"Theoretical and methodological conceptions in liberation practices in Community Psychology: a Brazilian point of view"

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Acknowledgments:
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Context of Brazilian Psychology Community's development

- Period of socio-political tension (Military Dictatorship Regime, 1964-1985);
- In Ceará, the authoritarianism was developed by the political and economic domain of a small group of colonels;
- During this autocratic context, numerous resistance movements rebelled against the political oppression and the social inequities;
- This was proved by the professors, professionals and students of Psychology who began to provoke it in order to take more effective positions towards the construction of citizenship practices (Lane, 1996).
Context of Psychology Community's development

- Latin CP is ethical-political position directed to the transformation of excluding realities.

- The Community Psychology performed in Latin-American starts to emphasize especially to the potentials and ways of living of the communities, seeking their strengthening (Montero, 2003).

- These specific aspects were developed in a critic way to the Social Psychology that was considered individualistic, elitist and disseminator of decontextualized concepts, not answering the demands and latin american social problems.
Since the beginning of the 1980’s by the reflections and practices of Professor Cezar Wagner de Lima Góis, at the Federal University of Ceará (FUC), Community Psychology has strongly developed.

His first works involved adult education, inspired by the actions proposed by Paulo Freire.

Theses actions happened mainly in the Pirambu neighborhood, on the peripheral region of the city of Fortaleza, capital of Ceará (Góis, 1993).

In 1983, this work was registered in FUC as a university extension project entitled “Project for the Psychosocial Treatment of the Nossa Senhora das Graças Neighborhood Residents in Pirambu” (Projeto de Atendimento Psicossocial dos Moradores do Bairro Nossa Senhora das Graças do Pirambu).
Those experiences received the denomination of “Popular Psychology”, for being characterized as a “more practical than theoretical” Psychology.

After Professor Cezar Wagner de Lima Góis’s participation in the event “1st Meeting about Epistemological Questions, Theories and Methodologies between Psychoanalysis and Marxist Psychology”, that took place in Cuba, in 1986, the Cultural-Historical Psychology created by Vigostski and developed by other soviet authors was used.
History of Community Psychology Nucleus

- The creation of the mandatory Community Psychology class, at FUC’s Graduate Psychology course, in 1988
- The realization of the Community Psychology Meetings, in Ceará, project initiated in the 1980’s;
- The launch of the book “Community Psychology Notions” (Góis, 1993), first work containing the main systematizations from the reflections and practices in Community Psychology.
- The creation of the Community Psychology Nucleus (NUCOM in Portuguese language) at the Federal University of Ceará (FuC), in 1992.
Community Psychology Nucleus

- Graduate and postgraduate students of Psychology and related areas, like Pedagogy; as well as professors and collaborators;

- The extension model, as proposed by Ximenes, Nepomuceno and Moreira (2007), named as University Cooperation, states a horizontal position in the construction of its praxis, proposing cooperation, as joint action free from hierarchy, opening to a dialogue between different ways of knowing. University cooperation is guided by a type of community/liberation intervention.
Community Psychology Nucleus and Researches

- The Nucleus has developed theoretical and practical researches, deepening in subjects coherent with the praxis in CP, where graduate students participate as research initiation fellows or as volunteers.

- Previous researches: sense of community; Complexity paradigm and liberation paradigm in Community Psychology.

- Actual research: psychosocial implications of poverty in urban and rural communities
Community Psychology Nucleus and Learning spaces

- There are Meetings with all professors, collaborators and graduate and postgraduate students every two weeks: subjects in poietic (meaning creative) and didactic manner are discussed, deepening performances from community practical activities.

- Every semester, there is a meeting to evaluate and plan the next semester activities, and another to strengthen the interpersonal relationships and the group’s intimacy, entitled as the Dionysus Meeting.
The urban community is located in the Bom Jardim neighborhood, in the city of Fortaleza.

The purpose of this work is to enable participative processes that lead to community health of the residents.

NUCOM has been acting in this community since 2007. Many activities have already been done, such as groups of women, groups of young adults and children, groups with people with mental disorders and their families.

These actions have been developed in a partnership with the Bom Jardim Community Mental Health Movement, a Non-Governmental Organization that has activities in this neighborhood.
Community Psychology Nucleus and extension/cooperation activities

- In the rural community, practices have been performed in the Canafístula district, located in the Apuiarés County, 100 km from the capital of Ceará, Fortaleza.

- The purpose is the community development, considering the psychosocial implications of poverty, and promoting the strengthening of community subject.

- Since 2005, NUCOM has been developing projects in this community with groups of young adults, women, leaders and farmers. The local partners that help in the execution of the projects are the Cooperative Cells Education Program (PRECE), the Local Economic Development Agency (ADEL) and the Union of the Vale do Rio Acaraú Associations (UAVRC).
Community Psychology and Liberation Ethic

- Liberation is defined by Martín-Baró (1990), as an epistemological, conceptual and praxis alignment.

- **Epistemologically and conceptually**, the external agent must deal, in a critical way, with the ideological and material chains of oppression, and the potentials existing in the realities in which an intervention is intended.

- **In the praxis scope**, it would be of the utmost importance, to design joint actions in a cooperative and democratic way, including the wishes and historical realities of the individuals, covered in an ethical feature.
Community Psychology and its theoretical frameworks

- “Community Psychology as theory, Complexity, as paradigm, and Liberation, as ethics (Ximenes & Góis, 2010).

- So, the Complexity Paradigm would bring the systemic, dialogic and trans-disciplinary principles;

- A liberation ethic would implicate, as pointed out by Montero (2005), in a combative position facing the authoritarian relations of domination and exclusion of the “other”. Furthermore, inspired by the legacy of Martin-Baró (1998), “liberation” refers to a historical and collective process aiming to the auto nomination of the subjects, the potentiation of the virtues and the popular groups, such as the construction of new more fair sociabilities.
Community Psychology and its theoretical frameworks

- Bio Dance

- Rolando Toro (2002, p. 30) states experience as something “lived with great intensity by the individual in the present moment, which involves kinesthesia, the visceral and emotional functions. The experience provides the subjective experience a palpitating existential quality of living the here and now”.
Community Psychology and its theoretical frameworks

- Bio Dance

- Bio Dance corresponds to an approach of human development that aims the strengthening of the identity, beyond its intellective and reflexive aspects. Its methodology consists in providing integrative experiences, from the five lines of human potential expression.

- Bio Dance is through the combination of music, group integration and dance (in the form of expressive, spontaneous and aesthetic movement) that this approach hopes to find a privileged access to pre-reflexive dimensions of identity, which are difficult to be accessed through verbal language or rational activity.
Community Psychology and its theoretical frameworks

- Bio Dance and its main influences.
- An approach that facilitate group processes and personal development, focused especially on emotional and relation aspects.
- Is articulated with a network of activities integrating ways of intervention, insertion and facilitation of the community way of life [...]. (Pinho et. al, 2009, p. 35).
Community Psychology and its theoretical frameworks

Rogerian Approach

- The emphasis is the conception of actualizing tendency and its facilitating conditions to human development (positive and unconditional acceptance, empathy and authenticity).

- One of the great characteristics of the approach created by Rogers is the focus on the subjects’ potentials and the therapeutic character of the relation established between psychologist and client. Likewise, we point the importance of the work method with groups, known as “Encounter Groups” (Rogers, 1972), resulting in a broadening of his approach.
Community Psychology and its theoretical frameworks

Popular Education

There is an emphasis in action-reflection-action, autonomy and consciousness development;

Thus, Freire (1980) considers that there are three levels/types of consciousness. According to that perspective, by moving through those levels, in the direction of the critical consciousness, process named conscientization, the subjects would pass from a state with a fatalist consciousness about the world to another state with a consciousness that enables the recognition of the historical and social conditions of their reality, as well as their capacity to promote changes to their conditions of life.
Liberation Psychology

- Martin-Baró (1998) states the Liberation Social Psychology’s work is guided by a re-planning of its theoretical fundaments and the strengthening of popular instances.

- Thus, there are some necessities: recovery of people’s historical memory, the potentiation of popular virtues, the systematic study of forms of popular consciousness, the “ideology critique” of everyday experiences; and the popular organizations analysis as instrument of historical liberation (Nepomuceno et. al, 2008).
Community Psychology and its theoretical frameworks

Cultural-Historical Psychology

- This theoretical framework points social constitution of the human psyche as semiotic mediation processes. Likewise, the implication between learning and development is analysed by Zone of Proximal Development concept, conceived as a shared symbolic space of exchange, creation and construction of knowledge.

- There is also the main concept created by Góis (1993, 2005) related the Theory of Activity: the “community activity” concept, which states “a complex system of instrumental and communicative interactions” (Góis, 1993, p. 87), contemplating collective and individual demands.
Community Psychology and its theoretical frameworks

- Cultural-Historical Psychology

- The Community Psychology practice, as proposed by Góis (1993), is guided by the analysis and experience method of community activity, having as a goal to strengthen them (Soares, Diogo, Moura Jr, 2013).

- There is an emphasis in the study of processes and relations. The attention is in exchanges and collaborations between heterogeneous social actors (Ximenes & Barros, 2009). Vigotski (1989) claims that this method is guided by three principles: analysis of the processes, and not the objects; explanation, and not a mere behavior description; and the study of the behavior constitution dynamics, instead of the fossilized behavior.
Conscientization

Attitudes:
- Sympathy (Rogerian Theory);
- Liberation Ethic (Liberation Psychology);
- Experience (Bio Dance);
- Dialogue (Popular Education);
- Problematization (Popular Education)

Zone of Realization

Zone of Proximal Development

Zona of Proximal Development

Social reality
Experiential Dialogic Method

- Experiential Dialogic Method (EDM) (Rebouças Júnior & Ximenes, 2010) places dialogue and experience as basic elements for the community process facilitation.

- The EDM’s effectiveness results in a bigger experiential opening for the external agent, an understanding and a bond with the community dynamics, with the local residents involved.
Experiantial Dialogic Method

- **The epistemological experience**, according to Góis (2002) is the one in which symbolic consciousness generates knowledge, and is guided by consciousness’s reflective dimension.

- **The ontological experience** is the one whose sense closes on itself, being in the pre-reflective and emotional order. Thus, it does not happen in a symbolic dimension, but in a sensitive dimension of the body’s encounter with the sensitive world (Góis, 2002).
Therefore, in EDM’s dialogic dimension, being supported by Freire’s (1996) conception, dialogue is seen as a political act of educating action, in which knowledge and lived experiences are valued by those who are involved, having as a principle the horizontal relation between subjects that learn and become mutually aware.

By being directed to autonomy, it inspires an ethical posture, respect of the others, coherence and, capacity for learning living with what is different.
Community Activity

- The realization of community activities that are oriented towards collective goals, as well individual motives. These activities are constituted by an ethic community that overcomes the dichotomy between individual and social (Góis, 2005)

- Activity starts from the interpsychological dimension to later on become intrapsychological (Leontiev, 1978).

- The individual is autonomous and act voluntarily. He must have previously been in contact with this sort of experience. Therefore the action of external agents is important and justifiable as an initiative that promotes collective activity flowing with dialogue and cooperation, in a facilitation that provides horizontal participation (Soares, Diogo & Moura Jr, 2013)
Community Activity

- Community activity, then, favors dialogue, horizontality and the participation of all residents, promoting free thought and expression;
- Community activity is didactically divided in two areas (Góis, 2005):
  - Instrumental: covers the use of instruments, simple and / or complex, for the objective sphere of the transformation process. We comprehend the activities should create actions or concrete products;
  - Communicative: comprises a dialogue conducted by the participants of the activity, as well as their affection related to promotion of loveliness and criticality.
Practical experience in CP

- São João’s Party as community activity
- The activities were developed in a community in the state of Ceará, being located 144 km from its capital-Fortaleza

- This community is located in the Médio Curú region. It consists of five towns: Apuiarés, General Sampaio, Pentecoste, São Luís do Curu and Tejuçuoca. This region registers high incidence of poverty, with percentages above 55.17%. The city of Apuiarés has the highest subjective poverty rate (67.65%) (IBGE, 2011).
We observe that the São João’s party has a macro-perspective, because this event is part of the cultural identity of the region, establishing itself as a tradition in the communities where the residents play actions of the organization and realization of this celebration (Moura Jr et al, 2013).

Martín Baró (1998) shows that the redemption of shared culture by the oppressed population is one of the ways to overcome the immediacy.

- From the Experiential Dialogic Method, was identified in the residents a willingness to undertake a São João’s Party.
- The celebration was in a private and individualistic practice, weakening the participation of community residents.
- We noticed that the extension staff could contribute to facilitate dialogue among local stakeholders in building this party as an event of the whole community.
Open community meetings were held to plan the realization of Sao João Party. Invitations to participate in organization and celebration were performed. It was noticed that the locals had great appreciation for the party.

During these meetings, the external agents sought dialogues about the importance of the celebration and participation, building a party which most residents could be identified with it.
Practical experience in CP

The municipal school formed three quadrilhas among their students, and NGO's Popular School Cooperative also formed one along with the extension;

The school provided its sports court space for the event.

It was noteworthy that the external agents participated of the process in different ways, because there was a need to experience the reality of the community to promote their development.

Montero (2006) states that it is necessary to carry out actions that external actors are involved, being tied up and reference support in the community.
Practical experience in CP

- São João’s Party can be considered a community activity because it express individually from action with a common purpose desired by the residents and collectively planned as a breakthrough for the community dynamics.

Furthermore, it is an activity with specific characteristics in two dimensions. The communicative dimension was permeated by dialogic postures and horizontal, loving and cooperative meetings held for discussion, planning and execution of the event. These meetings were made fortnightly between partners.

- Relatively to the instrumental dimension, spaces discussions were identified, in addition to the instruments used, the infrastructure and all other administrative proceedings.
Practical experience in CP

- After the completion of the celebration, a group of youngster decided to reflect together on community issues, developing actions for community development and focusing on improving the quality of the life residents. The group then took shape and assuming the denomination of “The Ramparts” (Original name: Baluartes).

- We can understand these process as a moviment of strengthening and releasing community activity, as the feast, unveiling the reality from the process of deepening counciousness, nurturing personal relationships through social dialogical, cooperative and loving interactions. It provided the ability to act in reality through a collective and critic movement (Ximenes & Góis, 2010)
Practical experience in CP

- Community activity can be a promoter of liberation movements, resulting in community development, the strengthening of personal and cultural identity, autonomy and action upon reality.

It has to be developed with a focus on concrete and collective actions to promote real change in the community, such as the June celebration.

Due to experience as much as possible the reality of the community, since only in this way will build relationships, attitudes and experiences together to residents who can contribute to community development.
Practical experience in CP


Practical experience in CP


Practical experience in CP


Practical experience in CP


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Thank for your attention