants made an analogy of this component with the work institution to represent it as a support for the exercise of healthy leadership, offering a motivating work environment that favors the growth of individuals, their success, and well-being.

It should be noted that the characteristics of the work environment are relevant to the productivity, competitiveness, and sustainability of companies and communities. In long term, institutions that promote and protect workers' physical and emotional health are among the most successful and competitive, as well as achieving the best rates of employee retention⁽¹³⁾.

A healthy work environment can be understood where not only managers but also workers collaborate in a process of continuous improvement of the protection and promotion of safety, health, and well-being for sustainability⁽¹³⁾. Also, their importance is not a recent concern of managers, since a study published in 1995 already proposed a reflection on the theme and affirmed that an organization would be healthy when leaders played their role through a pattern of ethical and balanced, mutually trustworthy and not threatening relationships⁽¹⁸⁾.

In 2010, in addition to the balanced relationships that favor the achievement of a healthy organization, the World Health Organization highlighted the importance of considering the areas of influence in which actions can occur in a satisfactory manner. These spaces include the physical and psychosocial work environment, resources for personal health and the involvement of the company in the community⁽¹³⁾.

After contextualizing the importance and influence of the organization in the practice of nurses' leadership and in their work environment, fruits were cut out in the red paper so the participants recorded what they had learned from the activity developed and what they would incorporate as meaning for their professional practice. Among the contributions expressed there were knowledge, more projection, learning, the motivation for change, reflection and action, courage, willingness to go forward and hope.

The meanings expressed by the group allowed an understanding that the activities carried out surpassed the physical dimension of the classroom and contributed to the reflection of the topic addressed in the perspective of their professional practice and not only from the theoretical point of view. From this dynamics, it was evidenced the need for the leader to develop emotional intelligence to articulate the difficulties faced in the work in a way that produces satisfactory results for all involved.

The leader must have a good communication, introduce information and ideas that provoke the reflection and interest of the team in continuing to reflect on the subject, leading to awareness of problems and the need for changes in the work process. When the decision to change and the learning of new patterns of perception and new knowledge occurs, there are different ways of approaching the problems and solving them, giving rise to innovative opinions and behaviors⁽¹⁵⁾.

The stage of incorporating new knowledge and the transformation of concepts results in a phase of reestablishing the equilibrium and the transition to change. To that end, there is a need for external reinforcement so previous attitudes and behaviors are not manifested again⁽¹⁵⁾.

In this sense, post-graduation plays an important role, providing moments of renewal of knowledge and construction of entrepreneurial attitudes in nurses, which provide a quality management, based on the modern patterns of work processes. By combining the renewal of learning with the use of active teaching methodologies, it is directed towards meaningful learning, which enables the practical application of theorized points.

It is worth noting that the use of active methodologies in the learning process of post-graduate students favors the exercise of the action-reflection-action dialectic, always having the social reality as a starting point, with

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The use of tree dynamics favored reflection on the concepts of healthy leadership, as well as the characteristics favorable to its development, its consequences in the work process and the factors involved in leading.

The performance of this activity allowed the participants to freely express, allowing them to reflect on their work process and their professional practice.

It is worth noting that the central theme of this study and the others discussed in Nursing Leadership Skills Development as a healthy organization and the characteristics of a successful leader are most frequently addressed in the areas of administration, economics, and engineering, being that nursing research subjects related to teamwork, conflict management, interpersonal relationships, among others. Thus, this report becomes relevant for instigating reflection on the importance of an increasingly emerging issue in nursing, which substantially interferes with the work process and can be a foundation for a successful management.

This study reinforces the relevance of using active methodologies in teaching nursing and other professions, either with students or with workers, as they lead the participants to a reflection of their professional practice insofar as they consider their experiences, contributing to motivation and changes in professional posture.

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