Gestão & Regionalidade

Pleasure and suffering experiences of workers from a resort chain: contributions from psychodynamics of work

Prazer e sofrimento de trabalhadores de uma rede de resorts: contribuições da Psicodinâmica do Trabalho

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to analyze the pleasure and suffering experiences of workers from a resort chain. We used a qualitative approach, having the psychodynamics of work as the theoretical framework to guide the discussions on the subjectivity of workers and work organization. We identified how the work organization affects pleasure and suffering experiences of this resort chain workers by conducting nine semi-structured interviews and analyzing their core meaning. The results suggest that the company displays an uninterrupted surveillance system, lack of autonomy, lack of privacy and work prescription contradictions, which elevates the turnover rates. Their work also enables them to have pleasure experiences, characterized by recognition, personal self-development, compliments from clients, and enjoyment of the resort facilities.
Keywords: hospitality; core meaning; people management; worker's health.

Resumo

Objetivou-se neste artigo analisar as vivências de prazer e sofrimento de trabalhadores de uma rede de resorts. Empregou-se uma abordagem qualitativa, tendo como base os subsídios teóricos da Psicodinâmica do Trabalho, de modo a orientar as discussões sobre a subjetividade do trabalhador e a organização. A partir da análise de nove entrevistas semiestruturadas e os núcleos de sentido emanentes delas, foi possível verificar como a organização do trabalho impacta nas vivências de sofrimento e prazer dos funcionários da rede de resorts. Os resultados indicam que a empresa se estrutura com um sistema de vigilância contínua, pouca autonomia aos funcionários, falta de privacidade, e um distanciamento entre o prescrito e o real do trabalho, o que aumenta muito a rotatividade organizacional. O trabalho possibilita ao mesmo tempo vivências de prazer, caracterizadas pelo reconhecimento, desenvolvimento pessoal, elogios dos clientes e uso da infraestrutura do resort.
Palavras-chave: hotelaria; núcleos de sentido; gestão de pessoas; saúde do trabalhador.

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1 INTRODUCTION

The fast transformations in the corporate environment in recent years have caused significant changes in the organizations and in workers' health, above all in relation to production processes, to workers' profile and working conditions (MERLO; MENDES, 2009). In tourism, work related themes are still underrepresented, particularly within references that consider workers' subjectivity and other aspects outside the scope of pragmatic corporate management.

Baum and Hai (2019) discuss the increasing precariousness of the employment in tourism sector as made explicit by low wages, intensive working hours–extensive in high season or reduced and overly flexible in the low season. Such characteristics antagonize the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) promoted by the United Nations (UN) and incorporated by World Tourism Organization (OMT, 2017) turning work in the tourism industry a current object for interdisciplinary research.

The interfaces between the tourism phenomenon and the world of work are multiple. They range from economic and sociological approaches to psychological, epidemiological and several other ones. This study has taken a psychodynamics of work perspective, a theory and clinical method developed by Dejours (2006, 2012), and complemented by Mendes (2007) and Mendes and Araújo (2012). This article focuses on pleasure and suffering experiences of workers in corporations.

The scientific production in psychodynamics of work in Brazil concentrates mainly in social psychology of work and is being widely spread (SELIGMANN-SILVA; 2011). Besides psychology, the psychodynamics of work also applies to the studies of public health, production engineering, nursing, business, and other areas of knowledge (MERLO; MENDES, 2009). The study of tourism work under these theoretical lenses is still at an early stage. Yet it is possible to find examples of its application in hotels, which show the prevalence of suffering in the experiences of employees (HERNANDES; MACEDO, 2008; MACEDO et al., 2008; BARRETO et al., 2016; SANT´ANNA; VOLTA,2019.

To contribute to this discussion and understand the discourses of hospitality workers, the empirical object in this paper are the workers' narratives about their work in a multinational resort chain. We defined resort labor as our study object because of its peculiarities when compared to traditional hotels, where examples already exist. We chose a specific multinational resort chain because of the idiosyncrasies of its philosophy and its relationship with its employees and customers.

The purpose of this article, therefore, is to analyze the experiences of pleasure and suffering of workers from a resort chain. Our research is qualitative and the methodological procedures we employed were documentary analysis, observation, and semi- structured interviews with nine workers and former workers of a resort chain. We analyzed data according to recommendations of Mendes (2007) in her Core Meaning Analysis, a version of the traditional content analysis (BARDIN, 2011) adapted for the theory of psychodynamics of work.

After this introduction, we present a literature review, framing some theoretical foundations of the Psychodynamics of Work and cases of pleasure-suffering studied in the hotel industry. Next, we

outline the qualitative method used in the study. After that, we present four Core Meanings found in the narratives of the workers and discuss the results based on Psychodynamics of Work. Finally, some final considerations summarize the contributions of the article, its limitations, and pathways for future research.

2 PSYCHODYNAMICS OF WORK

Psychodynamics of Work refers to a set of three complementary elements: the clinic, the theory, and the practice (DEJOURS, 2017). As a theory, psychodynamics is the product of the articulation of a set of concepts referring to the repercussions of work on the subjects' psychic, their defensive strategies, and actions that allow subjective mobilization in the face of suffering. The clinic involves providing a space for workers to speak and deal with issues regarding the organization of work (MENDES; GHIZONI, 2017), in which it is possible to identify and diagnose work-related disorders (DEJOURS, 2017). The practice, according to the author, involves psychotherapeutic knowledge that, through listening, allows the patient (worker) to re-signify their sufferings and mobilize themselves.

Psychodynamics of Work is also a school of thought about work. It was born in France in the 1980s, still as Psychopathology of Work, at the event of the publication of the book "*Travail, usure mentale*" (DEJOURS, 2015). In it, the author advances the psychopathological discussion of work-related illness processes, also directing his gaze to the defensive strategies mobilized by the subjects and workers' ability to resist illnesses (DEJOURS, 2015). Suffering gains in the "psychodynamic analysis of work situations" a central character (DEJOURS, 2006, p. 21), as it appears not only as a potentiator of situations that lead to illness, but also associated with the strategies mobilized by workers to face their suffering.

Dejours (2006) notes that suffering can be overcome and given new meaning, a condition engendered by the possibility of its subversion into pleasure (DEJOURS, 2013). The overcoming of suffering configures what we know as creative suffering, which happens when the organization of work allows an opening for the worker's ingenuity to face the adversities inherent to his activity (MORAES, 2013). The very act of working comprises a constant process of adaptation, repair, and transgression of norms, which allows us to overcome the reality of work (DEJOURS, 2013).

Psychodynamic pleasure has its origin in the framework of psychoanalysis, a theory that inspired Dejours (2006). The author states that pleasure is an experience of extreme satisfaction, expressed through gratification, achievement, recognition, freedom, and appreciation of work. Thus, one way to feel pleasure would be sublimation, and one possibility to experience sublimated pleasure would be work. As Mendes (2008, p. 19) explains: "[...] sublimation implies a political mobilization and the ability to give a new meaning to the reality of work, reconstructing and changing it, a dynamic that results from the possibility of negotiation in the face of differences of interests inherent to the work".

Authors describe pleasure at work as "a mobilizing principle that puts the subject into action in the search for gratification, self-realization and recognition by others of the usefulness and beauty of their work" (MENDES; MULLER, 2013, p. 2013). According to them, we cannot understand pleasure and suffering dichotomously, but complementary. This is because the conditions in which work takes place can open ways to overcome suffering, both pleasure and suffering being "the result of the combination of the subject's history with the organization of work" (MENDES; MULLER, 2013, p. 291).

Thus, pleasure at work is fundamental for the structuring of the working subject, as he(she) may perform the sublimation processes responsible for the construction of subjectivity and health. However, getting pleasure at work does not presuppose the end of suffering, but its re-signification. Therefore, pleasure is fundamental for structuring the individual who works, whether they experience it directly through sublimation, or indirectly through the re-signification of suffering (MENDES, 2004; 2008).

In summary, pleasure and suffering are psychic dynamics that can coexist. Both experiences should be the object of management attention for a few reasons: first, because workers are subjects, social agents, who have the right to quality of life and to enjoy meaningful work, a condition in which it is possible to feel, think and create at work (FERREIRA, 2009). Second, because the exhaustion of workers' adaptive capacities and defensive strategies can culminate in illness, a characteristic and ultimate consequence of pathogenic suffering. In more extreme cases, suffering can even lead to suicide (DEJOURS, 2017).

2.1 Pleasure and suffering experiences in the hotel industry

Authors using the Psychodynamics of Work have studied the most varied economic sectors in recent decades. In a fragmented and dispersed way, there are studies in the hospitality business. The peculiarities of this sector urge analysis of the organization of work and its repercussions on the subjective experiences of workers. To get to know some theoretical-empirical examples and identify gaps, we carried out a review of the major results of these publications.

Hernandes and Macêdo (2008) and Macêdo et al. (2008) were possibly the first authors to investigate the pleasure-suffering experiences of workers in hotels in Brazil. In both publications, they report empirical research conducted with hotel workers, the first from a qualitative approach and the second quantitative. The contexts studied were, respectively, a family organization and an organization certified by the SA8000 standard, which assesses the social responsibility of organizations. There were experiences of pleasure because of personal and professional fulfillment (HERNANDES; MACÊDO, 2008) and gratifications (MACÊDO et al., 2008).

The suffering indicators revolve around the physical and mental exhaustion resulting from the inflexibility of the work organization (MACÊDO et al., 2008), work overload, individualism, and difficulties in interpersonal relationships (HERNANDES; MACÊDO, 2008). Padilha and Grande (2011) point out that the physical and mental overload of hotel workers can come from the practice of keeping reduced staff, which culminates in extensive and intensive working hours. Despite this, the authors found in the housekeepers and receptionists' speeches allusions to the recognition of their work by guests, which contributes to the re-signification of the elements that favor distress at work.

Barreto et al. (2016) examine the physical, psychological, and social risks in a hotel restaurant. They discuss the possibility of illness of workers exposed to such risks for a long time, since the coping strategies mobilized by workers can be exhausted. When the efforts mobilized by the subjects are superior to their capacities, pathogenic suffering happens, a type of suffering that corrodes the worker, leading to illness.

In internships in the hospitality industry, Sant'Anna and Volta (2019) present a scenario marked by strains in relationships, decline in academic performance, and lack of recognition. Such indicators point to the experience of suffering, and, if autonomy, opportunities for practical intelligence and recognition are not present, creative possibilities are suppressed and pathogenic suffering expanded.

This overview exposes the predominance of experiences of suffering in investigations about work in hotels. We found studies interested in the qualitative and quantitative dimensions of the phenomenon, covering workers from different sectors. However, there was a lack of publications dealing with workers in resorts, leisure hotels, which are distinguished from other hotel enterprises because of different working hours, management practices, and work organization. To fill this gap, we undertook a study with workers from a resort chain to understand their experiences of pleasure and suffering.

3 METHODS

We classify this study as exploratory and qualitative. It aims to provide a discussion and deepen the understanding of work in the hospitality industry based on narratives about pleasure and suffering experiences of workers and former workers from a resort. To present the path followed in the research, we divide this section into two parts. In the first part, we characterize the organization of work and the participants we interviewed. Then, we describe the data collection and analysis procedures.

3.1 Characterization of the organization and participants

We studied a multinational organization in the leisure hotel industry, also known as resorts. The Brazilian Association of Resorts defines resorts as exclusive and differentiated destinations, endowed with excellent infrastructure and security, in paradisiacal places, where there is contact with nature and several options of leisure and entertainment, for all ages (LEHN, 2004). Although the organization has many units around the world, this study has not defined a specific one to conduct this research, as the company has the policy of changing employees between units, including abroad.

Our target research subjects were employees and former employees who lived in this resort chain, with a non-continuous working day and functions related to guest interaction. The research focuses on the subjects responsible for entertaining the guests, besides their specific functions such as bartenders, receptionists, and entertainers. We justify this delimitation by the interest in investigating how these characteristics can have repercussions on the experiences of pleasure and suffering of these individuals.

We grouped data regarding the profile of the interviewees in Figure 1, divided into subject identification, gender, status of link with the company, time of affiliation to the resort chain, and age.

Figure 1 - Interviewees' profile.

Identification	Gender	Resort affiliation	Time of affiliation	Age
Interviewee A	Male	NO	1 year and 2 months	29
Interviewee B	Male	NO	1 year	30
Interviewee C	Male	NO	7 months	27
Interviewee D	Male	NO	4 months	28
Interviewee E	Male	NO	5 years	30
Interviewee F	Male	NO	1 year and 6 months	35
Interviewee G	Male	YES	2 years	28
Interviewee H	Female	NO	9 months	25
Interviewee I	Female	NO	1.5 years	26

Fonte: Authors (2022).

It is important to explain the reason for including former employees of the company in this research. During the pre-research stage, the first author observed the relevance of the post-dismissal time. As these workers lived inside the resorts, with different habits and customs, if compared to the reality outside the organization, they suffered a hard impact on their routines, since they end up clashing with a very different reality from the one, they lived when working inside the chain. In addition, we found no methodological obstacles that would compromise the research results by including workers who had already left the organization.

3.2 Data collection and analysis procedures

Two procedures comprise the pre-research stage (MENDES, 2007): (1) One author stayed in a hotel unit for 3 days to observe, unsystematically, the daily life of the resort and its employees. He recorded his observations in a field diary; (2) a documentary analysis was built from the company's official websites, blogs, and social network profiles, open to the public.

Next, in the research stage, we opted for semi-structured interviews as a data collection tool, using a script built based on the Psychodynamics of Work theory and on the three procedures that preceded the interviews. As Mendes (2007) recommends, we divided the script into categories, such as work organization, working conditions and relations, pleasure indicators (gratification, recognition, and freedom); suffering indicators (distress, insecurity, and isolation) and indicators for the defense mechanisms.

Because many interviewees lived in different regions of Brazil and even in other countries, we opted for semi-structured individual virtual interviews. The interviews were done through Skype[4] and

recorded with the consent of the participants. One meeting was scheduled with each person during February and March 2018, ranging from 20 to 35 minutes. There was no concern about the number of interviewees or saturation point at first. As Minayo (2017) suggests, we navigated through the empirical universe until we found we had apprehended a sufficiently dense and qualitatively rich material, in this case, that would allow a critical interpretation of the results considering the theoretical bases of the psychodynamics of work. With nine interviews, sufficient variety and depth was observed in the responses that justified the end of data collection.

After transcribing the interviews, the analysis was divided into four stages: (1) selection and exploration of the material, when a floating reading of the transcribed interviews was made to find specific core meanings (2) coding - the questions were excluded and the answers were divided by theme; (3) grouping of themes into distinct sets (4) formatting of the Core Meanings - we named each grouped set based on the set of verbalizations that had similar themes, thus forming the Core Meanings (NASCIMENTO, 2012; OLIVEIRA, 2014).

4 CORE MEANING ANALYSIS

We identified four core meanings: the first and second ones represent the dimensions of work organization, work context and socio-professional relationships. We can find the feeling of pleasure at work in the third core meaning. Finally, the fourth core referred to the suffering experiences on the job and confrontation strategies.

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[4] Skype is both a computer software and smartphone app that allows making video and/or audio calls. Available here: https://www.skype.com/pt-br/features/ Access in: Jun 17th, 2020.

4.1 Core meaning n. 1: The work context between what is prescribed and what is real. *"I think this is the difference between those who manage to stay in the company for longer and others who only stay for a few months: feeling comfortable with the rules (...)"*

This core meaning deals with how organizational culture and its particularities influence the daily lives of employees. Many interviewees when describing the rules of the company, mentioning the difficulties of modifying the prescriptions; and this seemed to paralyze the work system, making it difficult to execute whatever they need to. So, employees expressed having autonomy to a certain extent, as having the freedom to solve a problematic situation is often impossible by a rule that prevents tasks from being carried out.

> Obviously, companies need to set rules for their employees; the problem is that we are always at the disposal of these rules (INTERVIEWEE I).

> Sometimes I was really exhausted psychologically, physically, and unhappy. Because we identified a problem, tried to find a solution, took it to the management, and, even so, they did not give the support to solve the problem, which many times, you had the solution. It was very stressful because you couldn't do anything (INTERVIEWEE B).

Interviewees found difficulties with their "real" work, due to being stuck to inflexible rules imposed by the work organization. For this discussion, from a sociological perspective, Rosenfield (2004) deals with granted autonomy, presenting it as one that reduces the margin for creation and improvisation of workers "to make way for a normative management system, in which real autonomy must be integrated into the institutionalization of autonomy" (p. 205). In this context, the employee may even be given some autonomy, but it will always be "controlled", leading, in some cases, to discontent and frustration.

Like any institution, contradictions permeate the work organization we examined (DEJOURS, 2006), not only between what is prescribed and real, but within the prescriptions themselves. Some workers mentioned the difficulty of modifying the rules, which was evidenced by the stiffness of prescriptions created by the company, even if the rules could paralyze the work system or hinder the evolution of the tasks performed. This suggests that prescriptions can contradict each other and confuse workers. Thus, it is impossible to achieve effective quality by respecting the prescriptions, since unexpected events conditioned the real work (DEJOURS, 2005). A work organization in which the prescriptions are too rigid makes it difficult to perform the task itself by not opening space for the worker's ingenuity and intelligence, fundamental elements for the construction of the access route to creative suffering (VIEIRA, 2014).

Besides the rules and requirements existing in each unit of the resort chain, the group agrees with the inefficiency of the selection process, which is carried out in the company's offices, outside the resorts. All interviewees claimed that the company only communicated the benefits that the company could provide. Yet, there is no mention of what happens on a day-to-day basis, the problems that may appear, the tasks performed and the time it takes for the worker to earn some promotions or benefits.

> Since the selection process I created a lot of expectations, they didn't tell everything. That's why there is a high turnover of employees; they sell you the fish, but when you get home and open the package, there is no fish, only the spine (INTERVIEWEE F).

The way Interviewee F justifies the high turnover of the workers of the company we studied, with the metaphorical expectations not reached in the purchase of a fish, are also linked to other factors that

will be presented in Core Meaning number 4, such as distance, confinement, physical and mental distress, among other factors. However, there were important speeches considering the selection process as the main reason for the high turnover of employees, because according to the interviewees, it is not uncommon for a new employee to arrive at the resort, not find what he expected and resign in a few weeks or months, clarifying that this is one of the problems the organization faces.

This matter draws attention to an important problem experienced by organizations, especially in the accommodation industry, employee turnover (LASHLEY; SPOLON, 2011). Haldorai et al. (2019) list a set of factors that may be associated with employee turnover in the hotel sector: low wages, long working hours, work overload, interpersonal tension, lack of opportunities for career progression, emotional labor and, finally, work-life balance. Some of these factors, which induce turnover, occur in the investigated company, such as the lack of transparency in relation to time and the promotion process in the company. In this regard, it is worth mentioning that, not revealing the actual working conditions, at the time of selection process, can burden the company, since it increases turnover, raising the costs of the company with training and adaptation of the individual, in addition to the disruption of organizational learning (RYAN; GHAZALI; MOHSIN, 2011; SIMONS; HINKIN, 2001).

Therefore, the gap between the real and the prescribed work is present in the investigated company and can be considered a source of frustration for many workers. This is due to the strict rules, which allow little autonomy in solving everyday problems and, in the work experience itself, which is far from what was presented in the selection process.

4.2 Core meaning n. 2: Socio-professional relationships: *"Living in the same place as your boss is not easy".*

The workers we investigated lived inside the resorts, in individual rooms, which, in many units, are close to the dwellings of individuals with other hierarchical positions, and even to the guest housing units. This suggests an increase in the organization's control over employees, as well as an increase in work related pressure.

> [...] the bedroom was a good place, as it was one of the few spaces where I could be completely at ease. It was the environment in which you felt you were not observed by anyone (INTERVIEWEE A).

Interviewee A reveals the existence of constant surveillance in the organization. Living inside resort creates an atmosphere of control that can be associated, in the Foucauldian conception, with the panopticon [5] (FOUCAULT, 2014). Technology, organizational architecture, and management practices may work as mechanisms of control and constant policing. Living at the resort results in living within an organizational aura, even during leisure time, which can result in self-discipline, through the incorporation of attitudes and practices in line with the company's culture.

Another peculiar characteristic of this company is the culture of close relationships between employees and guests. In this relationship setting, workers must even have lunch and dinner with the guests and talk during the day, to make them feel more welcomed. Some evidence was found that this proximity can bring several annoyances, especially regarding the employee's privacy, who reported difficulties in always demonstrating that they were happy and willing to have a good conversation, especially at mealtimes.

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[5] The panopticon is an architectural model composed of a central tower in which, around it, are the cloistered detainees exposed to constant observation (FOUCAULT, 2014).

[...] I learned a lot talking to guests. On the other hand, I had to be nice all the time, and sometimes I didn't want to. Sometimes I would wake up in a bad mood, for example. That was annoying sometimes, you know? (INTERVIEWEE C).

There are some guests that you really make friends with, but there are many cases that you end up making contact out of obligation. So you are without your privacy; there are times when you just want to rest inside that "pot". You just want to eat in peace and that is not very comfortable, especially on days with many arrivals of new guests, when you don't know anyone, asking to eat at the same table, without knowing the person or the family (INTERVIEWEE B).

The obligation to be kind and welcoming, even when there is no willingness to do so, relates to one of the factors that drive organizational turnover, as presented by Haldorai et al. (2019). This factor is the need to regulate workers' emotions when they are in contact with guests; that is, it refers to the control of emotions, so that the employee can always appear hospitable and able to offer the best service quality. In a lodging environment, the worker will certainly come across hostile guests and conflicting situations. For O'Neil and Davis (2011), such conditions generate discomfort in the work environment, including the desire to leave the job.

A study of hotel workers in China found that employees who could control their emotions suffered less from emotional exhaustion. Research shows that subjects with an extroverted, active, and positive profile tend to be more resilient than those with an introverted and pessimistic personality (LV; XU; JI, 2012). This is a required competence in the resort we studied since the contact between workers and guests is more intense and constant than in traditional companies in the hotel sector. On the other hand, most of the interviewees agreed that the closeness between workers

and clients can be very fruitful in terms of learning languages, assimilating different cultures, and even building true friendships that are maintained, sometimes, for many years. In addition, interviewees reported it was easier solving problems when there was a less formal relationship with the guest, because, according to the workers, the customer was more patient when making a complaint, to the point of treating the employees as equals, with more respect and patience.

The last theme in this core meaning is the affective and intimate relationships between guests and employees. This characteristic proved to interfere effectively in the day-to-day lives of employees, as most respondents reported making use of this possibility as a way of fulfilling their social needs. Respondents emphasized that the intimate relationships between guests and employees were not a prescribed rule of the company, but the exception to a rule that prohibited such a fact from happening – that is, no one is persuaded to behave in ways they would not like. Despite seeming to be an unusual feature for a multinational company, the subjects we interviewed found it natural, and reported cases of marriages between customers and employees. Likewise, the interviewees added that workers can also have sexual relations with co-workers, regardless of hierarchical positions or sexual orientation.

4.3 Core meaning n. 3 – Pleasure in the workplace: *"They [the company] put a lot of trust in me, allowing me to grow personally and professionally. Since I joined the company, every season I spent, I was always rewarded for my work. I was recognized, whether with promotions, unit changes or trips".*

Since the company promotes the exchange of units, the possibility of work experiences abroad arouses the interest of many workers. Thus, the workers who got this benefit report that it was a fruitful experience for their professional life inside

and outside the resort. In addition, the learning experiences and increased confidence of the subjects, as professionals, are aspects that also stood out in the interviews. The narratives of former employees reveal how the professional experiences learned in the company helped in their current jobs. This includes training orchestrated by the organization and even the languages that were improved or learned during the resort experience.

Most of the individuals who occupy important and leading positions in the company were employees who started at the bottom of the hierarchy. Thus, one of the motivating factors highlighted is the career plan offered by the organization; even though the undergo that routine for at least a few years, he has possibilities for growth. Besides the possibility of professional growth in the company, the interviewees showed expressions of recognition for a job well done.

> I felt recognized. I don't know if this is true for everyone, but for me it was very fast. The bosses pushed me a lot, said that I could grow and that I had talent (INTERVIEWEE B).

Interviewee B highlights the recognition by his superiors. According to Dejours (2006), for suffering to become pleasure, recognition plays an essential role, since the worker's identity is confirmed through the gaze of the other. Among the interviewees, we also observed that recognition appeared differently in the speeches of the participants. Reports varied showing that recognition changes not only among employees and former employees, but also depends on how long the individual has been working in the organization and the psychological, personal, and social moment in which he or she is.

Besides direct contact with guests, the subjects we interviewed showed enthusiasm when talking about the resort's infrastructure. Many reported enjoying living in a paradisiacal place and being able to use its infrastructure. The narratives also include and highlight the non-performance of every day and domestic tasks such as cooking, paying bills, cleaning the room.

Undoubtedly, the friendships built within the organization were one of the most evoked elements of pleasure during the interviews. As workers create bonds with the company, usually in another city, away from family and friends, they are prone to creating friendships within the resort. These relationships often help them face difficulties, motivate their daily work, and maintain their social life, which, according to the workers, is completely modified from the moment they start working in the resort.

4.4 Core meaning n. 4 – Suffering and coping strategies: *"I ended up incorporating my work life and turning it into my personal life at that moment. But I didn't have an extra life; the company became my life".*

Just as the transfers of workers between units around the world can lead to contentment within the organization, some subjects expressed the impasses that can occur in the face of these transfers. When the perspective is to work in exotic locations or outside the country, a feeling of motivation and contentment arises. However, when the frequent changes, especially in managerial positions, happen suddenly, the other employees suffer from the abrupt changes in the prescriptions of the tasks and overall work organization.

> [...] but then when the head of the unit changed, I started to change my thoughts about the company. I had really thought about staying there for many years, pursuing a career, and really growing. But then, when this guy arrived, I couldn't stand to stay there any longer, without being pressured, he was terrible (INTERVIEWEE B).

As well as the selection process, several statements were found that

highlighted the lack of support in the company's Human Resources (HR) sector. The workers claimed distance from the sector because the central offices are usually downtown and, therefore, geographically distant from resort units. For the interviewees, HR ends up not being accurately informed about what happens in the day-to-day activities of the units, which ends up directly affecting the well-being of employees.

Another aspect of the pleasure and suffering experiences is the feeling of recognition internalized by the workers in relation to the company. This was the only factor that showed exact differences between the individuals who still worked for the company and those who no longer did. Those who still had a link with the organization showed that they felt accomplished and recognized with the tasks they perform (presented in Core meaning n. 3). Conversely, former employees complained about the little recognition they experienced with the many promises of promotions and unit transfers that took a long time to happen. A former employee also stated that he only felt recognized after showing his interest in leaving the company.

Interviewees reported physical and psychological exhaustion by expressing the high workload, pressure from bosses and customers and problems with the autonomy of operations. Some studies have already pointed out that one of the characteristics that most repels workers in the hotel sector is the intense working day (HOEL; EINARSEN, 2003; HALDORAI et al., 2019). In the resort we investigated, the employees point out that they assume the organizational problems as their own as the contact with the customer is frequent, because the workers live in the hotel.

Even when they are not working, they feel like they are, as there are a lot of rules to follow, even on days off, which happen once a week. This aspect resumes the analysis presented in core meaning number 2 about constant surveillance,

expressed by the image of the panopticon presented by Foucault (2014). For interviewees, the only way to completely avoid the rules is to stay in their respective rooms or leave the hotel. The speeches, in general, translate feelings of confinement within the organization.

> [...] for example, on days off, we can't walk around the hotel in any clothes, we must maintain a degree of elegance and posture. To be totally free we need to leave the resort (INTERVIEWEE F).

> It's a confinement here, your friends are your co-workers or even your boss, that's complicated. (INTERVIEWEE G).

The reports above exhibit the lack of privacy and freedom in the employees' routine, as their respective social lives are limited to guests and co-workers, resulting in a blending of personal and professional lives. These facts disturb workers' minds, generating confusion when differentiating their personal identity from their professional one. The home/work boundary is becoming increasingly tenuous with technology (COSTA, 2013). In the case we investigated, as the workers dwell in their own work environment, this limit becomes invisible, because, as revealed in the speeches, even in their free time, the worker must mold their attitudes and behaviors to the organizational culture, enjoying a few moments of privacy inside their bedrooms.

Research participants also believe that daily work at the resort can lead to worker alienation. Many reported that conversations about life outside the company were not common among employees, as the subjects revolved around what was happening inside the hotel at that time. The interviewees also showed that they have little contact with the outside world, due to lack of time and even interest, because the work and daily life they lead make them forget about the reality outside the company. Since resort units are usually located in remote areas, away from the

employees' homes, many workers chose to stay at the workplace on their weekly breaks, which favors greater confinement and involvement with the organization and its culture.

Workers refer to the company as a unique environment, a space outside reality, and with its own rules, distinguishing the resort from the outside world. Terms that convey the feeling of confinement and restriction are "that pot", "here inside", "in this bubble" and "Big Brother" [6]. These terms were often used to designate resort units during interviews, alluding to enclosed spaces.

Interviewees also create their own coping strategies. As discussed in the literature review, suffering can be overcome and given new meaning, a condition engendered by the possibility of its subversion into pleasure (DEJOURS, 2006). This overcoming configures what is known as creative suffering, which, according to Moraes (2013), happens when the organization of work allows an opening for the worker's ingenuity to face the adversities inherent to their activity.

Another frequent coping strategy was enjoying the leisure infrastructure of the units. As employees can enjoy all the resort's equipment when they are not working, there are some ways to escape the intense routine and pressures of work: playing sports, working out at the gym, enjoying the beach, pool, bar and the jacuzzi.

Leaving the hotel unit in moments of non-work also appeared frequently, almost as much as enjoying the hotel's infrastructure. Both strategies are recurrent features that characterize attempts to transform suffering into pleasure. Although there are difficulties in leaving the units, since, in general, hotels are in isolated locations, far from urbanized spaces, it also proved to be an important form of breakout

from the prescriptions, rules and pressures found in the company.

The friendships built between employees proved to be another defense mechanism. Likewise, contact with the family proved to be another strategy. Reports show that employees feel more willing and less pressured when these relationships are maintained, even if, often, talking to the family requires the use of technologies such as Skype, social networks, or telephone.

As the consumption of alcoholic beverages is allowed for employees at certain times of the day, this issue appeared as an important and dangerous defense mechanism in the speeches of some interviewees.

> Drinking was a standard employee routine. Each person chooses their own relief valve (INTERVIEWEE A).

In many interviews, there were situations of denial of suffering and detachment from the pressures experienced. Moreover, workers pondered that that career is not something that will be forever and, mainly, the acceptance that the organization's problems are bigger than the problems themselves, even if it compromises physical and psychological health. In addition, salaries do not match the requirements of availability, and dedication to the company, nor with the desired life goals, often causing dissatisfaction, as shown in other research carried out in hotels. However, the group we interviewed did not express salary as a relevant factor in the manifestation of suffering, which can be explained by the young profile, recently graduated and who, for the most part, does not intend to pursue a career for long years within the resort business.

5 CONCLUSIONS

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[6] Television program in which the contestants are confined in a scenographic house, being watched by cameras 24/7, not being able to communicate with their relatives and friends, read newspapers or use any other means to obtain external information. Available here: https://bit.ly/2YT4xIT Access in: May 16th, 2020.

This study has contributed to deepening the understanding of the importance of spaces for cooperation and discussion about hospitality workers' mental health, more specifically in resorts. Conducting semi-structured interviews allowed participants to reflect and express work situations, even those considered normal.

This study corroborated the idea that pleasure and suffering can coexist, mainly because the dynamics of the organization seem to have two different characteristics that affect, in a positive and negative way, the employees. The close relationship between employees and customers configures the first one. The second is the fact that all workers must dwell inside the resorts. These characteristics suggest that the experiences of pleasure and suffering underlie individualities, personal experiences, and the time each subject works in the company.

Workers' routine stands out as a relevant point in this article. The interviewees' speech reveals that everyday life inside the resorts can allow the development of practical intelligence, recognition and, therefore, pleasure. However, in certain situations, this dynamic has also proved to be exhausting, as it reduces workers' privacy and promotes continuous surveillance.

From a practical point of view, this study may also serve as an indicator for other hotel enterprises, regarding processes related to people management, so that they can be more attentive to the needs of employees. In short, we suggest that, in people management practices, greater attention should be paid to the suffering and angst of the worker, to seek alternatives that generate pleasure, through recognition, greater autonomy and cooperation.

Since this article presents evidence about the work conditions of one resort, which makes up a multinational network, these results represent a particular reality, which cannot be generalized. The fact that the interviewees live far from the interviewer did not allow the information to be collected in person, but through a meeting mediated by technology. This may, in some way, have affected the content of the answers, since it was not possible to have a closer contact with the research subject, allowing the creation of a more friendly and relaxed environment, which is important for an interview of this nature.

Another limitation of the study was the time of bond with the organization of each interviewee, ranging from 4 months to 5 years. Evidently, the time spent working in the company interferes in the perception and in the relationship of the subjects with their job. However, even though we are aware that this variation could interfere with the results, we considered the responses of all those who were willing to participate and contribute to this investigation.

Finally, we suggest that the effects of work on individuals continue to be researched through different theoretical-methodological approaches and using other hotel chains, so that new data and results can emerge from this discussion. This research theme still presents several questions that need to be elucidated, and, for this reason, it is expected that other tourism researchers and other areas of knowledge will develop new studies on hotel and resort workers.

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