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On the Formation of a Favorable Socio-Psychological Climate in Territorial Divisions of the Internal Affairs Bodies of the Russian Federation

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Abstract

Introduction: the process and results of joint activities and their effectiveness, the attitude of members of this team to results of their own activities as part of the group, satisfaction with this activity, interpersonal relationships and communication significantly depend on the characteristics and state of a socio-psychological climate in the team. The socio-psychological climate plays an essential role in the formation and development of organizational culture, ensuring the service and social efficiency of a production organization. Scientists' interest in this issue is mainly determined by increasing demands on a person in joint work, complication of business and interpersonal relations in a group, and constant growth of personal claims of team members. It seems natural that there is a resurgent interest of researchers and practitioners in studying the socio-psychological climate in service teams of the internal affairs bodies of the Russian Federation and its management. *Methods:* the study covered 98 respondents – employees of the Main Directorate of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia in the Kemerovo Oblast, the Main Directorate of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia in Altai Krai, and the Main Directorate of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Novosibirsk Oblast. The express methodology developed by A.Yu. Shalyto in collaboration with O.S. Mikhalyuk and the expert evaluation methodology of the management activity of the head of the internal affairs body are used. *Results:* the authors assess a socio-psychological climate in service teams of the Main Directorate of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia in the Kemerovo Oblast, the Main Directorate of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia in Altai Krai, and the Main Directorate of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Novosibirsk Oblast, the nature of interpersonal relations in terms of 3 components of this interaction:

emotional, cognitive and behavioral. In addition, with the help of expert assessment methods, the severity of professional qualities of the head of the internal affairs body at the regional level is established. *Conclusion*: the interrelation between interpersonal relations in the team, a certain set of professional and personal qualities of the head and their influence on the socio-psychological climate in the service staff of the internal affairs body at the regional level is identified.

Key words: socio-psychological climate, competencies, interpersonal relations, internal affairs body, office staff, head.

5.3.9. Legal psychology and accident psychology.

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Introduction

The head of a territorial body of internal affairs (IAB) is personally responsible not only for the fulfillment of general and special law enforcement tasks set by the state and society by its personnel, but also for the creation of the most favorable conditions for employees to carry out official activities [1, p. 20]. Such conditions undoubtedly include both the creation and maintenance of a favorable socio-psychological climate in the service team [2, p. 58].

Studying a socio-psychological climate is important for any service team, in particular for internal affairs departments, as it contributes to improving the efficiency of performing operational and official tasks, increases discipline and organization in departments, and also raises employees' satisfaction with the conditions and results of their activities [3, p. 22; 4, p. 145]. A positive socio-psychological climate based on the principles of justice, respect, objectivity, and trust cannot be formed spontaneously [5, p. 58]. It is the result of systematic and painstaking activities of the entire management staff of the internal affairs body aimed at establishing trusting relationships between employees, developing their personal and moral qualities, increasing a sense of responsibility for joint activities, developing cohesion and mutual assistance, consistency among colleagues [6, p. 320; 7, p. 280,].

A competent and effective activity of the IAB head to administer law enforcement and other activities of the service team entrusted to him implies that he has the appropriate competence, as well as a certain set of personal quali-

ties [8, p. 54; 9, p. 186]. The head of the internal affairs body should be able to both form and subsequently maintain a favorable socio-psychological climate, pursuing the goal of maximizing the optimization of activities of the territorial IAB [10, p. 131].

The relatively recent reform of the structure of the Central Office of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia in terms of establishing the Main Directorate for Work with Personnel in its structure and introducing the position of Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs of Russia for work with personnel and the position of deputy head in the relevant field of official activity into the staffing tables of territorial internal affairs bodies clearly indicates the importance of ensuring proper conditions of official activity, organization of work and recreation of IAB personnel [11, p. 35; 12, p.48]. It is extremely important to form a favorable socio-psychological climate in service teams of internal affairs bodies [13, p.52].

The purpose of this work is to study activities of the IAB head and his professional qualities that affect the creation and maintenance of a favorable socio-psychological climate in the internal affairs body entrusted to him [14, p. 43].

Research methods

The study covers 98 respondents – employees of three service teams, of which 21 heads and 77 subordinates (the Main Directorate of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia in the Kemerovo Oblast, the Main Directorate of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia in Altai Krai, and the Main Directorate of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Novosibirsk Oblast).

1. The express methodology developed by A.Yu. Shalyto in collaboration with O.S. Mikhalyuk and designed for the fastest and most objective study of the state of the socio-psychological climate in the team. The express methodology helps not only to assess a socio-psychological climate in the team at the time of the study, but also to identify specific aspects of its progressive creation and development, which can be used in practice by the IAB head to increase the favorability of the socio-psychological climate [15, p. 19].

During the research, the information obtained is systematized according to several parameters that have a direct impact on the indicators of the socio-psychological climate: 1) general data illustrating basic social as well as demographic indicators of IAB teams. In particular, they reflect information on the list and actual number of IAB personnel, the number of certified officers and employees, their gender, and, in addition, data on the main age groups of persons forming the service team, 2) information reflecting the most typical characteristics of those interpersonal relations that most often and steadily arise in the service team. When collecting information on this parameter, we identify the specifics of perception by the surveyed IAB officers and employees of both those relations of interpersonal nature that exist in the team and the team itself. The components of behavioral, cognitive and emotional nature influencing the respondents are taken into account. The surveyed are asked 3 questions with a template of possible answers. Each of the questions offered to the respondent implies a relatively formulaic answer, rated from “+1” to “-1”.

In order for each specific component to have the most holistic and objective illustration possible, the answers to the questions received from respondents are considered according to a pre-designed template. In order to characterize each component of the response block in the questionnaire as objectively as possible, we apply the following methodology: in those cases when respondents mark answer options as “+++”, “++0” or “+-”, we regard this reaction as positive; in those cases when respondents mark answer options as “- - -”, “- - +” or “- - 0” we regard this reaction as negative;

all other reactions, as well as the omission of the respondent's reaction to the proposed task, are categorized as indeterminate. After all the questionnaires are processed and positive, negative and indeterminate reactions of respondents from among officers and employees of the relevant internal affairs bodies are identified, we calculate the average score for each block of questions in the questionnaire. Questions in the questionnaire are grouped into three basic components: emotional, cognitive and behavioral. According to the survey results, the climate is assessed as favorable, unfavorable, or indeterminate.

2. The expert evaluation methodology of the management activity of the head of the internal affairs body. An essential characteristic and system-forming link of any law enforcement team is its head – the head of the IAB. In this connection, within the framework of studying the IAB chief's role in creating and maintaining a favorable socio-psychological climate, it is crucial to identify his managerial qualities. The assessment was made by subordinates and the head of the internal affairs body himself.

Several most typical characteristics of an IAB head are displayed in the proposed sheets of the expert assessment of managerial qualities. The respondents assess each quality of an IAB head taking as a basis a five-point rating scale from one to five. The average score of the expert assessment of the IAB head's managerial qualities allows us to make a judgment about the level of IAB head's managerial competence to form and maintain a favorable socio-psychological climate in the team.

Results

The methods used in the course of the research allow us to assess the nature of interpersonal relations in IAB service teams at the regional level in terms of three components of this interaction: emotional, cognitive and behavioral. The data presented in Table 1 shows a positive estimation of all three components (emotional, cognitive and behavioral) of mutual relations between members of the surveyed service teams (indices of indicators lie in the interval 0.33 – 1). This demonstrates a friendly and respectful atmosphere in the team and a favorable socio-psychological climate (Table 1).

Table 1
Features of interpersonal relations in the team

Parameters studied	Components		
	emotional	cognitive	behavioral
Average values in the group	0.9	0.8	1

Figure 2 shows results of the assessment of behavioral, cognitive and emotional components of relationships between officers of various services and divisions of the internal affairs body.

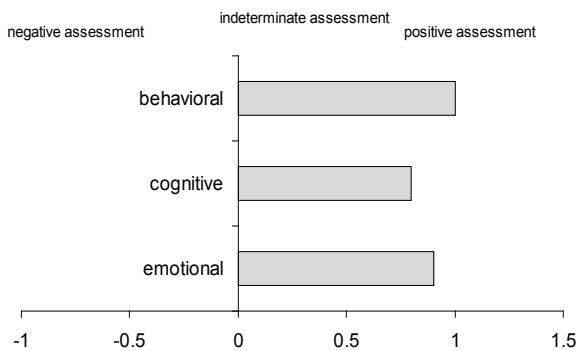


Figure 2. Nature of relationships in the team of territorial internal affairs bodies at the regional level

According to the data obtained in the course of the expert survey of subordinate officers reflected in Table 2, heads of the surveyed internal affairs bodies have highly developed managerial competence.

Table 2 shows assessments characterizing the degree of expression of certain qualities among the heads of the surveyed internal affairs bodies, as well as the indicators characterizing the estimation of the same qualities by the heads themselves.

Table 2
Assessment of qualities of the head of the territorial internal affairs body

Parameters studied	Expert assessment	Self-assessment	
	2	3	
1			
Qualities of the head	Hard work	5	4
	Social activity	5	4
	Care for people	5	3
	Insistence on high standards	4	3
	Tactfulness	5	4
	Sociability	5	5

	1	2	3
Ability to understand people		5	3
Criticality		3	3
Responsibility		5	5
Average values		4.7	4

The surveyed heads of internal affairs bodies assess the level of criticality, ability to understand people, insistence on high standards and care for subordinate personnel as low. The subordinates assess qualities of the head of internal affairs bodies somewhat higher, although they believe that an average head of internal affairs bodies lacks criticality insistence on high standards.

Discussion of the results

In the course of the research, it is found that the socio-psychological climate in the surveyed teams can be considered favorable. Managers and subordinate employees tend to spend together not only working but also free time (behavioral component). They treat each other well and appreciate their colleagues (emotional component). Besides, they know each other well, as most of them have been working together for quite a long time (cognitive component).

The research data indicate a high degree of development of horizontal ties in the team of the internal affairs body. It reveals great capacities of the analyzed service teams, associated with the resource of using not only official-legal, enshrined in departmental normative legal acts and job descriptions, but also personal relationships.

A high level of managerial competence of heads of territorial internal affairs bodies largely determines the nature of a socio-psychological climate in the studied teams.

The identified trends (high expert assessments), combined with the data on employees' satisfaction of their leadership, demonstrate a positive nature of the development of hierarchical interrelationships of the team structure, which are a significant factor in the favorability of a socio-psychological climate in service teams of the internal affairs bodies.

Conclusion

A favorable socio-psychological climate depends on and influences many factors. If the socio-psychological climate is not positive, it will have a serious impact on interpersonal relations [16, p. 47; 17, p. 43].

The primary functions of a socio-psychological climate in the team of the internal affairs body are the following:

- consolidation;
- stimulation;
- stabilization;
- regulation [18, p. 65; 19, p. 66].

The structural organization of a favorable socio-psychological climate in the service team is directly dependent on two complementary elements: an attitude of service team members to the joint law enforcement activity and social relations between them, arising and implemented both within the hierarchical subordination and at the horizontal level.

The results of the conducted research show that the IAB head creates and maintains a favorable socio-psychological climate in his subordinate service team, as he is tactful to the personnel of services, divisions and apparatus-

es of the IAB. In fact, the respondents indicate that the team leader is always ready to help. He makes sufficient efforts to prevent conflicts in the subordinate service team. The IAB head strives to distribute official duties among employees of various services and divisions of the IAB, but in case of failure to fulfill the assigned task, he takes responsibility for himself and using administrative and power resources personally supervises the fulfillment of law enforcement tasks assigned to the IAB by the superior management.

It is crucial that the head aspire to self-improve and develop managerial competencies and personal qualities that influence a psychological atmosphere in the team and effectiveness of its work. In case self-control skills are not formed in managers, work stresses lead to nervous breakdowns, diseases, premature burnout and professional deformation.

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