Contemporary perception of pleasure and suffering...
INTRODUCTION

The work plays a key role in society and the concept has come to occupy a privileged place in the space of theoretical reflection in the last two centuries.¹ In a historical context of the world, we can consider the work in different stages, from pre-history, passing by slave labor, serfdom system, guilds until the industrial revolution with the implementation of labor right.²

Since the dawn of humanity, it can be seen that there is division of tasks in hunting, in tribe vigilance, in food handling, a division of tasks between group members, featuring a working process model. In an etymological approach, the word work has its origin in trabis word (beam) from which trabare was originated, in order to obstruct the path in the middle of a beam. However, as human activities, many authors bring the original meaning as something that represented great effort, punishment, tiredness.³

In ancient philosophy, Plato and Aristotle were considered as exalting idleness. For Plato, the citizen should be spared from work. Aristotle valued political activity and referred to the work as lower activity (delegated to slaves) that prevented people from having virtues.¹,⁴

With the end of slavery, serfdom brought another context. Societies (feuds) were organized in a system of dependency exchanging protection for servants managing their production in the fields. The need to get away from the field to a concentration of masses around castles starts to configure the craft guilds of teachers and learners, another class who lived the manufacture of iron artifacts.⁴

Both in the Middle Ages as the Industrial Revolution changes have taken place in the economy and social structure. Since then, there was a process of changing workforce values. Chaldeans, Jews, Orientals and the first Christians, among others, had distinct ideas about work. The most visible change was the emergence of capitalism, with the introduction of capital focusing on workers supplying products in bulk and eliminating the differences between the classes of workers.⁴,⁵

From then, there were several scholars studying on the subject. Smith differentiated productive work like that one adding value and not productive, not aggregated anything. The ideals of Marx in his theory of value bring reflections on the value of collective work with the quantity of production. Thus, the organization of work allows mass production, eliminating the worker’s intelligence, subjecting him to exploitation. Taylorism studied the planning and execution of tasks, argued that the work is not a collective work, each worker is isolated from others, radicalizing the division of concept and execution of work.⁴

From the Versailles Pact, signed on 07.28.1919, the International Labor Organization (ILO) was created, to establish protective rules in labor relationships between employees and employers, within an international sphere.⁵,⁶ From here, there is a concern for worker’s health. ILO states that the psychosocial environment at work involves organizing and social relationships. The interaction between the individual and the environment within the world of work, organizational conditions, work content, employee skills, perceptions, experiences, performance, satisfaction, culture, are the psychosocial factors that are found in organizations.²,⁶

The study of health at work has been outstanding in an individual level and is increasingly associated with the level of quality of life, activities and performance to which workers are exposed. For this, there is a need to dispense of the concerns care for the working environment, both physical and psychosocial.⁷

Some decades ago, workers defined their work as stable, realizing career in the same company, and often retire working on a single organization. In the contemporary scenario, with the growth of organizations, it is more competitive, with a multi-functional work, there is the anxiety caused by fear of unemployment, stress, work overload, demand, excessive pressure, strong competition between people and lack of performance recognition, in short, many evils and consequently greater psychological breakdown of that worker.⁵

The social transformations of the modified view of work call for a study demand, especially studies related to pleasure and mental suffering, its causes and consequences, to work performance. Today working conditions are more advanced for a good support being a physical occupational disease, but there is a difficulty in finding consensus to define what a mental or psychological illness caused by work is.⁹

In general, the clinical area and to epidemiology areas consider basic criteria for classification of mental disorders, presence of alterations, disconnection of psychic functioning and the duration of the changes. However, there is a model with a situation where there is psychological suffering without
being defined as a disease or mental disorder, hampering diagnoses that could soften the prejudice of the existing theme within the organization.¹

There is even difficult to find elements that are the basis for the relationship between work and psychological distress within companies, depending on the employees who does not always describe their suffering as a mental disorder, or because before making an accurate diagnosis the employee remove or is removed by the loss of work activities.¹⁰ Also, it cannot be forgotten that, when it comes to mental health and work, it is necessary to consider that this is a process that expresses the conditions of human life and the ability of beings to face and deal with conflicts, challenges, reflections, assaults, pressures, anxieties and processes of change within the context of working life of these workers.¹¹

The understanding of this view of psychological distress related to work can be adopted as processes with two different capacities. Considered as a set of malaise, characterized by difficulty of the subject in operating plans and defined meanings for life, combined with the feeling of helplessness and emptiness. In this context, “I” will be experienced as an alien thing. The other quality is to be considered as an individual reappropriation mode, which manifest frustration in attempts to understand, over come, prevent or make tolerable psychic anxieties, radicalizing the insanity of deception and making a person live conflicts unresolved expectancy or seemingly eliminate voltage poles between essence/appearance, individual/society, part/whole, awareness/objectivity.¹²

For Sigmund Freud, “mental health is the capacity to love and to work”.¹³ The human being will have to be psychologically well in the affective and his production capacity to enjoy good mental health. By changing the optics, a psychic difficulty would be when love and/or work are in trouble, within a psychoanalyst view.¹

From the psychoanalytic concepts, Dejours presents studies about the relation between mental health and work as a challenge to understand the suffering produced at work and the management of it, and the strategies used by workers for pleasure, trying to ensure a balance in situations where there may be significant psychological impact. The individual seeking a better way to do his job try to do it with pleasure, from realizing as the subject of work organization triggers an expansion or a decrease of psychic load generated by the work context.¹³⁻¹⁴

Stress, psychodynamic and epidemiology are an evidence of health study concentration in Brazil.¹ The Stress approach shows that the work should be a harmonious place where the relationship should be of peace. The more quiet and calm the best working environment. Modern theories about stress have defined that stressors allow man to exercise his coping ability and not the absence of stimulus. The concept of “mental disease” and work in this approach would be understood when the body subjected or is subjected to escape situations or fight for a long time, causing accumulation of substances produced for these purposes, which causes damage and suffering to the subject, known as stress. Many theorists understand stress not as mental disease, but the intermediate state between health and disease. The actions turn to the individual management through cognitive-behavioral methods.³⁻¹⁵

Epidemiological approach focuses on the conception of man in a social environment where suggests that his development is born from conflicts with other men, with nature and with himself being work the indicator. For this approach, work should always be pleasurable, if there is suffering, there is something wrong because the suffering is the result of some kind of alienation. The concept of “mental disease” and work would be understood as a circuit breaking between work and pleasure. Thus, there are many studies of this approach, both quantitative and qualitative, referencing the experiences of the individual within a socio-cultural and historical environment.¹⁶

In psychodynamic approach to work, the early childhood experiences are attributes to understand the relationship between pain/pleasure. It comprises the libido as a driving force source of pleasure for man, then, the work is seen as suffering carrier over to the pleasure, not letting them to feel. There should be a sublimation of suffering for no displeasure at work. For Psychodynamic, it cannot exist “mental disease” produced by labor; this is unconscious product of breaks occurring in primary affections. Research in this approach show that suffering is able to disrupt the subject`s identity, but also able to provide coping strategies, turning it into a positive experience.¹⁵⁻¹⁷

To conceptualize approaches, it can be noted that stress had influence of social learning, behavioral-cognitive psychology, as well as epidemiological approach, received help of medicine and the psychodynamic
Contemporary perception of pleasure and suffering... focused on the style of how the individual experiences the pleasure and suffering and how he uses the defense of individual and collective coping. Within this perspective and some other approaches, there are some studies exposed in the work of EnANPAD and EnEO.

A case study with the theme pleasure and suffering in the teaching practice in higher education in a IFES of Minas Gerais was conducted and found that there is a precarious working conditions of the teachers at IFES, besides personal isolation, reflecting the competitiveness and demands for increased productivity, thus constitutes a hardship factor at work. However, this research also had experiences of pleasure, which softens the impact of the work in controlling the physical and mental health and encourages teachers to face the problems and difficulties of everyday life. However, in general the suffering of indicators were highlighted, warning about the health and the disease process.\(^8\)

Two studies also performed with teachers of an institution of Higher Education, the one held in the city of Belo Horizonte found that elements such as professional achievement, freedom of expression, pride in the profession, the independence to use creativity are intertwined with pleasure and suffering. Another study of teachers in the area of exact sciences at the State University of Maringá reports that there may be several sources of suffering, spending from the non-recognition of the profession until institutional bureaucracy. In both studies, it was found that the student’s maturation process and knowledge of transmitter are sources of pleasure and when it comes to suffering issues such as lack of trust, communication and interaction between teachers, burnout (overload, stress and tired of the profession) and lack of recognition of the profession were appointment.\(^9,19\)

As teachers report much pleasure as suffering in students’ work of a master degree in administration, they talk about their feelings with the course, and the feelings of suffering were highlighted such as excessive hourly load complaints, no information as how would be a master course, not understanding and being away from the family, anxiety and pressure from teachers. Although there are some pleasures that motivate students to move forward and complete the course, such as acquired knowledge, critical view, improved scientific article research, achievement of dreams and increased chance of work.\(^20\)
In another study, it was considered the daily lives of doctors. This research focused on pleasure and pain as profession. They interviewed 40 doctors, 20 in a university hospital and 20 in a private hospital of high complexity. It was sought to identify aspects that contribute to the creative and pathogenic suffering. Some aspects that emerged in this study were the appreciation of the profession to society, the medical work in its essence, the doctor-patient relationship on judgement and contact with death.\textsuperscript{21}

As additional information, it was found in the same research that approximately 95% of doctors surveyed have more than one job. The highest concentration of income is above 20 minimum wages, proving to be an attractive profession in the financial area. Another issue experienced the pleasure of being a doctor is inherent in the fact of saving lives, curing patients with pessimistic prognosis and rare diseases.\textsuperscript{21}

Within the suffering of bias is common the existence of fear, pain, insecurity in doctor-patient relationship, referring to the treatment and the fear of death. This condition leads medical professionals to deal with personal and collective strategies of defense, denial, sublimation to cope. Another important issue to point out are the alternative schedules, which endanger the health and the generator family life of physical and emotional exhaustion. Consequently, it creates a paradox, since who should take care of health is neglected claiming to have lack of time, self-medicating, for fear of exposure.\textsuperscript{21}

For understanding and perception of the psychological distress experienced by mental health professionals who work in a Psychosocial Care Center (CAPS) located in Fortaleza, Ceará, semi-structured interviews were used with voluntary participation of nine professionals from various areas. Identification with their activity, valorization and social recognition, rewarding relationships with users, families and professionals were the pleasurable situations identified in the study, inherent to the work of mental health professionals. Situation of suffering refers to poor working conditions, difficulties in work organization, emotional and social demands characteristics of their jobs, low wages, lack of perspective, without stability work and low decision-making power. The study showed that by any of these sufferings, the main defensive strategies used by these professionals are rationalization, projection, denial, identification, somatization, sublimation, passivity, improvisation and individualism.\textsuperscript{13}

Through a study with a group of 62 surgeon-dentists, Betim City Hall Health Units (SUS Betim), found that the experiences of pleasure refer to the good relationship between colleagues, freedom of expression, collaboration, bond of trust, pride and identification with the profession who have the possibility to help each other and recognition of the work by patients. Suffering experiences are related to work organization, to stress, to work overload, high demand charge for productivity and lack of recognition.\textsuperscript{22} It was identified that professionals have adopted some strategies to reduce suffering and prevent illness using tactics compensation and also the rationalization strategy.

Another study sought to identify the extensions of pleasure and suffering in teleworking with emphasis on dimensions. Thus, it identified flexibility, autonomy, isolation, relationship with family life, stress and satisfaction. The research method used was interviews with 20 teleworkers in São Paulo. The research results revealed that respondents perceive that telework brings more pleasure than suffering in relation to classroom work, but the pain is still present. The perceptions of pleasure and suffering do not have a standard for those issues. For some pleasure, it is related to the tranquility of not move daily to work. In addition to having more control of their own work, freedom of action, opportunity to undertake their own solutions, flexible schedules, the closer family enjoyment and thus quality of life as a result of the possibility of working in the family environment.\textsuperscript{16}

For some of the respondents, suffering is linked to the perception of disorganization, confusion between family and occupational life, of isolation from peers and higher level of stress in relation to the leadership. Teleworkers are guarded by phone calls from their superiors charge them for immediate results.\textsuperscript{16}

A study\textsuperscript{23} conducted in a public company of supply and sanitation with 554 employees analyzed the value related to pleasure. In this study, the organizational values have not been evaluated isolated, but integrating the inherent subjectivity of pleasure, thus valuing the ideal that values are learned in primary socialization, being part of the constitution of subjectivity and experiences of pleasure-suffering of the individual. In its results, it was identified that pleasure permeates three dimensions of organizational values, with the best record the poles of harmony, domain and autonomy. Suffering is inversely explained by...
the pole of autonomy. They also found that the pleasure depends more on cultural variables than the suffering. To the extent that culture plays a role of gratification and fulfillment of desire and therefore space for pleasure, if there is not meet this expectation, it arises space for suffering. The culture is responsible for generating the suffering, but the emergence of that pleasure comes to depend on how much pleasure has been restricted by external constraints.23

An exploratory research with quantitative and qualitative approach aimed to raise the experience of pleasure and suffering at work of employees of three companies, one in the trade sector, one in industry and other in services. The instruments used were a pleasure Indicators Scale and Suffering at Work - EIPT and a semi-structure interview.7 The studies showed that younger and larger companies are the least care about the Quality of Life of their workers, and small and older companies have greater concern, such attitude possibly due to greater focus on productivity than with the quality of life of workers.23,4

In 2006, an exploratory qualitative research was conducted in two leather-footwear villages, one of them located in Arroio do Meio and the other in Encantado in the state of Rio Grande do Sul. The experience of suffering is emphasized in the interaction between company and village, both by managers and by residents. As for managers, it is believed to be the indulgence of employees/residents who turns into a collective and unconscious conduct. As well as suffering, pleasure can also be glimpsed in this interaction, both by managers and by residents. In the view of managers, such manifestation is due to the appreciation and gratitude to some employees for their services. At this point, the work can be a source of pleasure and health care provider for the worker.25

As seen in the reports of the research involving the theme pleasure and suffering at work, most of the analyzes are focused on the psychodynamic approach, in the structure of the subject, that is, the human being as an individual, then, there is the need for detection of suffering to the achievement of pleasure. Only one study investigated the health at work using cultural variables.17

When it comes to pleasure and suffering at work, both are involved with the individual`s relationship with the organization, with himself, with others and with the environment in which is inserted. Thus, when for some may be pleasant is not necessarily for others.26

However, with the organizational discourse can make everyone start to feel pleasure, because it is related to emancipation and freedom is transformed into a pleasure associated with servitude and subjection, supported by organizational seduction and false recognition promises. Such arguments are mirrored in Sociological, psychoanalytic and particularly in psychodynamics of work references.27

**CONCLUSION**

With this study, it was observed that the thematic work can be linked to situations of pleasure and suffering. Regarding pleasure, the construction of a social identity by the worker can this inherent values, principles and achievements in the work environment. Differently, the failure to identify activities, the impossibility of understanding and not integration with the policy and values of the organization, contribute to the development of suffering in the worker.

It is understood that no job is completely free of possible satisfaction or suffering (physical and/or mental), but these may be present in greater or lesser degree, whether for cultural, subjective or social variables. To the extent that pleasure-suffering is a worker`s subjective relationship with his work, implying intersubjectivity which is fostered by values, principles and occurring with the organization that already has its rules, specific values that guide their actions.

It was found that the actions and activities of work, often cannot be changed. They should be followed, but they can make contributions to its improvement, allowing an activity which give vent to creativity, ludic practices, transforming the suffering that has led to inertia and dissatisfaction from work to seek to achieve pleasure in it.

One limitation of this study was that we found few publications about the pleasure-suffering worker`s problems. The most frequent research were under the teaching and more specifically in the psychodynamic approach. Therefore, we find the need to understand how other approaches include this topic and also that further research should be conducted to expand scientific knowledge as well as for preparation of proposals for organizations to make, promoting health and worker`s satisfaction.

Among the researched articles, some aspects were highlighted. In the health sector there is a dichotomy, given that the compensation is fairly disparate, while for a doctor`s salary is one of the variables that reflect the satisfaction and enjoyment at
work, to other health professionals of CAPS it is a source of suffering.

In education, teachers showed dissatisfaction with the work environment and the precariousness of the profession, signaling that labor conditions are not adding, but still there is the identification with the professional practice, which eases labor impacts on physical health and mental.

Another factor of interest in the research presented was to have the theme pleasure-seeking connected to the beliefs and values of the individual. Comparing studies of teleworkers and companies in other areas the same situation may represent suffering for some while for others is a reason of pleasure.

It is suggested that future studies address the theme pleasure and suffering at that concern the effects of the culture of an organization, because there is extensive literature relevant to the detriment of the individual’s health, caused by not adapting to socioeconomic circumstances. In this sense, we let a proposal to explore the organizational field comprehensively, aiming to expand the range of studies to create opportunities for the issue addressed.

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