INSTITUTIONAL EMERGENCY SERVICE: EXPERIENCE REPORT OF A PSYCHOLOGICAL INTERVENTION AT THE UFPR[1]

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ABSTRACT. This work describes the implementation and execution of a psychological practice model at the Federal University of Paraná – UFPR. The emergency psychological service was developed as an education, research and extension project conducted through interviews with students who seek for psychological support, performed by fellow trainees. From a historical and cultural perspective, this practice enables the sharing of experiences between students. Psychology apprentices under supervision conduct the project. Twenty-seven undergraduate students were interviewed so the senses attributed by them to the proposed psychological practice model were grasped, which allowed assessing the relevance of continuing with the projects. Results showed a positive sense attributed to peer counseling and the acknowledgement of an institutional emergency psychological care in which the students' issues are listened and given importance. Finally, results also highlight the challenges to the implementation of alternative student assistance services as opposed to the regular individual clinical model.

Keywords: Educational psychology; public university; emergency psychological service.

PLANTÃO INSTITUCIONAL: RELATO DE EXPERIÊNCIA DE UMA INTERVENÇÃO PSICOLÓGICA NA UFPR

RESUMO. O presente trabalho relata a experiência de implantação de um modelo de atuação do psicólogo na Universidade Federal do Paraná - UFPR. O Plantão Institucional, desenvolvido na forma de um projeto de ensino, pesquisa e extensão, utiliza-se de Entrevistas de Acolhimento para acolher os estudantes que buscam apoio psicológico. Fundamentada em uma perspectiva histórico-cultural, tal prática institui espaços para a circulação da palavra entre os estudantes, sendo conduzida por estagiários de psicologia, sob supervisão. Apresentam-se a implantação do projeto e seu acompanhamento com estudantes acolhidos. Foram entrevistados 27 estudantes de graduação, objetivando-se compreender os sentidos atribuídos à prática proposta, e sua pertinência para a continuidade do projeto. Como resultados, evidenciam-se a significação positiva do acolhimento pelos pares, o reconhecimento do espaço do plantão como lugar institucional onde as questões são ouvidas e valorizadas. Destaca-se, por fim, o desafio à implantação de modelos de assistência estudantil alternativos ao modelo clínico individual.

Palavras-chave: Psicologia educacional; universidade pública; plantão psicológico.

PLANTÓN INSTITUCIONAL: RELATO DE EXPERIENCIA DE UNA INTERVENCIÓN PSICOLÓGICA EN LA UFPR

RESUMEN. El presente estudio relata la experiencia de implementación de un modelo de actuación del psicólogo en la Universidad Federal de Paraná - UFPR. El Plantón Institucional, desarrollado en forma de un proyecto de enseñanza, investigación y extensión, utiliza la estrategia de Entrevistas de Acogimiento para acoger los estudiantes que buscan apoyo psicológico. Fundamentada en una perspectiva histórico-cultural, tal práctica instituye espacios para la circulación de la palabra entre los estudiantes, siendo conducida por monitores de psicología, bajo supervisión. Se presenta la implementación del proyecto y su acompañamiento junto a los estudiantes acogidos. Fueron entrevistados 27 estudiantes de pregrado, buscando comprender los sentidos atribuidos a la práctica propuesta, y su pertinencia para la continuidad del proyecto. Como resultados, se destaca la significación positiva del acogimiento por los pares, el reconocimiento del espacio del Plantón como lugar institucional donde las problemáticas son escuchadas y valoradas. Se destaca, finalmente, el desafío a la implementación de modelos de asistencia estudiantil alternativos al modelo clínico individual.

Palabras-clave: Psicología educativa; universidades; plantón psicológico.

Introduction

This work reports, assesses and discusses the implementation of a care service for college students started at the Federal University of Paraná in 2012 by the Consulting and Research Center for Psychology and Education (CEAPPE). The Institutional Service, developed as an education, research and extension project, receives all students seeking psychological support at this center through Welcoming Interviews. It has been designed as a means to listen and respond to psychological demands within various institutional contexts, demands which are the reason why students seek help. The state of the art of Care Services in the Psychology field in Brazil addressed by Scorsolini (2015) points their historical ties with psychological counseling incorporated into the teaching of psychology since the regulation of the profession in the country. It is also inscribed into different theoretical approaches, the humanistic and existential-phenomenological being the predominant one   a historical product of the first services implemented in the context of Brazilian universities. Their definition comprises the meaning of "caring in emergency", which can happen in the form of welcoming, understanding of the complaint, provision of information, a space for listening (p. 164). In this study, the Emergency Service is inscribed into the Educational Psychology field, from an institutional perspective, founded on a cultural-historical approach, being configured as a space for the sharing of experiences between students.

In 2007, at the Federal University of Paraná (UFPR), a set of policies aimed at the democratization of higher education led to the creation of the Pro-Rectory of Student Affairs [*Pró-Reitoria de Assuntos Estudantis*] (PRAE), which in turn installed the Psychosocial Support Unit [*Unidade de Apoio Psicossocial*] (UAP), which counts with psychology, education and social work professionals (http://www.prae.ufpr.br). The initial activities of the psychology service consisted of individual care for students seeking psychological support, in order to prevent drop out. In the UFPR, as well as in several educational institutions that have implemented the psychological support service, the latter has its foundations in demands created within the educational environment, demands which require urgent actions, such as "list of critical situations and multiplication of tasks", requiring "a quick and efficient performance under penalty of professional disqualification", as well stated by Rocha and Aguiar (2010). Such demands include the endless waiting lines for psychological assistance as a result of the very way that the services are structured.

Such a situation is common in Brazil, where psychology services in educational contexts have traditionally complied with practices guided by clinical intervention models (Souza, 2009). Student care practices fit into models for the screening, assessment and therapeutic follow-up of students as a response to the production of the so-called complaint, which is institutionally configured as the student's difficulties. The senses of learning, socialization and behavior difficulties identified in students are attributed to the latter's inadequacy to the academic context. It is in it that the psychologist's intervention

stands out as an emerging field for professional practice and a challenge to research and the creation and recreation of the field of practices. Several studies have discussed the importance of educational psychology developing models that consider the institution's participation in the production of the difficulties of students, overcoming adaptive models (Sampaio, 2010; Bisinoto, Marinho-Araújo, & Almeida, 2011; Silva, Rodrigues Brito, & França, 2012; Santana, Pereira, & Rodrigues, 2014; Pan & Zugman, 2015).

However, those very same studies point out that psychology resorts to few alternative models of operation, presenting itself as a school clinic, reaffirming the dominant representation of the profession and the lack of knowledge of other practices for the psychologist's intervention in education. Santana, Pereira and Rodrigues (2014) conducted a research involving professionals who worked at a Higher Education Institution (HEI) about how they understood the action of the psychologist in that institution. The result showed that the meaning attributed to the Psychologist's practice was "care of students with difficulties". (p. 234). In the discussion held by the authors, such results translate traditional concepts that privilege the students' difficulties as an object of psychology, and ignorance of the role of school psychologists.

This evidences the need to create new professional practices in the higher education context concerning the educational psychology field, from an institutional perspective, and it is in this context that the present study is justified, as it aims to report and discuss the implementation of the Institutional Emergency Service as a practice model for psychologists in higher education developed at the UFPR.

Institutional Emergency Service: report of an experience promoted by an Education, Research and Extension Project.

The Institutional Emergency Service started in the form of a care service offered by trainees from the Psychology course to the university community, as part of a professional traineeship in Educational Psychology, in 2012, instituted by the education, research and extension project called "*PermaneSendo: Psychology* intervention designed to increase persistence" [*PermaneSendo: intervenção da Psicologia nas políticas de permanência da Universidade*][3], in 2013, in order to allow undergraduate students to perform an active and responsive listening to the student body in the face of psychological support needs. It was implemented at the CEAPPE, an organ of the Human Sciences Sector, and carries out extension projects and psychology traineeships targeting college student support. The *PermaneSENDO* project established partnerships with different units of the UFPR, including the student support service of the UAPS – PRAE, which provided a Psychologist in 2013 and two Psychologists in 2014 to compose, together with the coordination board of the project, the team responsible for supervising the formative practice of students, as well as the service provided to the community.

The theoretical bases used for the creation of the Institutional Emergency Service were the foundations of the cultural-historical psychology and the socio-historical conception of language. These foundations converge on the importance given to language in the constitution of consciousness and as an instrument for semiotic mediation of human relations (Vygotsky, 1991). Social relations are dialogical relations that operate under the principles of otherness and exotopy (Bakhtin, 1979/2003a). Dialogism is a central category in Bakhtin's thought, which portrays the living dynamics of language as a semiotic tool of human relations and operates under the principle of the heterogeneity of the senses, reflecting and refracting the experiences of human groups at certain times throughout history, which compose the social voices, the different ways of saying the world (Bakhtin, 1979/2013b). The relation of otherness – dialogical otherness – establishes a mutual and ethical commitment between the subjects that enunciate, who take a place of responsibility for their co-creation (Jobim and Souza & Albuquerque, 2012). According to Paré and Lysack (2006), Bakhtin and Vygotsky draw attention to the inner dialogue

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[3] The Project was entitled by its participants and is recognized as so by the internal community. It has been officially registered at the Pro-Rectory of Extension and Culture of the UFPR (Registration No. 807/13) and approved by the Ethics and Research Committee of the SCS/UFPR as Identity, Inclusive Policies and Contemporary University: Challenges to Brazilian Psychology [*Identidade, Políticas Inclusivas e Universidade Contemporânea: Desafios à Psicologia Brasileira*] (CAAE 18729013.7.0000.010)

as a working tool in the formation of psychologists for counseling, by enabling the identification of the different voices that become aware as they listen and respond in the counseling process, at the same time that they develop the ability to take the focus off themselves to develop their own voice as counselors.

The welcoming interview was established as the CEAPPE entrance door for all undergraduate students that appealed to it seeking psychological support during the action period of the project. Upon arriving at the CEAPPE, the student would be invited for a welcoming interview conducted individually by a trainee attending the last year of Psychology. During the interview, basic information about the student would be collected and the reasons why they were seeking the service would be identified by a fellow student who shares similar experiences in their college career, promoting a space for active and responsive listening to the students' experiences. With instructional character, the trainee would present other projects developed at the CEAPPE, and assess, together with the student, the possibilities of action before the situations exposed.

This joint construction between trainee and student provides some tools for students to think independently and critically about the difficulties with which they are faced in their college life. The partnership established with the trainees, who are more experienced students, and students who seek support, is based on the concept of zone of proximal development (ZPD) formulated by Vygotsky (1991). Reflecting on the relationship between development and learning, the author takes the ZPD as a space that enables development, where the relationship with and the orientation to/from the other lead the subject to act in a way that would not possible if he/she acted individually (Vygotsky, 1991, p. 53).

The objective of the interview was to value the otherness dimension of the dialogical relationship, inserting the student's speech into the complexity of social voices that compose the institutional arena, trying to understand what such speech evidences about relations in institutional hierarchies, helplessness and exclusion situations, which are often masked as that which is defined as complaint, preventing the student from finding a solution. Pluralizing the meaning of the complaint by making it dialogical, that is, creating other thinking strategies for one to reflect on the condition of college students, has become an ethical formation challenge for students and the very process of welcoming peers, as shown by Paré and Lysack (2006).

So that the service could operate as emergency care, the trainees were organized on different shifts; thus, every day of the week, in the morning and afternoon, at least one trainee would be available to receive students. After the interview, the assisted student would be instructed to come back at any time for further assistance if necessary.

The demands presented by the assisted students during the interviews were analyzed by the trainees under supervision during weekly meetings of the extension project. In addition to the supervision time, the group composed of teachers, psychologists, psychology trainees, scientific initiation students, research extension students, master's students and volunteer researchers met up weekly to study and plan the intervention. Those meetings showed an active participation of students and researchers in the process of creation and recreation of psychological practice, institutional practices and the construction of knowledge in a dynamic process of intervention and research.

Assessment of the Institutional Emergency Service model and its institutionalization at the UFPR

The monitoring and assessment of the work were performed throughout the operation period of the Institutional Emergency Service, between June 2013 and December 2014, totaling three semesters. During this period, 279 students from different undergraduate courses went through the welcoming interview of the Institutional Emergency Service, 27 of which were randomly selected for a follow-up through individual interviews, in person or via telephone, carried out by one of the psychologists of the PRAE who participated in the project. The information produced was recorded during the procedure. For the interviews, the following criteria were considered: a) students who accepted to give their testimony; b) those who had been received by different trainees; c) those who had attended the interview in different periods of each semester.

We approached the information provided by students considering them as active and responsive participants who communicated their thoughts and feelings from their student place, standing in the arena of voices (Bakhtin, 1979/2003b). Thus, we understand that when the students spoke they spoke of their experiences, needs and feelings, were taking a stance based on their age, social, ethnic and academic status and on the dialogic scene set in the context of the research (Jobim and Souza & Albuquerque, 2012, p. 115).

The first point stressed unanimously as positive by the assisted students was the fact that they were welcomed by fellow college students; three students said that they felt more comfortable being assisted by trainees than by psychologists of the institution. According to their reports, the students felt that the welcoming environment created by the trainee was less tense than that created by professional psychologists, especially concerning the approach of matters related to the university. There was convergence in relation to the perception of the fellow trainees, who had the same point of view with regard to academic and socio-affective difficulties in college, unlike professors, coordinators and employees, who assessed their needs from other institutional positions in the official discourse. There is therefore a sense of exchange between the students that enables the valuing of the experience narrated and a re-signification of this experience that happens at the time of interview, favoring the construction of a relation of otherness (Bakhtin, 1979/2003a).

The fact that the trainees were studying psychology was also worth special highlight among the assisted students. The students added to this point the extremely welcoming attitude of the trainees and the feeling of being valued by them, while also feeling that they were assisting the trainees in their formation. The sense of exchange reported by the students allows for, thus, the opening of a space that breaks the silence experienced in the academic routine. When talking to another student, the singularized feeling is echoed in the other and brings out the student's voice, voice which does not resonate in the figure of the professional of the institution. A relation of otherness, dialogical otherness, is then established between students and trainees, in which the other is assigned the place of subject.

In this way, it was also found that the emergency service is a place where the arena of voices of the college routine becomes present, allowing the sharing and discussion of experiences. Psychology trainees and students from different areas recognize themselves in the discourse of the student body, and are distinguished by the particularities of the objective practices of each course, while sharing the strangeness of the official discourse of the university. One student said that her classmates were used to meet up at the facilities of the university, such as the cafeteria and the courtyard, to discuss about difficulties experienced in the classroom routine. The student considers that these meeting moments end up not having any result that benefits them, worsening their feeling of discouragement, as they are all immersed in the same issues and without a perspective of change. When referring to the welcoming interview, the student assessed that the difficulties were understood by the trainee and that the latter provided a differentiated reading of the situation, made possible by his knowledge of psychology.

Another factor positively highlighted in the students' assessment was the emergency character of the assistance and the prompt service. This situation is emphasized in the report of students who said that they were promptly assisted when they needed someone to talk to. In some situations, the students reported that their demands were resolved at the very moment of the welcoming interview, without the need for referral to other services, even when the latter was the reason they had sought for the Emergency Service.

At this point, it is important to assess that the students who showed interest in referral to clinical care services did not show up for the scheduled service with the psychologist who worked at the PRAE clinic, after the welcoming interview. In this regard, the interviewees said that, in addition to being welcomed, they were informed about the emergency character of the service, which would continue to be at their disposal, leading them to ponder that, at that time, the clinic would not be necessary. This assessment confirms the need to provide different services for different demands of students, as advocated in several studies in the Educational Psychology field (Souza, 2009; Sampaio, 2010; Bisinoto, Marinho, & Almeida, 2011; Santana, Pereira, & Rodrigues, 2014; Pan & Zugman, 2015). In the case of the emergency service, it is possible to think that it works as a support strategy for students, together with the most experienced students, to be able to find possibilities to reflect on and solve their

problems, which they could not do alone condition of the Zone of Proximal Development (Vygotsky, 1991).

It is was therefore observed that the welcoming interview provided the students the re-signification of the so-called complaint and created a support and security reference for them, recognized in the emergency service, situation which, we assess, may have contributed to students not feeling the need for further clinical care. Moreover, this data confirms the importance of the Institutional Emergency Service as a possibility of psychosocial practice that re-signifies the meaning of the psychological care offered by the PRAE, favoring the opening of new ways of action for the student support service of the UFPR.

Still, it should be noted that most of the students resorted to the emergency service interested in a referral to a psychotherapy service. Among those who kept such a demand, the main suggestion offered to improve the service would be clinical care for all the university students, since currently the Psychology Service of the PRAE restricts clinical services to students with a PROBEM[4] scholarship. At this point, it can be seen that the meaning of psychological practices in academic context are associated with psychotherapy service, thus constituting a challenge to the implementation of alternative practices.

The main criticism that appeared in the speech of the students is about the location of the CEAPPE and the little information about psychological support services. Many reported difficulty finding the CEAPPE and, as a suggestion, stressed the need to improve the spreading of information about projects in courses, at departments, coordination offices, pro-rectories, as well as online. It is worth pointing out that the instructional dimension of the Institutional Emergency Service highlighted positively by the students involves the dissemination of information about projects and support services offered by the CEAPPE and the UFPR, of which, in most cases, students are unaware. Thus, the welcoming interview also allowed the students to learn about services from which they could benefit in the future, if necessary, or inform their mates about such services.

Final considerations

This works reports and assesses the implementation of the Institutional Emergency Service as part of an education, research and extension project created to offer a practice through which one can be assisted by their peers. Such a practice proved positively assessed when it comes to the promotion of a space for the acknowledgement of the suffering of students as part of a collective sentiment which can be shared with peers in the space of the emergency service and allowed re-signifying the meanings of the complaint, initially reported by the student as a personal/individual problem, making it being heard in the many institutional bodies. In addition to this recognition, support to and guidance as to the needs of the students, especially in their emotional dimension, were identified in the speech of the students interviewed.

The assessment of this practice, however, while it proved resolutive, revealed the difficulties of implantation of models that can promote the active participation of students in college, such as the overcoming of the broad representation and reliability of psychology services as psychotherapy services.

The results lead us to reflect on the importance of assessing the needs presented by the students and investing in different practices of psychological counseling as well as their dissemination and re-signification by the academic community. Although many students resort to the psychology service seeking psychotherapy or a psychological practice of clinical-individual character, we assessed that their needs can be met by alternative practices such as the welcoming interview. The assessment of the work revealed the need to problematize educational psychology models adopted in the university, and the place of practice that the psychologist has been consolidating in the academic context,

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[4] The PROBEM [*Programa de Benefícios Econômicos para Manutenção aos Estudantes de Graduação e Ensino Profissionalizante*, Program for Economic Benefits Aimed at the Permanence of Undergraduate and Professional Training Students] of the UFPR, managed by the PRAE, was created to support low-income students who need assistance in order to stay in college. It counts with Permanence, Meal, Housing and Daycare aid.

corroborating the researches by Bisinoto, Marinho-Araújo and Almeida (2011). The assessment of the experience leads us to problematize the meaning attributed to the classic model of individual clinic practiced in formal education institutions, as it allows finding in the student the understanding of the complaint produced institutionally, without the institution being led to reflect on its implications for this process (Pan & Zugmam, 2015). Such a practice can thus respond to the interests of the institutional silence. In this way, we wonder about the range of this practice in promoting the students' effective participation in the assessment of policies created for their benefit, and the necessary changes in institutional practices.

In this sense, the project materializes an alternative model for the intervention of educational psychologist in the university, where the focus of the work is not the adjustment of those regarded as deviant, but the problematization of relations of tension that comprise the demands of students so that they, together with actors from the psychology field, manage to develop different forms of action and positioning. The institutionalization of a new school model in a context where other practices are already in place is a work that is faced with many symbolic and political barriers, which involve not only the implementation of a practice model, but also the transformation of the meaning of psychological practice in the university for its managers, professors and students.

Finally, it is possible to acknowledge that the PermaneSendo project showed positive results to consolidate a model to be implemented in the institution, being given a recognized space within the academic community.

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