

## ANALYSIS OF PSYCHOSOCIAL RISKS AT WORK: A STUDY ON THE REALITY OF FAST-FOOD CHAIN EMPLOYEES

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**Abstract:** Research shows that there is great difficulty in studying psychosocial risks in the *fast-food* sector. Furthermore, research dealing with the application of the Work and Illness Risk Inventory (ITRA) in this sector is scarce in Brazil. Therefore, this article aims to evaluate the perception that workers have about their work context, its demands, as well as the experiences and physical, psychological and social problems caused by the activity. Therefore, the ITRA was applied to a franchised unit in this food sector located in the state of Rio de Janeiro. The results showed that severe averages are related to pain, physical effort, repetitive movements and stress at work. Therefore, an ergonomic analysis of work can contribute to the process of transforming the situations analyzed and the risks highlighted, as well as to the creation of a space for listening, verbalizations and deeper observations about the activity.

**Keywords:** Psychosocial Risks. Food. ITRA. fast food. illness at work.

## INTRODUCTION

According to the International Labor Organization (2014) (ILO), in Europe, 50-60% of all lost working days are attributed to stress arising from work, data indicates that this type of condition increases over the years. A survey carried out by the International Stress Management Association (Isma-BR), in 2018, showed that 32% of workers in the country suffer from stress — that would be more than 33 million Brazilian citizens.

Furthermore, according to the National Association of Occupational Medicine (ANAMT), Social Security data in 2017 showed that depressive episodes generated 43,300 sickness benefits, being the 10th disease with the most absences. Recurrent depressive disorder appeared in 21st position, with 20.7 thousand aids. Anxiety disorders are also among those with the most absence,

ranking in 15th position, with 28.9 thousand cases.

Given the importance of this problem of understanding the universe of psychosocial risks and their impacts, many researchers are developing studies aiming to analyze psychosocial risks in different realities.

Anchieta et. al. (2011) in their study evaluated the perception that civil police officers in the Federal District have about their work context, in its various dimensions such as: the demands, experiences and physical, psychological and social problems caused by work. In this study, the researchers applied the Work and Illness Risk Inventory (ITRA) to 160 civil police officers, men and women, recently hired at the Institution. The results indicated that, although there is a lack of evidence regarding serious damage to the health of novice police officers, there are possibilities of risks related to possible illness.

Another researcher, Prata (2014), addressed in her publication the risks of illness present in the routine of managers at a Brazilian private bank. The results of this research showed that the work context of managers has insufficient time to carry out activities and conflicting socio-professional relationships, which imply both integration and disputes between peers. The researcher highlighted that emotional support from family members and specialized professionals are among the most used alternatives to mediate suffering arising from work.

Still in this universe Silva et. al. (2019) developed their study with employees of a Federal Institute, aiming to analyze the risks of illness at work as well as the pleasure that this sample supports. Therefore, the ITRA questionnaire was applied to 18 managers.

The results showed that managers are inserted in a context of challenges, multiple cognitive demands and aspects of physical suffering. In this sense, it is expected that the

knowledge generated will be useful for strategic planning processes aimed at thinking about alternatives that strengthen pleasure within the work environment of these managers.

Siqueira (2018), who evaluated the occurrence of experiences of pleasure and suffering of managers working in a fast food chain located in Brasília-DF, used the theory of Work Psychodynamics as a basis. 5 fast-food restaurant units in the Federal District were analyzed and had 21 volunteer managers. To collect data, the Inventory on Work and Illness Risks (ITRA) was used, an instrument developed by Mendes and Ferreira (2007). The research showed that the organization of managers' work allows, simultaneously, experiences of pleasure and suffering, with a predominance of experiences of moderate to negative suffering, and moderate pleasure.

In this sense, several instruments are found in the literature to analyze psychosocial risks at work, including: Work and Illness Risk Inventory (ITRA), Health Safety Executive Questionnaire - Indicator Tool (HSE-IT), Risk Assessment Protocol Psychosocial At Work - (PROART), Copenhagen Psychosocial Questionnaire I (COPSOQ I), among others.

This article aims to evaluate the perception that workers have about their work context, its demands, as well as the experiences and physical, psychological and social problems caused by the activity. To this end, the ITRA was adopted and applied in a unit of a *fast food* chain operating in the state of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

We chose to expand knowledge within the fast-food sector, as it is known that workers in this economic sector live in a reality in which the distinction between management and employee is very clear, employees are generally very young, they have an intense work rhythm, with pain and scars, arising from this journey (SIQUEIRA, 2018; RIAL 1997).

In this sense, this work seeks to analyze the

possible psychosocial risks in the enterprise in question and will be structured in five parts, namely: introduction of the work, theoretical framework, methodological procedures, results, discussion and conclusion.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **PSYCHODYNAMICS OF WORK: BETWEEN PLEASURE AND SUFFERING**

In 1980, Christophe Dejours, a French psychoanalyst, began investigations into man's relations with organizations, focusing on the pleasure and suffering of workers, therefore, it is considered the beginning of the term "psychodynamics of work", Lavanchica (2015). The psychodynamics of work contributes to the understanding of workers' health, by analyzing the circumstances of suffering and cognitive damage, in addition to identifying experiences of pleasure in the work context (DEJOURS, 2017 apud SILVA et. al. 2019).

According to Lancman et. al (2007), Work Psychodynamics seeks to understand the relationships between work organization and mental health. It contributes to giving visibility to the act of working as an inseparable action that occurs in the encounter between the subject and the reality presented by work situations. For researchers, the real refers to that which resists the will, the mastery of the subjects, something unpredictable, unexpected, which constantly leaves us faced with feelings of impotence, anger or even disappointment. Therefore, through a confrontation with reality, the suffering experienced in relationships is born.

Dejours (1993, p.103) already pointed out that, in the context of the profession, suffering can emerge in two distinct ways: the first can assume the function of mobilizing health, in the sense that "work does not cause suffering,

it is the suffering itself that produces the work.” The second can lead to the emergence of illnesses, when the worker is unable to interfere in their work reality, even using their cognitive, psychological and affective capacity.

Regarding the organization of work, its understanding can be given through two axes, namely the technical division of work and the social and hierarchical division of work. The first axis is related to what the worker develops, how the activity is carried out and who is conducting it. The second axis is more related to the organization's norms, power sharing and the role of each worker within the company (LANCMAN et. al 2007).

Therefore, the psychodynamic approach opens up broader perspectives that are not just about suffering but also about pleasure at work, not just about the individual but also about their work activity, and not just about their personal organization but also about work situations in a way that particular. Dejours (1994) states that the relationship between the organization of work and man is not a rigid block, but is in continuous movement.

This way, this framework not only analyzes the individual in their subjectivity but also presents contributions from Ergonomic Work Analysis and Psychoanalysis to understand experiences of pleasure and suffering. It is worth adding that, for this approach, it is impossible to separate the employee from the human being himself. In other words, the individual inside and outside of work, who make up a whole, are in constant interference with each other. Thus, workers from different economic sectors experience this work dynamic, including professionals who are immersed in the fast-food segment, a growing sector that employs young people at the beginning of their careers in different parts of the world and has a work organization model particular.

## RISE OF FAST FOOD CHAINS

Production models such as Taylorism and Fordism drove repositioning and innovation on the part of establishments in order to remain operational. The transformations began in the 20th century and are of a social, technological, cultural and economic nature in the world of work. Inspired by the mass production of Fordism and cinemas, the first “Fast-foods” emerged in the late 1930s in California, United States of America. It was a strategy to escape the logic of traditional restaurants. Faced with this, the first fast-food restaurants initially appeared as “drive-ins”, that is, as cinema cafeterias, in which spectators watched films from inside their cars (FONTENELLE, 2002).

This movement was associated with the processes of urbanization and the acceleration of time in cities, as well as the application of industrial production methods, which involves the organization of an assembly line, worker training and the presence of machines in the organization of food production.

According to Monteiro (2013), it was at the end of the 1940s that the McDonald's brothers introduced innovations that redefined the meaning of fast food: they replaced cutlery, cups and plates with disposable packaging, they converted the counter into a place for ordering and paying at the same time. time, they reduced the number of products and organized production on an assembly line. As a result of these changes, production was accelerated and the need for labor was reduced or almost eliminated. The data shows that the company holds around 45% of the fast-food market, operates globally, operates in more than 30.00 establishments distributed in more than 100 countries on 5 continents, serving approximately 46 million people daily. (MONTEIRO, 2013)

In this scenario, Royle and Towers (2002) point out that an average of four new

restaurants are opened every day somewhere in the world. The growth is due not only to the advancement of technology but also to the worker, who is an essential key to the brand's success.

Ritzer (2008) already pointed out that the system of control and monitoring of workers in "McDonaldized" organizations has been successful due to some factors, such as: they are trained to carry out a number of limited activities, they have technologies and a work organization favorable to control and, finally, leaders act in such a way that workers need to be disciplined. In this organizational model, movements and working time are calculated, therefore, an ideal worker is one who can handle the multiple tasks he or she is tasked with carrying out.

On the other hand, at the same time as there is an expansion of fast-food chains around the world, this restaurant segment has also shown broad growth in recent years in Brazil. According to the Brazilian Food Industry Association (ABIA), between 2009 and 2019, the revenues of the food industry for the food sector outside the home, the so-called Food Service (FS), which involves restaurants, bars, cafeterias, bakeries, services catering, vending machine, fast food chains, among others, grew 184.2%. It is worth mentioning that, in a survey carried out by EAE Business School, Brazil is among the largest consumers of Fast-Food in the world. (El País, 2016)

In this situation, it is observed that extreme competitiveness occurs in the context of guaranteeing a competitive advantage in the market compared to other competitors, using aggressive strategies in the sales campaign, providing an increase in the services offered to the customer, launching new products and guarantee of more affordable prices.

According to Siqueira (2018), the pressures imposed by the market mainly wear down the contemporary worker, who has a 44-hour

working week and specific 12x36-hour shifts, and may, in some units, have uninterrupted working hours, serving the public on weekends, dawn and holidays.

Rial (1997) worked as a server at a fast-food restaurant. In his view, there were always agitated movements of employees, flashing lights from machines and a clear distinction between bosses and employees in the workplace. She quickly realized that incompetence in fast food work is punished in order to set an example for other employees. According to Rial, this is due, initially, to understand the logic of hard manual work, which left marks on his body (small burn spots on the skin, a persistent smell of grease that resisted baths, a lot of muscle pain) and a permanent sensation of being humiliated. This experience revealed that the researcher was immersed in work that proved frightening from the beginning due to the imposition of a hysterical rhythm and cadence. (RIAL, 1997, p.04).

Therefore, the psychosocial risks associated with employees of fast-food chains currently tend to be greater compared to establishments at the end of the 1930s, as the demands and struggle to maintain a superior position in this market therefore require the hiring of labor exposed to intense work and inadequate remuneration. In view of this, the adoption of instruments that allow measuring the risks of illness at work are of great value for research and organizations.

## **THE WORK AND ILLNESS RISK INVENTORY - ITRA**

The Work and Illness Risk Inventory - ITRA is a questionnaire that aims to assess the workplace and the risks of illness due to possible physical and psychological exposures. To this end, this inventory (ITRA) was developed by Mendes and Ferreira (2007), which clarifies the relationship between work

and the employee's personal life. Briefly, it aims to investigate the workplace and risks of illness due to possible physical and psychological exposures.

The ITRA is divided into four topics with an average of 31 questions per section, which verify, respectively, the work context in which the employee is inserted, the assessment of requirements and demands at work, the negative and positive experiences experienced and the physical, psychological and social problems generated by carrying out the work. After applying this form to a sample of the population in question, it is expected to obtain data that will enable a good understanding of the employee-work relationship and its effects and influence on the employee's life. The sections are organized as follows:

1. Work Context: This section has 30 items, analyzing factors such as the division of tasks, pace of work, as well as the conditions under which the service is performed and interpersonal communication in the environment. It aims to categorize psychic relationships and intersubjective relationships;
2. Work Costs: This section has 32 questions, which aims to understand how carrying out work requires both cognitive efforts, to solve problems, and physical effort, to carry out manual activities;
3. Meaning of Work: This section has 32 questions and seeks to understand experiences of pleasure and suffering, with the aim of identifying the reasons that motivate and discourage the performance of work;
4. Work Damage: Finally, the last part of the form has 29 questions and aims to analyze the consequences related to carrying out work, such as physical pain, emotional problems and their impact on social relationships, even outside the environment work.

The items in each section are evaluated from 1 to 5, a scale which allows the employee to express their point of view on a certain aspect, according to the table below, with the exception of the topic "Work Context" which is evaluated according to table 2:

1	2	3	4	5
NEVER	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	EVER

Table 1 - referring to sections 1, 3 and 4

Source: MENDES, 2007

1	2	3	4	5
NOTHING REQUI- RED	LITTLE REQUI- RED	MORE OR LESS RE- QUIRED	VERY DEMAN- DED	FULLY REQUI- RED

Table 2 - referring to section 2

Source: MENDES, 2007

Given this scale, the employee must evaluate a certain item. According to the author's approach (MENDES E FRREIRA, 2007), there is a relationship between the average of the responses obtained, which follows the following relationship:

Work Context Assessment Scale (EACT) and Human Cost at Work Scale (ECHT):

- Results above 3.7: Negative and serious evaluation
- Results between 2.3 and 3.7: Moderate, critical assessment
- Results below 2.3: More positive evaluation, satisfactory

The Pleasure and Suffering at Work Indicator Scale (EIPST):

- Results above 4.0: More positive and satisfactory evaluation
- Results between 3.9 and 2.1: More moderate, critical assessment
- Results below 2.0: Assessment is rarely serious

In this category, the higher the values, the more positive the values, unlike suffering, the lower the values, the more positive the results.

Work-Related Damage Assessment Scale (EADRT):

- Results above 4.1: More negative evaluation, presence of occupational diseases
- Results between 3.1 and 4.0: Moderate assessment to frequent, severe
- Results between 2.0 and 3.0: Moderate, critical assessment
- Results below 1.9: More positive, bearable assessment

## METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

This research aims to analyze the workplace and the risks of illness due to possible physical and psychological exposure in a unit belonging to a *fast food* chain located in the state of Rio de Janeiro, using as a reference the Inventory of Work and Risks of Illness (ITRA), suggested by Mendes and Ferreira (2007), widely adopted in national research on health and work - to identify the risks of illness, this being a quantitative instrument, although, “the psychodynamics of work prioritizes an approach of a predominantly qualitative nature ” (Mendes, Ferreira and Cruz 2007, p. 105).

The questionnaire was administered in a unit belonging to a *fast-food* chain located in the state of Rio de Janeiro. Furthermore, it is worth highlighting that the company is located in a busy area of the city, where there is a large flow of consumers daily, it has a total of 15 employees, however only 10 participated in the evaluation in question. This results in a reliability of 90% and a margin of error of 16%.

Regarding data collection procedures, the following steps are followed:

1. Research was carried out on the basis and effectiveness of the ITRA questionnaire and the advantages of its use.
2. Subsequently, approval was obtained

from the person responsible for the network to carry out this evaluation, for educational purposes only and fully committing to the confidentiality of information, both from the company and the employees involved.

3. The questionnaires were delivered in physical form to the 15 employees in question and, after 3 days, 8 completed questionnaires were collected. Deeming the quantity of samples obtained unsatisfactory, a second contact was made with the company and a second delivery of questionnaires. This time, they waited for them to be completed on site and received 2 more responses, totaling 10 completed.

4. Workers were encouraged to fill out the questionnaires after their work shift and they were subsequently left in a specific location in the administrative office. It is worth noting that workers were free to complete the process, management had no influence on the responses and did not even offer compensation for the responses to be collected.

Regarding the procedures for analyzing the data obtained, the next step was to organize and analyze the data. For this, Excel was used as a tool to organize and carry out the manipulations and calculations necessary for the analysis. Statistical descriptions were made for the ITRA factors, with the aim of clearly understanding the indicators. From the results, it was calculated:

1. Margin of Error: Starting from a reliability level of 90%, and with a sample of 10 responses in a space of 15 employees, a margin of error of 16% was found.
2. Arithmetic Mean: It was used to find a value that best represents the employees' situation, relating them to the approach scales suggested by (MENDES and FERREIRA, 2007).
3. Sample Standard Deviation: Quantity used to enable a better understanding of the

dispersion of the data obtained. Its value was calculated for each item answered.

It is important to highlight that although Work Psychodynamics is a more comprehensive approach, which seeks a free space for the circulation of words and good listening conditions, in the present work, it played an important role in expanding the researchers' reflections. Finally, the analysis and interpretation of the results began.

## RESULTS

The data obtained will be presented and interpreted in a way that explains its influence in relation to all organizational spheres of the company. The ITRA has 4 sections, therefore, the results obtained from each section of the questionnaire will be analyzed.

### SECTION 1 - WORK CONTEXT

From table 1, which represents the results of section 1, an approximate value of 1.84 can be noted for the average, which on the EACT scale, concludes that it is a value that has a positive, satisfactory assessment. In this stage of the questionnaire, the daily practices carried out by the employee are analyzed, as well as the interpersonal relationship and the influence of the physical environment at work.

It is understood that there is concern among superiors regarding the division of tasks, service requirements, and work organization. This creates a work environment in which employees are aware that they are capable of carrying out their activities and delivering good results. It is also important to mention the values found for the standard deviation.

In the analysis by item, it is clear that the item "Employees are excluded from decisions" has a zero-standard deviation, that is, there is unanimity and none of the employees feel represented in this statement. On the other hand, the item "Work tools are insufficient to carry out tasks" presented the highest

standard deviation, showing that this topic brings opposing and diverse opinions.

This may represent the interpretation of employees from different occupations, since, although the majority judged that the instruments are never insufficient, 20% of them stated that they are always insufficient, which generates inconsistency in the answers. Another possible approach is to calculate the standard deviation from the means. A value of 0.81 is obtained, confirming that the result based on the EACT scale is comprehensive for all items in question.

### SECTION 2 - HUMAN COST OF LABOR

Table 2 shows an average of 2.49 in section two, which, according to the EACT scale, is a positive/satisfactory situation. Therefore, according to the employees' view, the requirements that their respective positions require are understandable and capable of being fulfilled.

To analyze the standard deviation for each item, it is clear that the statement "Being forced to smile" has the highest value for this quantity, being 1.99. This fact can easily be related to the different sectors that were covered, since professionals more focused on customer service are encouraged to be more pleasant due to their direct contact with the customer, than those who work with support or on the administrative side, for example.

In turn, the value 0.67 was the lowest standard deviation value found, for the statement "Transgressing ethical values". With this, it can be interpreted that it is a respectful work environment, with rare exceptions that must be punished. During the analysis of the standard deviation of the session as a whole, the value found was 0.9, making the homogeneity of opinions among employees undeniable.



	Items	Average	Standard deviation		Items	Average	Standard deviation
1	The pace of work is excessive	2,90	1,37	21	Tasks are not clearly defined	1,20	0,42
2	Tasks are completed under pressure of deadlines	1,90	1,37	22	Autonomy is non-existent	1,40	0,84
3	There is a strong demand for results As normas para execução das tarefas são rígidas	1,70	1,82	23	The distribution of tasks is unfair	1,10	0,32
4	There is performance monitoring	2,20	1,62	24	Employees are excluded from decisions	1,00	0,00
5	The number of people is insufficient to carry out the tasks	2,90	1,66	25	There are difficulties in communication between management and subordinates	1,10	0,32
6	Expected results are unrealistic	1,70	0,82	26	There are professional disputes in the workplace	1,90	1,10
7	There is a division between those who plan and those who execute	1,40	1,26	27	Lack of integration in the work environment	1,70	0,82
8	Tasks are repetitive	4,10	1,52	28	Communication between employees is unsatisfactory	2,10	0,37
9	Lack of time to take rest breaks at work	1,20	0,42	29	Lack of support from managers for my professional development	1,30	0,95
10	The tasks performed suffer discontinuity	1,60	0,84	30	The information I need to perform my tasks is difficult	1,10	0,32
11	The physical environment is uncomfortable	1,70	1,34	31	Working conditions are precarious	1,20	0,42
12	There is a lot of noise in the work environment	3,80	1,62				
13	The existing furniture in the workplace is inadequate	1,40	1,26				
14	Work tools are insufficient to carry out tasks	2,20	1,69		<b>Selection average</b>		
15	The workstation is unsuitable for carrying out tasks	1,80	1,69		1,84		
16	The equipment needed to carry out the tasks is precarious	1,40	1,26				
17	The physical space to carry out the work is inadequate	1,60	1,35				
18	Working conditions pose risks to people's safety	1,40	1,26				

19	Consumables are insufficient	1,50	1,27
20	The pace of work is excessive	3,60	1,43

Table 3- Results obtained in section 1

Source: Own authorship

	Items	Average	Standard deviation	
1	The person has control of emotions	1,50	0,85	
2	The person has to deal with contradictory orders	1,90	0,88	
3	The person has an emotional cost	1,30	0,67	
4	The person is forced to deal with the aggressiveness of	1,90	1,37	
5	To disguise your feelings	1,50	0,85	
6	To be forced to praise people	1,80	1,14	
7	To be forced to have a good sense of humor	1,60	0,84	
8	To be forced to take care of your physical appearance	2,50	1,27	
9	To be nice to others	2,40	1,43	
10	To transgress ethical values	1,30	0,67	
11	To be subjected to constraints	1,60	0,97	
12	To be forced to smile	3,20	1,99	
13	To develop tricks	1,60	0,97	
14	To have to solve problems	2,20	1,14	
15	To be forced to deal with unforeseen events	3,30	1,16	<b>Section average</b>
16	To Predict events	2,10	1,52	2,49
17	To Use vision continuously	2,20	1,40	
18	To Use memory	2,80	0,79	
19	The person has intellectual challenges	1,80	1,03	
20	To make mental effort	2,40	1,65	
21	The person has mental concentration	2,10	1,52	
22	To Use creativity	3,90	1,20	
23	To Use physical force	3,30	1,64	
24	To use your arms continuously	3,70	1,42	
25	To stay in a bent position	1,70	0,95	
26	To walk	2,50	1,18	
27	To be forced to stand	4,60	0,70	
28	The person has to handle heavy objects	2,70	1,06	
29	To make physical effort	2,70	1,25	
30	To use your legs continuously	4,00	0,94	
31	To use your hands repeatedly	3,70	1,06	
32	To go up and down stairs	3,90	0,99	

Table 4- Results obtained in section 2

Source: Own authorship

	Items	Average	Standard deviation	
1	Freedom with management to negotiate what you need	3,50	1,96	
2	Freedom to talk about my work with	4,10	1,52	
3	Solidarity among colleagues	3,80	1,75	
4	Trust among colleagues	2,60	1,51	
5	Freedom to express my opinions in the workplace	4,10	1,52	
6	Freedom to use my creativity	4,20	1,40	
7	Freedom to talk about my work with	4,40	1,35	
8	Cooperation between colleagues	3,00	1,56	
9	Satisfaction	3,20	1,69	
10	Motivation	3,60	1,58	
11	Proud of what I do	3,50	1,51	
12	Well-being	3,60	1,65	
13	Professional achievement	3,00	1,76	
14	Valuation	4,00	1,63	<b>Section average</b>
15	Recognition	3,50	1,51	2,89
16	Identification with my tasks	2,80	1,40	
17	Personal gratification from my activities	3,40	1,78	
18	Emotional exhaustion	3,10	1,29	
19	Stress	3,60	1,26	
20	Dissatisfaction	2,10	1,20	
21	Overload	2,40	1,07	
22	Frustration	2,10	0,99	
23	Insecurity	2,20	1,03	
24	Fear	1,60	1,35	
25	Lack of recognition for my efforts	2,00	1,33	
26	Lack of recognition of my performance	2,10	1,37	
27	Devaluation	1,70	1,16	
28	Indignation	2,10	1,20	
29	Uselessness	1,90	1,52	
30	Disqualification	2,30	1,77	
31	Injustice	1,50	1,08	
32	Discrimination	1,50	1,08	

Table 5 - Results obtained in section 3

Source: Own authorship

	Items	Average	Standard deviation	
1	Body pain	3,90	1,37	
2	Pain in the arms	3,20	1,48	
3	Headache	2,60	1,58	
4	Respiratory disorders	1,70	0,95	
5	Digestive disorders	1,40	0,70	
6	Back pains	4,00	1,41	
7	Hearing disorders	1,40	1,26	
8	Appetite changes	1,90	1,37	
9	Vision disturbances	1,60	1,26	
10	Sleep changes	2,30	1,64	
11	Leg pains	3,70	1,34	
12	Circulatory disorders	2,50	1,84	
13	Insensitivity towards colleagues	2,10	1,66	<b>Section average</b> 2,14
14	Difficulties in relationships outside of work	2,80	1,75	
15	Want to be alone	3,10	1,91	
16	Conflicts in family relationships	2,20	1,93	
17	Aggressiveness towards others	1,20	0,63	
18	Difficulty with friends	1,10	0,32	
19	Impatience with people in general	1,60	0,97	
20	Bitterness	1,20	0,63	
21	Feeling of emptiness	1,40	0,84	
22	Feeling of helplessness	1,50	0,85	
23	Bad mood	2,00	1,70	
24	Wanting to give up everything	2,20	1,62	
25	Sadness	2,00	1,41	
26	Irritation with everything	1,80	1,40	
27	Feeling of abandonment	2,00	1,49	
28	Doubt about the ability to do tasks	1,90	1,52	
29	Loneliness	1,80	1,40	

Table 6 - Results obtained in section 4

Source: Own authorship

### SECTION 3 - NEGATIVE AND POSITIVE EXPERIENCES

For section three, the average is 2.89. Therefore, there is a moderate/critical assessment on the EIPST scale, showing that some actions are necessary, such as greater team motivation and improved relationships between employees and their superiors. The highest standard deviation value for a specific item was 1.96, in the statement “Freedom with management to negotiate what you need”.

The discrepancy between the assessments makes it clear that communication between the team and their superiors needs to be improved. For the smallest standard deviation we have “Frustration” with 0.994. This is a clear factor that a significant number of employees have complaints, which are possibly not resolved and generate a feeling of frustration.

Finally, we have the sample standard deviation value as 0.89. The fact shows that there is consistency in employee dissatisfaction regarding some negative experiences in the workplace.

### SECTION 4 - PHYSICAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL AND EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS

During section four, the average obtained was 2.14. Based on the EADRT scale, we have a moderate assessment. Therefore, it is recommended that actions be taken, aiming to avoid worsening the situation or the emergence of possible occupational illnesses among employees. The maximum standard deviation was 1.92, coming from the statement “Conflict in family relationships”. This reflects the heterogeneity of employees, showing that

each one has a different reality.

As a minimum standard deviation, we have “Difficulty with friends” with 0.32, showing good acceptance among the circle of friends and understanding of the demands of a job in a fast-food chain. Finally, we have the standard deviation of the sample as 0.8, also an acceptable value. This shows that the results obtained in the analysis in section 4 reflect the situation of most employees.

## DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Given the results presented, section one was the one that presented the best average, totaling 1.84. The item that caught attention was related to repetitive tasks with an average of 4.1. A reality already highlighted in the literature, Siqueira (2018) in the fast-food sector. On the other hand, the item that stood out most positively was related to the exclusion of employees in decision-making, showing that they have been included in important discussions about work.

In relation to section two, it was observed that the fact that they were forced to smile (average 3.2), stand (average 4.6), use their hands repetitively (average 3.7), use their arms continuously (average 3.7) using the legs continuously (average 4.0), are aspects that generate discomfort in workers, thus generating negative averages for the section. The indicators show the importance of ergonomic issues and attention to behavioral patterns, thus providing highly relevant clues for possible change strategies.

Section three included an important aspect regarding the freedom to speak to management (average 3.5), considering that there was a high standard deviation (1.96), showing that this aspect can be improved, with the aim of creating a channel of access to management for the majority of employees. Still in section three, it was noted that, with regard to frustration (average 2.1), which

presented a low standard deviation (0.99), it was evident that workers have a positive perception of the organization, but, for On the other hand, a high stress index was noted (average 3.6).

Finally, in section four, it was observed that difficulty with friends (average 1.1) presented a low standard deviation (0.32), showing that the work collective functions as a regulator of work activity, since that the team relationship is positive. Dejours (2007) comments on the importance of organizing public spaces to minimize suffering at work. However, body pain, arm pain, leg pain and back pain showed a high average. Such aspects were already highlighted by researcher Rial (1997). Therefore, this fact again highlights the importance of investing in ergonomic work analysis (AET), aiming to contribute to the transformation of the work situations described.

It is also worth highlighting that individual and collective psychic defenses can influence the completion of the questionnaire, and it is ideal that there is a space for free circulation of words that allows interaction and exchange between the group and between the group and the researchers.

Therefore, as it is a questionnaire with closed questions, in an environment in which there may be some influence from managers, as well as defensive postures on the part of professionals that can mask the suffering experienced, AET could contribute to the construction of a space for listening, verbalizations and deeper observations about the activity.

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This work aimed to evaluate the perception that workers have about their work context, its demands, as well as the experiences and physical, psychological and social problems caused by the activity. To this end, the ITRA was adopted and applied in a unit of a fast food chain operating in the state of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Regarding the theoretical framework, it is worth highlighting that, nationally, less than 10 articles were found that involve the application of the Work and Illness Risk Inventory (ITRA) in fast-food companies, most of the time being carried out analysis in just one franchised unit, qualitatively or quantitatively. Many of these studies, however, report difficulties in studying the fast-food industry. In this sense, this research also observed how difficult it was to access employers and receive permission for the questionnaires to be administered. Possibly, due to insecurity regarding the leakage of internal company information or undesirable results in the advertising sphere.

In view of this analysis, it was concluded that

although there are good satisfaction averages in the sections, important opportunities for improvement are related to pain, associated with repetitive movements reported in the ITRA by employees, in different parts of the body, the freedom to talk to management and the high levels of stress present in workers' daily lives. Such indicators highlight the importance of developing strategies that minimize the identified *gaps*. Therefore, an ergonomic analysis of work can contribute to the process of transforming work situations and the risks highlighted, as well as to the creation of a space for listening, verbalizations and deeper observations about the activity.

Thus, the contribution of this research also lies in reflecting on the challenges surrounding the internal reality and the impacts of work on the external reality of the employees of the analyzed franchise, an old trend in the fast-food sector that needs to be analyzed and transformed, aiming for better results. working conditions for professionals. It is therefore recommended that other units be analyzed in order to expand this study and contribute to the development of good strategies in the sector.

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