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REPRESENTATIONS OF SOCIAL WORKERS FACING ALCOHOL

REPRESENTAÇÕES SOCIAIS DOS TRABALHADORES FRENTE À BEBIDA ALCOÓLICA

REPRESENTACIÓN DE LOS TRABAJADORES SOCIALES FRENTE DE BEBIDAS ALCOHÓLICAS

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ABSTRACT

Objectives: to identify the social representations of employees about alcohol and analyze their implications for the health of the worker. ***Methodology:*** an exploratory study of interpretive character, with procedural approach of the Theory of Social Representations. There were interviewed 30 workers of the Brewery from the city of Belém-Pará/Brazil between April-May 2011, using the technique of free association of words and semi-structured interview. The data were treated by the Technique of Content Analysis. The research project was approved by the Committee of Ethics and Research, Protocol 0006.0.321.000-11. ***Result:*** alcoholic drink for the workers was responsible for providing moments of joy, pain, and sadness and of occupational risks; and these feelings and practices were guided by social representations, having a dynamic aspect between subjects, direct community and general society. ***Conclusion:*** social representations of alcohol consumption are directly related to the social context. ***Descriptors:*** Accident Prevention; Alcohol Drinking; Nursing Labor, Social Psychology.

RESUMO

***Objetivos*:** identificar as representações sociais dos trabalhadores sobre a bebida alcoólica e analisar as implicações das mesmas para a saúde do trabalhador. ***Metodologia*:** estudo exploratório, de caráter interpretativo, com abordagem Processual da Teoria das Representações Sociais. Foram entrevistados 30 trabalhadores da Cervejaria Paraense no município de Belém-PA/Brasil, entre abril a maio de 2011, por meio da técnica de livre associação de palavras e entrevista com roteiro semiestruturado. Os dados foram tratados pela Técnica de Análise de conteúdo. O projeto de pesquisa foi aprovado pelo Comitê de Ética e Pesquisa, Protocolo 0006.0.321.000-11. ***Resultado*:** a bebida alcoólica para os trabalhadores foi responsável por proporcionar momentos de alegria, dor, tristeza e de riscos ocupacionais sendo que estes sentimentos e práticas foram guiados pelas representações sociais, tendo aspecto dinâmico entre sujeitos, comunidade direta e sociedade geral. ***Conclusão*:** as representações sociais sobre o consumo do álcool estão diretamente relacionadas ao contexto social. ***Descritores*:** Prevenção de Acidentes; Consumo de Bebidas Alcoólicas; Enfermagem do Trabalho; Psicologia Social.

RESUMEN

Objetivos: identificar las representaciones sociales de los trabajadores cerca de la bebida alcohólica y analizar sus implicaciones para la salud del trabajador. ***Metodología:*** un estudio exploratorio de carácter interpretativo, con enfoque de procedimiento a la Teoría de las Representaciones Sociales. Fueron entrevistados 30 trabajadores de la Cervecería Paraense, en la ciudad de Belém-Pará/Brasil entre abril y mayo de 2011, mediante la técnica de libre asociación de palabras y la entrevista semi-estructurada. Los datos fueron tratados por la Técnica de Análisis de Contenido. El proyecto de investigación fue aprobado por el Comité de Ética e Investigación, Protocolo 0006.0.321.000-11. ***Resultado:*** la bebida alcohólica para los trabajadores fue responsable por proporcionar momentos de alegría, dolor, tristeza y de riesgos ocupacionales, siendo que estos sentimientos y prácticas fueron guiados por las representaciones sociales, teniendo el aspecto dinámico entre individuos, la comunidad directa y la sociedad en general. ***Conclusión:*** las representaciones sociales cerca del consumo de alcohol están directamente relacionadas con el contexto social. ***Descriptores:*** La Prevención de Accidentes; Consumo de Bebidas Alcohólicas; Enfermería del Trabajo, Psicología Social.

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INTRODUCTION

The work plays a key role in people's lives; contribute to the formation of identity, allowing them to participate in society development. However, when the worker adds the effects of consumption of alcohol in this respect the process of health and disease in the workload is unbalanced.[1]

The worker under the influence of alcohol develops decreased attention on activities, loss of peripheral vision, false perception of speed in driving a vehicle, euphoria and difficult to discern spatially distinct luminosities in the workplace, as well as decreased production work.[1]

Alcoholism in the workplace is a problem that accompanies humans for over 6000 years before Christ, so the use and abuse of alcohol these days are made increasingly present among people and their productive lives.[2] There are several factors that contribute to the use and abuse in the workplace, such as the availability of access in the workplace, social pressure to drink, lack of social and family support, lack of supervision at work, auto or low-income, tension, stress and danger.[3]

According to the World Health Organization, the abuse of alcohol is responsible for 3,7% of deaths in the world, compared to other causes, alcoholism, representing 4,4% of the diseases in the world, and in the Americas, is responsible for 8,7% of the mortality of men aged productive. [2]In this scenario it is estimated that alcoholism at work is also responsible for the third leading cause of absenteeism, congregating today as the most frequent cause of early retirement and work accidents, is the eighth leading cause of sickness granting the Brazilian social security system. Expenditures for direct and indirect damages arising from alcohol abuse are among the most significant health sector setting this disease as a public health problem in the workplace.[3]

Alcoholism is in the International Classification of Diseases (ICD) as a disease related to mental and behavioral disorders, then the origin of alcoholism at work is dismembered in multi-causalities, and factors related to social vulnerability, genetic, psychological, and sociocultural. Thus, the meanings that originate the use and abuse of alcohol at work is not only due to the chemical characteristics of the alcoholic beverage, but to its representative attributes, to the social imaginary reproduced by society and to its cultural aspect.[4]

Regarding the theoretical framework adopted in this study, the social representation it is a theory of social psychology that studies how people treat, represent and share their knowledge among a group on a given object or event and thereby constitute about their actions everyday realities.[5,6,7]

The social representations has an explanatory power that may assist in identifying possible reasons that a subject assigns to internal and external actions of its context which is inserted, it releases an order among the subjects that allows the dialogue between his group, classify and categorize data objects and events that are unfamiliar, so making them, explaining, reified and family.[5,8]

Social representations are derived from scientific theories following their transformations in society and how they are renewed with common sense or originate from current events, experiences and objective knowledge, in which workers have to face in order to establish and control their own world.[5]

Designates that social representations are a form of social thought, with modes of thought practical oriented information, understanding, and mastery of the social and material environment in which they are dispersed, being the same, prepared and shared collectively, in order to build and interpret the real world, and being dynamic lead individuals to produce behaviors and interaction with the environment, thereby leading their lives.[7-9]

Discussions within national and international have been developed to better understand the behavior of individuals towards the use of alcohol, such as coping with family, alcohol use among adolescents and women and violence. [1,3] However, there points subscribed between these discussions that are little explored how the use of alcohol-related work.

Given these considerations, the question is: What are the social representations that workers have about the booze? What is the relationship of these representations to the promotion of health at work? To answer these questions the study objectives:

- To identify the social representations of employees on alcohol
- To analyze their implications for the health of the worker.

METHODOLOGY

Exploratory study, of qualitative character and based on the Theory of Social Representations, which is developed on the premises of the clinic of Occupational Medicine of Brewery Paraense (CERPA) in the city of Belém, state of Pará, in the months from April to May 2011, with the participation of 30 employees who provide direct services in the production of the company and expressed availability and interest in participating in the study spontaneously after knowledge of the objectives and of the Term of Consent.

The inclusion criteria of the subjects adopted for this study were: age over 18 years old; accept that the interview was recorded, more than a year working in the company; having consumed alcohol at some point in life, to be in physical and mental conditions to sign the Instrument of Consent and answer the questions on the topic. We excluded workers who after knowing the goals and the term informed consent, did not agree to participate. Emphasize that the numbers of workers were determined through the principle of saturation in qualitative research, when no new information is being added to the study.[10]

The technique selected for data collection was the semi-structured interview, whose script had as theme representations and memories about the effects of the use of the drink in the workplace. Before conducting the interviews, we requested permission to use the information contained in the interviews and record them on tape, ensuring anonymity of the subjects. Therefore, when transcribing the interviews, we tried to preserve the identities of the subjects using only the letter T followed by numbers referring.

For analysis of the collected material we used the Technique of Content Analysis, which is a process by which the empirical material (reports or clusters of meanings) is systematically transformed and aggregated into smaller units that allow the exact description of the relevant characteristics content.[11] Then started to translate each story in a speech prepared, in short, expresses the social representations of employees on alcohol.

All subjects were informed about the study objectives and signed an informed consent based on Resolution n. 196/96 establishing the Standards for Health Research, which are applied throughout national territory, regulating research with humans. All steps in this study were performed with the approval of the study location and the research ethics committee of the Center for Biological and Health Sciences at the State University of Pará under no protocol 0006.0.321.000-11.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In its entirety the study subjects were male, aged between 20-50 years old, with complete high-school education, with income up to two minimum wages, living in the city of Belém - Pará and with more than one year bond labor in the institution.

During the interview, 20 (66%) subjects when were asked about what is alcoholic beverage, anchored to the object negative feelings, making them responsible for their sadness, headache, decreased concentration power, and potentiating of irregular moments, often irreversible, as shown in the dialogs below:

> *It is a drink plus some chemical component that depending on the amount of time and will make a degenerating effect on the human being, so it was done haphazardly to let people out of themselves and take risks. (T14)*
>
> *Is any drink that does not hurt the person, regardless if it is little or much. Beer and alcohol are exciting, because they lead us to take a lot and for a long time, which lead us to make mistakes in life, such as losing a job. (T19)*
>
> *Formerly from the time of Jesus people take, however, always have bad consequences, though joyful, then immediately comes sadness, headache and confusion as much sleep and lack of attention. (T26)*

The liquor was described by the physiological consequences, where workers sought to emphasize in their everyday experiences viewed as testimonials problems acquired after excessive consumption and long-term alcohol. However, if we enlarge and generalize these representations to the world of work can be inferred that the alcoholic beverage, as described in the reports, acts as a catalyst for the emergence of occupational accidents, which could be anchored to possible moments recklessness, as mistakes in life.

For this reason, previous studies involving this subject show that the alcohol when present in the bloodstream produces various neuromotor changes that can lead to accidents because individuals on effect of 0,3 dcg/l, which corresponds to one drink alcohol (14g alcohol) causes loss of attention to their activities, false perception of speed in driving a vehicle, euphoria and difficult to discern spatially distinct luminosities in the

workplace. Already concentrations of 0,6 dcg/l cause an increase in reaction time to the event and drowsiness, while concentrations of 0,8 dcg/l cause the worker to a reduction of peripheral vision, opacity of vision and poor performance in everyday activities, by Consequently, a decrease in production work.[12]

Social representations of workers demonstrated in their collective Alcohol is an object represented as responsible for triggering many changes in the human body ranging from motor changes that relate to psychological, depending on the manner and place of its use or its effect dramatically the way the work is perceived and performed by the subject. The Theory of Social Representations is presented in this context as a way of knowing that potential must be taken as true by the individual, the same being legitimized and present social relationships that this study presented anchored in knowledge of common sense workers.[9]

Social representations are identified in the daily lives of people allowing them lie and know different realities, tangible or even untested yet, but shared by others who have known them or even experienced, so that this knowledge constitutes reality when shared unusual among them, which is present in its practices and your choices influencing positivelly.[13] Thus, representations uncovered by workers serve as an important tool to guide alert other workers of their means of as belonging to guide their daily practices against drink alcoholic, performing consumption in moderation not to hit stages that put the work and health of workers at risk.

In the analysis of other discourses, 16 (53%) of respondents have referred representations about what is the alcoholic drink on the perspective that translates conquered and shared experiences during contact with the drink, however reveal that the representations were only identified as relevant when the actions that have been shared by his group happened to himself as noted in the following speeches:

> *My friends warned me well in advance about the consequences of drink, as it had done with them, but did not give value and ended up crashing too. Today I am controlled, barely drink. (T7)*
>
> *I had a problem in the eye due to consumption of drink, so I am very afraid of the drink, all warned me, but did not much care. Today only drink socially twice a month. (T20)*

The effects of prolonged consumption of alcohol, according to workers had already been tried by individual components of your group, and to be codified and shared among its members became collective and social, so allowing the respondents were aware about the complications this type of beverage, when consumed long term and not moderate.

However awareness mentioned by respondents was negatively, since workers are not guided by representations of their group as exemplified in the passages, leading them to experience the same consequences referenced by other workers, and, nowadays they aim and anchor their representations of alcoholic beverage not only from the experiences of their social environment, but with their own, such as a life story, which enabled them to create social representations that guide their behavior on alcohol intake in moderation.

Social representations are in the organizational culture of the workers, so they could not exist without being perceived and experienced as they express and structure both the concepts and the power of the reality of the actions of the subject, and is the experiences brought by them that they gain strength in the communicative practices of everyday life.[9] These forces inseparable and individual experiences bring a group discussion allows many workers have contact with something previously unknown, generating questions and behaviors that are not always structured in an ideology accepted as correct by a company.

In this case, the experiences of workers, to be shared possible that they leave the front of the lock state again, to react in given situations, since the front experiments have been the object represented in values anchored objectified and other members of group, and to be shared were transferred to the other.[13]

Workers aware of the social representations shared by his group understood the real consequences of immoderate intake of alcohol allowed themselves to be guided by their own interests, not taking into account the testimonies of the negative use on the consumption of alcohol, but of society as a larger group that is directly or indirectly in their daily

In the construction of the subject of alcoholism among workers realize that 18 (60%) of respondents provided the preparation of its representations resulting dialogues tangles of significant positive and negative, that sometimes individuals themselves could

not separate, because even to recognize the representations of alcohol as a problem, yet still with its use.

> *It can be pleasurable or disgusted, will depend on each one, myself am controlled, but who has no control ends up doing stupid seeks trouble working with the neighbor, ie, alcohol brings these people lack. (T6)*
>
> *The excesses are not beneficial, within the limit as I drink is good, but when it passes the threshold, speaks to things that should not take unexpected actions, do things they should not, like driving and drinking, that puts things is at risk. (T17)*
>
> *When she is appreciated moderately, it's good, but when they pass the limit people talk a lot of nonsense and end up exceeding the space of others, so I only drink on weekends. (T23)*

You can see that there is a certain banality of consumption of alcohol among respondents. They put alcoholism as something distant from each other, although they make use of the substance with some frequency. We also observed distortions of thought thrown on the object, in some cases showing the denial of these behaviors for themselves, ie the alcoholic drinker tends not to recognize what makes alcohol abuse. However, research shows that more than half of patients with alcohol-related problems are not identified, [14] adding to underdiagnoses, social prejudice and obstacles to motivating workers within the working environments for the process of behavior change, the result ends up expressing the enormous difficulty of promoting the diagnosis of disease and link actions of education and health to these actors.

The worker who makes use of alcoholic beverage passes through several evolutionary processes to become an alcoholic, and one of them is exactly that he begins to deny his participation as a potential consumer.[15] As the use appears sporadically becomes a routine, something inseparable in the daily and gradually the drink becomes part of their lives. Thereafter, the risk for addiction becomes gradually greater. Also, workers do not recognize in themselves the risks intrinsic to drink, you see that one makes use, even if it is sporadic at first, can lead to addiction of drinking. It is, then, a serious health issue, since most of these workers can become alcoholics over time.[16]

Regarding the difficulties of promoting the diagnosis of alcoholic subjects, the social representations of employees present themselves to the nurse's work as an important tool which the same shall in their assistance if appropriate, that gives you more interaction with the employee individually and globalized and allows identifying problems, signs and symptoms of alcoholism on workers.[17]

Social representations have this feature as a way to demonstrate knowledge of common sense, created in psychosocial every being, which enriches the knowledge and practices of groups that divide through communication, symbols, languages and gestures, their knowledge and their common characteristics highlighted in their daily lives.[18]

CONCLUSION

The study provided evidence that the alcohol is directly related to how employees understand it in its social context, which is responsible for providing moments of socialization, pain, sadness, exchanges of experiences and especially health risk, which was exposed through the effects of alcohol on the body, which can affect the entire context of that worker who drink to excess, even in your workplace.

Social representations found in the study make it clear that the lack of worker attitudes across the alcoholic beverage is proposing to risks in the work environment. In the alcoholic beverage was anchored to negative representations as lack of concentration, drowsiness, and drain them. Such representations are justified in the group experiences and socialized through language, a fact that allowed the emergence of concepts that guided them to form their social representations of alcohol in the workplace.

Social representations identified by the workers are of fundamental importance to the nurse's work has access to a vast field of research to understand the various relationships established between alcohol and health, such as those that build the individual and collective experiences of workers inside and outside the workplace. In this context, it appears to be necessary for the nurse's work promotes strategies that facilitate the involvement of employees, family and company in preparation for preventing and coping with the consumption of alcohol.

In this perspective, it is recommended to conduct further in-depth research that address the development of preventive interventions regarding excessive alcohol consumption among diverse populations, especially among workers and their groups in order to serve subsidy assistance for nurses work and all the occupational health team.

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