



Social Psychology

Risk factors, psychosocial protection, and work: Organizations that emancipate or kill


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The work we are reviewing, *Fatores de risco, proteção psicossocial e trabalho: organizações que emancipam ou que matam* [Risk factors, psychosocial protection, and work: organizations that emancipate or kill], is the result of the joint work of two professors who are renowned for their professional experience and academic production; Dr. José Carlos Zanelli and Dr. Lilia Aparecida Kanan. The work's objective resulted from a post-doctorate project undertaken by the authors, anchored in the text of Zanelli (2014), extending it in terms of theoretical depth, and showing it to be relevant to students and professionals in the area. Through clear didactic language, they make use of illustrations as an explanatory resource to assist in addressing the psychosocial phenomena in the work organizations. They focus on the risk and protection factors and the undertaking of strategic actions for the building of healthy organizations. As the authors indicate in presenting the book, carefully designed to provide psychosocial protection is rare in Latin American organizations; hence, bearing in mind the current transformations in the world of work, it is imperative for there to be ethics in people management, and commitment to policies and programs geared towards prevention. As a result, the work can function as a theoretical-practical device for professionals from the area who intend to intervene in reducing psychosocial harm. In Chapter 1, titled “Fatores de risco, proteção psicossocial e trabalho” [Risk factors, psychosocial protection, and work] basic terms are conceptualized – to be explored throughout the book. Health is emphasized as a fundamental element and must be considered to be a strategic value, allied with the objectives and concepts that define a healthy organization. The concept of risk and psychosocial protection is discussed, throwing light on psychosocial factors linked to work, which are divided into three facets: of the individual worker, internal and external to the work. The authors, therefore, are firm in understanding that risks must never be accepted in the organizations and emphasize the need to manage and monitor them. Chapter 2 is titled “Indicadores da organização de trabalho como construções saudáveis e não saudáveis” [Indicators of the work organization as healthy and unhealthy constructions] and goes into greater depth in the understanding of what constitutes a healthy organization, through the presentation of indicators of decent work, positive organizations and authentic organizations, which may indicate the construction of wholesome environments – or not. As a result, it is made clear that there is no straightforward recipe for constructing a healthy organization, and – furthermore – the need is emphasized to bring the needs of the workers and the organizations closer together.

er, it is the case that safeguarding health is a major challenge in the current work scenario worldwide. Chapter 3, titled “Fenômenos psicossociais no contexto organizacional” [Psychosocial phenomena in the organizational context] raises the notion of risk extension and a detonating event, and how these are related in the environment. Because of this, it is emphasized that exposure to situations of danger constitutes a psychosocial risk, while the notion of extension relates to the number of people who may be subject to the harm. To give an example, they raise the concept of vulnerability, relative to greater exposure to a work context of psychosocial threats. Based on this, the concept is brought closer to the principal of precaution, indicating organizations’ responsibility related to the stress potential caused by some activities. In order to instrumentalize the reader, the authors emphasize specific characteristics of the psychosocial dangers in comparison with the physical ones, indicating that these have different grades of manifestation. The chapter’s high point is the renewal of the literature on the negative and positive psychosocial phenomena, in which they highlight the general and common aspects of these, emphasizing the indissoluble relationship between both, and characterizing the negative phenomena as risks in the organizational context. The authors’ positioning, therefore, starts with the demonstration of the complexity in identifying what can trigger harm, as well as the need to identify the risks so that it will be possible to recognize vulnerability and indicate paths for developing preventive programs. Chapter 4, titled “Características básicas da cultura e do poder nas organizações saudáveis e não saudáveis” [Basic characteristics of the culture and power in healthy and unhealthy organizations] emphasizes human interactions and their influence on the constitution of healthy organizations, taking into account that the process of understanding this question presupposes the understanding of their culture. In this way, some possible relationships are indicated, articulating how these can strengthen – or not – the risks in work organizations. In this way, a discussion is developed on organizational culture, and its interface with politics and power: and certain terms used in the area are reviewed. In this regard, how interaction processes are associated with culture is presented, highlighting the changes of behaviors at strategic, tactical and operational levels, underlining how necessary it is to hold health as a value; and, therefore, as a premise of its policies and management practices. Chapter 5, “Princípios éticos, valores e moral associados aos fenômenos psicossociais no contexto organizacional” [Ethical principles, values, and morale associated with psychosocial phenomena in the or-

ganizational context] addresses the role of the principles, values, and morale regarding the psychosocial risks and the development of an organizational culture that is committed to health and well-being, supported in the Psychology of Moral Development. It explains Kohlberg's stages of moral development, ego-centered and socio-centered principles, and aspects of management based on ethical values within organizations, discussing the construction of a democratic and ethically committed co-existence in the workspace, "the daily practice geared towards ethical knowledge and the path to identify and prevent harm. It is a starting point to reduce psychosocial vulnerability in the organization" (Zanelli, 2014, p. 10). In this line, Chapter 6, "Atitudes e comportamentos associados aos fenômenos psicossociais no contexto organizacional" [Attitudes and behaviors associated with psychosocial phenomena in the organizational context] begins and discusses the role of the individual and collective attitudes and behaviors in building the organizational environment. The authors discuss the components of the attitudes and aspects of behavior, offering suggestions regarding the role of people management in encouraging and developing behaviors that promote the reduction of psychosocial harm, focusing on the importance of the individual-organization relationship in the process of building attitudes and socialization. Chapter 7, "Pressupostos de responsabilidade social corporativa associados aos fenômenos psicossociais no contexto organizacional" [Premises of corporative social responsibility associated with psychosocial phenomena in the organizational context], which involved the participation of the researcher Dr. Magna Macedo Madalozzo, of University of Caxias do Sul (UCS), discusses questions relating to corporative social responsibility, tensions between organizational sustainability and productivity, corporative corruption, practices and policies – such as sustainability governance – committed to developing an ethical and reliable corporative environment. Emphasis is placed on how cases of corporative corruption are presented, in order to reflect on its effects within and outside the organizations, given the relevance of this topic at present and the need to develop authentic corporative social responsibility, ethically committed to psychosocial sustainability. Finally, Chapter 8, "Articulação das variáveis psicossociais de riscos e de proteção associadas ao trabalho" [Articulation of the psychosocial variables of risks and protection associated with work] presents possible resources and practices for building corporative environments that promote a healthy organizational culture, addressing aspects of psychosocial intervention and strategies for preventing poor health and promoting positive health in

the workplace. This is divided into four parts: the conditions of the workplace, of the tasks, of the work group and of the organization itself. What calls attention in this chapter is how suggestions are offered that are instrumental to the development of psychosocial resources and practices, dialoguing with the reader and inviting her to consider harm reduction strategies. The responsibility of organizations, both with their members and with the various sectors of society is present in the work, serving as a common thread so that the reader may consider the ethical and political commitment of people management geared towards developing protection strategies, with a view to the company's health and the benefits of this for the workers and the company's competitive performance. The work organizations are also invited to engage through the reduction of psychosocial harm, considering corporative aspects, factors such as corruption, ethical shortcomings and how this permeates society generally; hence, they are situated as a living entity which must call to themselves the challenge of focusing on the global tensions. In the light of the topicality of the discussions employed and of the centrality of the issue, the reading of the work is understood as obligatory for those committed to developing healthy organizations and for those professionals and researchers whose focus is the development of policies and programs geared towards protection and the prevention and management of psychosocial risks. It is a valuable theoretical tool for studies and experiences aimed at reducing psychosocial damages. In this way, producing knowledge related to this problem can contribute to the advancement of practices promoting prevention and health promotion in the workplace. The authors, in order to provide continuity the powerful information provided in the book, have built a blog. The space makes it possible to strengthen the interaction between researchers, professionals and academics of the area, through discussions, exchange of articles, books, and films on the subject, broadening their visibility and recognizing the collective nature of engagement with the building of organizations that are healthy, ethical and committed with the well-being of all its members, anchored in ethical responsibility to themselves and society.

References

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