

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND SEXUAL DIVERSITY: A CASE STUDY ON A LARGE SCALE COMPANY IN RECIFE (PE)

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ABSTRACT

In a globalised market, even more competitive and dynamic, organizations have searched for actions in order to remain and to develop themselves, therefore, among other actions, it is necessary to establish organizational culture that is favorable to the management of sexual diversity, represented here by the GLBT community, that includes gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgenders (travestite and transexual), and to the interaction of that group with others in the working environment in order to contribute to a better acceptance, less discrimination and the understanding that all of them are professionals, once the required profile by the company is catered. This paper aims to investigate the way the organizational culture influences the management of sexual diversity in a large-scale company from Recife/PE. The qualitative method was adopted to make the research, as well the unique case study approach. The data collection was carried out through interviews, non participants direct observations and documental collection. The data was studied according to the content analysis approach by Bardin (2011). From the result found, it has been concluded that the aspects of organizational culture, represented here by the organizational policy, underpins a favorable environment to the management of sexual diversity, concerning the GLBT group that works at the company studied, according to the perception of managers and employees that belong to the GLBT group.

Keywords: *Organizational Culture. Sexual Diversity. GLBT Groups.*

1 INTRODUCTION

The society of organizations represents a globalised market, so, in order for them to sustain themselves, it is necessary dynamism and competitiveness through planning and managing actions, so that they became resistant against menaces and able to take opportunities in their acting environment. One of the main actions is the management of people who work and contribute to achieve their goals.

To Hunter (2006), productivity and satisfaction of employees at the working place have been confirmed as an important factor of business competitiveness. According to the author, the results published annually, by several companies, states that the bigger the valorization, integration and motivation, the bigger the productivity noticed.

In the industrial age, marked by the mechanization of processes and automation of industries, not only the human force was needed to maintain the order, but also the intellectual power that exerts creative force. In a post-industrial age, questions of gender, physique and ethnic-racial origins have become virtually irrelevant, once the analysis and essentially intellectual problems solving capacities are more valuable (MECCHI, 2006).

In this scenario, many dimensions of human identity have flourished at the working context, not worried about improving mechanical processes anymore, but the ability of interacting socially. The working have become an essential human relationship, in opposition to non-stop search for enhancing basically mechanical procedures (DE MASI, 2001).

This change have mainly shown the increasing in the leadership positions held by women at the political, non-profit institutions and religious fields (BAXANDALL, GORDON, REVERBY, 1995; ODENDAHL, O'NELL, 1994).

Apparently, noticing the people's individuality at the working environment is still a new issue. Studies that cross-checked questions of identity (ethnic racial, gender or class) with working issues started to emerge during the second half of last century, and have only been granted the proper attention in the 80's.

Thus, later studies have focused on a pluralist vision of the question, now known as cultural diversity. It is common, in the literature, to deal with the complete distinct human identity matters (such as gender, nationality,

ethnicity, physique or social class) under the same conceptual approach (COX, 1994; FLEURY, 2000). Gradually, studies, that have a more refined way of seeing the different themes concerning cultural diversity at organizations, have emerged.

Little work has been done about the respect for sexual identity and its influence at the human workforce. In accordance with McQuarrie (1998), the literature focused specially on the integration of workforce of people from different races, gender and physique. Like this, many programs that aims to attend those groups have been develop. In a general way, the employees' sexual identity of an organization is still hardly studied.

From then on, in advanced countries and, especially in the USA, the literature about sexual diversity at the working field is very extensive (McNAUGHT, 1994; ZUCKERMAN, SIMONS, 1995; FRISKOPP, SILVERTOSNE, 1996; WINFELD, SPIELMAN, 2001; SYNDER, 2003), while in Brazil, few papers have been published about that (DIAS, PEREIRA, BARBOSA et al., 2002; BITTECOURT, 2003; SIQUEIRA, FERREIRA, ZAULI-FELLOWS, 2006).

From a social perspective, that question has made progress, once the World Health Organization and Psychology Entity no longer considered homosexuality as sickness, disorder or perversion, as they did before. Since 1973, homosexuality is not classified that way by the American Psychiatric Association. In 1975, the American Psychology Association adopted the same procedure. (THE AMERICAN PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION, 1973).

That process occurred normally, when on may 1990, during the General Meeting of the World Health Organization (WHO) took homosexuality out of the list of mental illnesses - International Disease Classification (IDC) and in 1991, the Amnesty International started considering discrimination against homosexuals as a human right violation.

In Brazil, in 1984, The Brazilian Psychiatric Association (ABP) positioned itself against discriminations and considered homosexuality as something not harmful to the society. In 1985, Federal Council of Psychology stopped considering as sexual deviancy and in 1999, established rules for the psychologist about sexual orientation issues by declaring that: "homosexuality is not illness, deviance or perversion" and that psychologists should not cooperate with events or services that propose the treatment or healing of homosexuality, according the CFP Resolution, n. 001/99, at Mars, 22nd 1999.

São Paulo Seal of Diversity was set up by the decree n. 52.080, of 08/22/2007 and aimed to highlight public and private organizations and civil society to develop programs, projects and actions of promotions and valorization of diversity - ethnicity, gender, cultural, age, sex, etc., at their workspace and business area. The Seal, public recognition of social responsibility, may be incorporated to the image of organizations and, thus, add value. The companies must fill in an application form in order to participate and then sign a Commitment for Diversity Valorization (SÃO PAULO STATE GOVERNMENT, 2007).

The policies of people management related to sexual diversity happens within companies as a way of equalizing values and principles with effective procedures of the organization. In the literature, on the contrary, the focus is on the affirmation of human identity as an essencial factor of good performance and self-accomplishment at work (MECCHI, 2006).

This way, the discussion about sexual diversity at workspace as a people management policy is, in certain way, still young considering the practical reality of Brazilian Organizations, although it deserves to be explored. Given this, during some business consulting work for large-scale companies in Recife/PE, the curiosity about how that phenomenon happens to be at that company from the State of Pernambuco. So, a question was asked: in what way the organizational culture drives the management of sexual diversity? In order to answer that question, some goals had to be established, as follow.

1.1 The research objectives

The objectives of the paper are represented in two dimensions, with different characteristics: a wider dimension, described as the general purpose and, a more detailed dimension, described by the specific objectives of the paper.

1.1.1 General objective

The general purpose of this paper is to investigate the way the organizational culture drives the management of sexual diversity in a large-scale company from Recife/PE.

1.1.2 Specific objectives

The specific purposes of this paper are:

- 1.1.2.1 To identify the elements of organizational culture perceived by the managers. employees and gay couples concerning the management of sexual diversity in a large-scale company from Recife/PE.
- 1.1.2.2 To compare the perceptions of managers. employees and gay couples concerning the practice of the management of sexual diversity in a large-scale company from Recife/PE.

1.2 Justification for the research

The justification for the research are presented in the theoretical and practical sections, described below:

1.2.1 Theoretical justification

It is possible to say that the main theoretical justification for this paper is the few amount of papers and publications about the management of sexual diversity from 2002 to 2012, considering the national dimension. On the other side, the study of organizational culture is always interesting, especially when it is associated to the question of sexual diversity, in a company responsible for call center services.

1.2.2 Practical Justification

As practical justification for this paper, its intended to show actions that may contribute for the improvement of living together of managers and people who belong to the BLGT community at workspace, not only at studied environment, a call center company in Recife-PE, but also to spread the results and experiences to others institutions, looking for teaching managers about the managing of sexual diversity.

2 STATE OF ART

The theoretical background for this paper is represented by the gathering of data published by authors who studied, researched about the following matters: organizational culture, cultural and sexual diversities, and sexual diversity and its relation to the workspace.

2.1 Organizational Culture

The concept of culture has been used concerning organizations studies for some decades (WOOD JR.,1999; FLEURY e SAMPAIO, 2002; CHAN, 2003), until today. It has been incorporated to studies of organization, as well to analysis of managing and daily life of companies.

Schein (1992), known author about studies on organizational culture, defines it as the learning of cognitive and emotional elements shared by a group, that is set as a result of successful practices considering its adaptation to the environment and internal integration, not always in a consistent way, visible or tangible, that aims the anxiety created by the uncertainty. Those practices, values and beliefs have become part of the culture when incorporated by the members of a group and they start seeing it as the right way of thinking or acting.

Since the 80s, the studies of management about the organizational culture have aroused the interest of researchers. Nowadays, it is considered a consolidated field of management, thanks to its own way of institutionalizing itself and extremely robust existent literature (AKTOUF, 1990). At the moment, that field converges two different issues. They differ in the themes, conceptual references and objectives (FREITAS, 2007).

According to Thévenet (1986), the signs refer to the proper way a company operates. The symbols represent the reality of the company through rituals or history. Signs and symbols are part of the emergent logic and values of a company.

They summarize the set of characteristics of the company that owns them.

Table 1 - List of signs and symbols brought by Thévenet (1986):

THE SIGNS

1 – Communication with the outside world:

- pleasant welcoming phone calls;
- welcoming of visitors, distributors, costumes,;
- advertising messages;
- the way of secretaries and people in contact with the outside world..

2 – Non-verbal communication:

- space configuration;
- architecture, decoration style, colors;
- the surrounding.

3 – The behavior rules:

- intern communication, the language;

- dressing rules,
 - interpersonal rules;
 - taboo.
- THE SYMBOLS
- 1 – The rituals, for example:
- Christmas celebration;
 - the company committee activities;
 - personal information,
 - promotion and the reward systems;
 - selecting the employee of the year.
- 2 – The histories:
- about managers, heroes,
 - about the most important happening,
 - myths.
- 3 – The logotypes.

Source: THÉVENET, M. *Audit de la culture d'entreprise*. Paris: Les Éditions d'Organisation, 1986.

To Thévenet (1986), the rules guides the member's behavior. they are reference to the reward, sanction, comparison or encouragement. They can be written or not. Taboo charts the spaces of prohibition and drives the behavior according to what is forbidden. The most common taboos are concerning sex and race.

The rituals, according to Thévenet (1986) are planned happenings, repetitive, source of information about organizational culture. the histories gather important happenings concerning the company, its managers and its heroes. These ones are important characters remarked by their adhesion to the values, courage and hope to overcome the challenges of an organization. The myths are the values declared by the companies, but not confirmed by the facts. The logotypes represents the way the company is seen by outsiders. These symbols constitute a source of information about the company culture.

Thévenet (1993) proposes a method whose procedure has three steps:

Step 1: gathering information – It is the gathering of information from the fields where cultural marks are more visible. There are five important categories of information:

- founders and information circumstances: these data allow us to figure out the instructions and principles referring the creation of the company;
- history: it is the demarcation of the subjacent logic to the development of the company;
- profession: it is the source of base references built by the company during its activities;
- values: they help to separate what it is considered good or not, relatively to quality, satisfaction and efficiency criteria.
- signs and symbols: it is what the company tells us about itself relatively to its appearance or images.

Step 2: investigation of the culture hypothesis - it is the determination of subjacent logic to the five categories of information.

Step 3: hypothesis validation: it consists of confronting the hypothesis with happening or facts that shows if it is right or not.

Sá and Lemoine (1999) gathers the methods presented by Fleury (1990) and Freitas (1991) and that one by Thévenet (1993) and they created their own method of investigating organizational culture, thus they recommend four steps, as it follows:

- a) To analyze separately the two groups of index: one represented by values, gathered through data collected from a form given to the managers, supervisors and employees; by interview done with some workers from the company and by the direct observation of the organization of the work; The other group of index, signs, shown from the observation when in contact with the company;
- b) to give more importance to the group of index concerning to values, in order to decrease the margin of error related to the subjectivity of the researcher;
- c) to make a more refined analysis in order to compare the level of correlation between the two group of index;
- d) to classify the companies according to the models of organization, determined by the research.
- e) The managers must understand how the management aspects, like the exchanging of information, communication, decision taking and interpersonal relation. These cultural traits affect the management and results. Feedbacks are necessary within organizations. Giving and receiving information is very important. (FREITAS, 1991).

Once cultures, just like circumstances, are different, one may conclude the most adequate culture to a company is the one that better attaches to their operating environment, to the type of service and objectives (SCHEIN, 2001).

According to Schein (1992), culture is a set of convictions or basic presupposition. It defines how to react emotionally to what is happening and what action are supposed to be taken in several situations.

Fleury (2010) defends that to unveil the culture of an organization it is necessary to recognize the following aspects: the history of the organization, just like it happens with the socialization of new group members, the way how the human source policy are held, how the communication process happens and how the work itself is structured. Besides, the investigation strategies are an important factor to figure out what type of organizational culture it is.

Morgan (2010), in his book titled *Images of Organization*, introduces the metaphor of culture and relates it to: values, beliefs, presupposition, rites, rituals, ceremony, stories, myths, heroes, taboo, rules and so on, like constitution of their own elements. Schein (2009) defends that culture is a dynamic phenomenon, once it is everywhere in an organization and it brings with it a set of structures, routines, rules and norms and limitation of people's action.

After analyzing the theoretical background of organizational culture by Justino, Montenegro and Souza (2013), they approached the organizational culture to discuss the need to achieve contents starting from the origins of the term culture. Considering its subjective essence, culture brings with itself many meanings and interpretations in a way that does not allow it to be studied in a broader approach by researchers interested on the issue, once it is investigated on the basis of specific aspects of certain companies. Investigating the culture of an organization goes beyond the need of measuring that are considered to determine the profile of the company organizational structure. Culture brings the members of a company the projects that are born from a pre-established mission.

2.2 Cultural Diversity

According to UNESCO "Convention on Cultural Diversity" (2005, p. 1 e 2), it comprises culture as a " all the distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features which characterize a society or a group". That convention states that culture has a malleable essence and that "cultural diversity is, for humankind, as necessary as biological diversity is for nature".

Besides, the ONU Convention states that defending cultural diversity is a ethnical imperative, inseparable from the respect of human dignity. It must be assured by all the agents of collectivity: governments, civil society organizations and - of course - companies (UNESCO).

Cox (1994, p. 11) goes even further: according to him: "managing cultural diversity means planning and executing systems and organizational procedures of people managing in order to maximize the advantages". Thus, according to him, managing means adding value to the organization.

Cox (1991) argues that organizations need to become multicultural to capitalize the benefits and to minimize the costs related to the diversity. From the author point of view, an organization not only hires employees of multiple ethnicities/origins, but also celebrates that diversity. Cox and Blake (1991), for instance, listed six advantages related to multicultural organizations: improvement of the ability to attract and to keep talented staff, lower operational costs, higher degree of creativity and innovation, improvement of marketing efforts, ease problem solving and increasing of organizational flexibility.

To Cox (1994), cultural diversity means the representation, in a social system, of people associated in groups from different cultures.. The diversity is identified by visible characteristics such as: race, gender, age and physique (MILLIKEN e MARTINS, 1996) and non-visible like: nationality, religion, personality and formation (MENDES, 2004).

The managing of diversity is the adoption of administrative action to assure that personal or group attributes, lifestyle and attitudes, are considered ways of improving the performance of the organization, a managing practice intended to replace the affirmative actions and equalitarian access to job market. And the expected cooperation from the employees is based on the democracy if rights and clear communication, that started being recently wide spread (ALVES, GALEÃO-SILVA, 2004). Nonetheless, the fact of adopting diversity policies does not guarantee that there will be no discriminatory acts inside the organizational bubble (IRIGARAY, 2008).

2.3 Sexual diversity within the workplace

To Fleury (2000, p. 20) "diversity is defined as a mixture of people with different identities interacting within the same social system. Inside these systems coexist people from minor and majority groups. The majority

group is the ones whose members, historically, received advantages concerning economic sources and power in relation to the other group".

Literature reviews, Alves and Galeão-Silva (2004, p. 22), hold that diversity "refers to a variety of individual and group attributes", and they should be recognized by organizations in reference to their customers and employees.

According to Freitas (2012), some theories about sexual diversity are fundamentals for the study of the issue: sex encompasses the biological terms man and woman, as well as hermaphrodite, a person with the two sexes, but who is defined as man or woman. Gender is related to the cultural and social papers associated to the masculine and to the feminine. Heterosexuality encompasses the relationship between people of the same sex. Transexual refers to a person who is biologically determined by a sex, however has the conviction that belongs to the opposite sex and that can be solved through surgery. Travestites are men, who are sure they are men, but who may sometimes behave like woman, or rather, the sex identity is stable, but the gender is not. The gender identity refers to men and woman who accept themselves and men or women and pick other men or women up as love affairs. Hermaphrodite is genetically sexual ambiguous, or rather, they physically have both sexes. They may undergo a surgery to reassigned a sex, by excluding the sexual characteristics to which the person does not identify him/herself.

Dantas (2012) says that, in Brazil, men are considered authoritarian and male sexist, but who, heirs of the plasticity brought by Freyre, may surprise with the inclination to experience the flexibilities that may carry them to the joy. And, yet, by analyzing the male heterosexuality, it may reveal surprises, just as used to happen when, in the late 90s, several men confessed to feel attracted by Roberta Close, who became the first travestite accepted by the Brazilian families, a beloved celebrity by children, without any rejection from their parents.

To Eccel and Alcadipani (2012), the Brazilian nowadays reality confirms the female participation on the job market have brought changes within the family relationships. The report presented by the Institute for Applied Economic Research (IPEA) from 2008 revealed that on the last 15 years the number of families headed by women have increased. In 1993 they summed up to 3,4%, and, in 2007, they numbered to 18,3% of the homes. These data, according to the report, "points to an inquiry of the symbolic place of the men as the exclusive provider" (PINHEIRO ET AL, 2008, p. 17).

As stated by Siqueira and Andrade (2012), it is hard to speak about cultural diversity focused on the sexual orientation at organizations, specially the Brazilian ones. Most of what has been achieved in relation to the gay rights at the workplace is due to the political fight within the social field, thanks to the public policies developed and implemented and to the coordinated action of a political gay lobby, bringing benefits to the GLBT groups (gays, lesbians, bisexuals, travestites and transexuals).

In Brazil, the discussion of the GLBT groups at work have started to be effectively brought since 2000. Siqueira et al (2006) contributed to publish the pioneer mapping of articles and categories that analyze gay identity at the workspace in nine international journals from 1985 to 2005. Essentially bibliographic and quantitative, the study established four categories: (a) discrimination, stigma and homophobia, (b) career development, (c) coming out and in the closeted and (d) equal rights.

Concerning the professional insertion of homosexuals, Siqueira, Ferreira and Zauli-Fellows (2006) conducted the analysis of nine periodic international papers among January 1985 and December 2005 that mentioned the situation of homosexuals at organizations. The issue was discussed were: discrimination, stigma and homophobia within the work environment (37%); 26% spoke about coming or not "out of the closet"; 25% analyzed the career development of homosexuals and 12% discussed about the search by the homosexuals for equal rights.

3 METHODOLOGY

The methodology of this paper consists of many elements that describes since the characterization, design, locus and subjects of the research, till the data collection tools and its analysis, methodological aspects and limits of the research.

3.1 The study characterization

The most adequate method for collecting data and their analysis is the qualitative one, once it is more accurate to comprehend social reality. (FLICK, 2004, ROESCH, 2005; BAUER, GASKELL, ALLUM, GODOI and BALSINI, 2006; 2008). Richardson (2008) states that the qualitative approach of a problem, besides being an

interesting alternative to the investigator, it is justified, mainly, because it is an adequate way of comprehending the nature of social phenomenon.

.2 Lay-out of the research

The lay-out of the research, according to Kerlinger (1980), focus the way a research problem is conceived and placed in a structure that becomes a guide for planning, data collection and experimentation, as shown on table 2:

Table 2 - Lay-out of the research

Characterization	Qualitative research. Descriptive research. Unique Case Study.
<i>Locus</i>	Large scale Company from Recife City/PE, a customer call service area/ call center.
Subjects	Managers of the large scale company, in Recife/Pe. Employees/administrative partners from GLBT group at the large scale company, in Recife/PE. Gay couples who work as professionals at a large scale company, in Recife/PE.
Data collection	Guided interview. Non-participant direct observation. Documentary collection.
Data analysis	Documentary analysis. Content analysis (BARDIN, 2011).

Source: Dados da pesquisa, 2013.

3.3 Subjects of the research

The subjects of this research sums up to 350 people, among commercial managers, operational coordinators and quality monitors, as well as administrative employees/partners from GLBT group (gays, lesbians, bisexuals and declared transgenders (travestites and transsexuals)), and 20 gay couples who worked at the company: 15 male gay couples and 5 female gay couples (see Table 2), from a single unit of the large scale service company, in Recife/PE with a total number of 1250 employees, from which 350 had been interviewed, according to the information given in table 7.

3.4 Data collection tools

The guided interview was aimed to two kinds of workers from com the company: levels 1 2 and 3 managers of the organizational structure and the partners who works as telemarketing operators.

The script for the guided interview was applied for the managers, as well as the a partners from the company and encompassed the seven listed topics as follow: knowledge about GLBT groups, non-discriminatory against GLBT groups, social benefits offered for the GLBT groups, social inclusion policies practiced by the company toward the transgenders (travestites and transsexuals), managing and capacitating programs planned and executed by the company about sexual diversity (GLBT groups), external and internal actions practiced by the company about sexual diversity (GLBT groups).

Another more specific script for the gay couples who work at the comapny was done in order to gather specific information about them, concerning the following topics: female or male gay couple, leading position, number of people managed, how long a person works at the company, sexual orientation asked during the admission process, way of managing the company, discrimination at the work environment, relationship problem with workmates.

It was also aimed to identify the profile of the subject of the research, managers and partners, In this sense, some questions were asked: sex, age, civil status, children, position occupied at the company, the number of people managed (for the managers), how long they have been working at the company, degree of instruction and training.

The method of collecting data used was the non-participant direct observation. Barros, Lehfeld (2005); Marconi and Lakatos (2008) say that this technique embraces not only listening and watching, but also checking the phenomena intended to be studies.

Therefore, an indirect observation form or a field diary was built by the following items: company, observation period, facts observed and description of the observation.

Eventually, some documents from the company were used as data collection: partner manual, company intern journal called "Aproximar", with quartely edition and intern publications:: life chance histories, billboards - with information about how workers should behave within the company, and gifts givens during the employees' birthdays.

3.5 Data analysis technique

According to Bardin (2011, p. 36), the content analysis is a very empiric method, dependent of the kind of "speech" and interpretation aimed. yet, according to the author, the most adequate content analysis to the domains and intended purposes must be reinvented every time, except for the simple and general use.

According to the same author, the different phases of content analysis, such as sociological inquiry and experimentation, organize themselves around three points: 1) pre-analysis, 2) material exploration and 3) results, inference and interpretation treatment.

The pre-analysis is the step in which the data is analyzed in order to make it operational by systematizing the initial ideas. It is the organization itself through four steps: floating reading, the contact with the documents found during the data collection, when it is possible to get to know the texts, (b) selection of documents, delimitation of what will be analyzed, (c) hypothesis and objectives establishment through selection of texts from the documents of analysis (BARDIN, 2011).

The second stage consists of exploration of material according to the categories of definition (coding system) and identification of register unities (the meaning unity of decoding corresponds to the segment considered as base unity, aimed at categorization and sequential counting) and also the unity of context in the documents (comprehension unity to code the register unity correspondent to the message, in order to comprehend the exact unity of register).

The material exploration consists of an important step because it will make possible or not the detailed inferential interpretation. This is the stage of analytic description concerning the corpus (any textual material collected) subjected to a deep study guided by the hypothesis and theoretical references. This way, the decoding, classification and categorization are the fundamental steps of this stage (BARDIN, 2011).

The treatment of the results, inference and interpretation belong to the third stage. This stage is aimed for the treatment of results where the condensation and highlight of analysis information happen, ending with inferential interpretation. It is the moment of intuition, thinking analysis and critic. (BARDIN, 2011).

The abbreviation IMM was used to represent the Interview with Male Managers (men) and the abbreviation IFM was used to represent the Interview with Female Managers (women). It was also adopted the abbreviation IME for Interview with Male Employees (men) and IFE for Interview with Female Employees (women), from the company analyzed.

The answers acquired and selected to constitute this paper are the ones that reached the limits of saturation, presenting constant repetitions of answers given by the company interviewed people.

Yet: another limitation is concerning the problem of employees' communication and expression about the practice of daily organizational management. In order to diminish this limitation, we used the non participant direct observation.

4 DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

This paper had as main objective to investigate the way the organizational culture drives the management of sexual diversity within a large scale company in Recife/PE. In order to do so, some specific purposes were defined, serving as the base for the data analysis.

4.1 Locus of the research

The locus of this research is a large scale company (cf. classification according to Labour Code - 250 or more workers) from Recife City/PE, a national company for call center services.

4.2 Profile of the interviewed people

It will be described the interviewed subjects' profiles: 100 managers and 250 partners, a total of 350 professionals, including 20 gay couples who work at the company, summing up to 15 male gay couples and 5 female gay couples.

4.2.1 Managers' profile

Most of the interviewed managers declared to be male, more than 50%. More than 60% of the interviewed managers belong to an age group from 20 to 30 years old. Their civil status showed that 65% are single. More than 60% of the managers told they did not have any kids. From the amount of managers who declares to have kids, 38%; 23% told to have only one. 92% of the managers work as supervisors of operations at the company. Most of them declared to have occupied that leading position for 2 to 3 years. 73% of the managers answered that are responsible for 31 to 40 employees. More than 60% of the managers started working at the company between 2009 and 2012. all of the managers declared to have concluded High School at least. Most of them, 60%, declared to have participate between 31 to 40 trainings at the company.

4.2.2 Employees' profile

Most of the employees interviewed declared to be women, representing 60%. 70% of the interviewed employees belong to an age group from 20 to 30 years old. 70% of them declared to be single. 76% told they did not have any kids. Considering the 24% who have kids, 12% declared to have only one. 100% of the employees work as telemarketing operator at the company. Most of them declared to have been working for the company for 2 to 4 years. 73% of them stated that they work with 31 to 40 people in their groups sections. 80% started working at the company between the years 2009 and 2012. All of them declared to have finished High School. Most of the interviewed partners declared to have had approximately 31 to 40 trainings at the company.

4.2.3 Gay couples' profile

From the number of researched 20 gay couples, 15 of them declared to be male gender and 5 to be female gender. all the gays couples declared to work in a leading position as supervisor of operations (18) and coordinator of operations (2). Most of the gay couples have worked for the company for 5 years. According to information from them, during the application job interview, they were not asked about their sexual orientation. all gay couples answered that they received training and managing from the company, according to the established company rules. They also said all the social benefits offered by the company are available once their marital status is formally declared to the human sources department, not matter they belong or not to the GLBT group. They also declared there is no discrimination or prejudice from their immediate bosses, concerning the work relations, according to most of the gay couples interviewed. They same happens among their workmates from their sections. All of them stated that there are no problems with relationship among their workmates due to their sexual orientation and to their homosexual union. However, they said it is usual to notice, during the breaks, at the common areas of the company such as halls, WCs, discriminatory attitudes, for example: declared straight workers get away from the gay couples and during their informal conversations such as bad jokes or facial discriminatory expressions.

4.3 Comparisons between the Managers' and GLBT group's perceptions

The third specific objective of this paper aimed to compare the managers' and GLBT group's perceptions concerning the sexual diversity policy and management taken in a large scale company in Recife/PE.

4.3.1 Company values

The declaration from the people who belong to the GLBT group is useful to support the comparative analysis with the managers' speech. They are fundamental for understanding the company values, once the managers receive regular orientation from the company.

By building a synergetic connection between the information gathered through the interviews with the managers and employees that belong to the GLBT group, as well the observations made, it is possible to say that there are no organizational values, described or declared, concerning the management of sexual diversity at the company. According to the data collected, there are not any external or internal actions related to the sexual diversity practiced at the company.

According to the observations, it is noticed that managers and partners from the GLBT group who work at the company are free to engage on external or internal events about sexual diversity, especially the ones promoted by GLBT groups. An example of an internal action by the company, it is the Cultural Friday, an event that brings together all the employees, after their turn so that they can express themselves according to their cultural background. They perform songs, dances, poetry, paintings and religious aspects. This event is aimed for all the employees, but the ones more engaged to it are the ones who belong to the GLBT group.

According to the results found, it is possible to conclude that the company under analysis allows people from GLBT group to engage in events, although it was not found any specific policy toward sexual diversity. That group may participate and express their cultural elements just like any other worker, no matter if they are straight or not, from all over the company.

Historically, company have been managed - and studied - as aseptic and hegemonic entities in which people live functionally and neutrally around common objectives. (IRIGARAY, 2008).

According to the interviewed coordinator of operations, the daily life within the company from different groups of people just flows naturally. They are used to work with people who declare themselves to belong to GLBT group. They are employees and show a satisfactory performance at work.

Some of the interviewed partners said there were not need to establish non discriminatory policies for the GLBT group, as well for other groups of people who also work at the company. That is because people are used to treat anyone as a professional and to keep formal communication with the work relationships.

A bank service company, with headquarters in São Paulo, understands that diversity is a value that stimulates creative interactions and also allows us to find better solutions for the society and business world. As the company view, the bigger the diversity, the richer the community and vitality of the system. Concerning the stimulation, the company has a guide about diversity that is given to the managers, where it is illustrated ten different dilemmas that may be faced at the company and the GLBT matter is shown in one of them (MECCHI, 2006).

4.3.2 Signs

Guided interviews and "*in loco*" observations were used to identify and to analyze the signs of the company under study.

According to the Managers and partners' opinions from the GLBT group, in the work environment, there are no discriminatory acts toward the gays, lesbians, travestites and transsexuals. That happens because, in the interviewers' opinions, toward the habit and tradition faced by the workers at the company, the organizational environment itself helps to avoid the prejudice and discrimination, although there are not any formal criteria established by the company about these aspects.

From the observation and interviews made, it was noticed that many of the workers who belong to the GLBT group have managing positions in the several areas of the company.

According to Thévenet (1986), the signs represent all the aspects of functioning in the daily life of the company.

4.3.3 Rules

The guided interview was used to identify and to analyze the administrative rules of the analyzed company in order to get the employees' declarations.

It was possible to notice, from the observations made, that the gay couples, from GLBT group, female or male, who work at the analyzed company, have the same right to the social benefits established and offered by the company to all the employees, once they inform their immediate bosses through probationary document, formally: a civil union made at a register office with the other partner.

The same happens at one of the biggest technology company in the world, concerning the benefits. since 2003, when the program "*Domestic Partners*" was launched, at this company, any person who has a registered union at office with another person (independently of the gender) has the same right to the offered benefits as the ones offered to the married ones. for instance, health insurance, dental insurance, allowance of money for the diseased employee's dependent, travel insurance when at work and social security (MECCHI, 2006).

According to the interview given by the Supervisor of Operations A, there is a Collaborator Manual where it is established some rules about dressing worn by the employees, for instance: clothing shows who the professional is and what he/she likes, but during the work day, the clothing must follow the rules for the corporative environment. Thus, They do not allow deep neckline, transparency, skirts or short dresses, shorts, slippers and flip-flop, sweat shirts and caps. It is not also allowed to wear cloth with political, religious, discriminatory or sportive messages.

Yet, according to information from that supervisor, the management of the security of information, in the company, allows them to access registers, systems and any information within the company environment, at any time, through cams, internet and intranet, whenever they find it is necessary. The inadequate usage of these tools or action that may go against the company values may be punished in the civil or penal areas, according to the gravity of the action.

4.3.4 Taboos

Several interviews were conducted with the employees from the GLBT group in order to identify the taboos faced by the professionals who work the studied .

According to the managers' and GLBT group employees' opinions, the analyzed company does not have any external action about sexual diversity because, according to them, it is not the focus of the company - although the company sees sexual diversity with naturality. Thus, the company has not had any marketing campaign toward the GLBT public, neither joined or participated directly in any event or GLBT organization in its existence.

Some interviewed couples stated that, in the workplace, there is no prejudice or discrimination against them, but during the breaks, during meal time, during their arrival or when they leave it and go home, they observe non verbal communication showing some discrimination, however it only happens outside the company.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This paper had as general objective to investigate the way the organizational culture drives the management of sexual diversity in a large scale company in Recife/PE.

After the process of data collection and analysis, we have reached some conclusions, as shown below according the specific objectives presented.

Initially, this paper proposed to identify the elements of organizational culture noticed within the management of sexual diversity in a large scale company in Recife/PE.

According to the techniques of data collection and analysis, it is possible to conclude that the elements of organizational culture, existent at the company, such as its mission, values and collaborator manual are aimed to all the employees who are selected and hired for the positions offered by the company, not matter they declared themselves or belong to the GLBT group.

All the interviewed workers said that the habits and practices in the company as organizational culture make it easy for living and managing the professionals who declared themselves to belong to the GLBT group.

The analyzed company, based on the technique of data collection, on the non participant direct observation, applies its organizational policies, rules and operational procedures to all the employees who are placed in every hierarchical levels and in any functional area of the company.

It was noticed that there is no need for the company to adopt projects and actions, institutional marketing, just like the São Paulo Diversity Seal, established by the decree number 52.080, at 8/22/2007, by the Govern of São Paulo State. It is like an action of prejudice against the GLBT group.

From the moment that its developed activities according to the established standards and the programmed goals are reached; the effective commitment is achieved by the employees. Sá and Lemoine (1999) said that an atmosphere of joy and friendship within the workspace stimulates the motivation and pleasure of the employees. They also stated that it is the most important cultural characteristic, concerning the organizational commitment.

In relation to the social benefits offered by the organization, the company has 10 benefices for their employees, no matter these people belong or not, declare themselves or not, to the GLBT group.

The relationship between managers and collaborators, about the team work, contributes for the insertion of the GLBT group declared ones within the workplace, once all the collaborators are managed according to the rules and operational procedures of the company.

Another conclusion made is that the conditions of work that greets the GLBT group also contribute for the good personal and professional development of the GLBT person, producing commitment and productivity, compared to the opposite conditions.

According to Schein (2001), as the culture plans and executes the strategies of the company, objectives and the way of developing operational activities at the organization daily life, it makes important to know and evaluate them in order to understand its role and function of the company. This aspect has been found at the analyzed company, once it keeps a collaborator manual, folders, internal magazines and cultural events, well informed, updated and accessible to the employees. This contributes to the anticipation of the consequences and decision if they are desirable or not.

As it was stated by Fleury (2000), the analyzed company has a mix of people with different identities, declared from the GLBT group 9gays, lesbians, bisexual and transgenders (travestites and transsexuals) who interacts in the same social system, the company, through many hierarchical levels and several functional areas. In this system there are the majority group, GLBT ones, and the minority group, the straight ones. This fact allow the GLBT group to be accepted at the workspace without discrimination or prejudice.

In the studies made by Rios, Almeida, Parker and Pimenta (2009), it is said to be necessary to analyze the strategies to face repression, reparation and prevention against discrimination, homophobia. These strategies are used for the people and social groups at the organizations. It is necessary to overcome the heterosexuality and homosexuality as sexual identities. although, the combat against homophobic discrimination has some challenges like moral and social disapprovals, the attitudes that classify homosexuality as sickness or inferior aspect. These organizational dilemmas are: to hire or not a person is declared to belong to the GLBT group, to grant or not them with the same rights and to punish or ignore the discriminatory actions (MECCHI, 2007).

Sexual diversity management policies at the work environment must not expose the GLBT group, by giving the sensation of "animals in a zoo". The actions must be well communicated, but with a discreet approach and respectful discretion (MECCHI, 2006).

According to the consultancy work done, the analyzed company shows in relation to the professional contact, the acceptance and interaction of the straight declared ones with the GLBT group declared employees.. But as observed, these aspects are reached by the informal relationship of people, making it easier to build a work environment of organizational culture with habits and practices of the organizational daily life. This may be justified by the fact that the company is a call center, so there is no personal contact with customers.

The second purpose aimed to investigate the policies and practices of sexual diversity management in a large scale company in Recife/PE seen in the institutional training programs and improvement of the employees who work at the company.

According to the data collection and analysis through documental collection, guided interviews with managers and collaborators, and the non participant direct observation, it was possible to see that the company offers several management and capacitating programs to the employees, aiming the promotion and ascension.

The opportunities of development, as well as the institutional actions and programs, are offered to every employees of the company, if they meet the requirements and profile determined by the company.

As Adams, Cahill, Jackerlind (2005); Diniz, (2002) and Ward, Winstanley (2005) said, the company does not question neither demands the employees to declare if they belong or not to the GLBT group; These authors defend the idea that a good career development cannot happen when the person is forced, somehow, to suppress part of the identity that is depreciated by the society.

From the observation made during my consultancy work, the analyzed company shows some advantages to the GLBT group. From the moment that they are not under pressure to hide the way they are and live within their professional activities, this makes the work environment more cordial, stimulating the creativity of this group concerning their professional duties at the company.

The third purpose aimed to compare the managers' and the GLBT group people's perception concerning the sexual diversity practices adopted by a large scale company in Recife/PE.

According to the comparative analysis made with the collected information from the managers and collaborators at the analyzed company, it is possible to say that there are identical opinions and a relation of equality concerning the collected data about the organizational culture of the company, social diversity management practices, external and internal actions planned and practices by the company related to the sexual diversity management.

From the data collected and analyzed at the company, we concluded that the organizational culture adopted by the company. For instance: the way people dress at work and the freedom to declare they have a stable union with a person of the same sex, having granted all the right to the social benefits offered by the company to the straight couple. On the other side, the interviews made with the managers of different hierarchical levels at the company stated that there were not any formal practicing concerning sexual diversity. It was also suggested by the interviewed ones that there should be training about sexual diversity management, including the current available laws about the issue.

During my experience as business consultant, I noticed that most of the GLBT group declared people who work at the analyzed company suggest that the company must be a pioneer about developing strategic policies on managing and living of the referred group so that the managers may lead the people based on the organizational culture as well as the current available labor laws.

It is important to highlight that settlement of policies and practices of sexual diversity management is beneficial for the GLBT group employees who have a leading position and are responsible for employees who declare themselves to be straight.

5.1 Future studies suggestions

Concerning future studies, we recommend to apply the tools used in this research at other units of the analyzed company in order to confirm the relation between organizational culture and sexual diversity, specifically with the GLBT group. We also suggest the usage of other elements of the organizational culture to sexual diversity such as: values, organizational climate, beliefs, myths, taboos, heroes, symbols, as well as new studies that aim strategic planning with the inclusion of sexual diversity, including women, black people, disabled and foreigners.

It is also intended to go deep with the studied issue, during the doctorate course, at business management field, by analyzing the professional profile and the formal and informal relationship among managers, collaborators, customer and suppliers; according to the field of concentration and line of research of the *stricto sensu* post graduation program, at doctorate level.

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