ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE:
HOW TO MEASURE IT - A CASE STUDY

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Abstract

The current study sought to analyze the aspects of Brazilian organizational culture found in business management. Its purpose was to prepare a methodology to measure the elements that make up the organizational culture of a company in the Manaus Industrial District /Brazil. This study researched the company's cultural profile and the most important aspects of this culture, and it suggested recommendations on which to base its strategic plan. The Barros & Prates model was used as a reference. This model proposes nine cultural traits that are present in the Brazilian business environment: Power Concentration, Personalism, Paternalism, Expectant Posture, Formalism, Impunity, Personal Loyalty, Conflict Avoidance and Flexibility. The method used was quantitative via the development and application of a closed instrument Likert type (attitudinal scale) involving the nine Barros & Prates cultural traits. The instrument was validated in terms of items and reliability. Means and correlation coefficients were used as statistics to analyze the data. The analyses were based on 27 statements encompassing the nine cultural traits, and they were answered by 30 executives who make up the company's board of directors. The results showed a preponderance of the flexibility trait. Power concentration and personalism showed average preponderance. The least evident traits were Personal Loyalty, Impunity, Expectant Posture, Formalism, and Conflict Avoidance.

Keywords: Culture, Organizational Culture, Brazilian Culture

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the broadest studies on organizational culture in the world was carried out at the end of the 1970s. The ILO (International Labor Office), headquartered in Geneva, asked

Professor Hofstede and a group of experts to carry out a study on work-related cultural differences in over 50 countries throughout the world and to find out how such differences affect the validity of management techniques and their philosophy in different countries. The result achieved was that management should adapt itself to local conditions, mainly as to a country's cultural and social values, traditions and systems.

Some time later, and basing themselves mainly on Hofstede, Barros & Prates (1996) carried out a study on the main cultural traits present in Brazilian organizations by surveying the perception of 2500 executives and managers from large, mid and small-sized companies in the Southeast and the South of Brazil. The Barros & Prates paper studied Brazilian cultural traits within a Brazilian environment. The study showed that managers brought a management style that reflected the characteristics of Brazilian culture into their organizations. The current study is based on the model proposed by Barros & Prates and it seeks to create a methodology to draw the cultural profile of a Brazilian organization and analyze how it is used in the company's strategic analysis. From such an analysis we then make recommendations for the organization that is being studied. An organization's development is closely linked to its cultural development. A company's values, beliefs, rites, myths, laws, technology, morals, work and management are all molded on the society it is inserted in through its historic and anthropological makeup.

According to Bethlem (1999), people are culturally different, as they have received different influences through education and thus they have a diverse set of motives and goals. Among the greatest challenges facing managers are (1) adapting the company to the external environment and (2) internal integration for organizational performance.

The problem focused on this study is the inexistence of data that refers to aspects of culture in organizations that can contribute to strategic planning, mainly during the stage of strategic analysis. As we currently live in a society whose markets are very much in evidence, a moment that is characterized as the age of information, a time when changes are happening at great speed, companies must have a culture of great flexibility to face problems related to uncertainty that are generated by this society that grows increasingly demanding, mainly as to adapting itself to the characteristics of the environment. Strategic planning has been a very useful tool and it helps company managers very much. As this planning goes through a stage of internal analysis, we

intend to use this research to prepare a methodology to measure the elements that make up organizational culture, as they are very important for the company's internal integration. In many cases, cultural barriers are established and these will constitute a true bottleneck to organizational performance.

According to Tylor, cited by E. Willens (1962), culture is "that complex whole that includes knowledge, beliefs, the arts, morals and customs, as well as all the capabilities acquired by man as a member of society". Everything we can imagine is part of a society's culture. Therefore, this complex whole led Edward B. Reuter, cited by Lenhard (1982), to propose to organize cultural content by segmenting it, as below:

a – **material culture -** instrument and equipment building and handling tools;

b - **manifest social behaviors patterns** – just as when dealing with material objects, so it is when sharing experiences among people, as members of any society need a greater or a lesser, but not always a large number of skills and routines on how to carry out their activities;

c - **mental patterns -** behavior techniques and standards do not exist by themselves, but they serve the needs and desires of Man. Such desires produce feelings and attitudes in relation to objects (material, social and nonmaterial), which, by turn, are traditional for the most part and, although rooted in individual minds, are culturally conformed. Society attributes value to certain objects (that is, it bears feelings and attitudes in relation to them) and such consensus is essential to its cohesion. It is therefore important to transmit it to the new generations;

d - **social organization** - a ranking of positions and social relations, rules and values, power distribution, institutions such as the family and organizations, property, the state, etc., ensures a properly balanced society;

e - **symbolic elements** - symbols are perceptible phenomena that are socially used to mean that which is inaccessible to the senses. Every society has a system of communication and thought symbols that include oral and written language and the special languages of mathematics, logics, etc., that is, the sensorial phenomena to which abstract meanings are attributed; and

f - **thoughts organization - s**cientific, philosophic and religious systems built through symbols that stem from a society but that do not identify themselves with this society's system of feelings, attitudes and values.

According to Freitas (1991), culture is "something that is shared in the minds of the members of the community, such as the beliefs, values and ideas that people support in common". Bethlem corroborated with Freitas by citing the definition of culture according to the ILO study, which stated that "culture is defined as the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group from those of another". The current study sought to use the main organizational culture traits observed by Barros & Prates (1996) in their work, which proposes "a Brazilian cultural action model in business management". This model is based on reflections on the reading about Brazilian culture (DaMata, 1984, 1987; Barbosa, 1992), as well as on the theme of national cultures (Hofstede, 1980; Bolinger & Hofstede, 1987) and on the results of a survey about the main cultural traces present in Brazilian companies from the perception of 2500 executives and managers from 520 from large, mid and small-sized companies in the Southeast and the South of Brazil. The traits observed will be used in this research and they are: Power Concentration, Flexibility, Paternalism, Personal Loyalty, Personalism, Impunity, Conflict Avoidance, Expectant Posture and Formalism. The **research problem** was to prepare a methodology to measure the elements that make up the organizational culture.

2. THE BARROS & PRATES MODEL

The model proposed aims to deal with Brazilian culture in business management as a way to understand cultural action in an integrated way. This means that, when thinking about modeling Brazilian culture one must take into account not only the typical cultural trait in an isolated way and describe it but, mainly, its integration with other traits. This will lead to a cause and effect network within which those traits will influence each other mutually. From such a perspective, this Brazilian cultural action model was proposed for business management - a model of the Brazilian management style that portrays a multi-faceted cultural system with various facets, but one that acts simultaneously through several components. The model can be characterized as a system made up by four subsystems: the institutional (or formal) one, the personal (or informal) one, the one of the leaders, and that of those who are led, each one presenting common cultural traits and also special traits that articulate the set as a whole.

These subsystems intersect each other at various points where common cultural traits can be found. There are four intersections which are characterized by power concentration, personalism, expectant posture and conflict avoidance, distributed thus: 1) power concentration in the intersection of the leader and formal subsystems; 2) expectant posture in the intersection of the followers and formal subsystems; 3) personalism in the intersection of the leaders and personal; 4) conflict avoidance in the intersection of the followers and personal subsystems, according to Figure 1 below.
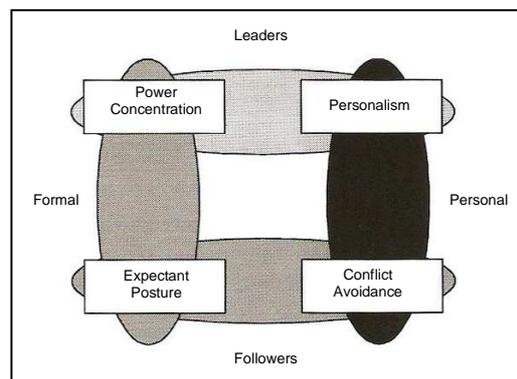

Figure 1 - Common cultural traits stemming from the intersection of subsystems. Source: PRESTES, Fernando C.; CALDAS, Miguel P., 1997.

These subsystems are also articulated through special cultural traits that, on final analysis, are the ones responsible for the whole system not rupturing. At the same time, these are the points that should alter in degree or nature so as to achieve effective change. Such traits are Paternalism, Personal Loyalty, Formalism and Flexibility. To complete the list of the most important Brazilian traits we should highlight Impunity in the institutional subsystem (formal), which bears strong reflexes on the Brazilian cultural action system, as it can reinforce or undermine the maintenance and stability of the whole system. The combination of all the traits cited is what makes up and operates the model called Brazilian Cultural Action System, as shown in Figure 2.
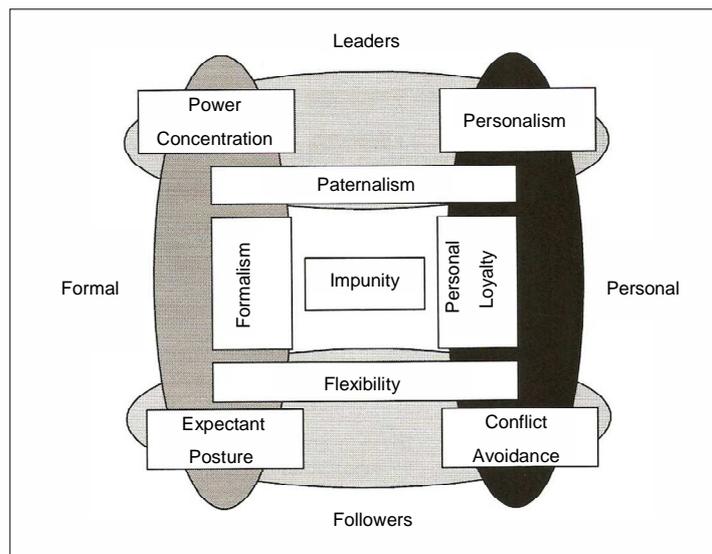
Figure 2 - An integrated vision of the model proposed Brazilian Cultural Action System
Source: PRESTES, Fernando C.; CALDAS, Miguel P., 1997.
A description of all the elements that make up the Brazilian Cultural Action System model is presented in Appendix 1.

3. METHODOLOGY

It was made up by four basic stages: constructing the measurement instrument (Appendix 2), applying the instrument, analyzing the validity of the statements, checking the reliability of the measurement instrument, calculating and graphically building the means of the validated statements and dimensions. All the managers of a company in the electronics sector were involved in the research. This company is located at Manaus Industrial District, and they totaled 30 people among directors, managers and department heads.

4. RESULTS AND ANALYSES

Executives' attitudinal profile by dimension

Figure 3 shows the means for the nine dimensions – Power Concentration, Personalism, Paternalism, Expectant Posture, Formalism, Impunity, Personal Loyalty, Conflict Avoidance, and Flexibility.
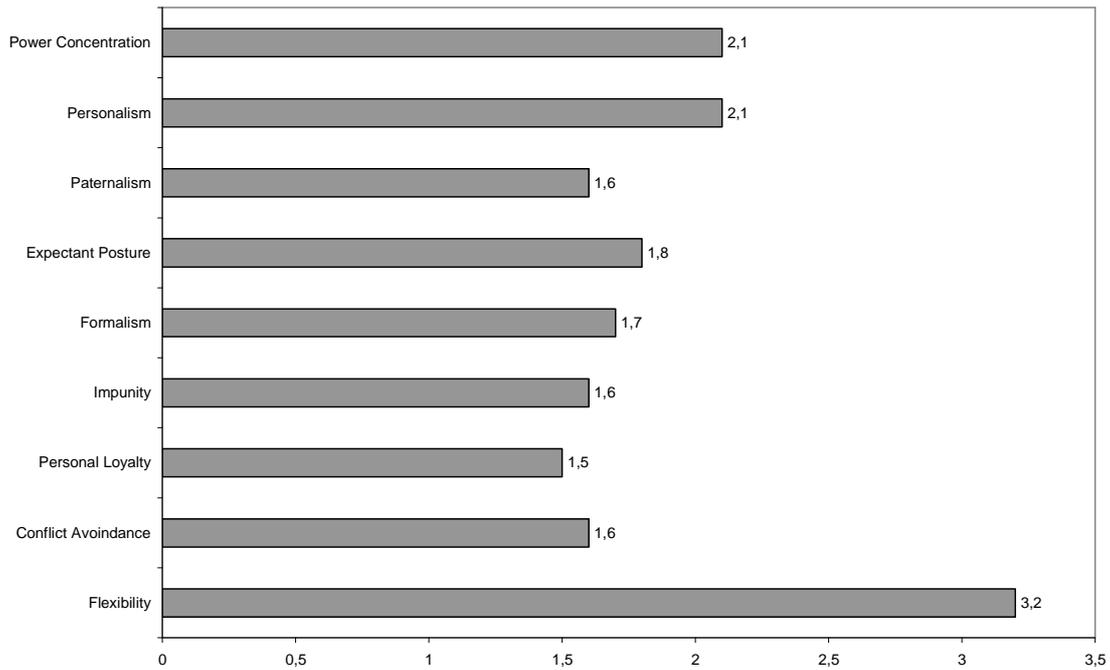
Figure 3 – Executives' attitudinal profile by dimension
Source: Research Data.

Figure 3 shows that the means for six dimensions - Paternalism, Expectant Posture, Formalism, Impunity, Personal Loyalty and Conflict Avoidance, can be found in the average preponderance zone, that is, means between 1.00 and 1.99.

The dimensions Power Concentration and Personalism can be found in the average preponderance zone, that is, their means varied between 2.0 and 2.99. The Flexibility dimension can be found in the high preponderance zone, as its means varied between 3.0 and 4.0.

Executives' attitudinal dimension by statement

Figure 4, below, analyzes all the executives' attitudinal profile by validated statement.
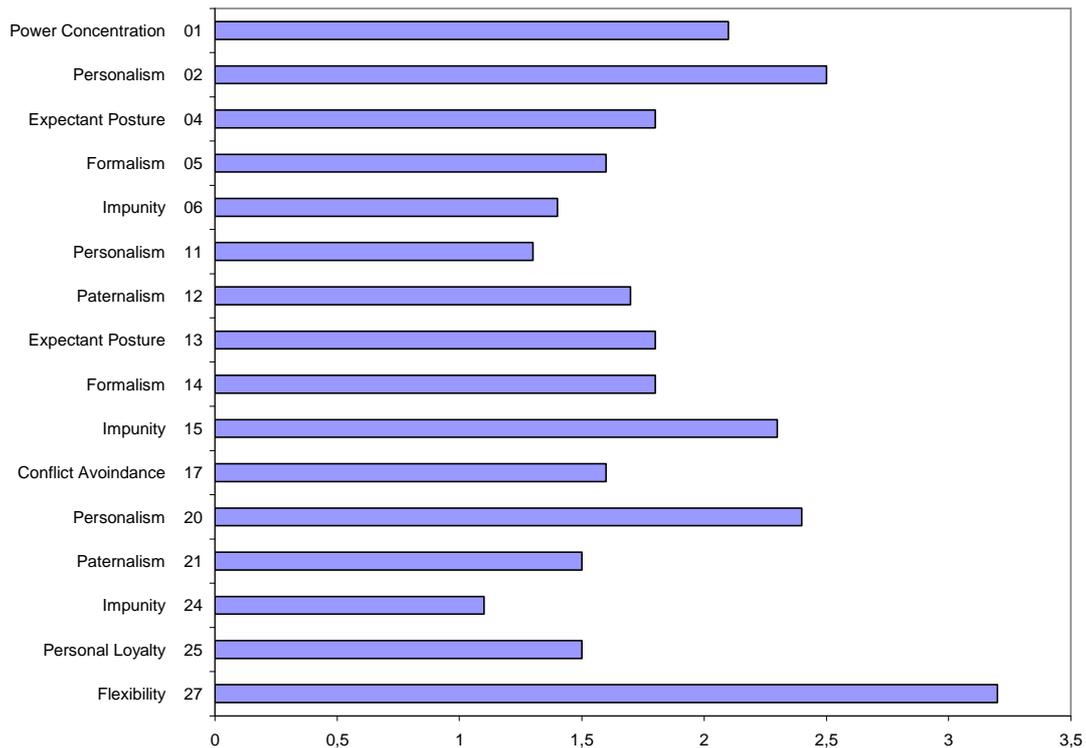
Figure 4 - executives' attitudinal profile by validated statement.

Source: Research Data.

As can be seen in Figure 4, the means for statements 4 and 13 (Expectant Posture), 5 and 14 (Formalism), 6 and 24 (Impunity), 11 (Personalism), 12 and 21 (Paternalism), 17 (Conflict Avoidance) and 25 (Personal Loyalty) can be found in the low preponderance zone, that is, means between 1.00 and 1.99. The means for statements 1 (Power Concentration), 2 (Personalism) and 15 (Impunity) can be found in the average preponderance zone, as they vary between 2.00 and 2.99. Statement 27 (Flexibility) can be found in the high preponderance zone, that is, its means varies between 3.0 and 4.0.

We would like to stress that statements 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 16, 18, 19, 22, 23 and 26, which were not validated by the methodology, contributed to the analysis of the statements/dimensions together with the positioning obtained in the field of the complement of the measurement instrument, since, as it has been mentioned, although they have not been validated, the statement/dimensions do not lose their value as content. The context of statements/dimensions will be discussed in greater depth in the topic that analyzes the data.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

Final recommendations are presented here by taking as a reference the analysis carried out based on the results obtained from this research in which we sought to verify the cultural traits of the model proposed by Barros & Prates (1996) present in the management. Thus, based on the conclusions and recommendations that will be presented, we hope that the company that was studied, and other companies that may wish to take advantage of this study, will keep from committing strategic errors from the point of view of cultural values and thus will be able to contribute to their enhanced performance and competitiveness. The use of the dimensions that have been presented by this research in other business realities should be carried out with great caution due to the fact that the study was limited to one Brazilian plant in the consumer electronics sector with its own characteristics, sophisticated technology and management systems.

The sample investigated by this study was a small one, which has led to unstable correlation statistics. Future studies that would involve larger samples and other categories of executives and sectors would be highly recommended. The number of statements per selected dimension should be increased in future studies so as to minimize the possibility of dimension losses along the process to validate the diagnostic instrument used.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The results of the analyses indicated the preponderant traits, based on the model proposed in the study. The Flexibility dimension showed the greatest preponderance, thus indicating that there is great flexibility within the company. This means that the organization has great capacity to adapt itself to the circumstances of the environment, which can be a positive point when we consider that, currently, society has been undergoing constant and fast changes that demand that organizations be agile so they can meet the demands of the environment. Personal Loyalty was the dimension that showed the least preponderance. It means that the executives who took part in the research are more loyal to the organization than to their leader. Thus, personal relations at the workplace remain in the background, which makes for a healthy environment from the point of view of motivation and collaboration. Two dimensions showed average preponderance, which can sound a warning to the company. Power concentration is present, which means that some executives still use the means of imposing their will basically through traditional legal power and their hierarchical position in the company. This is bad, as it can bring about an expectant posture which

will create much difficulty to management activities. Personalism is also present, which means that many executives still use this trait in their actions at the company. The other dimensions that follow showed small preponderance; however, there are important meanings here for the company. Paternalism is little used at the company. This means that the actions of the executives do not carry much of this trait. The relationship between the leader and the led does not configure itself as a father/son relationship, which ensures interactions are carried out with a certain degree of independence. Expectant Posture is not strongly present, either. This means that there is a dialogue in the relationships between bosses and subordinates, which leads to an environment of little transference of responsibilities for difficulties from subordinates to leaders. Formalism shows little preponderance, which means that discrepancies between concrete behavior and the prescribed norms are small, although the small presence that was detected by the research can be worrisome for the future since, as we are dealing with culture, this fact can evolve. Impunity, another dimension that was not very much present, means that the company punishes those that do not follow internal guidelines and regulations. The Conflict Avoidance dimension, which is not very significant, signals that there is no low motivation, passiveness and low initiative within the environment that was studied, which brings to the relations between leaders and those who are led a certain autonomy and independence. This is good for the company because, under certain situations, there is greater efficiency and effectiveness in activities carried out in autonomous and independent relationships. Some actions are needed to reduce some of the negative aspects of Brazilian culture that are present within the environment of the researched company. It would also lead it to greater internal integration that would improve its efficiency and effectiveness and thus contribute to its strategic plan. The following actions are deemed to be necessary to achieve the above-mentioned objectives:

Power Concentration: create a culture where power is not concentrated, where an executives' authority is not only based on rational legal power, on hierarchy-subordination, on the threat of sanctions and punishment, but also include other variables such as knowledge, performance, etc.

Personalism: in their dealings with their subordinates, keep leaders from emphasizing relationships focused on the figure of the leader, either through their discourse or their power from being linked to other influential people in the company.

Paternalism: keep leaders from acquiring the hierarchical and absolute power culture imposed from top to bottom with traditional acceptance by its members, as this will create dependence, a lesser degree of freedom and less autonomy for the group.

Expectant Posture: keep leaders from displaying expectant posture, which is generated by developing the bossing, protectionist and dependent practices represented by paternalistic solutions. This must be done by practicing dialogue, power balance, critical awareness, incentives to initiative, greater freedom and autonomy to act, and responsible acts.

Formalism: resist formalism culture in the company by having everyone follow internal norms and regulations. Practice what has actually been set down in company regulations. Avoid nepotism, favoritism, and corruption. Avoid situations in which established criteria are ignored in deference to greater business mobility. Whenever there is a gap between fact and right, use common sense in a shared way.

Impunity: avoid the impunity culture - the company should make an example of all those who break internal norms and guidelines.

Personal Loyalty: resist the personal loyalty culture by giving more value to the company's needs than to those of the leader. That is, centralize needs into the representation of the company. Strengthen the company by making compliance to norms an impersonal issue.

Conflict avoidance: resist the conflict avoidance culture by creating an environment that fosters empowerment, independence and autonomy in leaders. This will probably create an environment that is less alienating and passive while, at the same time, it will lead to improved motivation and initiative on the part of the employees. Conflict situations should be dealt with through institutional relations.

Flexibility: maintain a position of flexibility. As the world is currently very dynamic, the speed of changes demands that companies should almost routinely adapt themselves to the conditions of the environment (the market). Thus, they should remain agile to adjust both their internal and external processes to produce something new and create a situation of equal opportunities among individuals, thus leaving the hierarchical domain and moving towards a competence-driven domain.

Therefore it is believed that should the conclusions and recommendations presented be effectively put into practice they will be building a business environment that will be more appropriate to Brazilian culture. Such an environment will then lead the company that has been studied to effective improvements in efficiency, effectiveness and

competitiveness while increasing its chance for success. It will also keep it from wasting resources, mainly human ones, while also enabling the company to contribute towards generating more jobs and better results.

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APPENDIX 1
A DESCRIPTION OF THE ELEMENTS OF THE BRAZILIAN CULTURAL ACTION MODEL

1. THE LEADERS SUBSYSTEM

It is power concentration that is to be found in the institutional dimension. Beside it we find personalism, which is present in our society's personal dimension. Paternalism is the third element that articulates these two dimensions and shows the profile of the Brazilian leadership style.

Power concentration

This means traditional power. Alternatively, society has made use of traditional military power and also of rational-legal power to establish and maintain authority, thus creating a culture of power concentration that is based on hierarchy/subordination. "Those in

power give orders, those with common sense will obey" reflects an important facet of this culture.

Personalism

Power is wielded with great charismatic authority and magnetism. These are present in leaders through their discourse or their networking (relations with other people) and not through their expertise; this trait is highlighted in our daily lives. A network of friends, and even of relatives, is the natural way people take to solve their problems and, once more, obtain privileges that those who do not belong to a family cannot aspire to.

Paternalism

The combination of the two traits mentioned above, power and personalism, can be summarized into paternalism, to a greater or lesser extent. Paternalism has two facets, patriarchalism and patrimonialism. Our society carries within itself the value that the patriarch can do anything and that the members of the clan can only ask for and obey; otherwise, rebellious behavior can lead to exclusion from the relationship. Patriarchalism, that maintaining and affective face of the father who fulfills what the members of the clan expect of him, and patrimonialism, that hierarchical and absolute face that imposes its will upon accepting members, live side-by-side in our culture. It is within this mix of purely economic aspects - within which an objective exchange of work for pay, bearing essentially affective aspects within which dedication and non-conflicting collaboration is emotionally exchanged for personally close bonds - that each one of the leader and led actors will develop. To avoid rupture it is necessary that each one should seek to attain maximum benefit at minimum cost, which is paid both in affective and fiduciary currency. Just like societies in which power is distributed unequally, like in Brazil, and in which distribution tends to remain the same, there is a psychosocial phenomenon involving the continuous dependence of those who are led on the leaders, which is accepted by both parties under the conditions presented.

Along these lines we can say that societies and organizations will be led as paternalistically as their members will allow. Paternalism exists both for leaders and for those who are led, and the two groups' system of values complement each other. Paternalism creates a double dependence but, together with the control it exerts, it opens the way for an efficient way to identify and belong to a group. The reward lies in a greater degree of security made possible by the group. However, it is also true that a cost is extracted, as its members will enjoy a lesser degree of freedom and autonomy when compared to less paternalistic cultures.

2. INSTITUTIONAL SUBSYSTEM (FORMAL)

Freedom and a degree of autonomy are at the basis of the dynamics of the institutional subsystem that makes up the system. Power concentration and paternalism induce a new trait in Brazilian culture, expectant posture. Below we will present one of the main elements that articulates, within the institutional system, the subsystem of leaders and those who are led, and guarantees a relationship. It is the phenomenon known as formalism, which is one of the most significant and relevant ways through which our culture seeks to escape future uncertainty. Lastly, the impunity trait, which strongly reflects the institutional subsystem and which is one of the elements that cannot only reinforce but also undermine the maintenance and stability of the whole Brazilian cultural action system.

Expectant posture

We have seen that Brazilians were born and developed freely at a time of bossing, protectionism and dependence which is represented in our paternalistic solutions. We reflexively work guided by the external authority that limits our critical awareness. What can then be said of the lowly-qualified Brazilian population that lives within an environment that offers great power unbalance, no freedom or autonomy and low critical sense?

This process cannot but lead to the trait called expectant posture, whose main characteristics are mutism and low critical awareness and, consequently, low initiative, little capacity to perform through self-determination, and the transfer of responsibility for difficulties to the leaders. This childish process, which reinforces a low level of critical awareness, will lead to the condition of not knowing what one wishes, to not having one's own will, even when presented with greater freedom of action. Thus involved by perplexity, the one who has been freed once again feels the need to conform his/her behavior to the expectations of external authority.

Responsibility transfer is another of the characteristics of the expectant posture trait. The logic is as follows: if power does not lie with me, then I am not included in it and I am not the one who will make the decision; thus, I am not responsible, either. Thus I will transfer it to the one who has the legal right to it, which, in our culture, means further up the hierarchy. This is manifested in two other circumstances, that is, when

something wrong happens, then the blame or the main problem are both outside one's field of action and control.

And finally, our capacity to carry out tasks through self-determination is very small. Between the "culture of doing", looking out to the world from the perspective of cumulative change and the idea of progress, and the "culture of being", which hides from the world, resists change and is suspicious of progress, it would be more appropriate to call Brazilian culture the "culture of be doing", that is, "doing just enough", enough to maintain the status quo or, at most, to guarantee small changes without any significant advances.

Formalism

Brazilians have a socialization code for time that would place them closer to a society that does not worry much about the future. They surely live much more in the present than in the future. The quest for immediate results with low provisioning capabilities demonstrates anxiety about what might come next. This more relaxed side can be explained by their capability to hope for better times under God's protection. However, it is also possible that the so much talked about natural resources can make them feel safer due to having such reserves for the future.

In real life what actually happens is tacit acceptance of norms and regulations, although their practice is distorted and supported by other cultural elements that are stronger and more present in the Brazilian behavior:

"Therefore formalism is the discrepancy between concrete conduct and the norms that are supposed to regulate it. Formalism in not necessarily a social pathology as some authors describe it. In changing societies such as the Brazilian one it can be seen as a social change strategy imposed by the dual character of its historical transformation and, particularly, by the way it articulates itself with the rest of the world" (RAMOS, 1983).

The law that regulates getting a job through a public entrance examination exists so that everyone, through their own merit and knowledge, can be employed by the State bureaucracy. However, in practice there are other social-cultural variables present. Low educational qualification, the relative scarcity of jobs for abundant labor, and the strong personal relations that direct Brazilians' behavior will make the law inapplicable under such circumstances. There are extra legal channels or processes, or even legal ones, that are accepted as a great wave of norms and regulations by collective awareness. Its ethics lies in the fact that they allow people to overcome a social selection that is, oftentimes, imposed by idealistic or protectionist laws and regulations.

What really exists is a gap between right and fact, which characterizes formalism but which also justifies it. This is the pathological side to formalism since, as it is actually performed, then adjustment processes will rise to overcome it. As these processes are allowed and can reach configurations of nepotism, favoritism and even bribing, this fact then generates instability and insecurity. This will lead to the risk of applying remedy to legislations, one that will be increasingly specific and encompassing, and which will create a wave of norms that will lead to an apparent stability in social relations.

In Brazil, when the norms are quite specific, our adjustment is carried out through a process of reinterpreting the law, whose results will essentially depend on who stands at the other side of the issue. If it is someone who belongs to our group or someone with authority, there is broad flexibility in reinterpreting; if it is someone outside our circle, then there is absolute strictness. There can be no other meaning to what was said by Getúlio Vargas, as cited by Barbosa (1992): "Our friends will receive all, our enemies nothing, and those who are indifferent will have to abide by the law".

Impunity

And finally, we will make some comments about impunity. This code becomes relevant as it can be the link that will close a chain of cultural values and that increasingly feeds it back. Here we refer to the fact that, as leaders are exempted from punishment, this will strengthen their power position and increase the degree of consistency among the traits we have seen along the institutional subsystem chain. Where the law only exists for those who are indifferent and where individual rights are monopolized by the few, apathy can only grow and leave Brazilians as spectators.

The society that legitimized its leaders by means of the judicial-institutional system does not recognize their credibility anymore, which will lead to dependent egocentrism and base their relations on personal ones. Here we must invert our thinking and research in the face of rewards since, from the perspective of punishment, impunity is the reward.

3. **PERSONAL SUBSYSTEM (INFORMAL)**

At the basis of this subsystem we find security and harmony. Its make up encompasses the category of personalism, which has already been presented, besides those of people loyalty and the cultural trait of conflict avoidance.

Personal loyalty

Personal loyalty is the counterpart of the "personal" subsystem to the formalism of the leaders and the led subsystem, on the side of "personal" space.

Social cohesion in Brazil is subject to personal ethics that manifests itself through loyalty to people. Members of a group value the needs of the leader and of the other members of the group more than the needs of a greater system they are inserted in. Therefore, the mechanism of broad interconnection among the various groups in a society is centered on the person, essentially on the person of the leaders. Decision making at the level of a leaders' committee is well tolerated. Trust is deposited on the person of the leader and he becomes the link that connects the network and integrates the segments.

This leader's role will become a fundamentally responsible one if loyalty moves to the level of identification or imitation. This is a predictable possibility in a society where individualism is low and dependence exerted by behavior control is practiced. This phenomenon of broad fusion and "belonging" among the people involved is a strong cohesion mechanism. However, it is a fragile one because, depending on personal relations, it can easily lead to compartmentalization and stratification, or personal areas of influence.

The interaction between loyalty to people and the strongest cultural trait of uncertainty avoidance, which is formalism, can be seen as opposing mechanisms. From a linear logic, such as that found in German society, the stronger the institutions, the weaker the power of leaders, as power is transferred to personal norms. In Brazil, each reinforcement received by formalism will lead to stronger loyalty to people, so that the system can go on. The solution to institutional strictness is carried out through personal relationship networks.

Conflict avoidance

The relationship among individuals in a high power inequality situation can lead to a degree of alienation, low motivation and consequent passiveness and little initiative. This same situation of power inequality and strong dependence can represent a latent conflict situation which, in the Brazilian case, can be dealt with through personal relations, more properly through loyalty to one person who will be able to intermediate the relationship between the leaders and those who are led. Thus, the Brazilian way out is to use indirect solutions (triangulations) among diverging poles while, however, maintaining good personal relationships with them. This is the mechanism that is most frequently used.

It is worth highlighting that the conflict avoidance trait is much more present from the led to the leader. From the leader to the led, the former does not fear the existence of

conflict, as the structure of the relationship already indicates that the latter will find indirect solutions.

4. THE FOLLOWERS SUBSYSTEM

It is the one that articulates between the institutional and personal systems within the space of the led, just as paternalism did in the leaders' space. It is the flexibility trait.

Flexibility

Flexibility is the modern version of the process that has become known as a second-degree strategy, that is, it stems from formalism, whose characteristics are supposed to be creativity and pragmatism. Flexibility represents a two-sided category: adaptability and creativity.

Adaptability can be identified not only in terms of companies that show great agility in adjusting themselves to various internal and external processes. The concept of adaptability, when looked at from the processual side of it, is not a creation in a pure sense, such as the production of something new. It is the creative capability that is carried out within certain pre-ordained limits. This restrictive limitation is exactly the process that stems from the institutional subsystem aspect, within which norms are recognized and, due to them, will lead to an adjustment of operational elements and create only the new habits that fit our way of being. Such flexibility happens due to the fact that formalism is placed before loyalty to people. If, on the one hand, there is an idealized normative framework to be followed within the institutional domain, there will also be a relationship network based on personal loyalty within a social reality that, if it comes into play, will encourage the quest for a solution to personal objectives.

APPENDIX 2
INSTRUMENT TO MEASURE ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

Objective

The objective of this research is to measure your perception of your company's Organizational Culture.

Instructions

The research presents some statements that you should read very carefully. After that please mark only one of the possible alternatives:

STRONGLY AGREE (SA): you strongly agree that the statement portrays the reality of your workplace.

INCLINED TO AGREE (IA): you tend to agree that the statement portrays the reality of your workplace.

INCLINED TO DISAGREE (ID): you tend to partially disagree that the statement portrays the reality of your workplace.

STRONGLY DISAGREE (SD): you totally disagree that the alternative portrays the reality of your workplace.

Observations:

1. No answer is right or wrong. What is important is to know what you think about each statement that is presented.

2. Please mark only one answer to each statement.

3. Please make sure you have considered all 27 statements.

4. Should you have any doubts before or while you are filling out this instrument, please consult the survey supervisor.

MEASURING ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

	Strongly agree	Inclined to agree	Inclined disagree	Strongly disagree
1. My authority as an executive is based on the power of hierarchy-subordination				
2. Under my leadership people are involved and motivated more due to my discourse and charisma				
3. I exert authority by imposing the organization's hierarchy, and subordinates must obey				
4. I carry out my work without freedom of action or autonomy				

5. I exert authority based on internal norms, without fully following them				
6. Sanctions and punishment are determined for those who do not collaborate, but I let it be and look for an excuse				
7. I exert my authority by giving greater importance to the group than to the company as a larger system				
8. In a meeting of executives, I have low motivation because I have no power of decision				
9. During company reorganization I have great capacity to learn and adapt to what is new				
10. I exert my authority by determining sanctions and punishment for those who do not obey				
11. I exert authority because I have links to important and influential people in the company				
12. If my authority is not respected, the one who has rebelled can be excluded from the company				
13. The environment in my area has a low critical sense and great dependence on the leaders				
14. There are situations when norms are not being followed, sometimes by my superior and sometimes by me				
15. I can determine sanctions and punishment but I try to get away from regulations and try another solution				
16. I recognize the person who is the leader of the work group as being more important than the company				
17. I exert leadership without much questioning because I do not have the power to decide				
18. My management style is flexible in relation to cooperation among sectors				
19. My position in the company gives me the authority needed to direct my work activities				
20. I exert authority because I have access to information that is important to others				
21. I position myself to my subordinates as a father and they must obey me				
22. I have low initiative, little capacity to perform through self-determination, and that is so because I receive orders from my superiors				
23. Sometimes there are situations when norms are only partially followed				

24. I can determine sanctions and punishment for those who do not collaborate, but I let it be because they are friends of mine				
25. The trust shown to the figure of the group leader is more important than that shown to the company				
26. I exert my leadership passively and with little initiative because I am not encouraged to be a leader				
27. My management style is flexible in relation to fulfilling the demands of the position				

Should you wish to do so please use this space to write down additional remarks.

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Thank you very much for your kind attention.

This survey is important so that the company's organizational culture can be better understood.

Remark: The recurrence table that follows allows us to calculate the average points per dimension on the instrument by calculating the average of the averages per validated statement in the instrument. Points scale extremes are 4 (Strongly agree) and 1 (Strongly disagree).

DIMENSIONS	STATEMENTS
1. Power concentration	1, 10, 19
2. Personalism	2, 11, 20
3. Paternalism	3, 12, 21
4. Expectant posture	4, 13, 22
5. Formalism	5, 14, 23

6. Impunity	6, 15, 24
7. Personal loyalty	7, 16, 25
8. Conflict avoidance	8, 17, 26
9. Flexibility	9, 18, 27