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Mental health of youth and COVID-19: speeches producing the educational care mediated on the webradio

ABSTRACT | Objective: To analyze the speeches of youths as producers of clinical and educational web-care about mental health in the context of COVID-19. Method: Exploratory-descriptive research with a qualitative approach carried out by synthesizing the contents and interactions of the Program “Em Sintonia com Saúde”, produced at WebRádio AJIR in connection with youths from public schools and Higher Education Institutions in the State of Ceará, Brazil. Results: 40 questions-speeches about COVID-19 were carried out, being questioning questions that are in line with the fear of contracting the disease, enabling an increase in anxiety and depressive symptoms identified in colleagues, friends and family and concerns about safe information about the disease. Conclusion: The communication produced on the web radio helped young schoolchildren and university students in the development of strategies for approaching, listening and interacting in the context of social isolation, assisting them in decision-making to prevent and contain the pandemic of COVID-19.

Keywords: Mental Health; Information Technology; Coronavirus; Students.

RESUMEN | Objetivo: Analizar los discursos de los jóvenes como productores de web-cuidado clínico y educativo sobre salud mental en el contexto del COVID-19. Método: Investigación exploratorio-descriptiva con enfoque cualitativo realizada mediante la síntesis de los contenidos e interacciones del programa “Em Sintonia com a Saúde”, producido en WebRádio AJIR en relación con jóvenes de escuelas públicas e Instituciones de Educación Superior del Estado de Ceará, Brasil. Resultados: se realizaron 40 preguntas-discursos sobre COVID-19, siendo cuestionamientos que están en línea con el miedo a contraer la enfermedad, posibilitando un aumento de los síntomas de ansiedad y depresión identificados en colegas, amigos y familiares y preocupaciones sobre información segura sobre la enfermedad. Conclusión: La comunicación producida en la radio web ayudó a jóvenes escolares y universitarios en el desarrollo de estrategias para acercarse, escuchar e interactuar en el contexto de aislamiento social, ayudándolos en la toma de decisiones para prevenir y contener la pandemia de COVID-19.

Palabras claves: Salud Mental; Tecnología de la información; Coronavirus; Estudiantes.

RESUMO | Objetivo: Analisar os discursos das juventudes como produtores do webcuidado clínico e educativo sobre saúde mental no contexto da COVID-19. Método: Pesquisa exploratório-descritiva com abordagem qualitativa realizada por síntese dos conteúdos e interações do Programa “Em Sintonia com a Saúde”, produzido na WebRádio AJIR em conexão com juventudes de escolas públicas e Instituições de Nível superior do Estado do Ceará, Brasil. Resultados: Foram realizadas 40 perguntas-discursos sobre COVID-19, sendo questões indagativas que coadunam com o medo de contrair a doença, possibilitando elevação da ansiedade e sintomas depressivos identificados em colegas, amigos e familiares e preocupações com as informações seguras sobre a doença. Conclusão: A comunicação produzida na webrádio ajudou os jovens escolares e universitários no desenvolvimento de estratégias de aproximação, escuta e interações no contexto do isolamento social, auxiliando-os nas tomadas de decisões para prevenção e contenção da pandemia da COVID-19.

Palavras-chaves: Saúde Mental; Tecnologia da informação; Coronavirus; Estudantes.

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INTRODUCTION

The rapid spread of Coronavirus Disease - COVID-19, in China, in early December 2019, imposed on the World Health Organization (WHO), after the first case of infection with the new coronavirus (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 27 – Sars-Cov-2), consider that the terrestrial globe was facing a new pandemic. Records of new coronavirus infections were announced in 206 countries, with a total of 976.249 confirmed cases and 50.489 deaths as of April 2020. ⁽¹⁾ In Brazil, 9,056 cases were made official, with 359 deaths. ⁽²⁾

In order to reduce the peak incidence and the number of deaths, some

countries have adopted the isolation of suspicious cases, the closure of schools and universities, social distance and quarantine of the population. ⁽³⁾⁽⁴⁾ However, restrictive measures of social coexistence and restricted confinement to the home can generate demands on mental health in people, such as apprehensive, insecure and anxious behaviors, increasing those pre-existing but "retained" in the ways of life of the general population.

Thus, the concern with this aspect of the population's health demanded from some countries the offer of specialized assistance in mental health. ⁽¹⁾ And these actions of production and promotion of mental health have a central role in the demands of the juvenile public, considering that this health care is used in people's daily lives. However, this specific public is far removed from their socio-affective networks, school, friends and, often, family members.

In this context of understanding the psychic demands of young people, their forms of knowledge and sayings about mental health, when experiencing social isolation, these young people used Digital Technologies of Information and Communication (TDIC), aiming at the connections of communication in health as humanized practices for clinical and educational nursing and health care. ⁽⁵⁾

In this sense, clinical and educational web care is constituted as a discursive practice that takes rhizomatic contours in the digital communication generated and mediated in the cyberspace of the web radio with scientific and educational information, constituted in the context of nursing care, resulting in care practices with the youths managed by life experiences, their interrelationships of subjectivities, as well as for their stylistic and aesthetic ways of themselves in everyday life. ⁽⁶⁻⁷⁾

In this context, nursing and health professionals, when appropriating TDIC as pedagogical devices as ways

of learning and teaching, produce new ways of caring and innovating to promote health education in its multidimensional aspects, be it in prevention, in promotion or rehabilitation of human health. ⁽⁸⁾

The web radio is the device that anchors communication that produces web care on the Internet and other digital media, prioritizing themes about collective health of school youth. ⁽⁷⁾ Among these health communication designs, we highlight the Program "In Tuning with Health", with actions promoting mental health and prevention of COVID-19, with content of communication and health education for the practice of web care, paying attention to the dialogues of the participants, constituted by the said and unspoken questions and concerns, while pointing out possible and necessary activities to promote mental health in times of pandemic.

Thus, in this perspective, the following questions arose: What is the knowledge of school and university youths about anxiety and depression in the context of COVID-19? And the knowledge about self-care in the period of social isolation? What doubts do they have about the excess of information and its implications for mental health? Thus, the objective of this study was to analyze the speeches of youths, producers of clinical and educational web-care about mental health in the context of COVID-19, their emotional implications and the security of information on preventing this pandemic.

METHOD

Exploratory-descriptive research with a qualitative approach using the content of communication in mental health and covid-19 addressed in the Program "In Tuning with Health", conducted with school and university youths mediated in the online environment of WebRádio AJIR, on the Internet.

This online environment interconnects, through the world wide web, young people from the South, Center-South, North and Coast of the State of Ceará, enabling hybridization, knowledge of communication and education for the production of web care. ⁽⁷⁾⁽⁵⁾

These virtual communication substrates promote the movement of network and cities in interconnection, made possible as a "drawing" of synchronous communication and extension with audiovisual content in the "WebTv" space, which hosts the YouTube channel on the web radio site, <http://www.uece.ajir.com.br>, with repercussions on the social networks of the online channel on the Internet.

Thus, on April 29th, 2020, 75 young people from elementary, middle and university levels from private institutions in the municipalities of Sobral and Ubajara, northern Ceará, participated in the program that generated the content of this research. The participants interacted from their homes, using their own internet providers through applications, a digital communication composing a network of cyberspace interconnections on the Internet. Thus, the survey data were collected in April 2020, after the experiment was carried out in the same month.

The protagonists of the research were 15 university students of the undergraduate course in speech therapy and 60 young people from public municipal and state schools, of elementary and high school.

It is noteworthy that the organization of the production of the program was carried out by the web radio coordinator, who scripts, directs and mediates the guest with expertise in the subject, also from his home, using computers with digital applications, which capture image and audio of the guest and other mediators of the territories, who are called plateau, whose function is to transmit the speech-questions of the young people present to the digi-

tal room, on Google Meet® and in the WhatsApp® groups of each institution registered in the program.

Thus, the Young People's Discourse Questions (Perguntas-Discursos - PD) were captured, which were collected from WhatsApp groups on the online channel and in the digital room at Google Meet, which are devices of knowledge that produce practices of themselves and their collectivities.

Discourse questions constitute the discursive devices of immanent knowledge and power, which announce self-practices in the school context. (8) Thus, the numerical classification Jovem 1, Jovem 2 ... for basic education was used to identify DPs; and University A, University B ... for higher education.

The speech-questions were systematized into thematic categories and analyzed based on the theoretical framework of Michel Foucault's discourse analysis, which considers the speeches as events to be read within a perspective of "discontinuity, rupture, threshold, limit, series, contours and transformation". (9)

This research is part of the project "Use of WebRadio in training and health care: experimenting communication and health education strategies with youth", which meets the ethical procedures of Resolution 466/122, approved by the Research Ethics Committee of UECE, with Opinion No. 3,478,945 and CAAE No. 16372719.0.0000.5534.

RESULTS

40 question-speeches about COVID-19 were made, 13 of which were made by youth schools and 27 by university youth. With these 40 questions, three thematic categories were composed.

Category 1 - Knowledge of youths about anxiety and depression in the context of COVID-19

There were 22 question-speeches from participants in the interactions,

on the web radio, during the program, centered on the themes of anxiety and depression: "What measures can we take to alleviate anxiety in the midst of this pandemic so that we can focus on studies?" (University student A); "Can depression increase during this period? And how to avoid it?" (University student C); "Can people who are depressed and have a high percentage of cure ", have a recurrence due to COVID-19? And, in this way, can the information that comes to them, arriving in a distorted way, increase depression? " (University student E); "Can people with anxiety or depression know all the information about COVID-19, or is there a limit?" (University student I); "Was there an increase in anxiety cases after social isolation?" (University student K); "How to improve anxiety in quarantine" (University L); "Can social isolation motivate a possible depression in a person?" (University student O).

These knowledge and sayings of university students allow access to not only what is said, but the entire symbolic universe that, through their interrogations, reflects access to information, to the resources available on social networks in cyberspace, as this set of discourses can reveal, above all, ways of understanding care demands, especially when it comes to mental health.

Below are the questions of young schoolchildren, who also note the "desire" for answers around mental health in times of COVID-19: "Crisis of anxiety and relevant nervousness, due to the possibility of having contracted COVID-19, can lead to a stroke?" (Young 1); "How to maintain mental balance in the time of COVID-19?" (Young 5); "It is normal, during isolation, to be bored. But what to do to occupy the mind in those times?" (Young 6); "What is recommended to do to avoid an anxiety crisis in the middle of this pandemic?" (Young 7); "What are the psychological damages of this confinement for the population? Is the worsening of peo-

ple's mental health status in quarantine real?" (Young 10).

School youths presented questioning questions that are consistent with the fear of contracting the disease, COVID-19, in view of the feeling of insecurity caused in all dimensions of life.

Category 2 - Knowledge of Self-care in the period of Social Isolation

The participants were motivated by the program's production team through a question that was called "anchor", in view of its exploratory nature of the theme. Right at the beginning of virtual communications, they began to research the topic. The anchor question launched was: "Cite a practice of self-care that can be performed in the period of Social Isolation". Of the 50 participants, only 11 students answered the question using a Google forms form, with the link available in the WhatsApp groups.

The students considered the following self-care measures, which can be performed during the period of social isolation: "Doing what you like, trying new things, reading your favorite book, doing physical exercises" (Young 1); "Staying at home, drinking plenty of fluids, taking vitamins C and D to increase immunity, practicing physical exercises and taking care of hygiene" (Young 2); "Modify the routine constantly so that the person does not get bored, and this does not, consequently, cause low immunity in the body" (Young 6); "Doing what you love to do makes you forget about negative things. An example is playing an instrument "(Youth 8).

For 25 university students, who answered the anchor question, the self-care measures that could be performed in social isolation were: "Avoid large crowds, always hand hygiene, use gel alcohol when away from home and avoid false news (University student Ç); "Mental self-care, physical activity, good nutrition and seeking to carry out activities that transmit well-being" (University Student E); "The use of a

mask, alcohol gel, washing your hands correctly, practicing physical exercises, which can be done at home, and taking care of mental health (University L)"; "Filtering news and considering only those from reliable sources, doing something like reading a book, watching a movie" (Universitário P); "Maintaining mental health means fulfilling the quarantine without leaving the house, taking care to stay away, using a mask and using gel alcohol" (Universitário R).

Category 3 - False information: a virus that poses challenges to mental health care

Young schoolchildren and university students reported concerns about the excess of information, often mismatched, when they access media content that does not contribute to coping with the pandemic, thus being able to aggravate the state of anxiety or psychic involvement during social isolation.

The reinforcement of the search for communication content about the disease has also aroused in youths the interest in checking the source and the veracity of the information made available as information material on the pandemic. These apprehensions are noticeable in the following speech-questions: "Psychologically, what are the main consequences of so many fakes news related to the new coronavirus?" (Young 2); "A lot of information about the COVID-19 pandemic, can it increase anxiety attacks?" (Young 8); "How to stay informed and deal with the expectation of worsening of the situation of contamination and deaths without having anxiety attacks?" (Young 13); "Paying attention to the news, only listening to reliable sources and wearing a mask, avoiding external contact as much as possible" (University Student E); "Filtering access to social and business media online, reducing the frequency of access to entertainment media" (Universitário U).

Thus, the knowledge of youths map their concerns and the ways they take

care of themselves in order to maintain their health in the face of the pandemic through care practices, and not only with themselves, but also with their families and cohabitants, in addition to highlighting that qualified health information with safe sources and based on the referenced scientific knowledge create ways to produce care, which, in this text, has the meaning of a discursive practice that effectively places a concern with the other, therefore, a construction that gives meaning to web care nursing and health. ⁽⁷⁾

DISCUSSION

The discursive interactions of youths mediated in the cyberspace of the web radio showed that there are demands in mental health of social and interpersonal restrictions in the face of the experience of social isolation caused by the pandemic.

In this regard, it can be highlighted that the production of the "Em Sintonia com a Saúde" Program enabled participants to point out the "symptoms" that were made by the synthesis of the thematic categories with the speech-questions, as well as with the effects of these questions, which are their knowledge and sayings, produced in virtual meetings, and not only contribute to communication and information about the prevention measures of covid-19, but also point out the ways of living mental health through the communication that was done as practice of web care. ⁽⁷⁾

On the online channel, webradio, it was possible to promote discursive interactions with young people, facilitated by their digital communication systems with mediation by health professionals. In this perspective, the present study made it possible to systematize the youth speeches filled with elevated anxiety and depressive symptoms identified in colleagues, friends and family and concerns about safe information as an

important control measure to face the pandemic.

Anxiety is a device of the human psyche, adaptive and necessary for the individual to live with everyday situations, with varying intensity and duration according to each organism, which can be defined as "borderline" or pathological. As pathological, it consists of behavioral manifestations altered by fear and excessive anxiety. ⁽¹⁰⁾

Fear is the emotional response to an imminent threat, real or perceived, and anxiety is the anticipation of a future threat. It is necessary to consider that people, in general, were anxious and depressed even before the imminence of the new coronavirus, because, according to data from the World Health Organization, it is estimated that 20% to 25% of the Brazilian population have had, have or will have depression, and worldwide this is a major cause of illness and disability among teenagers. ⁽¹¹⁾ Anxiety, in turn, affects 9,3% of Brazilians. ⁽¹²⁾

Therefore, communication about anxiety as a human adaptive device was enhanced, also informing that, in the context of the pandemic, social restrictions and uncertainties in the information conveyed about COVID-19 can cause psychosomatic symptoms.

Among the international studies carried out to date on impacts on mental health in the face of the new coronavirus pandemic, Wang et al. ⁽¹³⁾ with the general population in China, including 1,210 participants in 194 cities, during the early stage of the pandemic. They revealed moderate to severe symptoms of stress, anxiety and depression in 8,1%, 16,5% and 28,8%, of the respondents, respectively. In addition, 75,2% of respondents reported fear of their family members contracting the disease. Being a woman, student and having physical symptoms linked to COVID-19, or previous health problems, were factors significantly associated with higher levels of stress, anxiety and depression.

In view of the context of excess information in both analogue and digital media, sometimes without reliable and verifiable sources, it is crucial to ensure them from the place and from the subjects authorized to speak. Researchers from the National School of Public Health of the Oswaldo Cruz Foundation demonstrated that the “Fake News” related to Covid-19, posted on social networks attached to the Internet, are the main spaces for spreading false news about the new coronavirus in Brazil. The data revealed that 10,5% of the fake news was published on Instagram, 15,8% on Facebook and 73,7% circulated by WhatsApp. The results also point out that 26,6% of fake news published on Facebook attribute Fiocruz as an advisor with regard to protection against

the new coronavirus. ⁽¹⁴⁾

Thus, a fake news pandemic was identified in the Brazilian scenario of living with COVID-19, since, in the database of the Ministry of Health, 70 fake news related to the pandemic can be identified between January and March of 2020, revealing possible interferences in the health care behaviors of the population.

Finally, the maintenance of social support networks during quarantine is also essential for mental health, since the rupture in the connections of affective social ties causes negative psychological impacts. ⁽¹⁵⁾⁽¹⁶⁾

CONCLUSION

The use of digital technologies, such

as the online channel, web radio, in the promotion of mental health can assist in the development of strategies for approaching, listening to and interacting with people in the context of social isolation caused by the pandemic of the new coronavirus, as virtual communication enabled the sharing of polysemic knowledge and languages.

Thus, communication and health information mediated by the web radio, resignified in the lives of young people as devices for transforming virtualized social spaces with the repercussion of their knowledge-power content shared with other subjects, navigators in digital territories, in the sense of helping them. them in making decisions to prevent and contain the COVID-19 pandemic. 🐦

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