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PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT MATURITY IN A FEDERAL REGULATORY AGENCY

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ABSTRACT

The following paper aims to describe the maturity level of institutional and individual performance management (PM) practices in a federal regulatory agency. Three Technical Groups (TGs) of public servants from three different careers were interviewed with questions concerning the PM maturity level in the organization. The answers were registered and a thematic content analysis was carried out. The results of the analysis identify performance management in a state of uncertainty, lack of patronization and systematization. Factors such as the role of leaderships, informal communication and shared attitudes and perceptions towards the importance of PM, have showed to be relevant for maturity in organizational departments. Given the conclusions and variables identified in this study, we recommend a survey to be carried out in the organization to measure attitudes towards performance management. We also recommend, in future research, the consideration of variables referring to the organizational structure, which may offer support to the comprehension of the maturity level as a contextual variable in the organization.

Keywords: Performance Management; Maturity level; Public sector; Politics of human resource management; Multilevel modeling.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Management models that come from evolutionary levels have been applied to the field of study of organizational study and other areas of knowledge. These models come from the basic assumption that there are characteristics that typify a determined moment in the organizations. These characteristics can be grouped in evolutionary levels and go from the most incipient level until phases related to effective management.

Level-based models presuppose an evolutionary process marked by distinct phases that are linked according to their growth; once they have reached a level of higher development, regression to the predecessor level is less likely to occur (SILVEIRA; GUIMARÃES; ABRÃAO, 2007). According to SILVEIRA et al., the evolutionary change that takes place by the escalation of the levels, influences the organism, alters its configuration, its characteristics and its functioning.

Several maturity models are found in literature with some degree of consolidation and application for the evaluation and diagnosis of company management practices (see, for example, DINIZ; CASTRO, 2010; GOHR et al., 2013; JABBOUR; SANTOS, 2013). Applied models in the areas of project management, processes and information systems stand out. These models are respectively exemplified by *Project Management Maturity Model* (PMMM); *Business Process Maturity Model* (BPMM) and *Enterprise Architecture Maturity Model* (EAMM) (BELOUT; GAUVREAU, 2004; DE BRUIN et al., 2005; SUIKKI; TROMSTED; HAAPASALO, 2006). All these models focus on management knowledge, the practical application of methodologies, aspects concerning human relationships, components of the organizational structure and, the degree of alignment with the organization's mission and objectives (DE BRUIN et al., 2005; HOUSTON, 2004). These dimensions are usually present at each maturity level when considering the scope of their application to organizational studies.

It is imperative, therefore, to recognize the essential characteristics that will compose each level of maturity and their influence on the object of research in relation to evolutionary levels. In this paper, the object under analysis is the organizational practice of performance management. It is argued that in order to have an effective management of performance, levels are required in order to formalize Performance Management in work organizations. From conception, that is, performance planning, to the review stage of a work plan, there is essential information that intends to demonstrate the multi-level nature of performance.

That said, the objective of this study is to identify the maturity level of performance management with public servants of a regulatory agency of the Brazilian Federal Government. Characteristics of each level of performance management cycle (planning, monitoring, evaluation and review) are identified and as a descriptive exploratory diagnosis is given in regards to the development and institutionalization levels. The analysis will elucidate how Performance Management is consolidated and incorporated in the management culture of the researched organization.

The goal of this paper is to indicate the current *status quo* of the implementation of Performance Management in this organizational body. The intent is to contribute to the empirical investigation of maturity models within the scope of organizational studies, especially considering the context of the Brazilian federal public administration.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The models based on evolutionary levels applied to the organizations come from the idea of maturity, that is, from the complete development or perfect condition of some process or activity (SMITH; MITCHELL, SUMMER, 1985; URDANG; FLEXNER, 1968). The notion of maturity connotes an understanding of the reasons why organizational success is achieved. In addition, this notion serves as a way to correct problems from a longitudinal and incremental perspective (GRANT; PENNYPACKER, 2006; SILVEIRA).

The steps involved and the information profile of each level should not be considered static (ANDERSEN; JESSEN, 2003; RABECHINI; PESSOA, 2005). They signal the identified set of elements that allows the practice to be classified at one level. By identifying the right level of current implementation of the practice, there are possibilities for the implementation of proper methods, techniques and tools.

Several times, adjustments are needed in the organizational structure, in order to promote the best prescription of the practice. Maturity implies, therefore, the ability for an organization to develop its processes, in accordance with previously defined goals, in regards to strategic and functional planning (Bessant, CAFFYN, GALLAGHER, 2001, VAZ, MIYAKE, 2003, VISCONTI, COOK, 1998).

Organizational maturity models come from the premise that processes can be structured by organizations from levels of evolution (KWAK, IBBS, 2000). Such levels can be explicitly defined, managed and controlled over time. This ensures the quality and orientation of work processes and results (CURTIS; HEFLEY; MILLER, 2002; SCOTT, BRUCE, 1987).

For instance, in the maturity model proposed by Bessant, Caffyn, and Gallagher (2001)[1], five levels are introduced. In level 1, the most basic level, (Pre-CI Interest in continuous improvement: there is no formal structure for improvement in organization; problems are solved randomly, always aiming for a short-term benefit; No strategic impact on human resources such as training, development and recognition), Level 5 (Full CI Capability for continuous improvement: extensive and widely distributed learning behavior Systematic finding and capture and sharing of learning).

In the model of Crozby (1979) there are also five levels. The first one, 'Uncertainty', deals with uncertainty about practice, there is no availability of time or resources, no organized activity, and inspection does not exist. In contrast, in the fifth level, 'certainty', quality is the imperative priority.

On the other hand, in the field of personnel management, other papers can be cited such as *the Human Factors Integration Capability Maturity Model* (EARTHY et al., 1999) and the *People Capability Maturity Model* (P-CMM) (CURTIS and HEFLEY; MILLER, 2002). While *The Human Factors Integration Capability Maturity Model,* deals with ergonomic practices as well as work safety, the *People Capability Maturity Model* deals with policies and practices for management and development of the workforce. The P-CMM, whose focus covers areas such as total quality, competence management and organizational learning, has gained increasing importance for application in business contexts (SILVEIRA, 2009). The model suggests five levels of maturity in which policies and practices of personnel management are described. The first level refers to an unsystematic management of the workforce and the following levels discuss integrated management practices. Additionally, they introduce up until the last level permanent strategic alignment, workforce development and organizational innovation (CURTIS; HEFLEY; MILLER, 2002). In this

1 See Silveira, Guimarães and Abrãao (2007), for summarized information about the models

model, Performance Management is treated as a process to be developed from the earliest level of personnel management. It intends to align workforce performance with organizational goals and to provide input to personnel development policies.

Maturity in the Performance Management cycle considers the degrees at which such practice is institutionalized in organizations. Performance Management considers the planning, execution, monitoring, evaluation and revision levels as fundamental to work results (NANKERVIS; COMPTON, 2006). Although evaluation should be maximized since it is an important step for Performance Management, other levels that are also fundamental for the good performance of individuals and work teams (COELHO JR.; BORGES-ANDRADE, 2011; JOHNSON, 2001).

In organizational studies, performance is intrinsically related to productivity and the analysis of individual behavioral processes. This former impacts groups and organizations (STARBUCK, 2005). For Collins (2002) and Humphrey, Nahrgang and Morgeson (2007), performance is measured in organizations, by analyzing the results of a job in relation to the achievement of the mission and objectives of the company. Furthermore, the intensity of contextual factors that have an effect on performance can facilitate or restrict the execution of a job. In order to measure performance, products and results achieved, it is imperative to have into account the degree of effort expended by an individual while carrying out activities and responsibilities.

The main premise of Performance Management is the development of individuals and teams by their acquisition of new skills at work that are in accordance to the objectives of the organization (COELHO JR., 2011). According to Coelho Junior. (2011), the role of superiors is fundamental in all levels of management, most prominently in planning and monitoring performance. They maintain levels of motivation and commitment of their subordinates. The effects of the work environment on individuals and teams must also be analyzed and considered in each of the levels, due to their availability to generate impact in work results.

In the planning level, it is expected management to be widely involved at all levels. Additionally, there is a relationship between standards of task performance and support for learning which is reflected in skills' acquisition and the removal of barriers of performance (COELHO JR., 2011). According to Coelho Junior (2011), it is expected in the planning level, that the manager stablishes monitoring and evaluation criteria in order to ensure continuous communication of performance and expectations with the subordinate.

It is the responsibility of the superior to develop strategies and mechanisms for monitoring, supervising and controlling what the subordinate does. Monitoring must be effective, it has to highlight the role played by supervisors while overseeing the performance of the individual (COELHO JR., 2011). For example, short, medium and long-term goals and objectives can be established with the subordinate so that the superior can provide guidance and control tools to the subordinate and work teams.

The following level after Monitoring, corresponds to Performance Evaluation. Performance Evaluation assigns a value judgment to a set of behaviors of the subordinate and work teams which are necessary for the proper performance of a job position. According to Coelho Junior (2011), it identifies valid, accurate and systematic information of the individual's performance in regards to what is expected of the individual for the position. To this end, the prior delimitation of a work plan of managers and subordinates in the planning level, is fundamental for the execution and consequent performance evaluation.

In synthesis, the performance management cycle considers that, from the establishment of the work plan to the attribution of factors to the individual's performance, all information must be formalized and standardized so that it can be managed. The application of maturity

levels is fundamental to the understanding of Performance Management since all the levels serve to have a diagnosis of the current status quo of work organizations.

3 METHODOLOGY

The objective of the following qualitative research is to understand a phenomenon applied in the context of a specific organization, that is, a regulatory agency that has outstanding performance throughout the national territory. It was decided, together with those responsible for the human resources sector of the organization, to include in the research only permanent staff of the board. This was decided in order to give greater legitimacy to the results obtained, in line with culturally established values and traits.

1 Research Instruments

In order to carry out this research, 24 questions were answered by participants. Questions were made in reference to the theories of the field of performance management (as previously discussed in regards to the levels in the development of Performance Management systems, by NANKERVIS, COMPTON, 2006, STARBUCK, 2005). Questions were based on the main maturity levels. Therefore, the theoretical levels of the Performance Management cycle and practices, as well as environmental constraints were considered.

Interviews included information on the organizational environment and culture, individual perceptions about performance, perceptions about management and psychosocial support in the workplace, as well as knowledge and opinions on Performance Management. Finally, specific issues were addressed in the description of practices related to planning, monitoring, evaluation and performance review.

1.1 Data Collection Procedures

Data was collected in person, through three working groups (WGs) that had public servants with different institutional profession: Administrative Technician (ADMT), Specialist in Regulation (SP) and Administrative Analyst (ADMA). Each WG was composed of servers of the same profession. Participants who maintained a relationship of subordination between themselves (for example, boss and subordinate) were not part of the same WG, in order to guarantee isonomy and free and spontaneous manifestation of opinions.

The following criteria applied to chosen participants of each WG: they should be key people in the organization under analysis, with shorter and longer service periods and who were recognized for their social influence. In this way, professionals of the Human Resources Administration (HRA) unit of the organization assisted in the selection of participants. The criterion of choice, therefore, was intentional. HRA professionals selected people who have been recognized as legitimate leaders in organizational sectors and departments. In addition, it was taken into account technical competence, that is, servers who were benchmarked in the institution for their excellence and performance.

As indicated above, the Human Resources Management Unit actively participated in the selection and invitation of participants. Participants were invited and the purpose of the study was explained, so that each participant had the right to decide whether or not to participate in any WG. It was then explained that the data collected would be confidential and would pass

through a comparative analysis that would be established a posteriori. Anonymity was fully guaranteed in the answers given.

As for the size of the WGs, a total of 11 analysts, 13 technicians and 10 specialists participated in the research, adding up to three WGs. The average service time ranged from one to seven years in the institution, and there was a preponderance of women in all groups. Each WG lasted, on average, three hours.

During each WG, participants were divided into pairs or trios, when appropriate. Each pair was responsible for commenting on the topics asked in a previous interview composed of 24 questions.

Through discussions of WGs, all pairs had access to a computer where they recorded their answers in Microsoft Word. After answers were given, their answers were saved in a file previously prepared by the research team, in order to safeguard confidentiality of the given answers.

1.2 Data Analysis Procedures

With all the data files generated, a thematic analysis was carried out for the interpretation of the content. Four major categories of analysis were established, so that the arguments presented could have parameters of comparison among them.

These categories were: clarity of institutional goals (global and intermediate), relationships between global goals (macro-organizational and strategic) and intermediate goals (per unit of placement and career type), performance planning strategies, and monitoring and supervision strategies of performance. Several arguments presented in each category have been identified and will be introduced below. As a descriptive and exploratory study, it was decided to present the main arguments that came up during the three WGs. Answers were differentiated and transcribed according to the career of each pair. It was decided to carry out a transversal and formative evaluation on the levels of organizational maturity.

RESULTS

The results suggest that the maturity of Performance Management within the organization under investigation is still in its infancy. The level of maturity, that is, the current status of development of Performance Management as a human resource practice, still lacks development, more specifically in the adherence of positive and spontaneous behaviors to the professionalization of this practice.

As seen, organizational maturity refers to the ability to develop processes in accordance to previously established goals, in strategic areas of organizations (HOUSTON, 2004). The organizational capacity of transformation and evolution of the practice under analysis implies a better understanding of the structural complexity of the more parsimonious organization, producing more efficient modes of operation (LASZLO, 2003).

The most critical factors identified are related to the need of having greater technical capacity for formal implementation of Performance Management, lack of motivation or negative attitudes towards the practice of performance evaluation and lack of involvement of managers. This lack of involvement comes from those managers who carry out a commissioned high-level position. Finally, the need to implement the practice of performance is normative in nature, and does not represent an interest for the management body. All these elements interdependently, put in check the HRA effort to implement and disrepute all the organizational efforts.

Performance Management has not yet reached the level of moral maturity in which conduct spontaneously becomes adherent to the current organizational culture of such practice. Moral maturity enables the company to resolve conflicts and rationalize the decision-making process in the face of dilemmas. It also stimulates multilevel feedback and communication systems throughout the network of organizations (Cookie-Davis 2002). This does not seem to have happened yet within the scope of the researched organization.

In the Bessant, Caffyn, and Gallagher Model (2001), the practice of Performance Management in the organization seems to be in Level 3, of continuous goal-based improvement. This level considers that continuous improvement activities are part of general management activities. In the Crozby Model (1979), between levels 2 (awakening) and 3 (clarification), the commitment of management and the development of quality instruments (especially evaluation forms) become urgent. For Silveira (2009), organizational maturation is directly related to a growing process of managerial reasoning, which allows management work to increase maturity levels of evolution. This goes from a basic level of management to a higher level in the organization.

1 Clarity of Institutional Goals

There seems to be consensus regarding the importance of defining institutional goals as a way to guide the whole Performance Management system. Reports indicate that such goals seem to be clear, although they are not fully understood by the participants of this work, who seem to have difficulty in putting them in practice in their daily lives:

> It's not so clear. Goals are not visible on a daily basis. (team 2, ADMA).
>
> They are not very clear. I believe that there are many instruments and objectives that run in parallel, that do not allow a vision of the whole. (team 4, ADMA).
>
> The goals are clear, the process of definition is also clear. The high level of the organization

> proposes some goals and selects others in accordance to other areas. Goals are also defined from the Government programs. (team 2, SP).

There is evidence of consensus among participants in regards to the definition of the main objective of the institution and the recognition of its usefulness and importance:

> The institutional goal is to stipulate tariffs in a fair manner, so that consumers and companies have observed their rights and duties [...]. (team 3, ADMT).

Data also indicates that there is some centralization of the institutional performance goals by planners. That is, the process, which should have the strategic participation of a diverse set of social actors, seems to be taken only by the high level of the organization, without even consulting HRA.

> The definition process is not accessible to all, so we do not know how to inform how institutional goals are defined. (team 7, ADMT).

> They are defined by the high level of the organization, taking into account governmental policies for the sector in regards to the mission of the agency. Such goals are disclosed internally to align the activities of the regulatory agencies and their servants. (team 1, SP).

> They are clear, but they are centralized. (team 3, ADMA).

> They are defined in the planning committee, composed of the leaders of the agency. (team 4, SP).

According to participants, planners of institutional goals need to be legitimated in relation to their performance. Strategic planning needs to be aligned with goals. The "small group" (team 5, SP) which takes care of this step, needs to maintain a more tactical relationship with other areas of the organization, in order to understand the routines, given the expected results. This is the recommendation of Earthy et al. (1999), in which it is stated that the greater social adherence to practice tends to facilitate the evolution of maturity levels. Even the credibility of institutional goals are tested when there seems to be a "black box":

> They are clear, but very shallow. The purpose is to comply with legal framework. (team 5, ADMA).

> The institutional goals and the way they are defined are not clear to all servants. We observe that only those who work daily with this have the knowledge. (team 1, ADMA).

> We do not think the goals are clear. We define them as management objectives that the agency has during a certain period. (team 5, ADMT).

> They are not very clear. They are defined by a small group of people and are not clearly communicated to everyone. (team 1, ADMT).

1.1 Relationship Between Institutional Goal(s) and Intermediate Goal(s)

Another interesting fact of the research is the relative degree of knowledge of participants on the relationships between institutional goals and intermediate goals. Participants understand that institutional goals derive from intermediate goals, and they see their importance in relation to the mission and organizational goals. The arguments that follow relate to the intrinsic

relationship between both goals, and their impact on the effectiveness of public administration:

> The intermediate goals are defined according to the institutional ones. (team 5, ADMT).
>
> The intermediate goals take into account the institutional goals, and are defined according to them. (team 7, ADMT).
>
> They are hierarchically grouped. There is legal provision for this hierarchy. (team 5, ADMA).
>
> Annually, global goals are defined, which are broken down into intermediate goals and then into individual work plans. (team 4, ADMA).
>
> The intermediary goals unfold from the institutional. The institutional ones are subdivided into sub processes that determine the intermediary ones. (Team 2, ADMT).
>
> The intermediate goals are derived from the institutional goal, which reflects the search for the good performance of the public service, efficiency. (team 4, ADMT).
>
> The way in which we must serve the public is based on the institutional vision of the agency, taking into account the duties of public servants and principles of Administrative Law. When regulating the Brazilian system, [...] the organization seeks to balance consumer tariffs. (team 3, ADMT).

It is inferred that limitation originates from the low participation of the social actors in the definition of institutional and intermediate goals. This generates an organizational subculture in which it is thought that "this is not for me, it is more an invention of management". It is interesting to note that, although these goals are published, even in the Official Journal of the Union, some participants reported simply not knowing which were the intermediate goals established during the evaluation cycle:

> Since we are not fully aware of the intermediate goals, we do not have inputs for the answer. (team 6, ADMT).
>
> The intermediate goals are defined in meetings from which sometimes we do not participate, and their publicity is given through e-mails or verbally when emails are not effective. (team 2, ADMA).
>
> There is a deficiency in the dissemination and socialization of goals and their interrelationships. (team 4, SP).

Once again, reports that state the difficulty to determine how intermediate goals can be broken down into daily work routines are identified. According to Vakaslahti (1997), there will be adherence to new ways of thinking about work if personnel can extract meaning of what is demanded of them. It is the task of an HRA to encourage the normalization of these new behaviors at work. There seems to be a lack of vision in relation to the goals at the macro level, and functional activities at a more individual level. Hence, people do not adhere not because they do not want to but, because what is expected from them in terms of the level of maturity desired is unknown.

> We see an alignment, but we do not know how this is achieved. (team 5, SP).
>
> In practice, much of the work performed is not reflected in the goals. There is an attempt to align the goals, but it does not always happen. It would be interesting to make efforts on the part of the <dome> and the organizational units aiming to the alignment and the optimization of resources. (team 2, SP).

Isolated initiatives indicate that there seem to be already informal operative groups that attempt to decompose these intermediate goals into a reality of work. Informal groups in organizational maturity models, according to Lockamy and McCormack (2004) and Neuhauser (2004), are an important ally for incorporating new thinking into organizational management practices, and should always be supported. According to an administrative analyst (team 3), "*the team meets and discusses how to aggregate goals to activities*".

1.2 Performance Planning Strategies

There seems to be a consensus among participants about the need of planning at the individual and organizational levels for the success of the evaluation cycle. The role of leadership is also essential for the subordinate to understand expectations and performance goals.

> There is a work plan that indicates the individual contribution of each server. It is formally established with deadlines for accomplishing the tasks. (team 4, SP).
>
> Yes, there is planning. The boss and the server define the goals, being the boss in a more authoritative position. The negotiation is directed by the boss. (team 2, SP).
>
> There are individual goals, agreed with the immediate boss, annually. The non-compliance impacts directly the performance evaluation of the server, and eventually remuneration. (team 4, ADMT).
>
> [...] [goals] are defined in a negotiation process with the unit owners, considering the overall goals of the institution and each organizational unit. (team 4, ADMA).

There seems to be a disparity between planning, an institutionalized activity within the organization, and isolated actions which do not have systematization. Without planning, according to Albino, Horti and Manfrinato (2008), the best practices of Maturity of Performance Management cannot be identified in the early stage level. Consequently, it is not possible to reinforce what is working positively to manage improvements. The unsystematic intuition also seems to be the way found by some leaders of the organization to define goals and agree on performance, as seen below.

> There is planning, but less often than desirable. As a rule, a more traditional type of planning is adopted, dictated by the management. (team 7, ADMT).
>
> Formally yes. In practice, almost nothing. (team 5, SP).
>
> This does not happen. The definition is exclusive to the boss. There is no continuous feedback. The work plan is already prepared by the management. (team 1, ADMT).
>
> Such planning is non-existent, since work is given by agendas, and when there is something new, it is distributed among servers with a certain execution time, however, there is no planning of activities. (team 2, ADMA).
>
> Planning happens in some cases. Predefined or tacitly. (team 6, ADMT).

1.3 Monitoring Strategies / Performance Monitoring

Performance Monitoring is carried out by the boss, either by observation, supervising or by reporting activities. The role of leadership is fundamental to the creation of a management culture and its incorporation into the organizational culture. Without the involvement of the high superior, the current level of maturity will hardly be developed or perfected.

> The boss monitors the subordinate's performance through interactions with the coordinators. If the monitoring presents some deficiency, it may be proposed to reassign tasks and / or learning actions. Brings results. (team 2, ADMT).
>
> There is performance monitoring through individual goal tracking reports for performance improvement. (team 1, SP).

Other monitoring strategies relate to continuous feedback meetings between heads and subordinates, as well as computerized systems (logbooks) and spreadsheets specially made for this purpose. Actions taken in regards to supervision results are also important when guiding servers that had performance failures. These actions taken increase the chances of obtaining competent performance.

> In addition to the evaluating on the fulfillment of work plans, there is a periodic performance evaluation, including the perception of bonuses. (team 4, SP).
>
> It happens through queries of reports of used systems and control worksheets existing in each area. In most areas no action is taken during monitoring. There is no link between learning actions and performance. (team 5, ADMT).
>
> Follow-up occurs through individual and team meetings where feedback is given and the scope of work plans is discussed. However, not all units do this. Monitoring allows both the adoption of actions that make feasible correction of sub or oversized plans, but this does not occur in all units. (team 4, ADMA).
>
> It gives result and opportunity to reinforce or correct certain behaviors. (team 1, ADMA).
>
> Monitoring results, reconsider of poorly evaluated servers; however, this does not apply to all offices and areas. (team 7, ADMT).

Once again, based on the presented reports, there is a need to implement a formally established culture oriented on how and what to monitor. The work plan should be the basic parameter. Nevertheless, intervening actions, if any, should be systematically established by organizational managers. The lack of systematization influences each individual to monitor in their own way, causing lack of standardization.

> Monitoring varies greatly from area to area, depending on the superintendent. The accompaniment is almost personal, the HRA takes a position observer only. Episodes of friction between the boss and the server compromise evaluation. Monitoring happens sporadically, there is a process of monitoring / communication / improvement of the work performed by the server. There is no link between performance and training. (team 2, SP).
>
> Yes, in our areas there is a coordination team responsible for monitoring individual and intermediate goals. This monitoring is quarterly. Monitoring allows modification of goals or work routines in the middle of the cycle, which can be considered a good result. However, there is no specific link between the goals and the training plan (as has been said, this is

> the sole responsibility of the server, the management team does not participate). (team 4, ADMT).

There are also perceptions about the lack of monitoring. Once again, it seems that the fact that there is no systematization formally existent in regards to supervision, which might affect personnel's understanding of what monitoring means. Monitoring can be intuitively implemented but, it needs to be standardized in order to be managed within the organization.

> That only happens in performance evaluation. It is not a continuous work. There is no monitoring. (team 1, ADMT).
>
> There is no monitoring. The monitoring that exists today in the areas is binary: it has or has not achieved the goal. (team 5, SP).
>
> There is performance evaluation. Monitoring performance not. Even the site is outdated in this regard. The work plans of the areas do not contemplate monitoring. (team 5, ADMA).
>
> It could be done more often and there needs to be more dialogue with the boss. There is not always a perceptible monitoring result. (team 7, SP).
>
> There is no monitoring. Only on the day of the evaluation there is a small feedback. This does not happen because the monitoring culture is not encouraged in the organization. If there was monitoring, there could be a noticeable improvement in server performance. (team 3, ADMT).

As reported, in general, Performance Management in the organization shows signs that it is in the stage of Performance Planning and Monitoring. Due to its low standardization and institutionalization, there is great variation between organizational units of practices, methods of performance management and, the involvement of managers and servers in the process. The qualitative analysis of the process allowed not only to verify the technical dimension but also, to highlight the sociocultural and structural elements of the organizational environment that influence the institutionalization of a performance culture.

CONCLUSION

The objective of this study was to present, from the perspective of key people, the level of maturity of Performance Management within the scope of a regulatory agency of the Federal Government. A maturity model can be conceived as a structured collection of data and information that describe certain aspects of organizational practice under analysis, in this case, Performance Management. A maturity model provides a reference point for the development of these practices, considering the benefits of users in previous experiences. Additionally, it takes into account a common vocabulary and a shared vision oriented to the standardization and prioritization of actions.

Characteristics of maturity models applied to organizational studies are required for a clear identification of elements that improve throughout time. Thus, when considering a theoretical model based on levels, it is necessary to identify the variables to generate a certain configuration in each level. Additionally, it is important to identify characteristics that signal change from one level to another in the course of time.

That said, it is considered that the overall objective of this work has been fully achieved. Performance Management Practice was identified in the organization, including the maturity levels based on literature models. It is considered that there was an understanding, in this study, of the causes that would help to define the most significant improvements for the organization in regards to effective implementation of the analyzed practice.

In terms of contributions, it is expected that this article will stimulate other human resources systems in other organizations to also be measured in terms of their evolutionary level and degree of maturity. Understanding the current status of practices will allow for a more refined analysis of the perception of HR practices. The theoretical contribution of organizational maturity to performance management is still minor in the scientific literature of organizational behavior.

It is still considered that a maturity model can be used to evaluate different organizations. At this point, it is recommended, for future studies, that other regulatory agencies of the Federal Government are researched in order to have a longitudinal comparative diagnosis of them. Other organizational practices can also be compared, such as training policy and competency management, for example. In this way, other distant components on performance management may influence the performance.

Furhtermore, it is recommended to make analyzes of organizational subcultures, most probably defined according to the type of career (analyst, technical or specialist) that can determine sub-levels of maturity. The degree of formalization of practices from the point of view of human resources' managers also needs to be identified in order to verify if there is any mismatch from the point of view of planners and implementers of these practices.

In regards to limitations, it is emphasized that the type of data collection was transversal and a single source of data collection was used. If there was access to the procedures manuals on the performance evaluation cycle, it is believed that such documents could impact data collected based on participants' perceptions and beliefs.

Performance Management is still at the stage of uncertainty and lack of standardization and systematization of practice. Social groups' processes, such as the sharing of attitudes and beliefs about the importance of performance management, seem to be decisive in their incidence.

It is also important to emphasize the role of leadership in the maturity of practice. Without the involvement of the top, it is difficult to achieve the desired levels of maturity (expertise).

Another aspect to be considered is communication, which should also be encouraged, especially through informal means.

For future studies, it is recommended a large-scale survey to be conducted in the organization, with a quantitative approach, having into account measured perceptions on Performance Management found in literature. It is also recommended to identify what individuals share with each other when trying to apply the assumptions of Performance Management.

It is assumed that literature derived from social cognition, can be incorporated in scientific literature on Performance Management. Other aggregate variables, related mainly to the components of the organizational structure, such as systems of authority, decision of autonomy and power relations, are able to help in understanding the level of maturity of the organization studied.

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