

DESCRIPTION OF A COSMETIC CONSULTANT'S NETWORK THROUGH DIRECT SELLING IN RETAIL FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF SOCIAL NETWORK ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

The direct selling segment in retail has expressed significant growth in several countries, including Brazil, from the first decade of XXI century. The aim of this study was to describe the characteristics of a cosmetics consultant's network through direct selling in retail in the city of São Paulo. It was applied a questionnaire to her customers to describe the centrality measures: betweenness, closeness, degree, as well density, which characterizes her social network. The results, through Social Network Analysis, revealed that the consultant has the highest centrality measures, which implies the greatest control and information flow (betweenness), the greatest access to resources (closeness) and the greatest prestige and popularity (degree). Furthermore, the consultant expressed the highest occurrence, i.e., 13.79% of all possible network relationships (density).

Keywords: retail, direct selling, cosmetics, social network analysis.

INTRODUCTION

Data of the World Federation of Direct Selling Associations (WFDSA) positioned Brazil as the fourth country with the largest number of direct selling of all amount of cosmetic commercialized worldwide. From 2011 to 2012, Brazil registered an increase of 13.1% of this sales volume, with about 6,7 millions of sellers. It corresponds to approximately 9% of global direct selling and it generated a turnover of US\$14.604 million dollars of that biennium (WFDSA, 2013).

Kotler (2007) considers personal selling as one of the most effective means of selling, which reinforces consumer trust and makes them act in a way to increase their preference in the product. One of the possibilities to study interactions among people can be developed through Social Network Analysis (SNA) (Borgatti et al., 2009, Butts 2009).

Social Network Analysis can identify the characteristics among actors that are in a social network (Borgatti et al., 2009, Butts 2009). Among these characteristics, for instance, Social Network Analysis is interested in the study of the society centrality inserted in social network. In other words, how many relationships there are among an actor and others, i.e., identifying the most influential actors in the network (Wasseraman & Faust, 1994).

This study focused on describing, from the perspective of SNA, a cosmetic consultant's network in the city of São Paulo in May 2014. The purpose of this study is to describe the consultant's network by using three centrality measures, indentifying who accesses more information and influences others, being able to have a central structural position that provides a large volume of information exchange, among other resources, in contrast to actors who have a more peripheral position in the network (Wasseraman & Faust, 1994).

Besides the three classic centrality measures (Closeness, Degree and Betweenness), described by Hanneman (2001), this study also sought to measure how actors are linked to others in the network (density) (Scott, 2000).

This study is structured, besides this introduction, in other four following sections namely, literature review about retail and social network analysis; methodology; result analysis and final considerations.

1 LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1 Retail Classification

Retail is composed of all activities that are in the process of service or product sale that meets the end consumer's need. Retail trader is any institution that has retail as its main objective. It is believed that retail is intrinsically linked to a store that sells products to its consumers; however, there are many ways to sell retail, such as through the telephone, the internet or the post office, for example. (Parente, 2009: 22).

In retail there is a structure of channel levels between manufacturing companies and end consumers. This structure is basically four levels (figure 1) divided in four levels. The quantity of present middlemen defines the level of each structure. On level two, for instance, there are not middlemen (Rosenbloom, 2013: 22), that is to say, the service or product is sold from a manufacturing company straight to a consumer or an end user. This model is defined as direct selling and, to Parente (2009), cosmetic companies such as Avon, Natura, among others, are an example of the ones that participate in this market.

Manufacturing companies just as well and consumers are part of all the channels. In the marketing channels for consumer goods, for instance, there is the direct marketing channel - level zero - which consists in sales between a manufacturing company and an end consumer, including door-to-door sales practiced by Avon and Tupperware representatives, among others (Kotler, 2007).

Figure 1 - Retail Classification

Direct Marketing	It happens when a customer is presented to a service or product in an impersonal way, such as mailing lists, the TV, the radio, magazines, newspapers or computers, these latter are much more common nowadays because of the internet.
Direct Selling	It is established when there is a personal contact with the consumer, at several places: homes, offices, telephone requests, among others. The aim is to provide services and products.
Vending Machines	They accept money or credit card and disperse nowadays beverages, candies, electronics, etc. The advantages are that they work 24 hours and all the products can be seen before the purchase. The machines are placed according to the product demand.
Online Retail Market	It is an emerging format in which the customers can check any product or service anytime at a specific store or search websites to compare prices, quality, product availability, stores, location, information and other characteristics that are convenient for each specific customer.

1.1.1 Direct Selling

In Direct Selling it is seen that consumers' contact initiative does not happen the same way as at a retail store built for consumers. Even if a customer has been contacted impersonally (by telephone, e-mails or messages), the personal communication is used to start sales contact. The no exposure to rival products or services becomes a competitive advantage (Berman, 2007).

Consumers benefit themselves with direct selling because of the convenience and the service it provides, including personal demonstration and product explanation. Direct selling offers important benefits for the ones who want an opportunity to earn an income and build an own business, as well as the consumers who prefer a purchasing alternative different from going to shopping malls, department stores or similar ones (WFDSA, 2013).

1.1.2 Direct Selling in the world and in Brazil

In the world, direct selling continues to grow. Between 2011 and 2012 there was an increase of 5.4% in direct sales volume. The four countries that sold more in this format were The United States of America with 19%; Japan with 14%; China with 12% and Brazil with 9% (WFDSA, 2013). Table 2 shows several ways to carry out direct sales, according to the WFDSA.

Figure 2 – Direct Selling, modified by WFDS (2013).

Sale Methods	From person to peron	80%
	Sales plan in groups	18%
	Other modalities of sales presentation	2%
Gender	Sales through women	75%
	Sales through men	25%
Produts	Cosmetics and personal care products	35%
	Wellness products	25%
	Products such as furniture and household appliances	14%

In the 2010-2013 triennium, Brazil occupied the fifth highest position in the worldwide ranking of direct sales: it accumulated 8,6% of sales and moved US\$ 14.188 million dollars, what represented 7,2% of the global direct sales in 2013, with a direct selling community with approximately 6.7 million of sellers (WFDSA, 2013).

Direct Selling can be characterized with network marketing (Figure 3). Some of the companies that stand out in this segment are Electrolux, South Western Company of Nashville (bibles) and the cosmetic company A (Kotler, 2007 p. 502).

Figure 3 – Direct Selling in Brazil, modified by WFDS (2013).

Sales Methods	From person to person	100%
Gender	There is not	
Products	Cosmetics and personal care products	83%
	Products such as furniture and household appliances	6%
	Personal use products, clothes and accessories	5%

1.1.3. Network Marketing

In network marketing, a point of sale or a big budget for product advertisement are not required. These products sales happen through word of mouth advertisement. Personal sale becomes one of the most effective means of selling, reinforcing consumers trust and increasing their preference for a product (Kotler, 2007).

1.2 Cosmetics, cosmetic company A

The cosmetic company A was founded on September, 13th 1963, after twenty years of door – to - door product sales success. The vision of the company was to create an enterprise with the purpose to offer economic opportunities for women and flexibility for them to take care of their families. Through the network marketing, women work for a commission and receive rewards if they reach the sale targets and recruit new sellers. In the second decade of XXI century, the cosmetic company A was present in more than 35 countries, being considered as one of the biggest cosmetic companies in the world (Ash, 2008).

The cosmetic company A revolutionized the model of sales through the method “party home”, what enabled to enroll new sale consultants for its products (Ash, 2008).

In the cosmetic company A’s model of business, the beauty consultant is in charge to choose a host for the “party”, who has the role to gather some friends for a make-up class (which sometimes is spread as a facial treatment). After showing the products, the consultant asks each potential costumer if they are interested in buying any product or becoming one of the company’s consultant. It is necessary to buy all the up-front products to become a consultant (a kind of basic kit with the facial line products). The company did not limit territories to the consultants, with the objective to give them freedom to sell the products and recruit people anywhere.

The cosmetic company A entered the Brazilian market in 1998 with the purpose “to offer its Independent Beauty Consultants a structured and professional development plan, to the point of them to become the owners of their business and the ones responsible for their own professional and financial development” (Ash, 2008). Formally, there is not a sales plan in group, except when sometimes there is a meeting in a house or a strategic place chosen by the consultant, such as places with a large pedestrian movement.

1.3 Social Networks

SNA is based on the understanding of a clear model of social bonds, in which actors are involved for some reason in the social web, participating in important effects or results directly or indirectly, either through relationship mapping among organizations or the knowledge built through collaborative networks.

SNA originates from graph theory, a branch of Mathematics that studies the connections among items of a particular group. One graph is a non-empty group of objects, named vertices or nodes, linked by non-ordered pairs of ties. In picture 1, the vertices are represented by numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 and the ties represent the links among them. In SNA, the nodes represent actors of a social network while the ties represent relationships among these actors. As an example, cities (nodes) and the roads that connect them (ties); health professionals (actors) and the relationships among them (ties) for the treatment of a patient. SNA is interested in structural relationships among actors and not their social demographic characteristics.

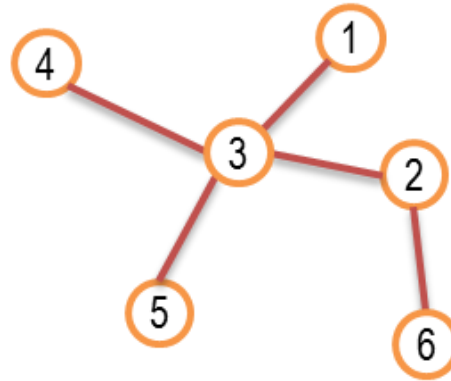


Figure 4 – Graph Model

Freeman (2004) states that this understanding has the purpose to explain the origins, nature and effects of the interaction of actors during their direct or indirect connections, aiming to analyze behaviors and processes through the connectivity among them.

Connections of social networks can have different kinds with several structural properties and sizes, such as in commercial transactions, resource flows and information flows, for instance (Nelson 1984).

Wasserman & Faust (1994) established the central concepts of SNA. One *actor* (nodes from 1 to 6 in figure 4) is the object of resource entity. It can be individuals, organizations or countries, etc. A relational bond (ties among nodes in figure 4) is a connection between a pair of actors. For example: 1) *diad* - connections between two actors (connections between actors 2 and 6 in figure 4), 2) *triad* - composed by three actors and possible bonds among them (connections among actors 3, 4 and 5 in figure 4).

One of the most used methods to analyze social networks is based on the relevance of the society centrality inserted in the network, which corresponds to the quantity of relationships among a specific actor and other ones, purposing to identify the most influential actors in the network. In these terms, stating that an actor has a higher centrality (direct and adjacent contact) means that this one has more access to information and a greater influence than other actors, having a structural position that provides an exchange of large volume of information and other resources.

In figure 4, for example, actor 3 has the highest number of direct connection (four links: actors 1, 2, 4 and 5) what results in a position of higher centrality, contrarily to actors 1, 4, 5 and 6 (all of them have only one direct connection), which are in peripheral positions, keep few connections, having a position of greater dependency in the network (Wasserman & Faust, 1994).

Among the measures used to analyze the centrality of an actor in a network, the most common are:

Closeness centrality: Smaller distance or proximity of an actor in relation to others in a network. The smaller the way to reach other bonds in the network, the more central the actor becomes. This kind of centrality depends not only on direct relationships, but also indirect ones, especially when two actors are not close. Closeness centrality is indicated to know the global centrality of an actor; it can stipulate the independence in relation to others' control (Scott, 2000).

In figure 1, actor 3 has the highest closeness, as most of other actors are reached by only one connection, while actors 4 and 6 have the smallest closeness. For example, for information to reach actor 6 from actor 4, at least three interactions are necessary (from actors 4 and 3, from actors 3 and 2 and between actors 2 and 6).

Degree centrality: it is obtained by the bonds an actor has with others in a network. If an actor receives a large volume of information from bonds directed to him, there is, then, a greater opportunity of selection and its independence in relation to others. When this relationship becomes clear, other actors seek to share information

with it; it shows its influence (Hanneman, 2001). While the level of entrance shows prestige and popularity, the level of exit shows the ability to support the information in networks that balance the directions of bonds.

In figure 1, the actor 3 presents the highest degree centrality: four connections among actors 1, 2, 4 and 5. In contrast to actor 6, who has only one connection with actor 2.

Betweenness centrality: It happens when an actor interconnects with some or several other actors that are not linked directly and, therefore, it shows how much an actor can act as a bridge, making information flow accessible in a network (Hanneman, 2001).

In Figure 1, actor 3 presents a fixed position of higher betweenness, being relevant and indispensable in the intervention of information exchange and/or resources in this network.

The centrality may not be identified for being a fixed position, but it brings the idea of power, as the more central the actor is, the better located it will be, thus becoming a strategic actor in this network, satisfying its needs and making use of resources and information access, reducing the dependency from others (Hanneman, 2001, Burt, 1992 & Ibarra, 1989).

Besides the basic structural centrality measures described by Wasserman and Faust (1994), with their different vertices of evaluation, there is also the density of a network. Steiner (2006) considers that the density of a network is related to the numbers of noticed bonds in comparison to the number of possible relationships. So, the density of a network is about the result between the number of noticed bonds among these actors, upon the possible total number of bonds among them. It can be explained mathematically, according to Levine and Kurzban (2006), as $\text{density} = 2R / (I - 1)$, in which “R” is the number of existent relationships in the network and “I” is the number of actors/companies which compose this network.

In figure 4, there are five relationships and six actors. The degree centrality in this network, then, is $[(2 \times 5 \times 6) / (6 - 1)] = 60 / 5 = 12$.

The density seeks to organize the interlink level of actors in a network (Scott, 2000). The one that manages the network becomes decisive to keep and amplify the network cohesion, because it is the responsible for projecting and intensifying the relationships, identifying and making the weak bonds into strong ones in the network.

The consistent and durable operation of a network demands elements such as safety, integrity, mutuality, flexibility, solidarity, conflict articulation and stability, providing the structuring of an appropriate environment for information exchange in long-term dimension that is a long-term one, where the actors can be favored of that (Gulati, Nohria & Zaheer, 2000).

The following section describes the methodological procedures used in this study.

2 METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

Researches about SNA have become an instrument to study the most different occurrences of phenomena related to interactions among people (Borgatti et al., 2009 & Butts, 2009). The contribution of SNA was to transmute the core, which up till then was unspecific for social networks, into a precise instrument for social analysis (Emirbayer & Goodwin, 1994). The organizational theory, as a consequence, has been benefited with the application of SNA when phenomena in organizational as well as inter organizational dimensions are investigated (Brass et al., 2004). In this study, SNA is used to obtain comprehension about the role of a direct sale consultant with her customer network, besides the setting and characteristics related to this network.

This research describes a phenomenon or process, having as a base the quantitative approach. The detailed researches use uniform techniques for data collection (Gil, 2008, 2002).

The methodological procedures were developed in different stages. Firstly, the network borders to be studied. For this purpose, the nominalist strategy was adopted (Knoke & Yang, 2008), limiting the subjects of research to 29 customers who are part of a consultant's network of the cosmetic company A. The second stage was characterized by the contact with all the consumers of the network to make the data collection possible. The data collection was done during May, 2014, through a structured questionnaire, with the nominal identification of all the network participants. The ones interviewed had to mention the participants they had a kind of relationship with. The elementary question of the questionnaire was: “Do you know any customer who buys from this consultant?”

The information (including some features of the actors) was organized without a matrix of symmetrical relations (Scott, 2000) in an Excel table. The respondents' confidentiality was ensured by an alphanumeric code, preserving their identification. In the matrix, there was a line and a column for each actor, with binaries applied to check with number 1 the existence of a relationship between two actors and with number 0 the absence of a relationship (Hanneman & Riddle, 2005).

The data was analyzed through computational algorithm by the softwares UCINET 6.509 and NETDRAW 2.138 (Borgatti, Everett & Freeman, 2002). The analysis was developed in two stages. In the first one, the densities of the consultant's network were calculated with and without her participation. This comparative analysis enabled the understanding of the consultant's participation in the network management. In the second stage, the centrality of each actor in the network was evaluated, with the purpose to identify the position of each of them inside the network. The centrality measures - *degree, closeness and betweenness* - were used.

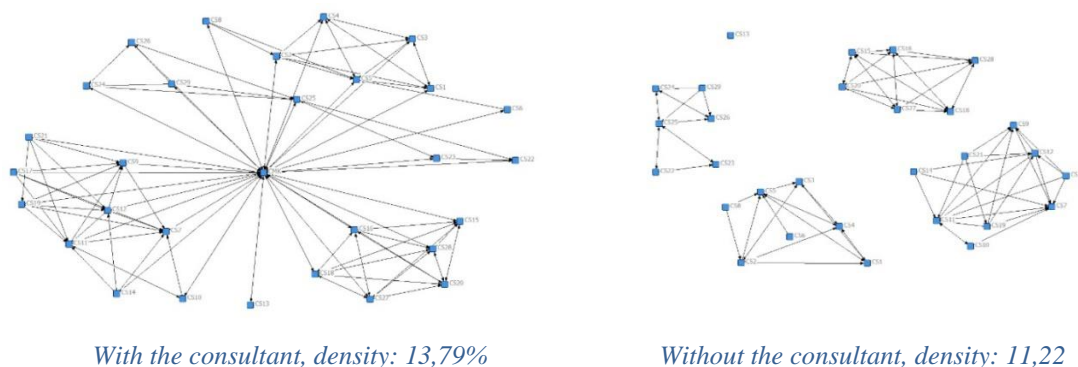
The analysis results are explained in the next section.

3 ANALYSIS RESULT

The analysis done through SNA jointly with the consultant MK (CMK), considering the answers to the question "Do you know any customers who buys from this consultant?", showed that the density of the network with the consultant's participation has the result of 0,1379 expressing the existence of 13,79% of all possible relationships in the network and the density of the network without the consultant's participation was 0,1121, in other words, 11,21% of all relationships occur in the network. According to the article of Camargo (2013) in which the density with and without the presence of the network manager was compared, this comparison of densities with and without CMK is graphically shown in figure 5.

The density measures demonstrate that, even in a low level, there is a CMK's cohesion expanding. This cohesion is explained by the variation from 0,1379 to 0,1121. It also shows that the number of connections among the actors in the network changed from 120 to 91 bonds, determining that there was a decrease in the relationship level of actors with the departure of the network Consultant's (Provan et al, 2007). Thus it can be affirmed that the interlink among actors with and without CMK is in a low level, however, the cohesion as well as the bonds are better when they are compared with CMK in the network, showing that she has fostered the organization and intensification of the relationships in the network, becoming a relevant actor in it. Some of the features collected through the questions confirmed some information about this aspect, when they were asked "What is the communication channel in this network?", the answers of all customers were "personal", that is to say, when all customers of this network needed any kind of information about this brand products, the answers were gotten through personal contact. These settings also inform us that the way they interact enables them to help each other when some information about the products or the network consultant is needed. In relation to these customers' features, it was identified that 16 of them are between 25-30 years old, five of them are between 30-35 years old and they wear the same product, which is the anti aging cream. There can be, in these terms, an information exchange network among customers at the same age who wear the same product, facilitating the information flow and the relationships in this network; even if each customers is in their respective group.

Figure 5 – Degree centrality in the consultant MK's network



In Figure 5 it can be observed on the "without the consultant" side that there are 4 (four) small customer groups without bonds among them, and 1 (one) isolated customer, i.e., people in a group do not interact with people from other groups because they do not have any bond in this network, except by CMK.

According to Mizruchi (2006), the centrality of a particular actor indicates what its position in the structure of the network is. In the organizational networks, the centrality of actors identifies actors with the best relationship conditions to interpose the coordination of activities and the insertion among actors, aiming to identify the most influential actors in it. (Provan et al, 2007). In this sense, it can be said that while an actor has more centrality (direct and adjacent contact), it means it has more access to information and ends up influencing other actors, taking a structural position which provides the exchange of large volumes of information as well as other resources, in contrast to actors that are not in centrality positions, they are actors in peripheral positions, which keep little or no connection and, this way, they do not take the same benefits, being in a position of more dependency (Wasserman & Faust, 1994). CMK's network has in its structure the seller who acts not only as a provider of products, but also new information about the brand last launching, just as well the last trends in this niche market and the relationship chain between the company she represents and the customers. Having as an aim to describe some characteristics of this network, including the influence of CMK and who is known by each customer in the network, its degree centrality, betweenness centrality and closeness centrality were considered (Freeman, 1979).

Table 1 – Measures of centrality in the MK Network

Ator	Degree	Closeness	Betweenness
CMK	100.000	100.000	81.133
CS11	31.034	59.184	0.961
CS7	27.586	58.000	0.644
CS12	27.586	58.000	0.427
CS5	24.138	56.863	0.862
CS9	24.138	56.863	0.160
CS2	20.690	55.769	0.246
CS15	20.690	55.769	0.000
CS16	20.690	55.769	0.000
CS18	20.690	55.769	0.000
CS19	20.690	55.769	0.049
CS20	20.690	55.769	0.000
CS25	20.690	55.769	0.739
CS27	20.690	55.769	0.000
CS28	20.690	55.769	0.000
CS1	17.241	54.717	0.000
CS3	17.241	54.717	0.000
CS4	17.241	54.717	0.000
CS17	17.241	54.717	0.000
CS21	17.241	54.717	0.000
CS14	13.793	53.704	0.000
CS24	13.793	53.704	0.000
CS26	13.793	53.704	0.000
CS29	13.793	53.704	0.000
CS8	10.345	52.727	0.000
CS10	10.345	52.727	0.000
CS22	10.345	52.727	0.000
CS23	10.345	52.727	0.000
CS6	6.897	51.786	0.000
CS13	3.448	50.877	0.000

The results through SNA performed with 29 customers as well CMK's network showed that CMK structurally occupies a central position in the network in any centrality measure. It is reiterated that, according to the results, the consultant has full conditions to contact her customers, organize tactics to reduce imbalance and set a perspective that is focused on her customers, meeting their expectations (Provan et al, 2007) and have the bridge position between the gaps in the network (Burt, 1992). This position between the gaps in the network (Burt, 1992).

This position highlighted in the structure of the network position can be seen in table 1, in which some centrality items of all actors in CMK's network are presented.

Referring to degree centrality, the measure is configured by the number of bonds that an actor has with others (Hanneman & Riddle, 2005), the results through SNA direct CMK as the most central actor. It is also important in table 1 that degree centrality has the value of 100.000, i.e., this consultant has a direct connection with all the 29 customers of her network. The centrality measure is related to the communication potential inside a network (Freeman, 1979); this actor receives, among other factors, a larger selection opportunity and consequently her independence in relation to others. When this relationship becomes clear, other actors seek to share information with her, it shows her influence (Hanneman, 2001). From then on, in case of CMK as the central actor of this network, she becomes the diffuser of information received and she cooperates for her network to receive homogeneous information about the benefits and information about new products, becoming a kind of cooperation provider (Pollock et al., 2004 Snow & Thomas, 1993) which is a result of her positioning in the structure of the network.

On closeness centrality, it can be seen in table 1 that CMK is, equally, the most central actor in this network. Closeness centrality is established in the gaps from an actor to another. (Scott, 2000). The closer other actors are, the more central a particular actor is. Thus, the measure is calculated in an opposite way, in other words, the smaller the relationship is, the smaller the distance of an actor is in relation to others, making closeness centrality higher (Hanneman & Riddle, 2005). In this regard, the effects of SNA prove that the consultant MK has the smallest distances in relation to other actors in the network (100.000). This number shows that the consultant has more possibilities of interaction with her customers in a fast way (the remaining actors), because she is closer to them (Freeman, 1979). This way, it shows that in the CMK network the consultant is characterized as the cooperation agent (Snow & Thomas, 1993), who identifies problems, suggests solutions or even stimulates joint actions conducted by her customers, as an example, the demonstration of new products, or even the announcement of a new catalogue, actions that are performed as a consequence of the centralized structural position in the social network.

In relation to betweenness centrality, the results through SNA analysis showed in Table 1 indicate CMK as the most central actor. Betweenness centrality is a measure that shows how a particular actor can mediate the interactions among others (Scott, 2000). In CMK's network, the highest index of betweenness centrality found was the consultant's (81.133), qualifying her as the actor with the best possibilities to mediate sui generis costumers in the network. There are 21 customers who are in more peripheral places in the structure, they are actors 15, 16, 18, 20, 27, 28, 1, 3, 4, 17, 21, 14, 24, 26, 8, 10, 22, 23,6 and 13, i.e., almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of her customers depend on other actors with higher indices in the aspect of betweenness centrality to interact with others (Wasserman & Faust, 1994). The central positioning of CMK qualifies her as a facilitator in the network (Hatch, 1995, Snow & Thomas, 1993) mainly by the fact that she has the best relationship possibilities to bring distant actors closer, seek cooperation of slightly more than $\frac{1}{4}$ (a quarter) of her network – 8 customers: customers 11, 07, 12, 05, 09, 02, 19, 25 – who keep the highest betweenness centrality index, in order to homogenize her network, support new participants and mediate divergences in the network.

Through the question analyzed, this network has a more decentralized configuration, it does not have a configuration as a genuinely star network, by the fact that the actors in the network are not loose or isolated in the "network edges", then, it is configured as a closed network, by the connection with other actors in its edges (Borgatti, 2009) (Table 1).

The result of the three centralities analyzed in this study proves that the consultant has a central position in the network relationships. Thereby it can be stated that CMK has a strategic position in the interaction with her customers in the enlargement of direct selling principles and with it she has performed an important role for the network intensification. In this direction, having a central position, CMK has been considerable for acting as a bridge between the structural holes in the network (Burt, 2005), improving the information flow and engendering trust to emphasize the relationships. Considering these results, it can be deduced that CMK is the main responsible for her customer network not only to safeguard it, but also to enlarge it, making new contacts with external people or even stimulating her customers somehow for them to be able to attract new customers for this network.

4 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The theories and the empiric evidences mentioned in this study have the purpose to contribute with the debate about the management of the organizational networks. The case analyzed provided the structure of CMK's network management to be understood. The actions of an organizational network are immersed in its social nature, with all the essential intermediation of the relationships in the list taken by the consultant. Hence, through SNA,

it was possible to conclude that a network management from an independent organization can originate not only the manager's talent, but also her capability to be in the central position of the relationships in the network. It was observed that, using the intrinsic measures of SNA, the density in CMK's network has provided the organization and intensification of the relationships in her network, more with her participation than without it, and she became a more cohesive bridge-actor. The identified results in the centrality measures show CMK with the highest index, considering the three centrality measures analyzed (degree, closeness and betweenness). Such measures conclude that the manager takes the role as the cooperation agent, identifying the problems as well as offering solutions, issued because of her position in the centralized structure in this network. One of the restrictions of this research happened only from an initial perspective in the network. It is suggested for a next research, for instance, the analysis of the "clicks" aligned with some features in this network, in which is sought to discover the customers who are referred by others and who among them have the highest or lowest influence role inside their action groups, if the customers identified by the consultant can contribute significantly, potentiating the gain expansion in the network. Thus, it is concluded that through SNA, it was possible to describe CMK's network characteristics and perform the purpose of this study.

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