

The meanings of work: a study in the perception of nurses

Os sentidos do trabalho: um estudo na percepção dos enfermeiros
los significados del trabajo: un estudio sobre la percepción de las enfermeras


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ABSTRACT:

The general objective of this study was to investigate the meanings that nurses from a private hospital located in Palmas attribute to their work. The method used in the research was literature review and field research through the application of questionnaires, using the quantitative approach. The data collection instrument was developed adapted from Morin's studies. The results reveal that the researched population has a positive understanding of work, which is defined as an activity that pays financially, but also allows people to improve their quality of life and grow personally. As for the meaning of work, it was identified that for the researched population, meaningful work is one that has clear objectives and goals, with a salary that meets personal needs, but that respects human values, has a safe environment and brings pleasure.

KEYWORDS: Work; Work direction; Nursing professionals.

Introduction

In the past, work was treated with disregard, considering it as a necessary burden for survival. However, over time, this contempt for work has been modified, making it also an activity of achievement for individuals.

Thus, the objective of this article is to investigate the meanings that nurses in a private hospital located in Palmas attribute to their work. For this, it is proposed: to identify the nurses' perception of what work is; identify what makes the work make sense

to these professionals; to verify the meanings that professionals attribute to their work in the individual, organizational and social dimensions.

Understanding the meaning of work for employees makes it possible for organizations to provide better working conditions and quality of life and, with that, give workers the opportunity to develop positive attitudes towards the work performed, that is, possibilities to do something that makes sense. to the company that employs them and, mainly, to themselves, leading them to assume a greater commitment to the work they do and to the Institution.

The study was carried out in the months of November and October 2019 in a private hospital located in the city of Palmas - TO, based on Morin's studies, addressing the definition of work and the meanings attributed to work.

Given the above, the question that guides this study is: what are the meanings of work in the perception of nurses in a private hospital located in Palmas?

The methodology used in the research was literature review and field research through the application of questionnaires, using a quantitative approach.

Development

Definition of Work

Approaches regarding work are generally carried out through two antagonistic axes (BASTOS; PINHO; COSTA, 1995). The first axis brings a negative evaluation of the work and lasted until the beginning of the 15th century (ALBORNOZ, 2006), linking the work to the notion of sacrifice, unusual effort, burden, burden, something exhausting for those who do it, synonymous with struggle, associated with the notion of punishment. In the second axis, there is a positive valuation as a way of applying human capacities to provide the effort in order to reach a certain objective, to do a certain task with care (SANTOS, 2010). According to Luchese et al. (2010), the search for valuing individuals within the organization allowed the emergence of a new concept of work, more oriented to the well-being of people, observing issues such as trust, subjectivity, affectivity, quality of life, making people perform their tasks with satisfaction and pleasure.

Santos (2010) in his research on the meanings attributed to work listed some authors who present different conceptual approaches to work, as shown in Chart 1.

Chart 1 Concept of work according to several authors.

Authors	Concept
Marshall (1980)	Work is an effort of the body and the mind, performed partially or totally, with the purpose of obtaining some benefit other than the satisfaction that derives directly from the work.
Fryer and Payne (1984)	They define in a similar way to Marshall (1980), considering work as an activity with a purpose that is different from the pleasure obtained in its execution.
Dubin (1958)	Work is, in general, a continuous job in the production of goods and services in exchange for remuneration.
Anderson and Rodin (1989)	Work is the time for which a person is paid.
Donald and Havighurst (1959); Friedman and Havighurst (1954); MOW (1987)	Work is a way of contributing to society, providing valuable goods and services.
Fox and Hesse-Biber (1984)	Work is an activity or use of energy that produces services and products of value to other people.
Friedman and Havighurst (1954); MOW (1987)	Work is a means of building identity and promotes social contacts.
Mow (1987)	Work generates intrinsic satisfaction, derived from its execution.
Friedman and Havighurst (1954); Parker and Smith (1976)	The work makes people maintain the minimum level of activity necessary for an adequate physical and psychological development.
Parker and Smith (1976)	Work is the opposite of rest.

Source: SANTOS, 2010, p. 18.

In this context, for the development of this research, the following concept is taken into account: work is an activity by which man performs, transforming the natural environment through his knowledge and skill, forming a final product or service; in addition, the individual is dedicated to this activity by assigning values, beliefs and subjective meanings.

The Meaning of Work

There are several studies addressing the meaning attributed to work. There are, for example, some national studies such as those by Borges (1997), D 'Acri (2003) and Oliveira et al. (2004). And the renowned international studies by Hackman and Oldhan (1975), from the group of MOW (1987) and Morin (2001).

Historically, the first studies on the theme are attributed to Hackman and Oldhan (1975), two psychologists who related the quality of life at work to the meaning of work. According to the authors, work that makes sense is important, useful and legitimate for the person who performs it and has three fundamental characteristics: the variety of tasks that allow the use of different skills, so that the worker can identify with the execution; non-alienating work; and feedback on their performance in the activities performed.

Another relevant study is by researchers in the MOW – Meaning of Work (1987) group, in which the approach translates an investigation model based on the concept that the meaning of work is determined by the individual's choices and experiences; and influenced by the organizational, family and social context in which he lives and works.

Borges (1997) addressed the divergences between the main influencing facets for the formation of the meaning of work, making a distinction between the valuative and descriptive attributes of the work. The evaluative attributes refer to how the work should be, being related to the values inherent to it; The descriptive attributes designate what the work is concretely, that is, what it represents mentally or abstractly for each person. Among the valuing attributes are: social requirements; justice at work; bodily effort and dehumanization; personal fulfillment; personal and family survival. Among the descriptive attributes are identified: success and personal fulfillment; work justice; personal and family survival, economic independence; mental burden.

Another study worth mentioning is D'Acri's research (2003), carried out with workers at an asbestos factory in Rio de Janeiro. The results showed that even in a scenario of disease, morbidity and capitalist exploitation, most of the workers surveyed saw the senses in their work, with the feelings of construction and performance of their work in the world. In this research, although the workers mentioned the economic need for survival as the first motivation for their work, the workers also highlighted the importance of work in their lives and the friendly and affective relationships, as they think they expand their world and them in a collective universe.

Oliveira et al. (2004) stated, in his research, that a meaningless job is one that clashes with personal values, that is not recognized, that does not allow development, that is unproductive, that is routine or little challenging.

Morin Studies

According to the works of Morin (2001) and Morin; Tonelli and Pliopas (2007), the concept and the meaning of work encompasses three dimensions: individual, organizational and social. In the individual dimension, work is identified with the moral

and ethical values of the subject, which is pleasurable, which allows valuation, development and growth in an individual sphere, and, in the organizational dimension, there is the utility and organization of work, which allows interpersonal and be useful to the group, with results obtained. And finally, the social dimension which represents work that is useful and contributes to the development of society.

In addition, the research results determine the attributes of meaningful work, in order to suggest concrete ways of organizing work during organizational changes. Are they:

1. Efficient work: work is a productive activity that adds value to something; for this, it must be organized efficiently, the realization of which leads to useful results, using energy in a profitable way. It is important that the objectives pursued and the expected results are clear and meaningful to the people who accomplish them.

2. Satisfactory work: the pleasure and feeling of accomplishment that can be obtained in the execution of tasks give meaning to the work. The interest in work would be related to the demands that it provides to the individual, with the set of values, interests and skills of the subject, with the possibility of proving his skills, with the autonomy, responsibility and feedback on his tasks.

3. A job that is morally accepted: something done in a social context that respects the duty and the knowledge to live in society both in terms of achievement and the goals it establishes. The Subject rejects places that exalt values not shared by the individual, that perform disrespectful, unfair, non-productive and dishonest practices.

4. A job that allows human relationships: an activity that puts people in relationship with others, contributing to the development of their identities. A meaningful job is a job in which you can find quality, honest, frank people, with whom you can enjoy working, being able to help each other. Meaning at work is found through strong social ties, allowing escape from the feeling of isolation.

5. A job that guarantees security and autonomy: the job is associated with the salary that allows to provide basic needs, gives a feeling of security and makes it possible to be autonomous and independent. The conditions under which the work is carried out were also considered important.

6. A job that keeps people busy: work is an activity programmed with schedules and routines, it is a need that helps people to be situated, that occupies the time of life and that gives it meaning, especially when you have autonomy.

Methods

Initially, there was a literature review on the subject, as according to Andrade (2008) and Marconi and Lakatos (2008), all scientific work, all research, whether in the laboratory or in the field, must have the support and support of a review. preliminary literature.

Literature reviews are studies that analyze the bibliographic production in a given thematic area, within a time frame, providing an overview on a specific topic, highlighting new ideas, methods, subthemes that have received more or less emphasis in the selected literature. It is, therefore, a type of text that gathers and discusses information produced in the study area that provides information to contextualize the extent and significance of the problem being handled and points out and discusses possible solutions to similar problems and offers alternative methodologies that have been used to solve the problem (MOREIRA, 2008). According to Laville (1999), to do a literature review is to review the works available, analyzing everything that may serve in future research, trying to find the knowledge and research related to the desired objectives, seeing how others proceeded in their research.

The field research, according to Marconi and Lakatos (2008), is a phase that is carried out after the bibliographic study, in this stage the researcher will define what is the means of data collection, sample size and how the data will be tabulated and analyzed . Field research was carried out with the aid of questionnaires. The study was characterized by the adoption of a quantitative approach that, for Lakatos and Marconi (2010), translates into numbers the opinions and / or information to then obtain the data analysis and, later, reach a conclusion and, the reason for conducting this type of research is to find out how many people in a given population share a characteristic or a group of characteristics.

As for the delimitation of the population, the universe of this research comprised the 30 nurses who work in a medium-sized hospital located in the city of Palmas-TO. It is noteworthy that although the research was authorized by the institution, it chose not to disclose the name.

We opted for the use of the data collection instrument developed by Morin (2001) and adapted by the researcher. The understanding that nurses have about work is investigated, through a question containing 22 definitions about the theme and to understand the meanings attributed to work, 27 variables that represent the definitions of work meaning were studied.

The questionnaire was applied in the respondents' work environment, during each interval. The same was applied by the researcher himself individually, in order to ensure the confidentiality and veracity of the answers, as well as to resolve any doubts that could arise.

For the treatment of the collected data, statistical techniques were applied for data analysis, namely: means, mode and standard deviation. Since the average provides a central position for the marks attributed by the respondents; fashion represents the note with the highest frequency; and the standard deviation shows how much variation there is in relation to the average. In this study, two themes were defined in the codification: concept of work and meaning of work, according to Morin's studies.

Results

Work Concept

Respondents were instructed to point out what reflected in their understanding of 'work', through 22 definitions on the theme on a scale where 1 represented the least reflected, and 5, represented the most reflected.

For the population surveyed, five definitions of what work is have the highest averages. For nurses in the hospital surveyed, the work:

Remunerates financially (item 4);

It allows the person to improve their quality of life (item 5);

It gives the feeling of financial and psychological independence (item 6);

Help in personal growth / learning (item 7);

It is a status symbol (item 10).

The definitions that least represent the understanding of the work for the respondents are also highlighted. In this case, five definitions have a lower average compared to the others. Thus, the concepts that least define work according to the respondents are:

Someone from the institution gives recognition (item 16);

The person perceives his contribution as unique and creative (item 3);

Whoever exercises perceives the process from beginning to end (item 14);

It can be used as a defense against anguish (item 22);

Other people take advantage (item 13).

Next, Table 1 presents the statistical statement about what work is, with the results of all the variables surveyed, organized from highest to lowest average.

Table 1 Statistical statement of the variables on what work is.

Item	Variables	Average	Fashion	Standard deviation
4	Financially remunerated	3.46	5	0.78

5	It allows the person to improve their quality of life	3.43	5	0.73
6	Gives a sense of financial and psychological independence	3.39	4	0.68
7	Help in personal growth / learning	3.33	3	0.85
10	It's status symbol	3.28	5	0.83
8	Provides identity to those who exercise	3.27	5	0.81
11	You must be accountable	3.26	3	0.79
20	It is a source of satisfactory human relations	3.13	5	0.21
19	It is considered ethical and morally acceptable	3.12	3	1.38
15	Has utility for the institution	3.08	5	0.59
18	Contributes to society	3.07	4	0.32
17	Allows social insertion	2.95	3	0.24
9	The institution where the person works is recognized	2.88	1	0.24
2	It is a challenge to be overcome	2.81	3	1.22
1	Those who exercise feel pleasure, like what they do	2.81	3	0.38
12	You are required to perform	2.79	3	0.42
21	Keeps people busy	2.78	3	1.09
16	Someone from the institution gives recognition	2.44	1	1.00
3	The person perceives his contribution as unique and creative	2.33	2	1.15
14	Whoever exercises perceives the process from beginning to end	2.33	1	1.15
22	Can be used as a defense against anguish	2.27	1	1.20
13	Other people take advantage	1.87	1	1.94

Source: Field research (2019).

The 22 definitions were grouped, according to Morin's studies, into three dimensions: individual, organizational and social.

In the individual dimension, Table 2, the work is identified with the moral (ethical) values of the person, it is pleasurable, it enables valuation, development and growth, the person knows with what purpose it is being accomplished and believes in what he is doing (MORIN, 2001). For nurses in the researched hospital, this dimension is the second with the highest average (3.03), in relation to the others.

Table 2 Individual dimension

Individual Dimension - Average 3.03			
Variables	Average	Fashion	Standard deviation
4 - Remunerate financially	3.46	5	0.78
5 - It allows people to improve their quality of life	3.43	5	0.73

6 - Gives the sensation of financial and psychological independence	3.39	4	0.68
7 - Help in personal growth / learning	3.33	3	0.85
10 - It is status symbol	3.28	5	0.83
8 - Provides identity to those who exercise	3.27	5	0.81
2 - It is a challenge to be overcome	2.81	3	1.22
1 - Those who exercise feel pleasure, like what they do	2.81	3	0.38
3 - The person perceives his contribution as unique and creative	2.33	2	1.15
22 - Can be used as a defense against anguish	2.27	1	1.20

Source: Field research (2019).

In the organizational dimension, Table 3, work is identified with aspects related to utility, work organization and interpersonal relationships in the work environment, and the work must achieve results, value for the company or for the group: to be useful (MORIN, 2001).

Table 3 Organizational Dimension.

Organizational Dimension - Average 2.72			
Variables	Average	Fashion	Standard deviation
11 - You must be accountable	3.26	3	0.79
20 - It is a source of satisfactory human relationships	3.13	5	0.21
15 - Has utility for the institution	3.08	5	0.59
9 - The institution where the person works is recognized	2.88	1	0.24
12 - You are required to perform	2.79	3	0.42
21 - Keeps people busy	2.78	3	1.09
16 - Someone from the institution gives recognition	2.44	1	1.00
14 - Whoever exercises perceives the process from beginning to end	2.33	1	1.15
13 - Other people take advantage	1.87	1	1.94

Source: Field research (2019).

In the social dimension, Table 4, work is identified as something capable of contributing and being useful to society, compared to the aspect of utility addressed in the organizational dimension (MORIN, 2001). However, in this dimension, it acquires greater breadth: work contributes not only to the development of the individual, but to society in general. This dimension was the one with the highest average (3.04).

Table 4 Social Dimension.

Social Dimension - Average 3.04			
Variables	Average	Fashion	Standard deviation
19 - Is considered ethical and morally acceptable	3.12	3	1.38
18 - Contributes to society	3.07	4	0.32
17 - Allows for social insertion	2.95	3	0.24

Source: Field research (2019).

Sense of Work

In order to understand the meanings attributed to work for nurses in the researched hospital, 27 statements were used about what makes work have meaning, based on the instrument proposed by Morin (2001). Respondents were instructed to point out what contributed to the work making sense, on a scale where 1 represents the least contributor, and 5, representing the most contributor.

For the researched population, a job that makes sense to them is that:

Where the objectives and goals are clear (item 18);

Who gives me a salary that meets my needs (item 21);

That respects human values (item 5);

That it be done in a safe and healthy environment (item 14);

That I am happy to do (item 13).

On the other hand, for the nurses of the researched hospital, the variables that least contribute to the meaning of work are:

Where can I count on the support of my superior (item 24);

That allows the use of creativity and innovation (item 27);

That allows me to exercise my judgment and give my opinion (item 3);

Where the results of the company can be seen (item 17);

That leaves me free to do it the way I prefer (item 12).

Next, Table 6 presents the statistical statement on the meaning of the work, with the results of all the variables surveyed, organized from highest to lowest average.

Table 5 Statistical statement of variables on the meaning of work.

Item	Variables	Average	Fashion	Standard deviation
18	Where the objectives and goals are clear	3.88	5	1.43

21	Who gives me a salary that meets my needs	3.82	5	1.35
5	Respects human values	3.79	4	1.33
14	Let it be done in a safe and healthy environment	3.65	5	1.05
13	That I take pleasure in doing	3.63	5	1.04
11	That respects my personal life	3.62	4	1.03
7	Which is done effectively	3.62	4	1.03
2	That allows me to learn and improve myself	3.49	3	1.01
8	That allows me to take initiatives to improve results	3.46	3	0.97
1	That matches my interests and desires	3.44	5	0.72
15	That recognizes my skills	3.44	4	0.76
16	Whose workload is adjusted	3.40	4	0.70
19	That serves for something	3.39	5	0.64
9	Which is useful for society	3.22	3	0.83
6	That allows you to glimpse the future with confidence	3.13	3	0.31
20	That gives opportunity to serve others	3.10	3	0.25
10	That allows me to have influence in the environment in which I live	3.08	5	0.14
4	Which is developed in a medium that respects people	3.06	4	0.19
26	Which is done in a place of justice and equality	3.05	4	0.14
23	That allows me to take on leadership responsibilities	3.00	3	0.09
25	That respects my personal beliefs	3.00	3	0.09
22	Where I can count on the help of colleagues	3.00	3	0.17
24	Where can I count on the support of my superior	2.91	2	0.28
27	That allows the use of creativity and innovation	2.86	1	0.24
3	That allows me to exercise my judgment and give my opinion	2.70	1	0.49
17	Where you can know the company's results	2.49	3	0.58
12	That leaves me free to do it the way I prefer	2.12	1	1.43

Source: Field research (2019).

In order to facilitate the understanding of the meaning of work, the 27 variables were grouped, according to Morin's studies, into six factors. Table 7 presents the definition of each factor and the average found in the research in decreasing order.

Table 6 Average of the factors of the meanings of work for the researched population.

Factor	Definition of factors	Factor average
3	A meaningful job is one that allows the use of individual skills and provides rewards for the worker	3.36
4	A meaningful job is one that does not negatively interfere in the worker's personal life	3.35

2	A job that makes sense is one that is done effectively and that recognizes the worker's skills.	3.31
6	A meaningful job is one that the worker realizes is useful for society.	3.23
1	A meaningful job is one that allows the worker to interact with the people in his environment.	3.11
5	A work that makes sense is one developed in an environment of freedom and respect for opinion.	2.88

Source: Field research (2019).

Factor 3 represents the most meaningful work in the opinion of the researched population, representing the first place in the general classification, with an average of 3.36. The main variables of this factor that gives meaning to the work of the nurses in the researched hospital are the salary that meets the needs and the pleasure of doing their job.

While factor 5, whose variables state that a job that makes sense is one that is developed in an environment of freedom, respect for opinion, creativity and innovation, presented the lowest average 2.88. Therefore, these variables, when present in the studied environment, are the ones that least contribute for the work to make sense.

The variables categorized according to the six factors are shown below, and they are classified in decreasing average order, as shown in Table 8.

Table 7 Factors that allow to assign meanings to work.

Factor	Variables	Average	Fashion	Standard deviation
1	1 - Which corresponds to my interests and desires	3.44	5	0.72
	18 - Where the objectives and goals are clear	3.88	5	1.43
	10 - Which allows me to have influence in the environment in which I live	3.08	5	0.14
	23 - Which allows me to assume leadership responsibilities	3.00	3	0.09
	22 - Where can I count on help from colleagues	3.00	3	0.17
	24 - Where can I count on the support of my superior	2.91	2	0.28
	17 - Where you can know the company's results	2.49	3	0.58
2	14 - Let it be done in a safe and healthy environment	3.65	5	1.05
	5 - That respects human values	3.79	4	1.33
	7 - What is done effectively	3.62	4	1.03
	8 - Which allows me to take initiatives to improve results	3.46	3	0.97
	15 - To recognize my skills	3.44	4	0.76
	6 - That allows you to glimpse the future with confidence	3.13	3	0.31

	12 - Which leaves me free to do it the way I prefer	2.12	1	1.43
3	21 - Who gives me a salary that meets my needs	3.82	5	1.35
	13 - That I have pleasure in doing	3.63	5	1.04
	2 - That allows me to learn and improve myself	3.49	3	1.01
	25 - That respects my personal beliefs	3.00	3	0.09
	27 - Which allows the use of creativity and innovation	2.86	1	0.24
4	11 - That respects my personal life	3.62	4	1.03
	16 - Whose workload is adjusted	3.40	4	0.70
	26 - What is done in a place of justice and equality	3.05	4	0.14
5	4 - Which is developed in a environment that respects people	3.06	4	0.19
	3 - Which allows me to exercise my judgment and give my opinion	2.70	1	0.49
6	19 - What is it for?	3.39	5	0.64
	9 - Which is useful for society	3.22	3	0.83
	20 - That gives opportunity to serve others	3.10	3	0.25

Source: Field research (2019).

Discussion

As for the definition of work, it was noticed that the researched population has a tendency to consider work as something that pays financially, but that at the same time can improve the quality of life of those who do it.

The results corroborate with the literature, in the sense that work is a form of financial return, that is, it is a means of producing the life of each one by providing for subsistence. But it can also be rich in an individual sense, contribute to the structuring of identity and improve personal and social experiences. Therefore, it has to be said that for the researched population, it is through work that the human being has sought to meet their needs, achieve their goals and fulfill themselves.

The dimension with the highest average was the social dimension, this result can be justified, because the reason for the existence of a hospital is to take care of the community's health and the function of the nursing area is to provide assistance to the individual, healthy or sick, family or community, and perform activities to promote, maintain and restore health.

As for the meaning of the work, the results raise the financial side again, and a meaningful job would be the one that gives a salary that meets the needs, in addition, the factor with the highest average was the 3 that refers, among other variables, the rewards to work.

On the other hand, the factor with the lowest average was 5, which refers, among other variables, to an environment of freedom. Corroborating, among the job definitions that showed the lowest average is the person who perceives his contribution as unique and creative; and among the lowest averages of the sense of work it would be the one that allows the use of creativity and innovation. It is noted that the functions performed by nurses in the hospital are generally routine, bureaucratic and prescribed by doctors; thus, it does not allow much autonomy or innovation. With this, perhaps, the reason for this factor and these variables have the lowest averages is explained.

Final considerations

For the study, it was based on the hypothesis that nursing professionals are inserted in a complex and highly responsible environment, subject to situations that generate tension, added to living with the suffering and anguish of patients and with death, for that would have a negative perception of work. In addition, because they deal directly with the public, they need to carry out their activities with enthusiasm, satisfaction, involvement and motivation. Therefore, it is important to understand the value that work occupies in people's lives, as well as to understand the meanings attributed to it.

It was realized with the study that the researched population has a positive understanding of the work, therefore the announced hypothesis is false.

The general objective of understanding the meanings that nurses in the researched hospital attribute to their work has been achieved.

The specific objectives were also achieved, the first objective was to identify the nurses' perception of what work is; the results show that for the researched population this is defined as an activity that pays financially, but also allows people to improve their quality of life and grow personally.

The second objective was to identify what makes the work meaningful for the nurses in the researched hospital, it was identified that for the researched population, meaningful work is one that has clear objectives and goals, with a salary that meets personal needs, but that respect human values, have a safe environment and bring pleasure. Corroborating, among the factors of the meanings of work, the one that presented the highest average was Factor 3, which states that a job that makes sense is one that allows the use of individual skills and that provides rewards to the worker.

The third objective was to verify the meanings that professionals attribute to their work in the individual, organizational and social dimensions. The results demonstrate that in relation to the dimensions researched in the concept of work, the social dimension

obtained a higher average. There is a tendency to consider work not only as a form of financial return, but as an intrinsically valued activity, as it helps to improve personal and social experiences.

Given the above, it is clear that the research problem has been solved, the results found demonstrate the nurses' perception of work.

It is recommended that the organization improve both financial subsidies and those that recognize the work of the researched population, since the results demonstrate the importance of both aspects. In addition, we did not seek to exhaust the topic, but it is hoped that this research will serve as a basis for future studies, with differentiated methods that contribute to the understanding and broadening of the vision on the subject presented.

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RESUMO:

O objetivo geral desse estudo foi investigar os sentidos que os enfermeiros de um hospital particular situado em Palmas atribuem ao seu trabalho. O método utilizado na pesquisa foi revisão de literatura e pesquisa de campo através da aplicação de questionários, recorrendo-se a abordagem quantitativa. O instrumento de coleta de dados foi elaborado adaptado dos estudos de Morin. Os resultados revelam que a população pesquisada tem um entendimento positivo do trabalho, sendo que este é definido como uma atividade que remunera financeiramente, mas também, permite a pessoa melhorar a qualidade de vida e crescer pessoalmente. Quanto ao sentido do trabalho, identificou-se que para população pesquisada um trabalho com sentido é aquele que possuem objetivos e metas claros, com um salário que supra as necessidades pessoais, mas que respeite os valores humanos, tenha um ambiente seguro e traga prazer.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Trabalho; Sentido do trabalho; Profissionais de enfermagem.

RESUMEN:

El objetivo general de este estudio fue investigar los significados que las enfermeras de un hospital privado ubicado en Palmas atribuyen a su trabajo. El método utilizado en la investigación fue la revisión de la literatura y la investigación de campo mediante la aplicación de cuestionarios, utilizando el enfoque cuantitativo. El instrumento de recolección de datos fue desarrollado adaptado de los estudios de Morin. Los resultados revelan que la población investigada tiene una comprensión positiva del trabajo, que se define como una actividad que paga financieramente, pero que también permite a las personas mejorar su calidad de vida y crecer personalmente. En cuanto al significado del trabajo, se identificó que para la población investigada, el trabajo significativo es uno que tiene objetivos y metas claros, con un salario que satisface las necesidades personales, pero que respeta los valores humanos, tiene un ambiente seguro y brinda placer.

PALABRAS-CLAVES: Trabajo; Dirección de trabajo; Profesionales de enfermería.