

LOCAL CONFERENCE OF HEALTH FROM THE ITINERARY OF THE FREIREAN RESEARCH: EXPERIENCE REPORT

CONFERÊNCIA LOCAL DE SAÚDE A PARTIR DO ITINERÁRIO DE PESQUISA DE FREIRE: RELATO DE EXPERIÊNCIA

CONFERENCIA DE SALUD LOCAL DEL ITINERARIO DE BÚSQUEDA FREIRE: RELATO DE EXPERIENCIA

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ABSTRACT

Objective: to describe the experience of the organization and implementation of a local conference of health from dialogues arising from the realization of Culture Circles in a Local Health Council of a municipality in the state of Santa Catarina, Brazil. **Method:** experience report came from a dissertation that used the itinerary of the Freirean research for its development, which data collection was carried out from June to September 2013. **Results:** presented the process of planning, development and evaluation of five grounded meeting in Freire culture circles, made with eleven members that culminated in a local conference of health. Expectations are presented, the evaluation of the participants and their reflections on the search results. **Conclusion:** It is pointed out responsibility actions of the representatives involved in the subject and highlights the existence of a space in permanent construction strengthening promotion strategies of health and empowerment.

Descriptors: Consumer participation; Strategies, Health councils; Health conferences; Health promotion.

RESUMO

Objetivo: descrever a experiência da organização e realização de uma Conferência Local de Saúde, a partir de diálogos oriundos da realização de Círculos de Cultura em um Conselho Local de Saúde de um município do estado de Santa Catarina, Brasil. **Método:** relato de experiência oriundo de uma dissertação de mestrado que utilizou o Itinerário de Freire para o seu desenvolvimento, cuja coleta de dados foi realizada de junho a setembro de 2013. **Resultados:** apresentou-se o processo de planejamento, desenvolvimento e avaliação de cinco encontros alicerçados nos Círculos de Cultura de Freire, realizados com onze conselheiros que culminou em uma Conferência Local de Saúde. São apresentadas as expectativas, a avaliação dos participantes e suas reflexões sobre os resultados da pesquisa. **Conclusão:** apontam-se, ações de responsabilidade dos representantes envolvidos com a temática e

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evidencia a existência de um espaço em permanente construção de fortalecimento de estratégias de Promoção da Saúde e empoderamento.

Descritores: Participação comunitária; Estratégias; Conselhos de saúde; Conferências de saúde; Promoção da Saúde.

RESUMEN

Objetivo: Describir la experiencia de la organización y la ejecución de una Conferencia Local de Salud de los diálogos derivados de la realización de los Círculos de Cultura en un Consejo de Salud local de un municipio en el estado de Santa Catarina, Brasil. **Método:** relato de experiencia provenía de una disertación que utiliza la vía de Freire para su desarrollo, que la recogida de datos se llevó a cabo de junio a septiembre de 2013. **Resultados:** presentó el proceso de planificación, desarrollo y evaluación de cinco reunión a tierra en los Círculos de Cultura Freire, hecha con once miembros que culminaron en una Conferencia de Salud local. **Expectativas se presentan,** la evaluación de los participantes y sus reflexiones sobre los resultados de la búsqueda. **Conclusión:** el punto es, las acciones de responsabilidad de los representantes involucrados en el tema y pone de manifiesto la existencia de un espacio en el fortalecimiento de las estrategias de promoción de la construcción permanente de la salud y la autonomía.

Descritores: Participación comunitaria; Estrategias; Consejos de salud; Conferencias de salud; Promoción de la salud.

INTRODUCTION

From the Constitution of 1988 established the participation of the population in the formulation of public policies and social control of actions at all levels, through representative organizations. In this context, the Management Councils of Public Policy emerged as a possibility to make popular participation a tool for shared governance between state and society through government and civil bodies established by mandate and normatively regulated.¹

Through the assimilation of the proposals of the Health Reform and the 8th National Health Conference in the Federal

Constitution of 1988, which were subsequently regulated by Law nº 8.142/90, the Health Conference took place in the municipal, state and national levels and is constituted in one of the formal requirements for the decentralization of health services. Thus, the Conference, along with the Health Councils, the three levels of government, represents the consolidation of constitutional guidelines for the participation of community.²

The Local Health Councils (LHC) are public structures that move through the mobilization of health and population professionals seeking to inspect any

actions taken in health within a certain coverage area.²

The LHC are linked to the Family Health Strategy (FHS) and make up part of the actions of the Municipal Council of Health (COMUSA). The FHS, in turn, showed up aiming at reorganizing the healthcare practice, with health actions focused on family unit.^{3,4}

The itinerary of Freirean Research predicts that the Culture Circles, through its steps, are: thematic research, coding and decoding and critical unveiling, can be run at a lower and variable number of participants, because it is a dynamic method, versatile and provides approximation among researchers and participants, turning the interest of the researcher also into the collective interest. The epistemological accuracy is ensured through a deep reflection and full of reality, developing the autonomy of the subject in process.⁵

It was in the LHC, a space that made possible the realization of this experience, the completion of the Culture Circle, which is a term coined by Freire⁶, indicating a dynamic space for learning and knowledge exchange, in which participants gather in the education process to investigate issues of interest to the group. A problem

situation leads to a reflection on the reality itself, for, as a result, be assessed and recognized in their causes and potencialidades.⁶

The Culture Circles are moments that are through the dialogic exercise, educational dimensions and as an activity that supports the planning of these participative processes. Using the methodological approach of the Culture Circle is strengthened and raises awareness of consciousness, the exercise of autonomy plan, and encourages participation as a form of empowerment and emancipation of individuals.⁷

The itinerary Freirean research emphasizes dialogue, values the popular knowledge and promotes a critical awareness of reality.⁸ The idea to propose health education strategies from this methodology was due to the need to know the reality, but mainly, ensuring dialogue, the exchange of experiences, awareness and participation, which culminate in mobilization and empoderasse individuals.

Freire⁷ proposes the understanding of man as a human being, who transforms reality by the active role it plays in it and with it and, with his work, has changed historically the natural world according to

their needs, mediating the process of knowledge, which is cultural.

This report aims to describe the experience of the organization and implementation of a local conference of health from dialogues arising from the realization of Culture Circles in one of the eight LHC of a municipality in the state of Santa Catarina, Brazil.

METHOD

This is an experience report coming from a study that used the itinerary of Freirean research for its development and is part of Master's thesis submitted to the Graduate Nursing Program of the Federal University of Santa Catarina, which data collection was held from June to September 2013. The study site was a LHC from a municipality in the northern state of Santa Catarina, where the two existing FHS in that community serve approximately 2.300 families with 9.000 people. The study was approved by the Ethics Committee in research by the university mentioned under the Protocol n° 393.516.

The selection of the participating Council of this study was based on information gathered by the President of the Municipal Council of Health, opting

for the one considered the most representative and active in the city. The number of participants of the Local Council meetings chosen is variable, being a group of 10 counselors (necessarily in the minimum composition of 70% of users and 30% representatives of the Health Units, as bylaws) when performing this search. Thus, the monthly meetings have a certain variation in the number of gifts, not formally existing minimum or maximum number of participants for the occurrence of the monthly meetings.

For inclusion of the subjects for this study, it was considered: every one who attended the meetings. Subjects who did not agree to sign the Free Informed Term of Consent (FITC) would be excluded.

The Culture Circles were composed of meetings with up to 11 subjects, among users and health professionals, who favored and encouraged dialogue as an effective communication strategy, generating numerous questions about the reality experienced by these subjects in the Local Health Council. The Culture circles generated themes for analysis and made in learning spaces, promoting action and reflection among all the involved subjects.¹⁴

In all, five Cultural Circles were developed, in the period between June and September 2013, with each meeting lasting 2 hours.

RESULTS

Through the dialogues that took place during the Culture Circles were raised reflections that contributed to the LHC. From this, they conducted themselves pedagogical proposals that approached the numerous challenges encountered in strengthening the SUS in the city where the study was performed and allowed also to build joint strategies for exceedances of problems. From the Circles it was outlined a proposal to hold the I local health conference as materialization of a permanent forum for discussion and socialization of advances obtained from the demands generated by the Councils. Thus, the Culture Circles culminated with the Conference, held in October 2013, whose aspirations subsisted due to the need to expand the discussions and approach of the Councils with the daily lives of many locations they represent.

Culture circles as a methodological strategy for intervention

In LHC, educational group activities are in important health promotion mechanisms, which in turn, can be understood as a necessary process of empowerment of individuals and communities on the most decisive varied health, favoring the questioning of reality and achievements of a better life.⁹

Thus, the researchers opting for this form of educational activity for understanding reality, was due not only to the meanings attributed to Freire's methodology, but also for this that this is a useful opportunity to build a relationship based the dialogue between researchers and research participants. The framework of Paulo Freire, although gradually occupying a strong position in education, has represented a challenge for the research area and is expanding, although has already been constituted as a methodological important alternative.¹⁰

Description of Culture Circles

The first Culture Circle consisted in the recognition of reality by researchers and representatives (users and health professionals), where information and general discussions about the LHC been affected. After formal presentation of research and its objectives, we obtained

informed consent of those present to participate, filming and recording of meetings.

In the second Circle of Culture, they proceeded to the new presentation, as there were new participants. Then the discussions were guided by questions: what are the practices of participation in LHC, which the difficulties of participation in LHC and what are the facilities of participation in LHC? The discussions have not progressed as expected, as there were other issues on the agenda. Thus, it was proposed the return of the questions for the next meeting.

In the second and third culture circles, questioning was continued to the aforementioned, in order to enhance the discussion of the generative themes in order to strengthen them. In these circles there was excellent participation of those present, generating numerous discussions and reflections on the local reality.

The fourth Culture Circle aimed to encode and decode the generators issues raised at previous meetings. There was broad participation of those present, about nine generating themes that were selected for discussion and critical unveiling. Thus, when asked what were the LHC participation practices, representatives

stated that: 1) learn about the council, 2) fight for improvement in the community's living conditions and 3) promoting LHC in the community were the practices considered more important. On the potential of participation in LHC, indicated 4) the possibility of citizenship; 5) the need to establish an educational space and 6) the decision-making intentionality that represents collectivity. Regarding the limits of LHC, they cited 7) ignorance about the responsibilities of the board, 8) the paucity of community participation and 9) community discredit with the decisions taken in the Council.

The fifth Culture Circle aimed to reveal the generators issues raised, coded and decoded in the previous meetings. It was widely discussed the issue of participation and the actual role of the board of directors and, since this subject appeared in the three issues raised in previous rounds and the participants themselves elencaram as priority in coding. And with this discussion actions were suggested to improve their participation and also the community, instructing and widely disseminating the LHC.

Among arising strategies of dialogues met: use of crafts for communication towards the executive,

legislative and COMUSA, invitations to representatives of other areas of the community, invitation to participate in meetings of the LHC for the representatives of the executive and legislative, which are already very often the association's meeting residents suggestion box for the community to express themselves about their health needs, using posters to be distributed in the community to promote the LHC and the successes already achieved so far, in order to promote the credibility and encourage greater community participation, the LHC disclosure in religious activities, common in the community (masses and festive gatherings), talks to the community with the presence of the President of COMUSA to address related issues.

Thus, during the stage of critical unveiling, as one of the propositions of the present in order to improve the participation of members and the community through encouragement, information and training of individuals and the collective, the President of the Council suggested the preparation of posters to spread in the community providing information about the Council and its successful experiences and invite the

President of COMUSA, to attend a meeting of the LHC.

Following this line of reasoning one of the health professionals LHC participants suggested issuing a letter inviting the President of COMUSA to attend a meeting due to his great knowledge of the Unified Health System (SUS), the Health Councils with in order to hold an enlarged meeting, so inviting, community leaders, directors of schools, merchants, etc., encouraging them to participate in the LHC.

Meanwhile, the president of LHC proposes to invite the community of entrepreneurs to participate in this meeting, as he said, they can contribute to the development and improvement of SUS, as well as encourage the participation of community leaders who can influence people in the community because of the trust they have earned.

One of the participants pointed out that the COMUSA owns funds to finance a meeting and that it becomes a magnet for community participation. And it is the time, through the set of ideas that comes the assumption to hold a local conference of health.

Thus, it was agreed a date in October among those present. Upon such

determination, two were issued Foolsap, one to invite the president of COMUSA, another to invite the Technical Coordinator of the Department of Planning and Audit, and the doctor active in the community FHT where the LHC part. Also in October, in ordinary LHC meeting discussed how staff return in relation to the forwarded calls, the distribution of responsibilities of each director on the disclosure and their responsibilities for the implementation of the Conference and the decision on behalf of the Conference then called "health, a well what you want: the participation of society to improve SUS".

Thus, the individual invitations to the community and posters for distribution in the Family Health Unit and throughout an area linked LHC were made. In programming contained an opening session, conferences, debate and closing cocktail. This information was disclosed on social networks in order to reach a greater number of people.

At the end of each Culture Circle was made a partial evaluation, at which each participant could manifest itself about the entire process. In the last session was held the final evaluation, through free report about the circles, your process and your product.

LOCAL CONFERENCE OF HEALTH

The democratic nature of the decisions promoted by civil society participation in the activities of public administration takes shape through the Health Councils and promotes the use of interventions that contribute to better quality of life and respect the cultural characteristics of each community. Conducting a Health Conference is located within enforce the Law 8142/90, providing opportunities for a democratic space of learning and health promotion. Part of this process, encouraging the participation of the community and SUS workers in proposals to improve the quality of health services.¹¹

On October 31, 2013, there was the 1st Conference Local Health entitled "Health, a benefit everyone wants: the participation of society to improve the SUS" as empowering and stimulating strategy for counselors and the community, in order to increase and qualify popular participation in LHC community. This conference was attended by 57 people from the community in the Parish Hall of the church located in the community the LHC belongs to. Community residents, employees of the Family Health Unit,

counselors and speakers attended this conference. It was said about the importance of the presence of everybody and the reinforcement for popular participation and social control.

A health professional spoke about the FHS functions in SUS, such as, give integrally and continuously assistance in family health units and at home, with resolution and quality to the health needs of the enrolled population; intervene on the risk factors to which the population is exposed; contribute to the democratization of knowledge of the health/disease process, the organization of services and the social production of health; and make health be recognized as a right of citizenship and therefore expression of the quality of life. Encourage community organization for the effective exercise of social control. Later, a brief summary of the community epidemiological profile was presented, based on information drawn from the information systems of the Ministry of Health.

The Department of Technical Coordinator of Planning and Audit of the Municipal Health Department, dialogued about popular participation in Brazil through history and today, as political movements like the struggle for broad

amnesty, general and unrestricted, health reform, the Direct Elections Now, the fight for the convening of a National Constituent Assembly which led to the creation of the NHS and the complementary laws that ensured and institutionalized popular participation through the Health Councils.

Finally, the President of COMUSA spread other information about SUS and Popular Participation, talking about the operation and the effective role of Health Councils in its various bodies and the importance of popular participation so that there is effectiveness and legitimacy in claims proposals the population and therefore, heeded by the public administration.

To end the conference the President of LHC stressed the importance of building and maintaining these spaces of popular participation, in order to reflect and deliberate strategies to progress in the community's quality of life.

At a meeting of the LHC after the conference, some aspects related to the Conference were discussed, as the great participation of community members, as well as the large participation through questions made to the speakers. With this, the conference was evaluated by the directors as highly successful and value, to

the point that encourages community participation, since individuals come to know and believe in the potential that the LHC has to significantly contribute to community development.

The Conference consisted in a first step to be taken for effective improvement of SUS through popular participation and social control, encouraging the participation of all the meetings of the LHC and COMUSA. It was been established that the second step will be to continue the community outreach and convening of actions for the effective participation in LHC and in 2014 a new Health Conference site will be outlined and implemented to keep active this development process popular participation and the development of participatory practices.

CONSIDERATIONS

By using the itinerary of Freirean research through liberating dialogic actions that constitute the culture circles, this provided the participants advisers this research to discuss and reflect on the community's reality regarding their participatory practices, their strengths and weaknesses to participate in the LHC.

Freire in his political/philosophical view reveals that human life has a meaning, as reason for being, and is beyond the existing oppressive relations in the community. This view indicates an emancipatory and community release commitment, and this way of thinking / acting can contribute to the understanding of the meaning of popular participation.

It is considered positive reflection made in the Culture Circles, as culminated in the First Conference Local Health "Health, a well what you want: the participation of society to improve the SUS." As empowering and stimulating strategy for directors and the community, in order to increase and qualify popular participation in LHC community studied. This conference constituted an important forum for dialogue among the participants, with identification of health determinants that interfere in the quality of life of the study community. The proposed methodology provided an opportunity to dialogue between the participating members and empowered them to participation so that together to discuss new ways to LHC.

The importance of using the I Conference Local Health as empowering tool is in fact the Councils and

Conferences constitute in places that enable the construction of democracy, areas that contribute to the strengthening of the SUS and the improvement of services offered to the community and consequently improved quality of life.

It emphasizes the importance of using Freire's Research Itinerary which provided discussion and reflection necessary for the conference. The successful reflection in Culture Circles did not happen discontinued way to the unveiling of the research topics, but led to actions that favored the transformation of the *status quo*, transcended the research and culture circles, culminating in changing the community's reality, from the execution of an act reflected above.

As potential highlight the use of this research methodology in culture circles, as a possibility for dialogue and reflection among participants. We can only deepen the values, desires and priorities of a community when we hear it. As limits, still stands out the discredit of the population's participation in councils, there is need for constant stimulation, since historically discusses the surface of problems, adopting free solutions and disconnected from reality, are assumed values and priorities in

actually, do not match those of the company involved.

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