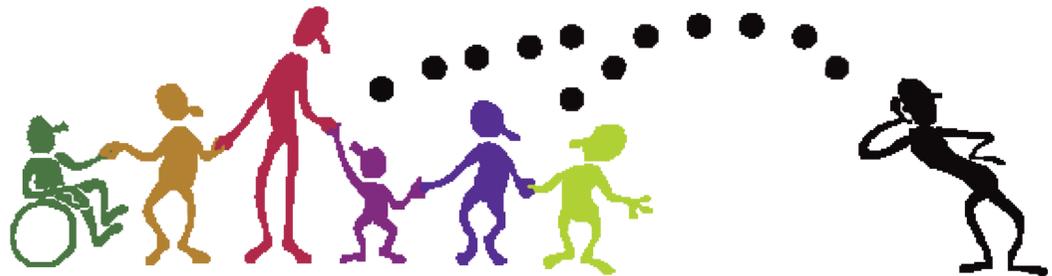


Research as a Resource in a Local Workplace Health Promotion Project

Å. Bringsén, H. I. Andersson, G. Ejlertsson
Centre of Public Health, School of Health and Society, Kristianstad University College, Sweden

Conclusion

Research through dialogue facilitates Workplace Health Promotion.



Within this particular context Participatory Action Research (PAR) and dialogue-based research methods facilitate creation of meaning and intelligibility that improves the possibility for research to function as a direct resource in the local Workplace Health Promotion (WHP) project. It seems as if assistant nurses can have difficulties understanding and making use of the PAR process, which emphasises the importance of researchers adapting to their needs.

Background

Workplace health promotion (WHP) projects in Europe have often had a traditional pathogenic perspective and evaluations have been studying the effects from the project related interventions and/or process. The role of research has often been characterised by the professional expert model, with research being considered objective and distant from the project itself, and therefore disregarded in the evaluations. A paradigm shift with more salutogenic as well as participatory research has often been recommended, when the dominance of the traditional approach to work and health research is being criticised. In 2002 a WHP project was started in a Swedish hospital ward. The project was characterised by a salutogenic perspective and participatory action research (PAR). The role of the researcher was defined as initiating and stimulating the change process and being in charge of an evaluation of the WHP project.

Aims

The aim of the process related evaluation was to explore health care staff's opinions about the different parts of the WHP project. In this poster some of the results from the evaluation have been used for the possibility to explore the role of PAR in relation to the local WHP project from the participants' point of view.

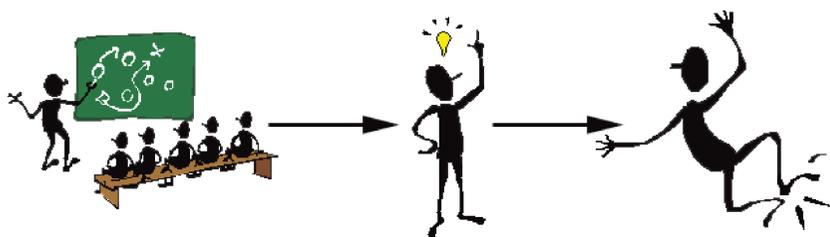
Methods

Eighteen individuals from the health care staff took part in five small focus group interviews. Nurses, assistant nurses and night staff were divided into different groups. The participants expressed their opinions about the project in general and the role of PAR in particular. The results of the interviews were transcribed by an assistant and analysed by the participating researcher. The result was presented and discussed with the participants subsequently.

Results

The **nurses** were positive towards the PAR process. They considered the research a resource giving opportunity for reflection on action, which helped to keep the WHP process going.

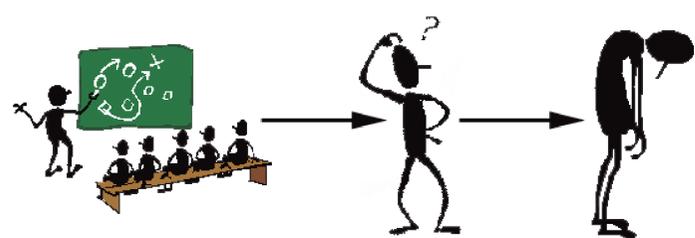
The **assistant nurses** were somewhat less positive. Sometimes they had difficulties understanding the researcher and participating in research was acceptable if the stress level at the ward was low.



Communication

Reflection

Action



Communication

Incomprehensibility

Less ability to act

All participants expressed positive experiences of dialogue-based research methods, and they wanted feedback from the researcher to be easy to understand and presented quickly, continuously and in rather small amounts.

Definitions

Salutogenic approach - focuses on explanations to why people maintain or improve their health (Antonovsky 1987).

Focusgroup interviews – Data is collected through group interaction concerning a topic being decided by the researcher (Morgan 1997).

Participatory Action Research (PAR) - Researcher as a facilitator conducting research with and for the participants (Foote Whyte 1991).

References

Antonovsky A (1987). Unraveling the mystery of health: How people manage stress and stay well. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco.

Morgan D (1997). Focus Groups as Qualitative Research. SAGE publications. Newbury Park.

Foote Whyte W. Participatory Action Research. California: SAGE Publications; 1991.