

## **ETHICAL AND SENSE BEARING SYSTEM, EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE: THE ORDER ASPECT**

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### **Abstract**

The article discusses the problem of interconnections between the ethical and sense bearing system of a personality and group with such qualities of emotional intelligence as definition of emotions' meaning and social responsibility. The ethical and sense bearing system is defined as the net of meanings, which the interaction participants construct or attribute to standard elements of life-sustaining activities, as well as the new elements of this “stream”. The net of meanings creates subjective cultural reality for a group. Based on the individual case modelling, the interconnection between actions/events, cognitions, emotions and ethical and sense bearing system has been shown. The author comes to the conclusion about the perspectiveness of organizational and cultural process management through singling out meanings from the emotions of joint activity's participants.

**Key words:** order approach, organizational culture, ethical and sense-bearing system, emotional intelligence.

### **Introduction**

Both investigations of emotional intelligence and development of order approach to social and psychological study of organizational culture are relatively new directions of development for the modern scientific psychology. In 2013 A.K. Kravtsova defended the first Russian dissertation, the topic of which was at the junction of both fields. A.K. Kravtsova's investigation showed the connection

between order personality types of organizations' leaders and the type of their emotional intelligence [4], which allowed the author to substantiate the influence of leader's emotional intelligence on the model of managerial interaction, which he/she is using (“parent”, “commander”, or “pastor”) and then on the formation of the corresponding type (aspect) of organizational culture.

Due to the fact that the model of organizational culture has a complicated multi-level social and psychological structure, where managerial interaction has an important position (conditional third level), but is still regulated by the sense-bearing system of culture (conditional seventh level), the scientific investigation mentioned above presented an opportunity for making a new step in the direction of singling out the connections between the sense bearing (or, to be more precise, ethical and sense bearing) system of organizational culture and the emotional intelligence of the leader and the group.

*The purpose of the present article* is to discuss the connection between the formation of ethical and sense bearing system of the participants of organizational interaction with such qualities of emotional intelligence as recognition of emotions' meaning and social responsibility. It is obvious that in order to clarify the mechanism and specifics of this connection, we will need the empirical study, and, in the long run, it will be relevant to set the goal of generating psychological technologies for the development of corresponding functions of emotional intelligence.

In order to achieve this goal we are going to consecutively view: a) fundamental principles of the order concept of organizational culture, place of the ethical and sense bearing system in the culture model, as well as major concepts of the phenomenon of emotional intelligence; b) the scheme of connection analysis for emotional intelligence and the ethical and sense bearing system of a leader and his/her group.

## **Emotional Intelligence and the Order Model of Organizational Culture: Main Ideas and Definitions**

Investigations of emotional intelligence and organizational culture are united by their focus on the task of searching for factors, which condition successfulness of problem solution or task management by an individual or an organization. Scientists that researched intellect linked successfulness of one's work with parameters of emotional intelligence. However, Goleman (Goleman,1995), Gardner (Gardner,1983), and Sternberg (Sternberg, 1997) proved at different times that tests evaluating g- intelligence (the general intelligence) cannot predict the probability of success achievement by a certain individual, no matter how high the score is. Goleman was the first to suggest that 80% of success in somebody's work is conditioned by another abilities, particularly by emotional intelligence.

Goleman was the first to attract the scientific society's interest to the concept of emotional intelligence; he defined emotional intelligence through its characteristics, i.e. self-motivation, resistance to disappointments, control over emotional outbursts, ability to say “no” to pleasures, ability to regulate one's mood, the skill, which does not allow rueful feelings suppress the ability *to think, to empathize, and to hope*. R.Bar-On defines emotional intelligence as all non-cognitive abilities, which give an individual an opportunity to successfully cope with various life situations. He singled out five pairs of competences and described their qualities, which lead to the achievement of success (cognition of one's own personality; interpersonal communication skills, including *social responsibility*; ability to adapt, stress management; prevailing mood, e.g. happiness). Mayer & Salovey define emotional intelligence as an ability to *recognize the meaning of emotions* and to use this knowledge in order to find out the reasons of problem emergence and to solve these problems [5].

We are mostly interested in understanding of emotional intelligence as an ability to recognize the meaning of emotions and use the obtained knowledge for solving problems (Mayer & Salovey), as well as in R.Bar-On's notion that emotional intelligence is a non-cognitive ability for interpersonal communication with the skill of social responsibility in the process of communication, which it is closely interconnected with. We will come back to these ideas in our analysis of an individual case.

Within order approach, organizational culture is understood as an ethically-determined order. Order is defined as a comprehensible state of organizational and cultural system, which can be understood and managed. Ethics is seen as a social and psychological mechanism for regulation of the relations between the part and the Whole, which contains the part. Ethics also regulates the relations between the parts within one Whole. An important role in this mechanism is played by the cognitive process of information sorting (categorization) based on the “right-wrong” (or “good-bad”) criterion. Organizational culture is formed in the process of coordination of parts into one Whole through developing general criteria of “right” and “wrong”. Both individuals and groups/organizations form their own ethical systems, where similar actions can be evaluated completely differently (what some people perceive as “right” can be “wrong” for others).

Within order concept, organizational culture has a complex social and psychological structure, which includes the net of interconnections within its levels and between them. The levels are presented through the system of social and psychological phenomena mutually revealing and interpreting each other: culture – social interaction – selective psychological connections – needs – perception (understanding, evaluation, conviction) – meaning. The latter position is discussed as the sense bearing system of organizational culture, which contains the subsystem of ethical meanings (ethical and sense bearing subsystem).

The unique feature of order understanding of the essence and structure of this ethical and sense bearing subsystem (further *system*) is that the ethical and sense

bearing system of a culture (both at the personal and small/big group level) has a two-level structure: a) the “upper” (surface) level is represented by functional ethical meanings, which are related to organizational culture's suborders (“family” suborder, which provides emotional and value related unity of an organization; “army” suborder, which provides for unity of organization's goal, and “church” suborder, which provides for sense bearing (meaningful) unity of an organization. The level of functional meanings is formed in the process of life-sustaining activity of organization's members; b) the “lower” (deep) level is represented by the matrix of meanings called “basic ethical meanings”, which is not recognized by organization members. The matrix includes four pairs of sense bearing diads: life-death, cooperation-fight, improvement-deterioration, responsibility-irresponsibility.

*The ethical and sense-bearing system can be defined as the net of meanings, which are constructed or attributed to both standard elements of the stream of life-sustaining activities and the new elements of this stream by the interaction participants. The net of meanings creates subjective group cultural reality.*

Meanings are formed differently. They can be opened, constructed, formed during the interpretation process, etc. Their ethical component is linked to the influence of basic ethical meanings on the process of decision making regarding meaning (sense) of a certain event (action, doing, situation). An important role in this process is played by the two properties of emotional intelligence: a) definition of emotion's meaning and b) social responsibility.

Let us illustrate this with an example.

### **The link between ethical and sense bearing system with emotional intelligence (case analysis)**

The case that we would like to present was described in Weick's “Sensemaking in organizations” [3].

“The case...took place in the course of military actions in Switzerland. A young lieutenant of a small Hungarian group in the Alps sent an intelligence group to this ice desert. Right after that it started to snow heavily. It was snowing for two days and the group was not coming back. The lieutenant was suffering. He was afraid that he had sent his people to their doom. However, on the third day the group came back. Where had they been? How did they make it back? Here is what the men told him: “We thought that we got lost and were waiting for an end to come. But then one of us found a map in his pocket. This helped us to calm down. We set up a camp, waited out the snow storm, and then, with the help of the map we managed to find out where we were. So here we are now.” The lieutenant decided to take a closer look at the wonderful map. To his surprise he discovered that it was not the map of the Alps. It was the map of the Pyrenees.[3, p. 93]. K. Weick comes to the conclusion that if you get lost, any kind of map can help you, because it can give you an incentive to act, allows to regain the sense of orientation, and overcome confusion.

In our case it is logical to pay attention to the problem solution process: a) got lost – expected the end to come, b) found the map – calmed down, c) calmed down – set up the camp, d) set up the camp – discovered their location on the map, e) discovered their location on the map – came back to their mainstay base. It is obvious that this sequence presents the pairs of actions/events and emotions that accompany them, singling out their meaning allows to perform the new action, and, eventually, solve the problem.

Let us imagine the situation described above within the context of events, emotions, and ethical and sense bearing systems, with the help of the following model:

Table 1.

## The Model of Interaction between Ethical and Semantic System and Emotional Intelligence

№	Event/ action	Cognition	Emotion	Property of emotional intelligence	Ethical and sense bearing matrix
1.	Went to gather information				
2.	Got lost	Thought that they: a) got lost b) it was the “end”	Fear, submission to death	Singling our meaning from the emotion: <i>fear of not finding the way back = death</i>	Diad “life-death”: choice preference - death
3.	Discovered an old map	Thought that they had a clue that would help them	Joy, hope, calmness	Singling our meaning from the emotion: <i>the way back can be found with the map/the map will help</i>	Diad “life-death”: choice preference - life
4.	Set up a camp	Thought that they had to protect themselves from snow and cold, got some rest	Enthusiasm	Singling our meaning from the emotion: <i>can outwait the snow storm in safety</i>	Diad “improvement- deterioration”: choice preference improvement. Diad “cooperation-fight”: choice preference – cooperation.
5.	Discovered their location on the map	Thought that they understood how to get back	Confidence	Singling our meaning from the emotion: <i>we can come back with the map</i>	Diad “improvement- deterioration”: choice preference improvement. Diad “cooperation-fight”: choice preference – cooperation.
6.	Went back	Thought that they knew the way back	Confidence, enthusiasm	Singling our meaning from the emotion: <i>we coped, we completed the task.</i>	Diad “responsibility- irresponsibility”: choice preference – responsibility (fulfillment of one's duty, coming back from the scout)

The table compactly presents the links between the events/actions, cognitive processes, emotions, properties of emotional intelligence and order ethical and sense bearing matrix.

The first event is that the group goes to gather information. The standard action, which is often performed and does not cause any deep reactions in the actions' participants. Then the second event occurs – the group gets lost. First comes the recognition of this fact and its rational cognitive evaluation is given (it is the “end”), meaning that consciousness delivers a verdict for the whole group of soldiers. This causes a strong emotion expressed through fear of the inevitable and nearing death. *The sense of fear*, its meaning is the impossibility of finding the way back. The first diad “life-death” is activated in the order ethical and sense bearing matrix with the emphasis on the latter member of the diad. The group opts for “death”. The third event is the discovery of the old map, which is recognized and evaluated as finding the solution to the problem. This realization causes such emotions as joy, hope and calmness. *The meaning of joy* is the possibility of finding the way back with the help of the map. The preference between the components of the ethical and sense bearing diad “life-death” is given to life now. The group chooses to live, although it requires certain effort (unlike the choice of death). The following action is determined by the choice of life, i.e. the group sets up the camp having realized that it is necessary to create conditions for rest and recovery, to protect themselves from the snow and cold. The work is performed enthusiastically, in high spirits. *The meaning of enthusiasm* is people's confidence that under corresponding conditions they will manage to outwait the snowstorm safely. The diad “improvement-deterioration” is activated, and the emphasis is on improvement, mostly due to the fact that the situation has obviously improved because of the discovery of the map and is getting even better as the camp is set up. The diad “cooperation-fight” is also activated, because the group members start active cooperation with one another in the process of camp organization. The choice of cooperation develops the logic of aspiration for life. Having found themselves in relatively comfortable conditions after setting up the camp, the



participants of the trip turn their attention back to the map, search for and find (!) their location on the map. This (false) knowledge of where they are located leads to them “knowing” the way back, which gives birth to the emotion of confidence in their ability to come back. *The meaning of confidence* is that their return is possible. The diad “improvement-deterioration” is activated again with the emphasis on improvement (the situation continues to improve). The diad “cooperation-fight” is activated again with the emphasis on cooperation, because the group has the common goal of survival and safe return. During this climax we can see the final action of this story, i.e. the group heads back thinking that they know the way back, experiencing the emotions of enthusiasm and confidence. The meaning of positive emotions is that the task is being performed successfully and we are coping with it. The diad “responsibility – irresponsibility” is activated in the ethical and sense bearing system, the emphasis is on responsibility, because the soldiers are capable of keeping their military oath of loyalty, perform their duty in the process of fulfilling their task, which is to gather information about the locality and come back to the base with the necessary information.

This case analysis demonstrates how the ethical and sense bearing system (as it is understood in the order approach) and such properties of emotional intelligence as determination of emotion's meaning and social responsibility are interconnected.

Construction of the model of interconnections between the ethical and sense bearing system and the emotional intelligence is a way to come closer to formulating the task of the empirical and possibly experimental investigation of this peculiar phenomenon.

### **Conclusion**

Even preliminary acquaintance with the topic of interconnection and mutual influence of the ethical and sense bearing system and properties of emotional intelligence gives an insight into the perspectiveness of studying this phenomenon from both theoretical and practical points of view. Focusing on the social and

psychological study of organizational culture from the position of the order approach, we can see extensive opportunities of influencing organizational and cultural processes within modern organizations through carrying out work aimed at singling out meanings from emotions, which occur in the process of joint professional activity, especially under harsh and extreme conditions. Based on the case analysis above, in order to fulfill tasks successfully (effectively and fruitfully) within the framework of joint activity, under conditions of uncertainty, the most important things are the choices and decisions that people make based on the ethical meanings (functional and basic) that they extract from cognitions and emotions, rather than the parameters of life situations. It would be interesting to continue the investigation of interconnection between order types of leaders and peculiarities of their emotional intelligence, which was initiated by A.K. Kravtsova, in the direction of finding out the possible links between the order type of leader's personality and his/her preferable type of singling out meanings from emotionally significant managerial situations.

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