

EVALUATION OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL INFLUENCE ON PHYSICAL AND PSYCHOSOCIAL HEALTH AT WORK

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Abstract

Currently cost-effectiveness criteria dominate in the practices of modern businesses. These latter are more attracted by the economic and management activities that enable the company to achieve excellent financial results. Nonetheless, statistics show a steady growth in the number of workers who have fallen victim to the various diseases, which are caused by excessive stress due to improper working methods and interpersonal relations at work. Toxic management practices have a significant disruptive impact on workers, their physical, social and psychological well-being. Thereby, there is underestimated social aspect of a negative impact of an organization's economic activities on psychosocial health at work that we consider as social pollution. The aim of the paper is to present current research focused on in-depth studies into the factors of the business environment which affect physical and psychological well-being of the workers. The paper builds on the basis of previous literature and desk-data on toxic management practices as well as on empirical analysis. The research comprises a questionnaire survey, which was carried out in order to reveal the most significant components of the toxicity of the intra-organizational environment. These factors must be brought under control in order to enhance the workers' well-being in the workplace.

Key words: social pollution, physical and psycho-social health, psychological well-being, socio-labour relations

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Introduction

Social pollution has adverse effects not only on the employees of a company, but also on the welfare of society, as a whole. Today, the state regulation of health and well-being of the workforce has a mosaic pattern.

Investigation of the influence of social pollution on the health and welfare of the economically active population enables the identification of problems in this aspect of the socio-economic development of the areas under examination. The dynamic character of the

development necessitates the monitoring of the situation in the long term, as well as the elaboration of effective state regulation methods.

Work and well-being are closely related: the good or bad quality of working conditions have a direct impact on an individual's quality of life. There are a number of researchers who discuss different aspects of the health at work issue. The studies confirm the clear links between work-related stress and a variety of physical and mental disorders, despite the difficulty of proving a direct causal link, since the majority of diseases and syndromes commonly attributed to stress have multiple causes (Blaug, R., Kenyon, A. & Lekhi, R., 2007).

Causes of the related-work stress are often rooted in the intra-organizational toxicity. Many researchers of management and organization speak about this toxicity, which may lead to dysfunction and pathology in the organization (Goldman, 2008; Lipman-Blumen, 2005; Lubit, 2004), as well as damaging individuals, teams, and entire systems (Frost & Robinson, 1999). This negative effect of the workplace toxicity generally affects both managers and subordinates; each of whom may be the reasons for, and/or the victims of, this phenomenon. One of the reasons for the occurrence of toxic management practices are crisis, and companies' efforts to reduce labour costs (Frost, 2004). Thus, toxic management practices spread quickly and widely, resulting in the high degree of toxicity in the organization becoming unmanageable.

Scrutiny of well-being at work from the viewpoint of the workplace is particularly important, because until now many of the concepts have been devised by experts in different fields. For instance, occupational health services, occupational safety, and organizational consultancy. As they have been imported from outside the companies, they have often remained as fragmented and isolated actions, with no real link to the daily activities of the workplace (Anttonen H., Räsänen T., 2008).

The aim of the paper is to present the current research, which is focused on the following: 1) in-depth study into the factors of the organizational environments' effects on the physical and psychological well-being of the workers; 2) development of hypotheses on the basis of previous literature and desk-data on toxic management practices having a negative impact on the socio-psychological wellbeing of employees, and their satisfaction with their workplace; 3) verification of hypotheses by conducting an empirical analysis, which includes a questionnaire survey carried out to reveal the most significant components of the toxicity of

the intra-organizational environment, which require control in order to enhance workers' well-being inside the organization. This, in turn leads to more effective management.

The above mentioned research identifies the issue of social pollution, which describes the decrease in the level of welfare, as well as the deterioration of the physical and psycho-social health of workers caused by the economic activities of the company. The theoretical study has allowed us to elaborate the methodology of how to monitor and evaluate the extent of the factors influencing both organizational performance and workers' physical health and psycho-social well-being. An empirical study conducted by the authors as a comparison between Russian and Czech companies, has permitted the verification of the given hypotheses: firstly, to examine in detail the nature of the social pollution of the intra-organizational environment, and secondly to identify the toxic elements of the socio-labour relations in the company.

1 Methodological approaches to the diagnostics of social pollution due to the economic activities of companies

The purpose of social diagnostics, as a totality of scientific methods, is to substantiate the accuracy of the information received. It stages a social diagnosis; i.e., scientifically sound findings about the state of social health. Based on the fact that the social diagnosis has a dual essence, and concerns both the state of the object and the social process, we consider it expedient to use this terminology in the concept of our proposed methodology for the diagnosis of social pollution due to the economic activities of businesses. This includes such important components as the physical and psychological health of the economically active population.

Evaluation of the impact of the organization on the health and socio-psychological well-being of employees consists of the following elements: 1) a conceptual model of the diagnosis object; 2) diagnostic techniques; 3) the diagnostic process.

The conceptual model includes a substantial component for the diagnostics of the studied object and their interconnections. Practical application of the conceptual model is possible after its operationalization: it is necessary to generate empirical indicators with measurable parameters. In particular, the empirical indicators are used in the diagnostics of the object state, and for the interpretation of the data obtained.

It should be noted that the proposed methodology diagnostics of social pollution which is due to the economic activities of businesses has been developed taking into account the

triangulation principle (Campbell, D.T. & Fiske, D.W., 1959; Denzin, N. K., 2009). Triangulation as a verification process includes several viewpoints and methods, it is used as a research strategy for improving the validity of the evaluation and research results, and to deepen and broaden understanding of the information. In the social sciences, it refers to a combination of two or more theories, data sources, methods, and/or researchers in the study of the same phenomenon. The given research suggests the use of the following forms of triangulation:

- triangulation of data (extract data from various sources in order to form a single body of data);
- theoretical triangulation (the use of different theoretical positions in the interpretation of data);
- methodological triangulation (the application of different research methods and data collection techniques - both qualitative and quantitative).

Thus, the implementation of the recommended diagnostics methodology of social pollution due to the economic activities of businesses is based on the following principles:

- triangulation principle in order to ensure objectivity, comprehensiveness and verification of the information received;
- systems principle associated with pluri-causal social problems; in other words their origin and development is determined by several factors;
- principle of the scientific validity that envisages validity and reliability of the diagnostic results;
- causality principle that implies the necessity to take into account the connection, and the interaction of all phenomena and processes, which have an influence on the studied phenomenon. It allows us in the research process not to be limited by the description of certain facts or events, and to discover the patterns of their emergence and functioning (tab. 1).

Tab. 1: Methodology of the diagnostics of social pollution due to the economic activities of businesses

Structure	Elements	Description of the elements
Methodological approaches	- systems approach	analysis of the relationships between different parts of the interrelated parts and elements of the enterprise structure
	- normative approach	detection of deviations in the state of the object from the

		standard (norm) by specific indicators
	- situational approach	examining the status of diagnosed object in accordance with the specifics of a particular situation
	- problem approach	focusing attention on the managerial situation as a result of a unique combination of problems
Methodological principles	- triangulation principle	- triangulation of data; - theoretical triangulation; - methodological triangulation
	- systems principle	all social problems without exception have a multiplicity of causes, ie their origin and development identifies several reasons
	- principle of the scientific validity	diagnostic results must be valid and reliable
	- causality principle	necessity to take into account connections and interactions of all phenomena and processes
Research techniques (social diagnostics methods)	- methods of conducting a diagnostic research	collection of primary information; familiarization with documentary and statistical materials; interviews; survey
	- analysis methods of diagnostic information	classification; correlation; comparative analysis of the problems; content analysis; differentiation
Methods diagnostic research	- impact assessment of the organization on the health and socio-psychological well-being at work	- conceptual model of the diagnosis object; - diagnostic techniques; - diagnostic process.
Classification criteria	- accessory to a particular category of persons considering employment and social status, age, gender	- structure of respondents by staff category; - structure of respondents by gender; - structure of respondents by age groups; - structure of respondents under forms and the degree of occupancy in the workplace; - structure of the respondents with respect to the their work
	- essence of the social phenomenon under study with accounting the causes and consequences of its manifestation, quality components and basic development trends.	- nature of social pollution as a causal factor; - features of the consequences social pollution impact on the workers; - degree of impact social pollution on the health at work; - features of the consequences social pollution impact on the psychological well-being of workers; - features of the socio-labour relations components, having a negative influence on the socio-psychological well-being of workers;

		- nature of social pollution with due account taken of the stability of his condition in time
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Source: our elaboration.

The above-described methods of diagnostic studies were implemented by the authors in the approbation process of impact assessment methods of the organization on the health and socio-psychological well-being at work.

2 Parameters matrix of socio-organizational diagnosis

As a result, we have developed a matrix of parameters of socio-organizational diagnosis, which allows us to draw conclusions, form a conceptual model of the diagnostic object, which, in turn, is a component of the impact assessment methods of the organization's impact on health and socio-psychological well-being at work.

The research methodology covers the collection of primary data, their analysis and interpretation. Data were obtained by interviews with randomly selected respondents and filled in structured questionnaires. In Russia interviews were conducted among 87 employees of 2 manufacturing enterprises operating in the Ural region in February and March 2014. The aggregate sample of the surveyed respondents includes 38 manual workers (43.7%), 29 specialists (33.3%) and 20 senior managers (23.0%). In the Czech Republic interviews were made in the second half of March, and at the beginning of April 2014. The number of respondents represented 54 employees, of which 18 were senior managers, 18 were specialists and 18 were manual workers who were employed in the food industry.

During the analysis of responses of the employees' aggregate sample, who were working in the Russian and Czech companies we identified several statistically significant relationships between various empirical data, which are systematized on the classification criteria (table 2).

Tab. 2: Parameters matrix of socio-organizational diagnosis: comparative analysis

Classification criteria	Ranking		
	Measurable parameter	Average for all respondents, %	
		RF	CR
Nature of social pollution as a causal factor	- negative influence on the state of physical health at work	67,4	59,2
	- lack of influence on the state of physical health at work	26,9	20,3

	- positive influence on the state of physical health at work	5,7	8,0
Features of the consequences social pollution impact on the workers	- headaches	29,8	33,2
	- sleep disturbance and insomnia	18,8	21,3
	- diseases of the nervous system	13,5	11,9
	- the absence of any manifestations	13,5	15,8
	- cardiovascular disease	7,9	5,4
	- overeating and/or obesity	5,6	9,8
	- diseases of the digestive system	4,9	10,6
	- weight loss	3,0	4,9
	- diseases of the respiratory system	2,6	1,9
	- diseases of the circulatory system	0,4	0,6
Degree of impact social pollution on the health at work	- presence of small and noticeable health problems as a consequence of work	54,9	48,3
	- the absence of any health problems due to work	29,6	24,6
	- presence of a direct link between work and health problems	15,5	10,3
Features of the consequences social pollution impact on the psychological well-being of workers	- inability to meet the needs for psychological safety and confidence in the future at work	51,0	46,2
	- availability to meet the needs for psychological safety and confidence in the future at work	49,0	43,1
Features of the socio-labour relations components, having a negative influence on the socio-psychological well-being of workers	- conflict situations at the workplace	43,5	37,5
	- absence of any frustrating situations at the workplace	39,6	31,2
	- frustrating situations related to the dismissal and displacement of personnel for various reasons	11,5	25,3
Nature of social pollution with due account for the stability of his condition in time	- absence of any influence of the organization on the workers' quality of life	43,9	37,6
	- positive influence of the organization on the workers' quality of life	37,1	32,8
	- negative influence of the organization on the workers' quality of life	19,0	15,3

Based on the analysis of the results of the survey, which included the employees of the Russian manufacturing enterprises and Czech food industry companies, we formulated the following provisions of social diagnosis of the studied areas. More than two thirds of respondents feel a negative impact on their physical well-being at work, resulting in their having both small and significant health problems often associated with stress at work: every third – with headaches; every fifth – with sleep disorders and insomnia; one in seven – with

various diseases of the nervous system. The negative impact of the organization on the socio-psychological well-being of employees is primarily due to the fact that every second person is unable to satisfy their need for psychological security and confidence in the future at their workplaces. In this case, the most significant frustrations for the employees at their workplace are conflicts with supervisors, colleagues and clients. Every fifth respondent feels the destructive impact of his/her workplace on the quality of their life as a whole. This suggests the presence of social pollution due to the economic activities of the businesses in the studied area. In the CR it is believed that the negative impact of organizations on the socio-psychological well-being of employees is caused by the declining the quality of working life in recent years, which is due to stagnation of real wages in the economy and increased job insecurity.

Conclusion

In general, the comparative analysis of the results of the survey carried out on the Russian and Czech organizations shows no significant difference in the employees' estimates of the various factors that influence their health and socio-psychological well-being at work. So, the vast majority of employees in both countries indicate a negative impact of the workplaces on the state of their physical health. At the same time, twice as many Czech respondents said that they suffer diseases of the digestive system due to their working conditions (10.6% vs. 4.9%). In addition, employees of the Czech companies suffer twice as much as a result of dismissals and displacements of personnel for various reasons (25.3% vs. 11.5%). On the other hand, employees of Russian organizations in comparison with Czech workers more often complain of not having their need for psychological security satisfied. They also complain of not having confidence in the future at work (51% vs. 46.2%). Conflict in the workplace is also a greater concern for Russian workers (43.9% vs. 37.5%).

Thus, socio-organizational diagnosis of the territory obtained as a result of the diagnostics of social pollution due to the economic activities of business organisations enable the accurate identification of the main components and factors of social pollution of the business environment in the studied area. Identification of the negative impact of enterprises on the health and socio-psychological well-being of the economically active population based on the analysis of causal links between organizations and workers' welfare, allows us to develop more effective management mechanisms, and HR best practices, in order to reduce

the damage sustained by the working population because of the dysfunctional economic behavior of enterprises.

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