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PERCEPTION OF THE OTHER IN THE CONCEPT OF WORKPLACE WELLBEING

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Abstract: The socio-psychological phenomenon of perception of the other is the subject of interdisciplinary study in the social sciences. In modern society, the perception of the other is often associated with the experience of communicating with strangers, thereby manifesting itself at the level of interpersonal communication. This article examines the perception of the other from the perspective of the workplace well-being concept. The phenomenon of perception of the other is presented in terms of the characteristics of the psychological climate within a work team and the assessment of subjective well-being during work activities. The phenomenon of perception of the other is examined in two aspects: as an organizing factor in intragroup cohesion and a psychological climate within a team, and as a personally significant indicator of value attitudes and behavior patterns. The perception of the other is closely linked to subjective assessments of well-being in the workplace and can serve as an indicator of the psychological climate within a work team. The article emphasizes the philosophical significance of the perception of the other as a methodology for assessing workplace well-being. The main findings of the study allow us to expand our scientific understanding of modern intragroup processes of organizing the psychological climate within a team and the workplace well-being.

Keywords: perception of the other, workplace well-being, psychological climate, assessment, intragroup processes.

Introduction

The phenomenon of perception of the other has been studied in various scientific disciplines and from various perspectives. It contains the deep meanings of the separation of the Self from the outside world, self-knowledge, self-realization and worldview. The multifaceted nature of perception of the other allows us to find connections in various manifestations of a person's life and activity.

Philosophical and socio-psychological interpretations of modern societies are also related to the perception of the other. The issue of under-

standing the relationship between "self" and "other" acquires particular importance in the context of work activities, when members of a work group often stand out or even oppose each other in their functions and responsibilities. The "division" of group members into "self" and "others" has a negative impact on assessments of workplace well-being. Although the phenomenon of workplace well-being has received a fairly wide response in theoretical and methodological studies, studies on intragroup relations and the psychological climate of the work team from the perspective of the perception of the other are still scarce. Of particular interest are the manifestations of the perception of the other in work groups, the deep connections of these perceptions with the processes of self-knowledge and self-assessment of the employee. The purpose of this article is to reveal the peculiarities of the perception of the other in the context of the conceptual meanings of workplace well-being. The role and significance of the perception of the other from the standpoint of the formation and assessment of the psychological climate within the work groups are particularly emphasized. The study results provide an opportunity to identify methodological approaches aimed at revealing the ties between assessments of workplace well-being within a work group and the perception of the other.

Philosophical Understanding of the "Other"

The differentiation between "other" and "own" is based on the formation of a person's I-structure in the process of socialization. It enables a person to outline the boundaries of his own I-images through the recognition of the other. The I-structure includes not only personal qualities and peculiarities, but also the qualities of the other. A person identifies himself with his environment, finds similarities between those he knows and his own I, and, finally, the socio-cultural and civilizational identity of a person, conditioned by a sense of belonging, is formed. The other becomes a person who does not belong to his native environment, differs in behavior, thinking, communication forms, and often also in appearance. And the more a person succeeds in the process of socialization, the more clearly his own, native environment is delimited from the foreign

one. And vice versa, the more the image of the other becomes stereotypical and unchanging, the clearer and more understandable his own environment becomes. This is accompanied by the person's self-knowledge, deepening of affiliative perceptions, and differentiation of one's own environment. In other words, the more clearly the image of the other is formed, the more the person's perception of the Self and identification with the native environment are strengthened. The person perceives his own world through the other, and vice versa, he perceives the other through his own world (Weingartner, 1962; Best, 2019; Zumwalt, 2019).

Many philosophers and anthropologists have emphasized the importance of communicating with "others" to better understand thought patterns and behavioral models. Furthermore, the idea of the identity of "one's own" with "the other" was emphasized, represented in a dichotomous understanding of phenomena. At the same time, a gradual separation of the perception of "other" and "foreign" was observed (Switat, 2017; Williams, 2020; King, 2019).

The phenomenology of "foreign" is culturally, spatially, and historically determined. At various periods of historical development, "foreign" was imbued with philosophical significance for defining and distinguishing "one's own" world from the "unfamiliar." At the same time, the perception of "foreign" was influenced by the ideological influences of a given historical era. Thus, many cultural scientists and anthropologists perceived foreign cultures as more primitive than European culture. This view was shared by Lévy-Bruhl (1903), Lévi-Strauss (2001; 2011), Boas (1982), and many other researchers (Gingrich, 2010; Truman, 1893; Postal, 1964) of various cultural communities. The anthropological understanding of "foreign" is closely linked to the unconscious processes acquired by humans along with culture. Therefore, many manifestations of the "foreign" were perceived by European anthropologists as illogical and unsupported forms of thought.

Boas's conception of the "foreign" is based on a multi-level system of contrasting the self-concept with the "foreign" world:

- The self-concept is distinguished from the "foreign" as a representative of the profane world.
- The self-concept is distinguished from the

"foreign" as something valuable and socially assimilated within its cultural environment.

- The self-concept is distinguished from the "foreign" as carrying meanings that are understandable and relatable to oneself on an individual level (Boas, 1982).

"The "foreign" is often associated with something located at an indefinite spatial and temporal distance, while the "other" can be present "here and now." "The Other" is something or someone that is present in the same cultural and social environment, but differs from the Self by a certain set of qualities or, conversely, by their absence (Simmel, 1976; Karakayali, 2006).

Husserl (1970) emphasizes the perception of the other in terms of its connection to past experience. "One's own" is perceived as something mastered through past experience, while "the other" is contrasted with "one's own" as something primarily inaccessible in one's own experience. Waldenfels (2006) developed the phenomenology of the other, incorporating the perception of a dual ego: the alien becomes a reflection of one's own self, assuming the significance of inevitability within the structure of the self. In general, Waldenfels presents the phenomenology of the other through the perception of new meanings within the structure of the self, which are contrasted with rules of behavior and stereotypes of thought already mastered by past experience, thereby becoming an inevitable alternative to the perception of the self-concept. The self-image is perceived through the opposition of oneself to the "other." The opposition of perception between "one's own" and "the other" is a kind of mechanism for preserving "one's" world, which exists through separation from the unknown, new, and incomprehensible "other." The further the Other distances itself from the Self, the more its alienation is emphasized in perception. The alienation of the Other leads to hostility of the Self toward the Other. While the Self and the Other can coexist in the same temporal and spatial environment, the transformation of the Other into a Foreign typically leads to a "battle for survival." Either the Foreign must become so understandable and acceptable to the Self that certain mechanisms of dialogue with it emerge, or the Foreign is marginalized, rejected by the Self, and contrasted with its own cultural environment. Acceptance of the Foreign occurs through perceiving it not as alien and hostile to a given culture, but as Other. In other words, in the Self-Foreign dichotomy, the perception of the Other occupies a certain intermediate position. The Other is someone who has the right to coexist with the Self. The presence of the Other makes the Self more visible and significant. The Other is a competing side of the Self, but at the same time does not evoke the mystical fear that is present in the perception of the Foreign or Alien.

Perception of the Other and Workplace Well-Being

The concept of workplace well-being is one of the characteristics of the psychological climate within a work team. It is based on the principle of diagnosing the psychological climate in the workplace, aimed at improving employee productivity and enhancing subjective well-being and satisfaction with the work process (Georgakopoulos & Kelly, 2017).

Although the concept of workplace well-being is a personally significant aspect of an employee's psychological health, it impacts the sustainability of the entire organization by promoting employee engagement in the work process. Workplace well-being is determined by an assessment of the psychological climate within the team. It is also determined by the employee's level of self-esteem, which depends on their level of engagement within the team (Alexandrova & Fabian, 2022; Diken, 1998).

Workplace well-being is formed not only through a sense of satisfaction with the work performed, but also through the employee's engagement with the work team, the psychological space of "We." Therefore, research on the concept of workplace well-being is closely linked to the perception of others and the "Us"-"Them" dichotomy (Kononov & Ein-Gar, 2023; Lingis, 1972).

Given the fact that the perception of the other can be found everywhere, we can assume that in work groups it can play both a negative and a positive role. The perception of the other plays a particularly important role in assessments of workplace well-being. The positive role and significance of the perception of the other can be seen especially in work groups where the image of the other is formed due to external, objective factors of the psychological climate (Maio &

Olson, 2000). Thus, in order to increase intragroup cohesion, the group manager can "find" or "create" any object representing an external threat - a competing organization, an unfamiliar auditing company, etc., which are foreign to the group members and pose a certain danger. Such an "external" projection of the perception of the other often has a positive effect on increasing the efficiency of work within the group, strengthening intragroup relations, as well as assessments of workplace well-being (Mallillin et al., 2021; Pautz, 2021).

Conversely, the intragroup localization of the perception of the outsider, as a rule, disrupts the psychological climate within the group, leads to the creation of various internal groupings in interpersonal relations, low valuation of work processes, as well as a decrease in satisfaction with work activities (Schutz, 1944; Simoneli & Parolin, 2016). That is why developing workplace well-being is a system of management and socio-psychological programs whose key components are:

- material motivation for activity,
- psychological motivation for activity,
- acceptance of new employees by the work team,
- constructive communication,
- a positive psychological climate within the work team,
- comfortable working conditions,
- career advancement, etc (Sirgy, 2018).

American psychologist Martin Seligman (2011) developed a concept of workplace well-being, the key characteristic of which was the assessment of happiness. This model was called PERMA, an acronym for the core happiness indicators:

- Positive Emotion;
- Engagement;
- Relationships;
- Meaning;
- Accomplishments.

Based on the PERMA model, the author developed a methodology for assessing workplace well-being. Employee assessments allow for the identification of both strengths and weaknesses in the work environment.

The level of the workplace well-being expresses the degree of an individual's satisfaction with their work and serves as a key characteristic of the moral and psychological climate of the team. In the process of identifying "otherness" in work activities, the behavior of both "us" and "them" is stereotyped. Gradually, types of communicative behavior are developed that correspond to the stereotypes of both "us" and "them." Thus, when analyzing the perception of others in a workplace, it is important to consider the general types of communicative behavior (Triandis, 1995):

- Collectivists: sociable, supportive of any initiative, proactive;
- Individualists: inclined to solve problems alone, gravitating toward personal responsibility;
- Pretentious: possessed of vanity, resentment, and a desire (pretensions) to be the center of attention when performing work;
- Imitators: avoiding complications, imitating the manners of others;
- Passive (opportunists): weak-willed, not showing initiative and susceptible to outside influence;
- Isolated: unsociable, possessing an intolerable character.

Hofstede (1980) identified four dimensions of communicative behavior: power distance, masculinity-femininity, individualism-collectivism, and uncertainty aversion. Hofstede subsequently expanded his typology of communicative behavior by identifying a fifth dimension: long-term orientation.

The power distance dimension determines how highly the social status of government officials and management is valued in a given society. The higher this dimension, the greater the power distance. In such societies, there is an accentuated hierarchy in the workplace. Employees of lower social status treat those higher up the management hierarchy with deference. Communicative behavior with a pronounced power distance dimension implies an authoritarian management style. Conversely, in societies with low power distance, there is a desire for equality in the distribution of power; organizational leaders communicate more freely with subordinates. Employees in such organizations actively participate in the management of the company.

The individualism-collectivism dimension determines the degree to which an individual embrace socially significant value. Communicative behavior characterized by pronounced individualistic values emphasizes individual ambitions

and goals. Collective goals become secondary, leading to the establishment of formal, business-like relationships between colleagues.

Communicative behavior characterized by pronounced collectivistic values, in turn, is expressed through mutual assistance, cohesion, and a high degree of affiliation with the organization.

The masculinity-femininity dimension indicates the degree to which certain values are preferred in society. Thus, a predominance of masculinity in communicative behavior indicates the priority of values such as goal-setting, material rewards for success, and competition. Its opposite dimension, femininity, indicates a preference in society for cooperation, mutual assistance, modesty in behavior, and mutual care.

The uncertainty avoidance dimension is closely linked to the level of individualism-collectivism in an organization and in society as a whole. A high level of uncertainty avoidance indicates a fear of the future and uncertainty about the future. Communicative behavior with a high level of uncertainty avoidance is expressed in employees' desire to adhere to strict rules of conduct, reduce risk, and adhere to management regulations and instructions. This type of behavior is characteristic of collectivist societies with a high level of power distance. In societies with low levels of uncertainty avoidance, employees are more adaptive to unexpected changes, and competition and rivalry in the workplace are perceived as contributing to the organization's success.

Finally, the long-term/short-term orientation dimension of communicative behavior indicates the direction of employees' goal-setting. With a predominance of long-term orientation, employees are willing to tolerate setbacks in the present for the sake of achieving success in the future. Values such as perseverance and patience are emphasized. With a short-term orientation, people are focused on quick results "here and now," and behavioral patterns emphasize the present.

Knowledge of the main types of communicative behavior, as well as monitoring of the psychological climate in a work team, can facilitate not only the timely diagnosis of manifestations of the perception of the other within the team but also direct team management toward improving workplace well-being (McAdams, 1994; Nickerson, 2010).

To improve workplace well-being, it is neces-

sary to develop a methodology for managing the work team. This includes:

- monitoring the level of psychological climate within the group and types of communication behavior,
- developing a strategy for designing work duties and functions based on the results of monitoring to identify types of communication behavior,
- creating an external image of the "Other", which promotes internal consolidation of the work group and psychological cohesion,
- improving workplace well-being (Bradley, 2013).

The perception of the other is also directly linked to the corresponding emotional load. Typically, the perception of the other is rooted in ambivalent feelings, which often arise in uncertain situations. Similarly, when confronted with the other, a person is unable to immediately position themselves as the direct opposite of the alien, as they are encountering someone they don't yet know well—typically, strangers, whom a person is trying to get to know better. And with direct opposition, a feeling of hostility arises, which, in turn, is not expressed toward strangers. Hostility, therefore, is determined by specific cause-and-effect relationships.

Thus, the perception of the other (and not the hostile) implies a simultaneous "distancing" from the stranger and an "attraction" to them. In the workplace, the perception of others becomes a consequence of unclear ethical norms of behavior. Therefore, it can be concluded that organizing a workforce through clear ethical rules of communication behavior and maintaining a value-based psychological climate will contribute to increased well-being in the workplace.

Characteristics of Psychological Climate

The socio-psychological climate in work teams is considered by a number of authors as an integral phenomenon, with continuous interrelations and interactions of various factors. It cannot be presented as some kind of finished, complete phenomenon, which is stable in its manifestations and consists of a mechanical sum of simpler elements (Altman, 1975; Altman, 1977). For example, the psychological climate cannot be perceived as a simple sum of individual needs,

interests, motives, values, etc.

The forms of manifestation of the socio-psychological climate in work groups most often include teamwork, the level of conflict in the team, cohesion, compatibility in the communicative field, forms of communication, satisfaction with work and life, self-esteem, sympathy, mood and other various factors. It is no coincidence that a number of authors have attempted to classify and present the factors that form the psychological climate under a certain methodology. Often, studies on psychological climate are presented by classifying objective and subjective, or internal and external, factors. Internal (subjective) factors include a person's disposition, motivation, level of group inclusion or involvement, psychological compatibility, willingness to be included in the group, etc. External (objective) factors include management mechanisms for organizing a work group, working conditions, competitive situations, social justice, material remuneration, external social or environmental processes, etc (Biswas et al., 2018; Hall, 1953).

Both objective and subjective indicators of the socio-psychological climate are distinguished. Kluckhohn (1951) lists objective (non-psychological) indicators of the socio-psychological climate of a working group as: the effectiveness of activity, the state of discipline, and the nature of personnel turnover. Subjective (psychological) indicators are determined by the characteristics of the perception and understanding of various aspects of life and activity by team members, the degree of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with work activities, as well as the behavior and activity of the majority in the team.

There are also other points of view on the indicators of the socio-psychological climate. According to Klüver (1925), objective indicators characterizing a negative socio-psychological climate include:
1) staff turnover,
2) inadequate working conditions,
3) lack of social and legal protection of employees,
4) ineffectiveness in performing professional tasks, etc.

Subjective psychological indicators are:
1) features of intra-team communication of employees,
2) level of professionalism of colleagues,
3) competence to solve the problems assigned to the organization,
4) features of employees' perception of mutual assessments,
5) emotional state, which is expressed in satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the conditions of activity,
6) expectations for the solution of social and everyday issues,
7) level of collective mood and its dynamics.

Subjective (psychological) indicators include the level of satisfaction of team members with various aspects of their life activities, the characteristics of perception and understanding of other people, satisfaction with existing relationships, prevailing psychological states among employees, effective work motivation, etc.

An important criterion for the socio-psychological climate in the work groups is the presence or absence of conflicts at the level of interpersonal relations, the spread of rumors about each other, psychological incompatibility of team members, the desire to move to other professional teams, psychological tension, hidden criticism of employees, and low workplace activity.

In assessing and optimizing the socio-psychological atmosphere in the work groups, a special role is assigned to psychological work, first of all, the development of personality, the implementation of measures to harmonize relations in the team, psychological readiness to be communicative and constructive (Kornadt et al., 2020; Westin, 1968).

White (2015) believes that the content of the determining components of the socio-psychological climate is extremely diverse, but is based largely on subjective factors. In his opinion, it is a complex spectrum of emotional, intellectual and volitional reactions, social positions and actions, which is expressed in motives, feelings, moods, attitudes towards life, ideas, norms, principles, stereotypes of perception and understanding of various life phenomena, etc. He also classifies the following objectively existing factors that influence the formation of the socio-psychological climate among subjective factors: the composition of the team, i.e. education, psychological compatibility, the number of members and the diversity of their individual psychological characteristics.

Menkens (2009) emphasizes the factors of the

socio-psychological climate that affect the effectiveness of the team, such as: the quantitative composition of the team, the level of team development, the system of intra-group communication, interpersonal relations, the leadership style of the leader.

Thus, in summary, the following factors characterizing the socio-psychological climate of the work group can be distinguished:

➢ Economic factors: salary, timely receipt of payments, setting salary limits in accordance with labor costs, fair distribution of material rewards, benefits, bonuses, etc.

➢ Managerial factors: style and methods of managing the team, the attitude of the leader towards subordinates, the cohesion of the management level, the continuity of assessment and selection of methods of influencing subordinates, social distance between managers and subordinates, the ethics of interaction between management and levels of business relations, etc.

➢ Psychological factors: staff relationships with each other, the degree of socio-psychological compatibility, conflict potential, the skills of building structural interaction, staff relationships with their immediate supervisor, the opinion of the group, norms of behavior and traditions, etc.

➢ Factors of the characteristics of the professional qualification of the staff: the number of staff, compliance of staff qualifications with the activities performed, ensuring adaptability and ensuring the transition to a position, professional growth and career prospects, training, etc.

➢ Legal factors: the optimality and consistency of legal acts regulating professional activities, the compliance of legal acts with the requirements for ensuring work readiness, the presence of a job description for each position, which indicates the scope, form and content of responsibilities, rights. legal acts (Sandstrom et al., 2022; Lauinger, 2021).

Thus, the main indicators of the socio-psychological climate of the work teams are the desire to maintain the integrity of the group, compatibility, teamwork, cohesion, communication, openness and responsibility. Let us briefly dwell on the essence of these indicators.

Cohesion is one of the processes that unites everyone. It characterizes the degree of commitment of its members to the group. It is determined by two main variables: the level of mutual sympathy in interpersonal relations and the degree of attraction to group members.

Responsibility is the control of activity in terms of compliance with the rules and regulations adopted in the organization. In workplaces with a positive socio-psychological climate, employees strive to take responsibility for the success or failure of joint activities.

Maintaining interpersonal relationships with each other and openness determine the degree of development of personal relationships between employees and the level of psychological intimacy between them (Brescoll & Uhlmann, 2015).

The socio-psychological climate largely depends on the level of compatibility and teamwork between group members. Compatibility and harmony determine the degree of interconnectedness and interdependence of employees. An effective group is a group that is psychologically integrated. Instead of many "I's", the concept of "We" appears. The opinions, assessments, feelings and actions of individual "I's" are combined, common interests and values arise, intellectual and personal qualities complement each other. Performing tasks and solving problems together, people develop special ways of regulating cognitive and emotional processes, behavioral strategies and a general style of group activity that are specific to this group. In such groups, experience is exchanged between people, a style of behavior is adopted, the range of individual capabilities is expanded, and the ability, desire and ability to link their goals and actions with the goals and actions of other people is developed. At a certain stage of cooperation between employees, the team can achieve optimal compatibility and harmony (Blanks, 2019; Berlyne, 1960).

The peculiarities of the socio-psychological climate affect the production, social and socio-psychological processes in a particular department and in the organization as a whole. We can confidently say that the socio-psychological climate of individual departments largely determines the success of the organization's production and its position in the market. Therefore, diagnosing and creating a positive socio-psychological climate in the workplace is an urgent task for each staff member.

Conclusion

Perceiving the other in a work team is an integral part of any team's development. Creating intragroup cohesion and collective spirit is the process of contrasting one's own with the other, one's familiar with the unfamiliar, and one's ingroup values and meanings with external cultural values. Much research on workplace well-being addresses the issue of creating an intragroup psychological climate, which is not only a factor in team management but also a socio-psychological factor in employee engagement and the organization of work activities. Examining the issue of workplace well-being from the perspective of the other allows us to identify the value component of the psychological climate within a work team. The more clearly employees recognize the uniqueness of the intragroup psychological climate and evaluate its constructiveness, the more cohesive and psychologically compatible intragroup communication becomes. In other words, perceiving one's own team as "We" and, simultaneously, perceiving other teams as "They" contributes to the rooting of intragroup values and behavior patterns.

However, the perception of "otherness" or "them" can also arise within the group itself, which is also reflected in assessments of the psychological climate of the team. The perception of "otherness" can affect the following forms of intra-group relationships:

➢ Vertical relationships between team members: leadership, the perception of the leader as an outsider by the team.

➢ Horizontal relationships between team members: the perception of a team member as an outsider, the prevalence of alienation in interpersonal relationships, a conflict-prone psychological climate within the team.

➢ An employee's alienated attitude toward work: destructive work motivation, low job satisfaction.

To improve the psychological climate in the work environment, it is necessary to deeply study the perceptions of the other in a given cultural environment, particularly in a given work team, with the aim of directing the negative potential of the perception of the other to the extpa-group environment, thereby contributing to increasing the level of intra-group cohesion and workplace well-being.

Further analysis of the relationship between perceived otherness and workplace well-being can be conducted taking into account individual employee characteristics (such as age, gender, education, and position at a particular company). The relationship between perceived otherness and communication behavior types, as well as assessments of the psychological climate within the team, can shed light on the process of identification with the workplace by employees of different age and gender groups and possible changes in the assessment of workplace well-being.

Understanding the phenomenon of perception of the other in a work team, as well as identifying the relationship with well-being in the workplace, can also lead to identifying types of compromising behavior and its stereotyping in work activity.

Acknowledgement

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