

FaR 2021

International Forum “Freedom and responsibility in pivotal times”

**CONFLICT BEHAVIOR STRATEGIES AND MOTIVATION OF
EMPLOYEES OF OJSC “RUSSIAN RAILWAYS”**Tatiana I. Nikulina (a), Yulia V. Chepurko (b)*, Yuri N. Perelyaev (c), Ekaterina V. Zimina (d),
Evgenia G. Vorontsova (e)

*Corresponding author

(a) Baikal State University, 11 Lenin st., Irkutsk, Russia, nikulinati@mail.ru

(b) Irkutsk State Medical University, 1 Red Uprising st., Irkutsk, Russia, juliavs@bk.ru

(c) Irkutsk State University, Gagarin Boulevard, Irkutsk, Russia, ynp_home@mail.ru

(d) Baikal State University, 11 Lenin st., Irkutsk, Russia, ZiminaEV@bgu.ru

(e) Baikal State University, 11 Lenin st., Irkutsk, Russia, ewgeniavorontsova@yandex.ru

Abstract

The article examines the strategies of behavior in a conflict and the motivation of railway workers. The purpose of the study is to identify the relationship between strategies of conflict behavior and employee motivation. The paper emphasizes the complex structure of motivation, which is built into a hierarchy within and outside the scope of activities of railway specialists. The main methodological principle on which the study of the motivational sphere in work is based is the provision on the unity of the content-semantic side and dynamic (energy) motivation. The subject of this research is the study of the relationship from the point of view of personality orientation, behavior characteristics and integration of motives in their semantic context. Conflict interaction is considered through a two-factor model, one of the dimensions of which is the behavior of railway employees. The study revealed the relationship between the strategies of conflict behavior and the motivation of employees of Russian Railways. A high level of labor motivation contributes to the choice of such strategies of behavior in a conflict as compromise and cooperation.

2357-1330 © 2022 Published by European Publisher.

Keywords: Motivation, strategies in conflict, workers, conflict

1. Introduction

Studies of personality motivation in domestic and foreign psychology are given increasing importance. Scientists are considering various sources of human activity, the incentive forces of one's activities, behaviour. The concepts of motivation, or in other words, the procedural aspects of an individual's functioning, focus on the dynamic, changing characteristics of human behaviour.

The formation of a subject of activity, capable of consciously setting life goals and achieving them, capable of taking responsibility for making decisions, is determined by the model of behaviour that is formed in the process of socialization.

Employees of one of the leading structures in Russia, JSC Russian Railways, must be highly motivated in their professional activities. But for each person, motivational activity will manifest itself in a certain motivational trend (Sudykh, 2014).

The daily interaction of employees with each other (colleagues or management) presupposes the emergence of conflict situations based on professional or personal misunderstandings. As a result, there is a need to use the dominant model of behavior in a person, which directly affects interpersonal relationships and the effectiveness of professional activity (Fontalova & Rerke, 2015).

2. Problem Statement

Motivation is a motivation for action that controls a person's behaviour, setting his direction, organization, activity and stability (Maslow, 1954). Motivation plays an important role in human development and activity. Based on this definition, Milman (1990) proposed a method for diagnosing the motivational structure of a personality, which was used in our work.

Studying conflict interaction, we relied on the approach of K. Thomas - R. Kilman. According to Murray (2011), the motive for affiliation can be described as the ability to make friends and feel affection, enjoy other people and live with them, cooperate and communicate with them; be in love; join groups. This definition was adhered to by Mehrabian (2002), whose diagnostic technique was later used by us in an empirical study.

A high and low level of motivation, both work and community motivation, largely influences the behaviour of an individual in a conflict situation, determining which behavior will contribute to resolving the conflict (Nikulina & Chepurko, 2019). At the moment, there is not enough research to establish the relationship between motivation and perceptions of behavior in a conflict situation. Conducting further empirical research and a deeper analysis of the results obtained will reveal all the novelty and significance of the issues (Vyatkin, 2013)

3. Research Questions

The object of research is personal motivation.

The subject of the research is to identify the relationship between personal motivation and strategies and tactics of behavior in a conflict among railway employees.

The theoretical and methodological analysis of the research problem allowed us to formulate a hypothesis: there is a relationship between the strategies of behaviour in the conflict and personal motivation of railway employees. The general hypothesis is concretized in the following particular hypotheses:

1) such strategies of behaviour in conflict as compromise and cooperation are more often manifested in employees with a high level of labour motivation;

2) strategies of behaviour, compromise and cooperation do not affect the high level of general motivation;

In connection with this goal, it is necessary to solve the following tasks:

1) conduct a theoretical analysis of the problem of the relationship between motivation and conflict behaviour strategies of railway employees in the work of domestic and foreign scientists;

2) study strategies of behaviour in a conflict and personal motivation of Russian Railways employees;

3) conduct an empirical study of the relationship between strategies of behavior in conflict and motivation of Russian Railways employees.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to identify the relationship between strategies of conflict behaviour and the motivation of Russian Railways employees.

This study was organized and conducted in the period from 2018 to 2019 and included three stages. At the first stage of the presented research, a theoretical analysis of the main domestic and foreign approaches to understanding the motivation of an individual as a whole was carried out; strategies of behavior in a conflict in domestic and foreign psychological literature was carried out. At this stage, the conceptual design of the study was implemented, the topic was formulated, the object, subject, scientific apparatus and empirical base were determined. Research methods have been studied and selected. An empirical research program has been developed. The second stage (2018-2019) - a diagnostic collection of material was carried out to determine strategies for behaviour in conflict and motivation of employees. At the third stage (2019), the most significant in this work, the processing, registration and systematization of the final research results were carried out. The theoretical and practical conclusions were compiled and refined. The effectiveness of the study was the introduction of methods for preventing conflict interaction in the team of Russian Railways employees. The theoretical and empirical conclusions were compiled and refined. The methodology by which the research was carried out was presented for implementation to the employees of the Irkutsk branch of Russian Railways, Irkutsk. The total number of subjects is 50, of which 48% are women and 52% are men, the average age of employees is 38 years.

5. Research Methods

The testing method was applied for the research. There is a test by Milman (1990) "Diagnosis of the motivational structure of personality", the test by Mehrabian (2002) "Diagnosis of motives of affiliation"

in the adaptation of V.V. Kozlova, G.M. Manuilova, N.P. Fetiskin (as cited in Mehrabian, 2002). There is a questionnaire "Styles of behavior in a conflict situation" by Thomas-Kilman as adapted by Grishina (2008). The collection, processing and analysis of the results were carried out using modern information tools - cloud technologies.

At the training stage, we realized the well-known advantages of cloud technologies. No costs associated with the operation of computers and software since interaction with the cloud was carried out using smartphones. The necessary tools for collecting and analyzing information were provided by the web service automatically and free of charge. A high level of technology of cloud computing power made it possible to store, analyze and process data inside the cloud (Perelyaev & Chepurko, 2019).

6. Findings

Based on the analysis and calculation of general research data, we determined that 44% of the employees of Russian Railways had a high level of community motivation, 30% had an average level of community motivation, 26% had a low level.

In our opinion, the high level of community motivation among employees of Russian Railways is due to the following factors: age characteristics of the study participants (average age of 38 years); activities involving risk; unfavourable working conditions; lack of interest in professional activity; focusing on personal interests.

When analyzing work motivation, the following results were obtained. 58% of the respondents showed low work motivation, 16% of the respondents showed a high degree of work motivation. These results indicate that work motivation is not the leading employee of Russian Railways.

Low indicators on the scale of work motivation, in our opinion, are associated with the lack of external incentives for the labor activity of Russian Railways employees, as well as the age characteristics of the respondents, risks at work, economic problems (staff reduction, implicit promotion).

For a more complete analysis of the data, we compared the data obtained on the scales of "hostel" and "work" motivation, according to the results, we can conclude that the employees of JSC "Russian Railways" common motivation prevail over the work – 44% versus 16%.

Let us consider the results of A. Mehrabian's (2002) "Diagnostics of Affiliation Motives" methodology as adapted by V.V. Kozlova, G.M. Manuilova, N.P. Fetiskin. It was revealed that the employees of Russian Railways have unequal indicators on the scales of "desire for acceptance in a group" and "fear of rejection". 44% of the respondents showed a high level of the motive "fear of rejection", 18% of the respondents showed a high level of the motive "the desire to be accepted by the group". A low level of motives "striving for acceptance in the group" and "fear of rejection" was revealed in 30% and 24% of the respondents.

We assume that a sufficiently high level of the "fear of rejection" motive among the employees of Russian Railways is associated with the high prestige of this profession, possibly with the personal characteristics of the respondents. Moreover, the presented analysis of the results using this method showed that only 18% of the respondents choose the leading motive of affiliation a positive strategy of "striving for acceptance by the group". The data obtained during testing indicate that among the employees of Russian Railways, the desire for collective well-coordinated productive work does not prevail over the negative

strategy of affiliation motives “fear of rejection”, characterized by fear of collective activity, fear of rejection, and non-participation in collective production activities.

When considering the results obtained according to the questionnaire "Strategies (styles) of behaviour in a conflict situation (Thomas-Kilman test)", it follows that the majority of employees of JSC Russian Railways revealed the dominance of the application of the strategy of behaviour in conflict interaction - a compromise (26%). This suggests that for most employees, prudence, balance and caution in solving problems in conflict situations are important. This is the basic setting for this type of behaviour. For employees who choose this strategy in conflict, personal goals and interpersonal relationships are equally important.

The use of the behaviour strategy by the subjects in conflict situations as “rivalry” was revealed in 22%. This means that in the current conflict situation, employees strive to prove the correctness of their position, exclude any agreements, insist on their opinion, and defend their position. The “exit” strategy was chosen by 22% of the respondents, which indicates a refusal both from achieving personal goals, and from participating in relationships with others. It can be concluded that respondents use this strategy of behaviour when they do not want to defend their rights, cooperate to work out a solution, refrain from expressing their position, and avoid disputes. This style assumes a tendency to avoid responsibility for decisions.

A similar result of 18% was found among workers using the "adaptation" behaviour strategy. In conflict situations, this behaviour can lead to conflict resolution. Also, this style is aimed at maximum in relationships, often at the expense of a minimum in achieving personal goals. Such workers have an attitude towards goodwill in communication at the expense of their own losses.

To test the hypothesis of the implementation of the relationship between personal motivation and strategies of behaviour in conflict, the coefficient of correlation r-Pearson was calculated. An inverse correlation relationship was found between the affiliation motive “fear of rejection” and the strategy of behaviour in a conflict situation “rivalry” ($r = -0.383$, at $p = 0.01$). The correlation relationship can be explained by the fact that employees of Russian Railways with high rates of "fear of rejection" rarely engage in conflict interaction, seek to avoid any controversial situations, present a conflict situation as a negative event that can harm their interpersonal relationship and position in the group. A positive relationship was found between the affiliation motive “fear of rejection” and the strategy of behaviour “avoidance” ($r = 0.320$, at $p = 0.01$). There were found correlations at the level of tendency between the motive of affiliation “fear of rejection” and the strategy “adaptation” ($r = 0.276$, at $p = 0.01$). This is due to the fact that for specialists with a high level of the motive "fear of rejection", entering into any conflict interaction is undesirable, they try to take the position of a leader and adapt to the opinion of the group, or take the side of the opponent.

A direct relationship was found between "work motivation" (E. Milman's technique “diagnostics of the motivational structure of a person”) and the strategy of behaviour in a conflict situation compromise ($r = 0,352$, at $p = 0.01$). Russian Railways specialists with high levels of work motivation are inclined in situations of conflict interaction to choose such a strategy of behaviour in a conflict situation as a "compromise", since for them work activity and its success are of particular importance. The positive results of professional activity, in particular, depend on ideas about behaviour in a conflict situation; employees seek to find a mutually beneficial solution to a disputed situation, sometimes making a decision in favor of

the opponent. A negative correlation relationship at the level of tendencies was found between the indicators "common motivation" (E. Milman's technique "diagnostics of the motivational structure of a personality") and the strategy of behaviour in a conflict situation "compromise" ($r = -0.271$, at $p = 0.01$). Such indicators are explained by the fact that in a situation of conflict interaction, specialists try to solve personal problems, strive to defend their position, protect their rights, or get away from a conflict situation, if such a position is beneficial.

The hypothesis of the existence of a relationship between strategies of behaviour in a conflict situation and motivation for this sample is confirmed.

7. Conclusion

The results obtained according to A. Mehrabian's questionnaire for diagnosing the motives of affiliation showed that employees of Russian Railways have unequal indicators on the scales of "desire for acceptance in a group" and "fear of rejection". A little less than half of the respondents showed a high level of development of the "fear of rejection" motive. A small number of respondents showed a high level of development of the motive "striving for acceptance by the group".

A positive relationship between the "fear of rejection" affiliation motive and the "avoidance" behaviour strategy ($r = 0.320$, at $p = 0.01$), in other words, the more often the "fear of rejection" motive arises among railway workers, the more often they choose; conflict interaction with colleagues or management, the "avoidance" strategy.

A positive relationship was revealed at the level of a tendency between the motive of affiliation "fear of rejection" and the strategy "adaptation" ($r = 0.276$, at $p = 0.01$).

A direct relationship was found between "work motivation" and the strategy of behaviour in a conflict situation "compromise" ($r = 0.352$, at $p = 0.01$), that is, the more often "work motivational orientation" occurs among railway workers, the more often they choose, in conflict interaction with colleagues or management, the "compromise" strategy. Workers compromise to achieve their work goals and professional challenges.

A negative correlation relationship at the level of tendencies was found between the indicators "common motivation" and the strategy of behaviour in a conflict situation "compromise" ($r = -0.271$, at $p = 0.01$), that is, the less often the workers of the railway "common motivation", the more often they choose, in conflict interaction, the compromise strategy. Thus, the hypothesis about the existence of a relationship between strategies of behaviour in a conflict and motivation among employees of Russian Railways, for this sample, has been confirmed.

These results of the research can be recommended for implementation in the practice of psychologists working in an organization in order to prevent conflict in the team, aimed at shaping the motivation of employees, can also be used to design and conduct seminars and trainings. These studies can be used to develop recommendations for the prevention of conflict interaction in the team of Russian Railways employees.

References

- Fontalova, N. S., & Rerke, V. I. (2015). The relationship between the career orientations of the personality of a future specialist and their social effectiveness *Baikal Research Journal*, 6(3), 38.
- Grishina, N. V. (2008). *The psychology of conflict*. Peter.
- Maslow, A. (1954). *Motivation and Personality*. Harper & Row Publishers.
- Murray, G. (2011). Identity, motivation and autonomy: Stretching our boundaries. *Identity, motivation and autonomy in language learning*, 247-262.
- Mehrabian, A. (2002). *Diagnostics of achievement motivation*. Socio-psychological diagnostics of the development of personality and small groups. Publishing house of the Institute of Psychotherapy.
- Milman, V. E. (1990). Methods for studying the motivational sphere of personality. *Workshop on psychodiagnosics*. MSU Publishing House
- Nikulina, T. I., & Chepurko, Yu. V. (2019). Motivation and behavior strategies in the conflict among railway employees. *Conflictology of the XXI century. Ways and Means of Strengthening Peace: Materials of the Third St. Petersburg International Congress of Conflict Experts* (pp. 264-267) Conflictology Development Fund.
- Perelyaev, Yu. N., & Chepurko, Yu. V. (2019). Cloud technologies as a tool of a modern teacher. *In the collection: Improving the professional skills of pedagogical workers in Russia: challenges of the time, trends and development prospects. Materials of the All-Russian scientific and practical conference with international participation dedicated to the 110th anniversary of the Irkutsk Pedagogical Institute* (pp. 209-213) Irkutsk State University.
- Sudykh, O. G. (2014). Social service as a tool for implementing social policy at an enterprise. *Izvestia of the Irkutsk State Economic Academy (Baikal State University of Economics and Law)*, 3, 20.
- Vyatkin, A. P. (2013). An integrative approach in research in economic psychology. *Baikal Research Journal*, (2), 31.