Abstract

The scope of this study was to evaluate how aspects of mental health policy in Brazil have been conceived and implemented in outpatient services, such as the Regional Outpatient Mental Health Clinic and the Psychosocial Care Center II, both in Ribeirão Preto, São Paulo. Semi-direct interviews and focus groups were conducted with 22 health professionals. The theoretical method and data analysis were supported by the dialectical hermeneutic framework of Jürgen Habermas. The following aspects were detected: considerable technological advancement in health actions and centrality of clinical-medical technology in relation to other nonmedical therapeutic actions; the prioritization of treatment options emphasizing pathology and drug therapy, and a process of mounting precariousness in labor relations. With respect to psychosocial rehabilitation, analysis revealed that instrumental and technically-oriented treatment is imposed upon the practical and dialogical rationale proposed by Brazilian Psychiatric Reform. As an alternative, participatory evaluative research is required in order to unify clinical and psychosocial rehabilitation actions in therapeutic projects, while establishing mechanisms to promote the improvement of care based on the psychosocial care model.

Keywords

Mental health, Outpatient mental health services, Psychosocial care, Psychosocial rehabilitation.