MANAGEMENT DIVERSITY AND HUMAN RESOURCES POLICIES AND PRACTICES IN HIGH EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

A DIVERSIDADE GERACIONAL E AS POLÍTICAS E PRÁTICAS DE RECURSOS HUMANOS EM INSTITUIÇÕES DE ENSINO SUPERIOR

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ABSTRACT

This article investigates the perception of the workers in High Education Institutions (HEIs) in the State of Santa Catarina (SC), it is based on six Human Resources policies, under the perspective of generational diversity. The research's nature was quantitative, based on description and survey. Data collection was carried out using the scale of the Human Resources Policies and Practices (EPPRH), validated in Brazil by Demo in 2008. A total of 409 workers from eleven HEIs participated in the study. Comparatively, results were very similar, with averages close in the items investigated, comparing the generations *baby boomers*, X, Y e Z. It can be sustained that in the HR policies and practices in HEIs all generations usually converge on the thinking and perceptions related to them. The interviewees showed indifference or unawareness about the policies that were studied, since their existence and/or effectiveness were not expressly perceived, it would be advisable for HEI to re-think their proposals, models of implementation and dissemination of these themes. Further research is suggested in view of differences in the belonging of HEI workers, intersectionalities of diversity, and qualitative understanding of responses.

Keywords: HR Policies and Practices, Generational Diversity, Baby Boomers Generations, X, Y and Z, Higher Education Institutions.

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RESUMO

O artigo investiga a percepção dos trabalhadores de Instituições de Ensino Superior (IES) enquadradas como comunitárias e privadas no Estado de Santa Catarina (SC), a partir de seis políticas de Recursos Humanos (RH), sob o olhar da diversidade geracional. A pesquisa foi de natureza quantitativa, tipo descritiva e levantamento (survey). Para a coleta dos dados utilizou-se a escala de Políticas e Práticas de Recursos Humanos (EPPRH), validada no Brasil por Demo, em 2008. Participaram da pesquisa 409 trabalhadores de onze IES. Os resultados foram muito semelhantes, com médias próximas nos itens investigados, entre as gerações, gerações Baby Boomers, X, Y e Z. Pode-se inferir, que as gerações de forma geral convergem em pensamento e percepções sobre as políticas e práticas de RH. Os respondentes demonstraram indiferença ou desconhecimento de suas existências e/ou efetividade, o que sugere que as IES devam repensar suas propostas, modelos de implantação e de divulgação das políticas pesquisadas. Sugere-se novas pesquisas tendo em vista diferenças de pertencimentos dos trabalhadores das IES, interseccionalidades da diversidade e compreensão qualitativa das respostas.

Palavras-chave: Políticas e práticas de RH, Diversidade Geracional, Gerações Baby Boomers, X, Y e Z, Instituições de Ensino Superior.

1 INTRODUCTION

The review of the role of people and their contributions to better organizational performance has undergone constant and profound transformations in recent decades, due to globalization, the increased use of digital technology, changes in labor relations, increasing demands for rights. and social participation, among others. The success of the intended changes has depended heavily on the ways in which organizations deal with worker engagement, promoting transparency, seeking adherence to values, objectives, policies, and developing skills and knowledge (Silveira & Maestro Filho, 2013; Ulrich, Dutra, & Nakata, 2008; Dessler, 2002; Bastos, 1997, 2002).

There is a need to identify if HR policies and practices are understood and perceived as they are planned, and otherwise work to disseminate them. These policies and practices contribute to the alignment of organizational strategies, seeking efficiency and effectiveness, but also involvement in labor relations. This knowledge, and eventually dissemination, needs to take into account the diversity of internal public looks, academic background, gender, culture, age, professional experience, among others.

In higher education institutions (HEI), whose core activities are education and academic and vocational training, this context is no different from other types of organization. Different types of workers, with their various belongings, live in HEIs, mainly teachers and administrative support staff, with views, expectations and perceptions that may differ, through numerous crossings, such as those mentioned above. This study investigated the perception of workers from community and private IESs of the State of Santa Catarina (SC), about HR policies and practices[1]. Given the wide diversity of audiences, a generational framework was sought to investigate how different generations perceive policies and practices and how they contribute to the management and adequacy of internal processes.

The study of diversity management in the context of educational organizations is still little explored, although much debated, and of great relevance to management, especially HR. The debate about diversity in IESs generally refers to the inclusion of students in the academic environment, accessibility, rights of different minority groups, among others. Although diversity management is a controversial topic, it is clear that the level of inclusion and access of workforce diversity is gaining evidence in organizations around the world (Triandis, 2003).

1 The term Human Resources (HR) was kept in the text for reasons of consistency with the scale used, although the authors prefer the term Personnel Management and Labour Relations.

The meaning of the term diversity in the organizational context is neither immediate nor univocal. There are many approaches to the subject (Nkomo & Cox, 1998; Fleury, 2000; Mazur, 2010). Most authors who study the subject conceive it from the differences between groups of individuals (Mannix & Neale, 2005). Cox and Blake (1991) pointed out that some of these differences became more evident in the workforce from the 2000s onwards and would be mainly related to racial ethnic minorities and gender, especially studies of women at work. According to these authors, with a more managerial approach, the appreciation of diversity should be managed in organizations, aiming at both improving the work environment and achieving competitive advantage.

In other words, historical struggles for rights and identity recognition would be pressuring companies to embrace inclusive and non-discriminatory workplace practices. Responding to this pressure, organizations would be looking for ways to bring HR policies closer to different group expectations, including age or generational belonging.

This article is dedicated to generational diversity. The debate on the theme of generational diversity allows us to consider that this demographic factor influences organizations, as different age groups generate expectations of certain behavioral patterns. The dynamics of different age groups and interpersonal relationships can act to benefit or harm the work environment, becoming elements of HR attention in organizations (Cordeiro, Freitag, Fischer, & Albuquerque, 2011).

In the last few years, the number of studies on generations has grown, especially from a chronological perspective, that is, the definition and formation of a generation based on a set of common experiences, which generate worldviews. These would be shared by individuals who lived and lived within the same historical period (Pouget, 2010). From this perspective, the twentieth century would have been the scene of four generations: traditional; baby boomers; Generation X or baby busters and Generation Y.

As HR policies assume special connotation in the development, appreciation and retention of talent, Legge (1995) argues that proper HR policies can promote worker commitment. Also, according to the author, an organizational strategy aimed at offering value-added services should concern the development and implementation of HR policies that facilitate people to perform better, which would constitute "the difference that makes the difference".

This article is based on the belief that generational differences are pertinent to assessing the acceptance of HR policies, since society and labor relations have changed very quickly and requested constant adjustments in the ways in which individuals and groups live in organizations. . Thus, this study starts from the understanding that individuals with different experiences and historical-generational belongings would have different perceptions and expectations about HR policies.

The article is organized into five sections. The first, here concluded, is intended to present, problematize and justify the importance of the theme analyzed. The second presents the theoretical review, the third, the method used, as well as the population profile. The fourth section deals with the analysis and discussion of the results, and finally, in the fifth one, we have the conclusions of the study.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT

There are many lines of thought that seek to define diversity. The most commonly used one conceives diversity as a social identity, that is, differences between groups of individuals. For Cross (1992), for example, diversity is understood as the differentiation of one

group of individuals from other groups. In this sense, diversity is not related to the differences of individuals in particular, but of one group in relation to others. On the other hand, Kandola and Fullerton (1994) conceive diversity from personal identity and that its meaning is directly related to the individual in a group, that is, the differences in identity, personality and behavior. Particular characteristics that differentiate individuals from each other, including dimensions such as background, personality, and behavioral style, would mark diversity.

Most authors who approach diversity seem to converge that it is with the differences between groups of individuals (Mannix & Neale, 2006). However, the differences between these refer to the delimitation on the sources of these differences. For Pereira and Hanashiro (2007), addressing the sources of differences between groups is a complex task. They can be defined by visible characteristics under which people have little or no control, such as race, gender, age and physical attributes. Still, they can be delimited by characteristics adopted, renounced or modified by the conscious and deliberate choice of individuals such as education, income and marital status.

Managing diversity can be broadly understood as an organization's perception of the diversity of its staff and the surrounding society, how it works to include that diversity and to raise awareness among its internal public about its importance. As already mentioned, it is currently a hotly debated topic of great relevance to management, specifically Human Resources.

Diversity management involves a set of policies and practices for including and integrating people and groups with different social identities than most in the organization. It is known from the historical disadvantages in the labor market for women, blacks, people with disabilities, people from 45 years of age, among others, and that the inclusion or access of these groups does not occur spontaneously. Diversity management would serve to alleviate inequalities in the organizational environment (Fleury, 2000; Hanashiro, Torres, Ferdman, & D'Amario, 2011).

Managing diversity means value added to the organization, while at the same time maximizing its performance, it can provide organizational image gains in society. Esteves (2000) points out that hiring and valuing workers from different groups makes the work environment more similar to the surrounding society.

Research has contributed to the understanding of the possible relationships between HR and organizational performance. This field is more challenging as a company's human resources are characterized by diversity, whether demographic, gender, age, race or nationality; as other distinguishing characteristics of individuals and groups (Trigueiro-Sanchez, Sanchez-Appeláñiz, & Guillen, 2012). Diversity management in organizations presents itself as a competitive opportunity, due to the emergence of new companies and businesses, changes in professional profiles and consumer relations (Bulgarelli, 2008).

Diversity in the workplace is a topic of interest and relevance in the corporate world. Cox (1994) understands diversity management as a set of planning and execution actions and policies that aim to positively use organizational differences, as well as to avoid their possible disadvantages. According to the author, at least three major organizational objectives are achieved with these policies: social responsibility, legal obligations and improved results. The first would be linked to the ethical aspect, to the fact that it is morally fair for organizations to make room for different people. The legal aspect refers, above all, to compliance with laws that determine the percentage hiring of representatives of a specific group, such as people with disabilities. Compliance with this objective protects the organization against any accusations of prejudice or resulting legal proceedings. Sales (2016), with regard to performance, or improvement of results, as Cox (1994), argues that an environment where diversity prevails is more creative, innovative, has better problem solving and communication works better.

Following the analysis of organizational performance, Siqueira et al. (2016) argue that an environment in which diversity prevails is more creative, innovative, providing greater problem solving capacity and facilitating communication. Presotti (2011) understands that the atmosphere provided by diversity is composed of individual level factors, such as identity, prejudice, stereotypes; by group factors: cultural differences, ethnocentrism and intergroup conflicts; organizational factors such as acculturation, structural and informal integration and influences of Human Resources policies.

Podsiadlowski, Groschke, Kogler, Springer, & Zee (2013) recognize discordant understandings and even theoretical inconsistencies about diversity management, which present a simplified picture of the reality of organizations. Theoretical inconsistencies are mainly due to the lack of understanding of the differences and similarities between group and organizational levels, being marked by the simple extension from one level to another. "Processes at the organizational level are much more complex and therefore need deeper consideration" (Podsiadlowski et al., 2013, p. 171).

For the present study, the diversity characteristics addressed are age-related differences in identity, expectations and behavior, thus focusing on the management of generational diversity of different age groups in organizations.

2.1.1 Generational Diversity Management

In the last decade, the debate about generations has been highlighted in academic management studies, especially in HR research. These are studies with more or less prescriptive positions, which interest this research as markers of group differences. According to Mannheim (1993), a generation can be understood as part of the historical process that individuals of the same age share, the potentiality of witnessing the same events, experiencing experiences, and similarly processing them. For the author, generation is an important analytical dimension for understanding the dynamics of social change and ways of thinking and acting of an era. For him, there are two central elements to the constitution of a generation: the presence of events that break historical continuity and the experience of these moments by members of an age group in their socialization processes (adolescence and early adulthood), predisposing them. certain ways of thinking and acting.

Generation, being a demographic attribute, can be used to categorize individuals and is important in people's decisions, behaviors and actions because they use them as a basis for social comparison (Lawrence & Tolbert, 2007). In practice, generational diversity has been one of the biggest challenges experienced by HR in organizations, requiring it to establish management practices that aim to manage the different generations living in the organizational environment, for example, to organize career strategies that they range from young entrants to workers with home time near retirement. According to Cordeiro et al. (2011), even though with different approaches, studies in this field agree that there are four generations currently coexisting in the workplace: the Veterans, Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y. The authors differ in the birth dates that separate generations, but do not differ significantly in their characteristics.

The debate on the theme of generational diversity allows us to consider that, as a demographic factor, generations exert influences on organizations, as they generate expectations of behavioral patterns that impact on group dynamics and work relationships. These generational expectations or behavioral patterns may act to benefit or harm the work environment and, therefore, must be carefully considered by organizations (Cordeiro et al., 2011).

As mentioned earlier, studies of generations in organizations have increased, especially from a chronological perspective. This perspective understands that individuals who lived in the same historical period share a set of common experiences, worldviews, etc. that would influence their behaviors, values, beliefs, among others (Pouget, 2010). From this perspective, organizations today would have four different generations: traditional; baby boomers; Generation X or baby busters and Generation Y.

The Veterans, born before 1950, are oriented by the practical sense, dedicated to work, the authority is established by respect and hierarchy, recognize the importance of sacrifice to achieve goals. Baby boomers, born between 1951 and 1964, are optimistic and strongly work-centered, have a sense of love and hate for authority, seek leadership by consensus, and feel responsible for their encouragement to work. Generations X, born between 1965 and 1977, are skeptical, with little attachment to hierarchies, seek leadership for competence, and advocate for a more informal work environment. Finally, Gen Y, born after 1978, are more individualistic and expect a better world. Decided, they defend their opinions and seek professional insertion without compromising their personal life, as they prioritize it over professional life (Oliveira, Piccinini, & Bitencourt, 2011).

The major challenge for HR is to identify and adopt the best practices of generational diversity management in order to manage the different age groups that coexist in the same organizational environment, marked by significant differences in ways of being and living, with behaviors and behaviors. sometimes conflicting values.

2.2 COMMUNITY AND PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

In the last thirty years, the HEIs have undergone several changes, due to the modernization of society, which reflected in the educational processes. The growth of paid employment has aroused interest in young people in higher education, as well as professionals seeking career growth. Breaking taboos and stereotypes related to gender, race or ethnicity, among other social demands, also contributed to the increased search and access to education. What was once considered exclusive to elites has become popular and affordable. As a result, there was a large expansion of private HEIs in Brazil, generating greater competition between them and with this the need for innovation in the processes of student attraction, such as teaching quality, competitive pricing, marketing, qualified faculty, among others. Thus, higher education institutions have become complex organizations that must compete to survive (Sampaio, 1991; Pochmann, 2012).

HEIs have been charged in a differentiated from traditional development: for better results, lower administrative and operational costs, more qualified students for the job market. Preserving and renewing are dilemmas of this transforming force of society (Monção Neto, 2000). For this, HEIs need HR practices that can guarantee or facilitate the achievement of results expected by internal and external audiences (Lopes, 1999).

In this context, HEIs are increasingly addressing the need and advantages of strategically developing their HR policies and practices. The current competitive environment between HEIs, in addition to economic, technological, social and political changes, have required a more strategic positioning as a way of identifying trends and proposing changes in line with the desired future. Even considering that the general scenario in recent years, due to different crises in the country, is of little progress and difficulties in identifying and adopting practices that may lead to development in the HR area. This statement starts from the instability of the Brazilian labor market in recent years, aggravated by other institutional and economic crises, which generate a

context of uncertainty and expectations. Finally, even in this scenario, strategic HR management is important to contemplate new practices in order to meet the challenges of new working relationships, the social context and the growing demand for diversity.

2.2.1 HEI HR Policies and Practices

In the current scenario, organizations in general, HEIs in particular, compete for space in a competitive market. Thus, companies are expected to perceive people as strategic rather than inputs or resources. It is important that they reformulate HR policies and practices to reconcile expectations of the organization with those of its employees. Dutra (2006, p.16) states that "the development of the organization is directly related to its ability to develop people and to be developed by people". Several studies have been conducted to identify the factors that drive people to achieve their goals. In HEIs no different, they are directed to adopt HR practices that support and encourage workers, whether teaching or technical-administrative, offering alternative benefits and incentives, capable of attracting and maintaining a qualified and committed workforce.

The relationship between organizations and people is based on mutual dependence and mutual benefits (Lima, Paiva, Aderaldo Neto, & Aquino, 2015). The relationships between companies and workers continually alternate with social transformations, reinforcing the importance of research and debate on HR policies and practices in organizations. New ways must be constantly sought to reconcile personal and organizational expectations. It is also necessary to rethink the concept of career and diversity management, considering the growing appreciation of interpersonal and social group differences that coexist in organizations.

The understanding of HR policy and practice studies on the strategic and relevant role of the area, which would have superseded the traditional supportive view and constituted essential organizational competence, is based on the belief that people are the main protagonists in production. knowledge, innovation and organizational skills. These capabilities derive from the redefinition and redistribution of HR policies, practices, functions, and professionals (Ulrich, Halbrook, Meder, Stuchlik, & Thorpe, 1991). Thus, HR policies are important as they are aligned with the organization's goals and provide the conditions for people to effectively contribute to achieving results (Demo, Fogaça, Nunes, Edrei, & Francischeto, 2011). Clearly, the position of the authors in this area is that HR is no longer merely a "people management" sector, but moves to a more influential and strategic level in organizations, becoming crucial to the achievement of organizational goals.

In this understanding, HR policies and practices favorably affect the performance of organizations. In turn, the effectiveness and acceptance of HR policies are related to organizational values and cultures. Finally, there is some consensus that these practices produce superior organizational performance when they are used together and integrated with business strategies (Guest & Hoque, 1994).

According to Armstrong (2009), HR policies define the positioning, expectations and values of the organization when it comes to the treatment of individuals, and also serve as a reference point for the development of organizational practices and decisions made. people, as well as promoting more equitable treatment among individuals.

In short, it is clear that HR policies can take on a special connotation in developing, valuing and retaining talent. In this sense, Legge (1995) argues that adequate HR policies should promote workers' commitment and, as a consequence, a willingness to act flexibly and adaptively towards the search for better results in organizations. Also according to the author, a business strategy aimed

at producing and offering value-added products and services should concern the development and implementation of HR policies that contribute to the high quality of performance.

Current studies on the subject point to these HR policies related mainly to recruitment and selection; involvement; training, development and education; work conditions; performance evaluation and selection; and, remuneration and rewards. In short, it is clear that policies assume a special connotation in the development, appreciation and retention of talent.

The HR policies and practices considered in this study were based on the literature discussed here, to identify workers' perceptions about them, through a Human Resources Policies and Practices (EPPRH in portuguese) scale, validated in Brazil by Demo (2008). . In order to point out possibilities for managing the generational diversity in HEI, these perceptions were stratified by generation. In the next section will be presented the methodological procedures used in the study.

3 METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

The study is quantitative in nature - adequate when it aims to discover and verify relationships between variables (Beuren, 2010; Malhotra, 2001). The research was non-experimental in character; (b) parametric; (c) transverse (Malhotra, 2001; Hair, Black, Badin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2009); (d) descriptive - which describes the characteristics of a given population or phenomenon using standardized data collection techniques - parametric, such as questionnaires (Gil, 2007); and (e) survey, which is indicated for descriptive research and suitable for conducting self-administered research, that is, in which the respondent can understand the research and perform it without the researcher's help, with or without the help of the internet (Almeida & Botelho, 2006).

The sample universe consisted of 409 active workers from 11 private community HEIs in Santa Catarina. Participation was free and voluntary. For data collection we used the full version scale of Human Resources Policies and Practices (EPPRH) (Demo, Neiva, Nunes, Rozzett, 2014). The scale model was a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (total disagreement with the statement) to 5 (total agreement with the statement). The scale consists of 40 closed questions, which were associated with 10 other questions to identify the sample profile, included by the researchers. For Hair et al. (2009) this type of scale requires a minimum sample size of 400 subjects to meet the research reliability requirements.

The formatting and dissemination of the scale was done through the public domain google forms online search tool and available for free on the internet. The link to the questionnaire was emailed to the HEI press officers, to be disseminated and distributed to all workers. The survey began on June 12 and ended on October 20, 2017.

In order to analyze the results of the PPRH scale, the questions were divided according to Demo et al. (2014), in six HR policies: (i) recruitment and selection (table 1 - questions 1 to 6); (ii) involvement (table 2 - questions 7 to 18); (iii) training, development and education (table 3 - questions 19 to 24); (iv) working conditions (table 4 - questions 25 to 30); (v) performance and competency assessment (table 5 - questions 31 to 35); and (vi) remuneration and rewards (table 6 - questions 36 to 40).

The interpretation of the results followed the instructions of Demo et al. (2014) "the higher the value of the arithmetic mean obtained, the more the respondent attests to their agreement with the evaluated content". The averages from 1 to 2.9 were considered as disagreement, respondent who does not know or do not agree with the policy; from 3 to 3.9 indicates that the respondent is indifferent to politics; and 4 to 5 was considered to be in accordance with the pol-

icy. Data were prepared in Excel, tabulated and analyzed with the aid of SPSS software (version 22). Mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum values were analyzed - descriptive and univariate statistics (Dancey & Reidy, 2013).

The following sections present the results of the individual analyzes of each policy.

4 DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

4.1 PARTICIPANTS PROFILE

The study had 409 participants from various entities whose names were preserved. In all there were 11 private and community HEIs in the state of Santa Catarina. The participation was stratified as follows: HEI A (0.2%), HEI B (0.7%), HEI C (3.4%), HEI D (19.6%), HEI E (2.7 %), HEI F (2.0%), HEI G (6.6%), HEI H (1.2%), HEI I (7.6%), HEI J (7.6%), and HEI L (48.4%). It was noted the predominance of participation of HEI L and D workers. This incidence can be explained by greater dissemination of research internally, willingness of people to participate and answer the questionnaires.

Regarding the profile of respondents, females were predominant (62.80%) over males (37.20%); the age group was concentrated between 26 to 37 (41.80%) and 38 to 51 (32.50%), which correspond to generations Y and X respectively; baby boomers (52 to 68 years) accounted for 15.59% and generation Z (up to 25 years) the smallest, with 9.30%. Thus, we can see the presence of four generations in the HEI, even with the predominance of the most active in the labor market today, ie people between 25 and 50 years.

The predominant time of service is less than 10 years (63.10%), and above that time has 36.90% of respondents. Most are married, 67.70%, and the others are single, widowed or divorced, 32.3%. About the level of education 80.2% are postgraduates. Working in the academic area are 41.1%, in the administrative area 34.2% and simultaneously in both areas 24.7%. The training of participants was diverse, but the highest concentration was in the following areas: (a) Administration (19.8%); (b) Engineering (11.3%); (c) Law (7.6%); (d) Accounting Sciences (5.6%); (e) Psychology (4.9%); (f) Biological Sciences (4.4%); and (g) Social Communication (3.9%).

Finally, analyzing the question of the profile of the respondents and relating it to the main theme of this study - generational diversity - draws attention to the relevant participation of individuals belonging to generations Y and X. The results indicate that, the research was mostly answered by individuals belonging to generations Y (41.80%) and X (32.50%), percentages that together represent practically 75% of the total population of respondents, ie 3/4 of the surveyed universe. This data is relevant because there are respondents from age groups who have possibly experienced several employment situations or, if one job, a few years of work. These subjects are in qualified positions to opine on human resources policies and practices.

4.2 INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE HR POLICY PERCEPTION SCALE (PPRH)

In Table 1, the data refer to the **recruitment and selection** policy. Questions 1 through 6 were analyzed, which are: **1.** Are the candidates recruitment processes (external and internal) for positions in the organization where I work widely publicized? **2.** Are the selection processes in the organization where I work disputed, attracting competent people? **3.** The selection tests of the organization I work for are conducted by qualified and impartial people. **4.** The organization I work for uses various selection tools (eg, selection process, interviews, tests, etc.). **5.** The

organization I work for discloses to applicants information regarding the steps and criteria of the selection process. **6.** The organization where I work communicates to candidates their performance at the end of the selection process. The individual results of each question were compiled by generation and the overall averages and standard deviations for the entire research universe were calculated.

It was noted in Table 1 that the perception of the generations about the HEI **recruitment and selection** policy does not differ substantially. According to Demo et al. (2014) this result indicates agreement among participants as it is clear that this policy exists. It is known that in HEI the selection process is standardized, which may explain the result. In the analysis of Table 1 also draws attention that the highest averages of agreement, very close to each other, are the generations X and Z, which according to the theory analyzed have quite different behavioral characteristics.

Those born in the Generation X period are more skeptical, seek a career based on personal development and skills, while individuals in the so-called Generation Y are more individualistic and put the profession above, or in tune with, their personal life. collective values, for a better world (Oliveira et al., 2011). From the results, it can be thought that current recruitment and selection policies satisfy both generational emphasis, both of professional merit and of valuing individual initiatives at work.

Table 1 - Perception of generations regarding the HEI recruitment and selection policy

Questions 1 to 6	BABY BOOMERS 65 respondents		GENERATION X 132 respondents		GENERATION Y 175 respondents		GENERATION Z 38 respondents	
	Average	Standard deviation	Average	Standard deviation	Average	Standard deviation	Average	Standard deviation
Overall Average	4,02	0,99	4,15	0,97	4,09	1,02	4,14	0,97

Source: elaborated by the authors

Table 2 compiled the data regarding the **involvement** policy. The questions 7 to 18 were analyzed: **7.** The organization where I work follows the adaptation of its collaborators[2] to their positions. **8.** The organization where I work cares about my well-being. **9.** The organization where I work treats me with respect and attention. **10.** The organization I work for seeks to meet my professional needs and expectations. **11.** The organization where I work encourages my participation in decision making and problem solving. **12.** The organization where I work encourages the integration of its employees (eg get-together, social and sporting events, etc.). **13.** The organization where I work recognizes what I do and the results I present (eg, compliments, stories in internal newspapers, etc.). **14.** In the organization where I work, employees and their managers enjoy the constant exchange of information for the good performance of their duties. **15.** In the organization where I work, there is an atmosphere of understanding and trust from bosses towards their employees. **16.** In the organization where I work, there is an atmosphere of trust and cooperation among co-workers. **17.** The organization where I work privileges autonomy in performing tasks and making decisions. **18.** In the organization where I work, there is consistency between management discourse and practice.

In this policy of **involvement**, it is clear that the respondents showed indifference to the issues addressed. Considering the content of the questions, this item was insufficient in the communication between organizations and workers, information exchange and cooperation, among others. Lack of feedback can create dissatisfaction or make the work environment unfavorable, it

2 The expression "collaborator (s)" was kept in the text in the excerpts where the questions of the scale are mentioned, for methodological coherence. Throughout the text the expressions "worker" and "workers" are used, by the authors' preference.

can also be a driver of turnover, as it reflects the trust between workers and HEIs. When analyzing the result comparing generations, it is noted that the averages are very close, being the highest of them the generation Z, which even being a markedly individualistic generation, seems to appreciate more the institution's policy of involvement with its workers.

One factor to be considered in this policy, considering the issues proposed by the instrument, is that the workforce of the HEI is quite diverse. If we think about factors influencing the involvement of teaching and technical-administrative workers, we might be surprised at the differences. There are numerous factors that can contribute to these differences: from work organization, salary, workload, to expectations, autonomy, participation in end or middle activities, among many other elements and characteristics that distinguish the types of job. It can be assumed that for HEI teachers involvement means different things from those suggested by the instrument, perhaps more directed to administrative workers. This kind of consideration can help put into perspective the analysis of other HR policies considered in the instrument. In doing so, it is not intended to relativize the application of the instrument but, on the contrary, to value the diversity of the groups of HEI workers.

Table 2 - Perception of generations regarding the policy of HEI involvement

Questions 7 to 18	BABY BOOMERS 65 respondents		GENERATION X 132 respondents		GENERATION Y 175 respondents		GENERATION Z 38 respondents	
	Average	Standard deviation	Average	Standard deviation	Average	Standard deviation	Average	Standard deviation
Overall Average	3,70	1,08	3,75	1,07	3,75	1,07	3,90	1,02

Source: elaborated by the authors

For the analysis of the **training, development and education** policy, we compiled the data in Table 3, with the analysis of questions 19 to 24: **19.** The organization where I work helps me to develop the skills necessary for the proper accomplishment of my duties. (eg training, participation in congresses, etc.). **20.** The organization where I work invests in my development and education, providing my personal and professional growth broadly (eg full or partial sponsorship for undergraduate, postgraduate, language courses, etc.). **21.** I can apply to my work the knowledge and behaviors learned in the training / events I attend. **22.** The organization where I work encourages learning and knowledge production. **23.** In the organization where I work, training needs are raised periodically. **24.** In the organization where I work, the training is evaluated by the participants.

In this **training, development and education** policy, it was noticed from the averages that the respondents showed indifference to the questions addressed. Even in the case of educational institutions, where knowledge is central to the functioning and organizational structure, respondents did not perceive this item as strong or expressive in HEIs. Perhaps it is a policy that is little publicized, or that does not meet the needs of respondents.

In the case of teaching professionals, who are not normally dedicated exclusively to a single private HEI, this perception may reflect little information about policies, or the perception of scarcity of resources. The analysis between the answers presented by the different generations allows us to conclude that regarding the training, development and education policy, the baby boomer and Z generations are the ones that most positively perceive these practices. Identifying for leadership could justify these outcomes, pursued through empowerment for baby boomers, or by the ideal of a better, more qualified world for generation Z. In order to improve the perception of this HR policy in HEIs, it is recommended that the models used be revised to create value for the institutions and recognition by the internal public.

Table 3 - Perception of generations regarding the HEI training, development and education policy

Questions 19 to 24	BABY BOOMERS 65 respondents		GENERATION X 132 respondents		GENERATION Y 175 respondents		GENERATION Z 38 respondents	
	Average	Standard deviation	Average	Standard deviation	Average	Standard deviation	Average	Standard deviation
Overall Average	3,96	1,04	3,89	1,11	3,88	1,08	3,97	1,07

Source: elaborated by the authors

For the analysis of the **working conditions** policy, the data were compiled in Table 4. We analyzed the issues from 25 to 30: **25.** The organization where I work is concerned with my health and quality of life. **26.** The organization where I work offers me basic benefits (eg health insurance, transportation allowance, food allowance, etc.). **27.** The organization where I work offers me complementary benefits (eg, agreements with gyms, clubs and other establishments, living / resting spaces, etc.). **28.** In the organization where I work, there are actions and programs for accident prevention and incident coping. **29.** The organization I work for is concerned with the safety of its employees by controlling the access of outsiders to the company. **30.** The facilities and physical conditions (lighting, ventilation, noise and temperature) of the place where I work are ergonomic (adequate and comfortable).

In this policy of **working conditions**, it was perceived from the averages that respondents showed indifference to the questions addressed. Among all respondent generations, the generation that most positively perceived working conditions in HEIs was generation Z, with an average very close to the minimum average so that such perception would cease to be of indifference and become of positive recognition. In general, as with previous data (Table 3), respondents do not perceive benefits, or infrastructure as something that differentiates HEIs, perhaps understanding it as something standard, or the minimum necessary. This would be another item to be analyzed in HEIs, to review what has been offered, used, requested, suggested, how often, etc.

Table 4 - Generations perception regarding the HEIs working conditions policy

Questions 25 to 30	BABY BOOMERS 65 respondents		GENERATION X 132 respondents		GENERATION Y 175 respondents		GENERATION Z 38 respondents	
	Average	Standard deviation	Average	Standard deviation	Average	Standard deviation	Average	Standard deviation
Overall Averages	3,73	1,25	3,75	1,25	3,73	1,25	3,89	1,04

Source: elaborated by the authors

For the analysis of the **performance and competency assessment** policy, the data were compiled in Table 5, with the analysis of questions 31 to 35: **31.** The organization where I work conducts performance and competency assessments periodically. **32.** In the organization I work for, performance and competency assessment supports decisions about promotions and salary increases. **33.** In the organization where I work, performance and competency assessment supports the development of an employee development plan. **34.** In the organization where I work, the criteria and results of performance and competency assessment are discussed with employees. **35.** In the organization where I work, the criteria and results of performance and competency assessment are disclosed to employees.

In this policy of **performance and competency assessment** it was noticed that the respondents showed indifference to the questions addressed. Comparing the responses of different generations, it can be noted that the average remained low in all generational segments and

that the standard deviation was higher when compared to the other HR policies addressed in this study. The perception of this policy is important because the fact that the worker does not know exactly what is expected of him and his work, as well as not receiving return on performance (Table 2), makes it difficult to develop and contribute to the HEI in who works as well as can cause staff stagnation, or underestimation of skilled professionals. The indifference of workers regarding the policy of performance and competences evaluation, directly related to professional growth and remuneration, can cause lack of interest in career advancement and the construction of a solid trajectory in the organization. The analysis and proposition of improvements in this policy, to better understand what generates the perception of most workers, is necessary aiming also to increase the level of knowledge of policies (Demo et al., 2011).

Table 5 - Perception of generations regarding the policy of performance and competences evaluation of the HEI

Questions 31 to 35	BABY BOOMERS 65 respondents		GENERATION X 132 respondents		GENERATION Y 175 respondents		GENERATION Z 38 respondents	
	Average	Standard deviation	Average	Standard deviation	Average	Standard deviation	Average	Standard deviation
Overall Averages	3,42	1,26	3,33	1,30	3,33	1,30	3,18	1,31

Source: elaborated by the authors

For the analysis of the **remuneration and rewards** policy, we compiled the data in Table 6, generated by questions 36 to 40: **36.** The organization where I work offers me remuneration compatible with those offered in the market (public or private) for my function. **37.** The organization I work for offers me remuneration commensurate with my skills and training. **38.** In the organization where I work, I receive incentives (eg promotions / commissioned functions, bonuses / awards / bonuses, etc.). **39.** In defining your reward system, the organization where I work considers the expectations and suggestions of its employees. **40.** In the organization where I work, my payment is influenced by my results.

In this policy, it was noticed from the averages that the respondents again showed indifference to the questions addressed. Respondents do not seem to perceive remuneration and rewards as compatible with their efforts and the market. Satisfaction with remuneration is a controversial aspect of HR policies, as salary always incorporates needs and more is desired. However, creating ways to measure and measure satisfaction with remuneration can help organizations create an environment of satisfaction and recognition of their efforts in this regard.

In the analysis of responses by generations, the average perception presented is very similar between the different generations and the standard deviation a little high when compared with the results presented in other policies analyzed in this study. It is suggested that HEIs make efforts to broaden communication about remuneration and reward policies so that workers realize that they are valued financially by the Institution. For this, the remuneration must be competitive, that is, be balanced with the average salary offered by the market and according to the level of competence and training required for each position.

Table 6 - Generation perceptions regarding the HEI remuneration and rewards policy

Questions 36 to 40	BABY BOOMERS 65 respondents		GENERATION X 132 respondents		GENERATION Y 175 respondents		GENERATION Z 38 respondents	
	Average	Standard deviation	Average	Standard deviation	Average	Standard deviation	Average	Standard deviation
Overall Averages	3,20	1,26	3,15	1,32	3,16	1,30	3,16	1,29

Source: elaborated by the authors

In general, given the averages found in all perceptions of HR policies around 3, it is important to identify earlier that the majority of participants belong to generations Y and X. Together, the two generations represent approximately 75% of respondents and thus most participants are of personal and professional maturity. According to a theoretical survey on the theme, these subjects represent a group that has very common characteristics, such as informality, skepticism, individualism and detachment from rules and hierarchies. This may perhaps justify that among the six policies analyzed (recruitment and selection; involvement; training, development and education; working conditions; performance and competency assessment; remuneration and rewards), in five of them the result was one of indifference.

At first, an indifferent result may be considered irrelevant, but its persistence may, if no improvement actions are taken, become disagreement, causing HEI efforts to be wasted. HR policies not perceived as valid by workers are superfluous and do not add value to HR. In case of implementation of changes and improvements can increase the positive perception of workers about HR performance, which would generate greater agreement.

Thus, among the six policies addressed, only one of them, recruitment and selection, was perceived as perceptible to workers. As already mentioned, this policy is standardized in HEIs, where everyone on admission goes through the selection process. Thus, its operation is clear to respondents, who perceive it as relevant. It is understood that the fact that everyone knows and has experienced such a policy in practice makes them perceive it as a constituent part of HR. Regarding the other lesser known and / or valued policies, it is evident that clarifications, information exchange, communications and feedbacks are fundamental for their knowledge and recognition. The results indicate that HEIs need to improve their policies and management practices in the HR area, either in the form of adaptation, review or inclusion / exclusion of items that do not generate values or results for institutions. In addition, commitment to communication and employee participation in policymaking can be a differential, given the strong presence of indifference and / or lack of knowledge about HR management processes.

5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The research aimed to analyze the perceptions of HEI workers regarding HR policies and practices, from a generational perspective. The research problem arose from an initial conception that if generations lived such different social moments, with different labor markets, they would also have different perceptions of HR policies and practices (Pouget, 2010). However, the data survey revealed that the perceptions of the four generations present in HEIs in general are similar, even when comparing generations Z and Baby Boomers, which would be the most diverse in terms of social, technological and cultural experiences. The averages obtained in most of the question blocks were very close, leading to the conclusion that the HEI's HR policies and practices lead to convergent perceptions between generations.

It may also raise some more objective hypotheses about the results in relation to the research instrument, if appropriate to the realities of the investigated HEIs and, above all, if the proposed questions were properly understood. The issues seem clear and broadly applicable to organizational life and so one can think of indifference as exactly the result of the lack of HR policies or their lack of clarity, visibility and disclosure. This is a weakness of HEIs compared to other types of organizations, which may rely more on these policies to attract professionals. Educational institutions, by ethical principles linked to their own purpose, may be less subject to or seduced by market rules. Even being increasingly charged by these policies, preserving and renewing are

still dilemmas of this type of institution in society (Monção Neto, 2000). HEIs need HR practices to ensure the achievement of expected results (Lopes, 1999), but they may have to find alternative means to traditional ones, more in line with their characteristics and purposes.

People management policies and practices contribute to the alignment of organizational strategies in the search for results. Knowing people's perceptions of their practices is believed to be one of the ways to adapt internal processes to organizational goals. The research results allowed us to infer that the six HR policies examined: (i) recruitment and selection; (ii) involvement; (iii) training, development and education; (iv) working conditions; (v) performance and competency assessment; and (vi) remuneration and rewards; obtained average results, shown in Tables 2, 3, 4 and 5, being between 3 and 3.9, which indicates that the respondents are indifferent to the researched policies, that is, the workers do not expressly perceive their existence, which suggests HEIs should rethink the proposals and their disclosure model. Only the policy of Table 1, recruitment and selection, had its results between 4 and 5, indicating a significant perception among respondents.

Thus, by way of conclusion, it is noted that the perceptions of respondents are generally very similar, both in comparing the results of generations with very different knowledge, behavior and culture characteristics, such as generations Z and Baby Boomers; as in generations that have theoretically closer characteristics, such as generations X and Y. The average results were close in all the items approached and no significant differences were found, which leads to the conclusion that the generations generally converge in thought and perceptions about HR policies and practices in HEIs.

In times of precarious working relationships, these results worry those who work in the area. "Indifference" would need to be further explored by raising hypotheses regarding the reasons in future research. In this case, indifference is not an absence of meaning; on the contrary, it is a significant result and, if further investigated, may favor knowledge and changes in HR policies in HEIs.

"Heterogeneity favors the management of diversity, as it enables different perceptions and the construction of critical thinking." In the present paper, generational diversity has not been shown to be potent for the perception of basic HR processes, despite the understanding that "attitudes, cognitive functioning and beliefs are not randomly distributed in the population, but tend to vary systematically with variables. Such as age, race and gender "(Cox & Blake, 1991, p. 50). Thus, an expected consequence of increased cultural diversity in organizations is the presence of different perspectives for problem solving, decision making and creative tasks.

According to the same authors, if people of different genders, nationalities and ethnic-racial groups had different attitudes and perspectives on the same issues, cultural diversity should increase the creativity and innovation of the team. In different studies, authors have confirmed the effects of heterogeneity on group decision quality. The quality of the decision is better when neither excessive diversity nor excessive homogeneity is present (Cox & Blake, 1991; Podsiadłowski et al., 2013). Ideally speaking, a nucleus of similarity among group members would be desirable as a "core value" concept proposed in the organizational culture literature. In this way, members would share common values and norms, building compatibility with organizational objectives. "The heterogeneity of groups would need to be balanced with the need for organizational coherence and unity of action to promote harmony of decisions without curbing innovation capacity" (Cox & Blake, 1991, p. 51).

This study considered the HEIs of a specific Brazilian region, Santa Catarina, where the results were verified and can be discussed. Other limitations of the study refer to the lack of deep-

ening of some results that emerged from the survey, because they were not among the initially proposed objectives of the investigation: among them, the considerable presence of women among respondents, the possible reasons for results of indifference regarding HR policies in HEIs and the diversity of needs of the institutions' internal publics. Regarding the majority presence of women in HEI, it is always important to consider the intersectionality in studies on diversity, which was not foreseen at present, but which may be enriching results in future. As for the internal audiences, made up of teachers and administrative technicians, further deepening could occur through the use of more complex statistical techniques that would allow a broader approach to the responses and a better definition of the characteristics of the respondents. This greater specificity of internal audiences would also favor the qualitative understanding of the content of the responses, which in this study were considered indifferent, as they were between knowledge and lack of knowledge about HR policies. These limitations may be considered as recommendations for future research.

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1. Definition of research problem	√			
2. Development of hypotheses or research questions (empirical studies)	√			
3. Development of theoretical propositions (theoretical work)	√		√	
4. Theoretical foundation / Literature review		√	√	
5. Definition of methodological procedures	√			√
6. Data collection	√			√
7. Statistical analysis	√			
8. Analysis and interpretation of data		√	√	
9. Critical revision of the manuscript	√		√	
10. Manuscript writing		√	√	
11. Other (please specify)	√			