

DO YOU REALLY WANT TO KNOW? LIFE IS NOT A BED OF ROSES! HOW EMPLOYEES AND PUBLIC SERVANTS PERCEIVE LEADERSHIP, ORGANIZATIONAL VIRTUES AND HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

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1 INTRODUCTION

In their current organizational dynamics, companies need to respond more assertively and quickly to the changes and challenges imposed by new technologies, globalization, political and economic crises (González-Navarro, Zurriaga-Llorens, Tosin Olateju, & Llinares-Insa, 2018) and pandemics, such as the effects caused by COVID-19 (Carnevale & Hatak, 2020), which requires increasingly creative and resilient employees, as well as inspiring and proactive leaders in promoting healthier work environments (Salanova, Llorens, & Martínez, 2016).

Therefore, leadership can be understood as one of the driving forces that leverages this entrepreneurial dynamics (Jing, Avery, & Bergsteiner, 2020; Zhu, Chew, & Spangler, 2005). Leaders act through strategies, policies and practices, which differ depending on the public or private context in which companies operate, producing different responses in terms of employee and public servants perceptions (Demeter & Tapardel, 2013). In addition, managers need to be responsive and flexible to ensure healthier environments (Oc, 2018) and improve people's performance levels in a landscape of uncertainty (Zheng, Graham, Epitropaki, & Snape, 2020).

In this line, the leadership style will shape organizational virtues (OV) (Karakas, Sarigollu, & Uygur, 2017) and together will influence attitudes and behaviors differently in public and private organizations (González-Navarro et al., 2018; Hvidman & Andersen, 2014). Thus, the leader of the 21st century should embrace virtuosity beyond ethical behavior (Caza, Barker, & Cameron, 2004), because it has the function of fostering virtuous actions, in addition to providing support to employees (Cameron, Dutton, & Quinn, 2003). It is, also, noteworthy that the perception of organizational virtues, by employees and public servants, can incite the emergence of extra-role behaviors, increasing individual and organizational well-being in the long term, as well as promoting greater engagement at work (Rego, Ribeiro, & Cunha, 2010; Singh, David, & Mikkilineni, 2018).

Then, the leader has become a key success factor not only in the formation of the OVs (Caza et al., 2004), but also in the design and implementation of human resource management practices (HRMP) (Aktar & Pangil, 2018). The employee's willingness to contribute to the organizational performance is reinforced when there is an alignment between HRM practices and the behavior of the leader (Neves, Almeida, & Velez, 2018), which will, ultimately, corroborate to the growth of companies (Thompson, Buch, & Glasø, 2020). However, when designing these practices, managers should consider the specific conditions of each sector (Blom, Kruyen, Van der Heijden, & Van Thiel, 2020; Javed, Javed, Ahmed, & Anjun, 2019; Vanhala & Stavrou, 2013), having as vision fair practices that aim to attract, retain, motivate and develop employees in search of better organizational performance (Al-Kahtani, 2018).

In addition to the current conjuncture, the gap in the literature regarding studies that address a comparison of organizational behavior variables, such as leadership, in public and private contexts, would bring contributions for both researchers and managers (An, Meier, Bøllingtoft, & Andersen, 2019; Saeed & Ali, 2019; Zheng et al., 2020), this investigation has as its central objective to expand the debate of particular issues that may emerge in public or private companies regarding leadership, organizational virtues and HRM practices, from the perceptions of employees and public servants.

In this sense, the main objective of this study was to analyze whether the company is public or private influences the perception of employees and public servants regarding leadership, organizational virtues and HRM practices implemented in the organizations in which they work. Only by knowing these perceptions will one know about the effectiveness of strategies, policies and organizational actions. It is for this purpose that the relevance and

opportunity of this paper consists. Furthermore, the results collected can be useful for managers of both types of organizations, favoring more contextualized decision-making regarding management style, virtues and organizational practices towards more effective human resource management.

2 THEORETICAL MARK

The role of the leader as a relatively passive agent has been replaced and is currently regarded as indispensable in the inclusion and motivation of people in organizations (Buengeler, Leroy, & De Stobbeleir, 2018), in the search for the survival and growth of companies (Ayentimi, Burgess, & Brown, 2018; Bischak & Woiceshyn, 2016) and achieving shared goals (Ahmed, Rehman, Ali, Ali, & Anwar, 2018; Yukl, 2012). In this new perspective, leadership or managerial style, used as synonyms in this study, went through different contexts and times in relation to conceptualization and theories developed, until reaching the current point in the studies of organizational behavior. Bass (1990, p.11) argues that leadership focuses on persuasion and influence, defining it as "a power relationship, an instrument to achieve goals, an interaction effort, a differentiated role".

Currently, studies that propose new nomenclatures and/or that evidence leadership relationships with other variables can be highlighted in the comparison between public and private companies. Saeed and Ali (2019) investigated the relationship of authentic leadership of professors and university leaders with classroom involvement, and as a result they obtained that this relationship is greater in the private sector compared to the public sector. The authors also point out, with the bad practices of leaders, that organizations have been suffering from corruption, requiring the introduction of organizational ethics by them as a way to improve the quality of life of employees. Still regarding the evolution of studies related to leadership, González-Navarro et al. (2018) associate the moderating role of the interaction leader/followers in the relationship between envy and counterproductive behaviors at work. In this study, the type of the organization was highlighted, verifying that the relationship was confirmed for companies of the public type, but not in the private ones.

In addition, in public companies, relational studies have evidenced leadership relationships with other themes: collective leadership and collaborative governance (Shilbury, O'Boyle, & Ferkins, 2020); leadership of founders and innovation (Lee, Kim, & Bae, 2020); and participatory leadership, affective commitment and change (Rogiest, Segers, & Van Witteloostuijn, 2018). Regarding private companies, the following can be listed: shared leadership and team results (Wu, Cormican, & Chen, 2020); effective leadership and effective communication (Moreno, Navarro, & Alkazemi, 2018); service leadership and professional and managerial skills (Zheng et al., 2020).

In this sense, it can be concluded that, for the proper functioning of organizations, leadership becomes essential, even with a complex, multifaceted character (Day & Antonakis, 2012). In times of uncertainty, leaders tend to assume a central role (Neves et al., 2018), seeking effective strategies for human resources management aiming at better organizational results (Aktar & Pangil, 2018).

Regarding investigations in the field of organizational virtues, these have been valued (Singh et al., 2018; Wright & Goodstein, 2007), considering that the business world has been experiencing an increase in political, social and economic turbulence (Rego, Ribeiro, Cunha, & Jesuino, 2011) and, as a consequence, a greater distrust among the members of the organization (Rego et al., 2010). This context is conducive to research that verify the importance of organizational virtues (Bright, Cameron, & Caza, 2006; Hamrahi, Najafbagy, Musakhani, Daneshfard, & Delavar, 2015).

When organizations face situations of change, market ambiguity and uncertainties, such as the Covid-19 pandemic experienced in 2020, virtues can assume a role of guiding the organization to better performance (Bright et al., 2006; Carnevale & Hatak, 2020; Caza et al., 2004; Dawson, 2018). This can be accomplished taking into account two attributes: the

amplifier, which favors or reinforces behaviors, attitudes, positive contexts; and the buffer, with a view to protecting the institution from negative effects, encouraging resilience and making the organization recover faster from trauma (Caza et al., 2004).

Within this perspective, Cameron, Bright, & Caza (2004, p.3) argue that "organizational virtuosity includes actions of individuals, collective activities, cultural attributes and organizational processes", consisting of five dimensions: trust, integrity, forgiveness, compassion and optimism. However, the authors point out that virtuosity cannot be treated as all or nothing, as neither individuals nor organizations are essentially virtuous or unvirtuous all the time. In the research conducted, it is also emphasized that virtuosity needs to be fed, supported, practiced, disseminated and maintained both at the individual and collective levels. Thus, the terms virtues and virtuosity will be used indistinctly in the present paper, and the authors who defend the difference do so only to discern levels of construct analysis, being virtuosity used for organizational levels and virtues for individual levels (Carneiro, Ames, & Colonetti, 2019; Sison & Ferrero, 2015). However, when specifying that the study variable is the organizational virtues, the distinction loses its meaning.

In addition, the OVs must consist of community activities, cultural traits or processes that enable the dissemination and maintenance of virtues leading to social improvement through human behavior (Kooshiki & Zeinabadi, 2016). For Gomide Jr., Vieira, & Oliveira (2016, p.305), organizational virtues are defined as "a set of employee beliefs that the organization that employs him has the capacity to govern its relationships with truthfulness, to fulfill commitments in the future and to sacrifice its interests to achieve the interests of employees".

The association of organizational virtues with other constructs, whether in public and/or private contexts, has gained increasing attention from researchers, where, in most cases, organizational virtues are antecedent variables and, in few studies, have been tested as mediators or moderators. However, despite the advances, several authors argue that more studies need to be conducted in relation to measures to evaluate the perception of organizational virtues and relationships still unexplored with other variables of organizational behavior, especially in the study of antecedents of organizational virtues and their role as mediators and/or moderators in research models (Dawson, 2018; Hamrahi et al., 2015; Singh et al., 2018). It is also recommended to apply new research with different samples (Gomide Jr. et al., 2016) and in different cultural contexts (Karakas et al., 2017; Magnier-Watanabe et al., 2020).

Therefore, a still fertile field is to be covered in investigations on organizational virtues. After all, virtuous behaviors such as loyalty, care and sharing tend to generate commitment, collaboration, participation and trust among individuals, besides contributing to the prevalence of positive emotions at work and, consequently, better organizational effectiveness (Cameron et al., 2004; Koys, 2001; Ribeiro & Rego, 2010; Singh et al., 2018).

As a premise, the new strategic role of HRM, integrated policies and practices should inspire the creation of different organizational capacities (Wickramasinghe & Dolamulla, 2017), highlighting the role of people, who are now understood as essential competencies in the production of knowledge and in obtaining better results, whether in public or private organizations (Demo, Fogaça, & Costa, 2018). With this, organizations should establish policies and implement practices that advocate the promotion of positive attitudes, as well as the engagement, valorization and motivation of employees (Aktar & Pangil, 2018).

Thus, HRM practices will be treated as habit, routine or action that will operationalize policies (Armstrong, 2014). At the organizational level, practices can also operate through internal social structures in order to increase flexibility and efficiency (Evans & Davis, 2005). And in this sense, Nusrat (2018) believes that HRM practices should be consistent, designed and implemented in an integrated manner, inspiring human capital in achieving objectives at the individual, group and organizational levels.

Regarding the relationship of HRMP with other variables in comparative studies, we can highlight the studies by Javed, Javed, Ahmed and Anjun (2019), Qazi and Jeet (2017) and Iqbal, Arif and Abbas (2011) that investigated public and private universities. The first evaluated the impact of HRMP on the job satisfaction of professors and non-teaching staff and found that there were significant differences in the relationship between the two variables in the different contexts, however, in relation to performance evaluation, one of the analyzed practices, the results suggested that there were no differences between the sectors surveyed. The second, regarding HRMP, it was observed that employees of public companies are more satisfied with teamwork than those of private companies. The third investigation, which had as a sample the directors or heads of departments of the two types of institutions, showed that there were differences in the HRMP. The results revealed that training and development were better evaluated in public universities, while performance evaluation was more prominent in private universities.

In the telecommunications sector, the results of Al-Kahtani (2018) pointed out that employees of private companies perceive better recruitment and selection practices, performance evaluation and remuneration than public sector employees. Singh (2018), in turn, studied HRM practices in public and private banks, noting that recruitment, training and compensation practices were the only ones that showed no significant differences in the sector comparison. In the same perspective, Ramakrishna and Rao (2017) addressed the evolution of the banking sector in recent years, highlighting the new emphasis of human resources as strategic partners and concluding that the HRMP of private sector banks have been more effective than those of public banks.

Given the large number of research in private sectors, more in-depth studies are needed in the public area for this theme and, additionally, investigations dealing with the subject comparing the sectors are rare (Vanhala & Stavrou, 2013). This statement is further corroborated by Javed et al. (2019) who point out the importance of this comparison highlighting the intention to make the entire HRM system more successful, because the implementation of best practices leads to greater employee satisfaction, as well as greater efficiency (Qazi & Jeet, 2017; Singh, 2018) and best sector performance (Ramakrishna & Rao, 2017). In addition, Blom, Kruyen, Van der Heijden and Van Thiel (2020) confirm that the sectoral context plays a valuable role in the relationship between HRM practices and individual performance. All these agendas highlight the opportunity of the present study.

3 METHOD

The population or universe of this study were employees of public and private companies. Regarding the sample, the technique used to choose the sample was the non-probabilistic for convenience (adhesion), where there is the selection of the most available elements to achieve the research and that provide the necessary information. In this sense, counting on possible losses in the data processing process, there was the distribution of 1200 questionnaires, 600 for employees of public companies and 600 for those of private companies. Of these, 362 returned from public companies and 409 from private companies, totaling 771 subjects (64.25% of the total distributed), which is a very favorable result, because in Baruch and Holtom's (2008) view, an acceptable rate of responses in organizational studies would be approximately 35.7%.

The questionnaire-type research instrument, which was used in this study, consists of three scientifically validated measurement scales with good psychometric parameters, namely: the Management Style Assessment Scale – MSAS (Melo, 2004), the Organizational Moral Virtues Perception Scale – OMVPS (Gomide et al., 2016), and the Human Resources Policies and Practices Scale – HRPPS (Demo et al., 2014).

The MSAS, used to measure leadership, was chosen for the research because it was validated in the Brazilian context, in a public company in the Federal District, verifying which of the three factors (task, $\alpha=0.72$; relationship, $\alpha=0.94$; situation, $\alpha=0.82$) the management's

performance turns. The items were constructed in order to portray the behavior of the leader in the day-to-day work with his subordinates (Melo, 2004). To measure how much each item corresponds to the behavior of its immediate leadership, the scale was composed of 5 points (1 = never acts like this, 2 = rarely acts like this, 3 = occasionally acts like this, 4 = often acts like this, 5 = always acts like this).

The OMVPS was adopted to measure organizational virtues, in view of being the only one on the theme validated in a national context. This measure was validated through adaptations to the context of Brazil, since it had already been tested with North American (Cameron et al., 2004) and Portuguese workers (Ribeiro & Rego, 2010). Thus, in the Brazilian study, we tried to measure with a greater property the perception about the organizational virtues of the employees of public organizations in the state of Minas Gerais, in relation to its three factors (Gomide Jr et al., 2016), namely: Organizational Good Faith ($\alpha=0.95$), Organizational Trust ($\alpha=0.92$) and Organizational Generosity. It is worth mentioning that the Organizational Generosity factor of this scale was not used in the composition of this investigation. This is due to the fact that private companies constitute a commercial activity, that survives through profit (González-Navarro et al., 2018) so that the factor would not be consistent, because it presents as a concept "spontaneous willingness of the organization to sacrifice its own interests in favor of the employee's singular needs" (Gomide Jr et al., 2016, p.35) and addresses issues focused on help, benefit and sacrifice in relation to employees without expecting retribution from them. Thus, the authors of the scale themselves (Gomide Jr et al., 2016) agreed with the removal of this factor for the purposes of the present study. The scale is *likert* type, ranging from 1 to totally disagree up to 5 to totally agree.

To measure the perception of people management practices, HRPPS was chosen. The reduced version and translated into the Portuguese by Demo et al. (2014) was the one worked on in this study, because it was validated cross-culturally, constituting the most recent and comprehensive instrument available in the literature to evaluate the perception of employees regarding HRM practices in organizations. The scale consists of six factors and adopts the *five-point Likert* model being 1 to totally disagree up to 5 to totally agree. The six factors are: Recruitment and Selection, $\alpha=0.81$; Involvement, $\alpha=0.91$; Training, Development & Education, $\alpha=0.82$; Working Conditions, $\alpha=0.81$; Competency Based Performance Appraisal, $\alpha=0.86$; Compensation and Rewards, $\alpha=0.84$.

As a complement, in addition to the 3 scales, the instrument also presented the demographic-functional part to typify the sample. The final instrument was then composed of 79 items. Data collection, through the printed questionnaire, containing the scales and demographic-functional data, occurred in person.

The collected data were then transferred to the *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS)* software for the operationalization of the analyses. The first stage consisted of the processing of data through frequency distribution analysis (mean, standard deviation, variance, minimum and maximum), missing values, outliers and multicollinearity /singularity (Field, 2018; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). At this stage of the 771 questionnaires collected and using the *listwise* procedure for the analysis of missing data (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013), 13 were discarded in the missing *values* process, for leaving blank questions, erasures in the answers or for containing the marking of more than one item.

In relation to *outliers*, the Mahalanobis method was used to verify substantially different values in relation to the mean and most of the data (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). In this case, considering 79 variables, in the verification of the chi-square table (χ^2), with significance index $p<0.001$, the value of $\chi^2=124.839$ was obtained. Of the 758 questionnaires, 85 *outliers* were eliminated, leaving a final sample of 673 subjects. Subsequently, in the verification of tolerance values, numbers higher than 0.1 were obtained and in relation to the variance inflation factor (VIF) they were lower than 10.0. This analysis showed that there were no problems of multicollinearity and singularity for the sample studied (Myers, 1990).

Regarding the assumptions for the use of multivariate analysis, according to the Field protocol (2018), the linearity, homoscedasticity and normality of the distribution of the data were verified by means of the residual plots and the normal probability graphs as recommended by Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson and Tatham (2014), and all assumptions were confirmed. The analysis of multivariate normality was also verified in the AMOS software, with no problems, because the values of asymmetry and kurtosis were within the expected, $|\text{Sk}| < 3$ e $|\text{ku}| < 10$ (Marôco, 2010).

Finally, to compare the results obtained in the public and private sectors, variance analysis (ANOVA) was used, a set of procedures based on the comparison between variances to verify if there are significant differences in the means of responses from different groups, in this case, servants of public companies and employees of private companies (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013).

Regarding the characterization of the sample, it was composed of public servants and employees of companies in the service, trade and industry segments. The age range of the participants ranged from 20 to 72 years in public companies and from 18 to 62 in private companies. It is noteworthy that in public, 58.77% of the employees are over 41 years of age, that is, more than 50% of the sample. In private companies, which concentrate the majority of respondents, 64.65%, most are aged up to 40 years, configuring a younger population. Regarding the time of work in the company, in the public, the majority are more than 15 years old (30.77%), while in the private ones, 46.26% of the total have between 1 and 5 years.

The next question was about the gender of the respondents. Most respondents from both types of companies are female, 50.15% of them were public servants and 52.01% were employees. With regard to schooling, participants were asked to select the level of education already completed. It is observed that in public companies, two options, specialization and master's degree, obtained the same percentage (32.62%). The same levels were also those already taken by employees of private companies, however in lower percentages.

4 RESULTS

In this section, the results will be presented and discussed regarding the verification of the fact that the company is public or private influences the perception of public servants and employees regarding leadership, organizational virtues and human resource management practices. In this sense, variance analysis (ANOVA) will be used. The first step was the verification of the homoscedasticity of the sample, a procedure that consists of attesting the equality of variances, occurring when a dependent variable, in the case of this research, the type of organization (public or private), has a constant dispersion along the values of the independent variables, leadership, organizational virtues and HRM practices. Thus, homoscedasticity was investigated for the independent variables using the Levene test. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2013), homoscedastics items should have significance (Sig.) greater than 0.05. Furthermore, the performance of the ANOVAs presupposes groups/samples of similar sizes (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013), which could be verified in the groups of type of company, and of the total number of valid questionnaires, 325 are of employees of public companies and 348 of private companies. The results of the Levene and ANOVA tests were exposed in subsections divided according to each scale, comparing the differences in the perceptions of employees of private companies and servants of public companies surveyed.

4.1 Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) of The Perception of MSAS Factors

For the type of company variable, in relation to MSAS, the results showed significances greater than 0.05 for the three factors of the scale, being possible the application of ANOVA. Subsequently, ANOVA was performed for the factors that presented homoscedasticity; and as stated earlier, applying to all factors.

The type of company variable did not present significance (Sig.) lower than 0.05 for the factors Relationship and Situation of the MSAS, with no difference in perception between the public servants and employees surveyed. On the other hand, there was a difference in perception in relation to the Task factor. This difference can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Difference in perception - Type of company

Factor	Type of Company	Total	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mode
Task	Public	325	4,01	0,62	4
	Private	348	4,23	0,65	4

Source: prepared by the authors, 2020.

The result shows that employees have a greater perception of leadership with a focus on the task than the public servants. In view of the leadership approaches, the management's performance, in this case, turns to the concern with productivity and achievement of goals (Parry & Bryman, 2006), linked to the behaviors of a management leader, oriented to achievements, autocratic, who values hierarchy, deadlines, as well as compliance with standards and methods (Melo, 2004). Oc (2018) portrays that the context of the task can explain unique variations and that when interacting with specific leadership styles can lead to important results of employees. Complementing, to the detriment of the participatory style, the task-oriented would be related to the competitive style, where the leader focuses on the completion of the goals of each employee aiming to reduce communication and transmission of information (Olmedo-Cifuentes & Martínez-Léon, 2014). This, in fact, seems to make more sense in the context of private companies.

The differentiation between the perceptions of employees and public servants is still corroborated by investigations that highlight that contexts may require management styles that meet their peculiar characteristics (Demeter, & Tapardel, 2013). As pointed out by González-Navarro et al. (2018), in the case of private companies, which are controlled by market forces, the main objective is to increase performance, leading to changes in relations between leaders and followers. Another factor highlighted by the authors is one of the objectives of the leaders of private companies, which would be to prioritize the maximization of shareholders' desires, focusing on increasing profitability. Additionally, in an analysis of public and private managers, the study by Hooijeberg and Choi (2001) indicated that public managers perceive a lower association between task-oriented leadership compared to private agents, corroborating the findings obtained.

Thus, the leader tends to lead the team adjusting the actions according to their reality, needs and circumstances (Campos, Silva, Campos, & Araújo, 2019), which differ depending on the specificities and conjunctures of the external environment (Oc, 2018).

4.2 Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) of The Perception of OMVPS Factors

Applying the Levene test to the OMVPS, it was observed that the type of company variable presented homoscedasticity only for the Organizational Confidence factor. Then, we proceeded with ANOVA, in which the Organizational Trust factor presented significant differences in perception between public servants and employees for the type of company. The difference in perception of the Organizational Trust factor can be observed in Table 2.

Table 2. Difference in perception - Type of company

Factor	Type of Company	Total	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mode
Trust Organizational	Public	325	3,77	0,76	4
	Private	348	4,16	0,69	4

Source: prepared by the authors, 2020.

The result shows that employees of private companies have greater organizational confidence when compared to the servants of public companies. Organizational trust is linked to two aspects, on the part of the employee, in relation to the organization: "that the organization trusts him" and "that the organization recognizes that it has a commitment with it in the future" (Gomide Jr. et al., 2016, p.304).

Besides that, this trust is based on a relationship with the formal system that has its origin in laws, rules, institutional regulations and practices of the organization (Costa, 2000), in addition to the belief that the other part is open and reliable (Motlagh & Hariri, 2013).

In a study conducted with employees of non-governmental companies, it is highlighted that organizational trust has become fundamental for the survival of the organization in competitive and turbulent environments, as it exerts positive effects on the cooperation, motivation and performance of employees (Oktug, 2013). In addition, the employee associates trust with the expectation of fulfilling the promise or agreement established (Gomide Jr et al., 2016) and organizational support (Clapp-Smith, Vogelgesang, & Avey, 2009), thus generating a peaceful and partnership work environment (Oktug, 2013).

In the view of Carmeli and Spreitzer (2009), when employees trust the organization, they tend to increase their level of vitality by participating more actively in work tasks. Furthermore, the generation of positive feelings through trust can result in greater involvement and contribution by employees, making efforts for greater organizational effectiveness (Shahid & Muchiri, 2018). It should also be considered that organizational virtuosity cannot be universalist in its interpretation, depending primarily on the organizational context (Magnier-Watanabe et al., 2020); this confirms the difference in perception because they are different contexts in the present study.

4.3 Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) of The Perception of HRPPS Factors

In the HRPPS, in relation to the type of company variable, only the factors Recruitment and Selection (RS), Involvement (I), Training, Development & Education (TDE) and Working Conditions (WC) were significant for the Levene test. Subsequently, the ANOVA was applied for these factors that presented homoscedasticity in the Levene test. In the end, it was identified that these four factors presented significant difference of perception between public servants and employees. The differences in perception in relation to the type of company for these factors are found in Table 3.

Table 3. Difference in perception - Type of company

Factor	Type of Company	Total	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mode
Recruitment and Selection	Public	325	3,90	0,76	4
	Private	348	3,57	0,84	4
Involvement	Public	325	3,30	0,78	3
	Private	348	3,85	0,75	4
Training, Development & Education	Public	325	3,47	0,84	4
	Private	348	3,93	0,86	4
Working Conditions	Public	325	2,95	0,81	3
	Private	348	3,90	0,85	4

Source: prepared by the authors, 2020.

The result indicates that the public servants presented higher perception in relation to the Recruitment and Selection factor. A similar result was highlighted in the study by Iqbal et al. (2011), that in the comparison in public and private contexts, the directors better evaluated the issue in public companies to the detriment of private ones. Moreover, in public companies, the practice in question has rules and norms, which limits the discretion of public managers in hiring and firing (Brewer & Walker, 2013). The mandatory public tender, with the subsequent publication of the rules and criteria, also brings greater clarity to the selection process of public companies.

Ayentimi et al. (2018), in turn, suggests that in order to avoid favoritism and ensure the recruitment of qualified and talented employees who can collaborate to increase organizational productivity, recruitment and selection functions should be outsourced to private companies. Even in the case of public tenders, job profiles need to be strategically planned and defined to attract servers committed to the principles of legality, impersonality, administrative morality, advertising and efficiency, guiding public administration in general (Oberfield, 2019).

Regarding the practices of involvement, the results indicate that employees of private companies presented greater perception, and this practice aims to "create an affective bond with their employees, contributing to their well-being, in terms of recognition, relationship, participation and communication" (Demo, 2016, p.126). Engagement practices also seek to weaken authoritarian and paternalistic attitudes left as a legacy of the industrial era, in view of which they can strengthen job satisfaction, motivation, employee commitment (Krzywdzinski, 2017), trust in the organization and well-being at work (Horta, Demo, & Roure, 2012). In a scenario marked by stress, need for change, pressure for results, economic crises and pandemics, engagement practices are seen as a positive effort of the organization in search of a healthy relationship with employees (Carnevale & Hatak, 2020; Costa, Demo, & Paschoal, 2019).

Regarding the Training, Development and Education factor, the results indicate that employees of private companies presented greater perception. In the conception of Qazi and Jeet (2017), training is a systematic process and should aim to increase the knowledge and/or skills of employees to better perform tasks in the most autonomous way possible. However, public managers may face difficulties in implementing this practice, because due to high levels of formalization and bureaucratization, there may be legal restrictions of freedom and flexibility so that public servants can act autonomously (Blom et al., 2020). The authors also recall that, because the goals of this sector are less tangible and sometimes conflicting, when compared to the private sector, there is a greater difficulty in projecting effective training programs.

However, changes should be considered, and one of these highlights the growing number of financial investments made to improve TD&E, in Brazil and other countries (Araújo, Abbad, & Freitas, 2017), as this practice can positively increase the affective and organizational commitment of employees, especially if there is a perception that their new skills and competencies will be effectively exploited by the company (Balsan, Costa, Bastos, Lopes, Lima, & Santos, 2017).

In the Working Conditions factor, employees once again presented greater perception in relation to public servants. The factor under study aims to "provide employees with good working conditions in terms of benefits, health, safety and technology" (Demo, 2016, p. 127). The practice should prioritize the reasonable working day, safe and healthy physical environment, and absence of unhealthiness (Lirio, Gallon, Costa, & Pauli, 2020).

In this sense, in order for work functions to be performed properly, employees need appropriate working conditions and a pleasant environment to be physically, socially and emotionally healthy (Tiecher & Diehl, 2017). In Linhart's view (2014, p.45), employees with high positions and public servants are the ones who experience subjective precariousness at work the most, which highlights as characteristics "the feeling of not being at home at work, the execution of work insecurely and the obligation to donate increasingly to the company", which places them in conditions of fragility and even vulnerability at work, certainly negatively influencing their performance.

It is also noteworthy that of the significant factors of HRPPS, WC presented the greatest interval between the averages of the types of companies (0.95) and obtained the first non-perception ($\bar{x}=2.95$ in public), in the comparison between companies, given that an average lower than the neutral point of the scale, 3.0, indicates that there is no perception of the practices evaluated. This added to what was previously exposed demands pressing attention

from public managers, especially the fact that public servants perceived only 1 item (mean above 3.0) of the Working Conditions factor, the one related to the offer of basic benefits, which are already provided by law.

When working conditions are safe and appropriate, a greater involvement of employees is ensured in support and cooperation activities among co-workers (Fernández-Muñiz, Montes-Peón, & Vázquez-Ordás, 2017) is ensured. However, according to the authors, for this to occur, managers must demonstrate efforts in reducing organizational risks, otherwise the company passes the message that it has other priorities. In addition, continuous improvement in working conditions tends to generate a higher level of employee satisfaction (Boas, de Sousa Pires, Faria, & Morin, 2018), and, consequently, greater motivation and a healthy workforce to achieve tasks (Demerouti & Peeters, 2018).

5 DISCUSSION, CONTRIBUTIONS, LIMITATIONS AND NEW PATHS

The comparison between the types of companies revealed, that regarding leadership, the Task factor was more perceived by employees working in private companies. Regarding organizational virtues, the greatest perception was also of employees and in the Organizational Trust factor. The set of factors related to HRM practices demonstrated, in general terms, that the Recruitment and Selection factor was better perceived in public companies and the factors Involvement, TD&E and Working Conditions in private companies.

The comparative study of HRM practices in the public and private sectors, conducted by Demo (2010), similarly revealed frustrating results for public companies, where only remuneration practices, which are defined by law, were perceived by the employees. What seems to be that, incorrectly, organizations continue to operate "*by the book*". It is well known that national public tenders are very attractive because of the high salaries paid, in addition to the stability provided in a scenario of political institutions weakened by corruption and a highly volatile economy filled with uncertainty and weather.

As the average perception in the private sector and also in all other HRM practices were concentrated around the neutral point, rarely reaching 4.0, it is concluded that there is a huge potential for improvements in the human resource management in organizations, in general. All this evidence converges to the poetic license used in the title of this paper "life is not a bed of roses". However, when not everything is flowers, there are opportunities for new plantings, fruits and results.

Again, as life is not a bed of roses, the work has limitations, which can be solved in further studies, shedding light on new paths of scientific research. The cross-sectional, convenience sample and investigation only from the point of view of employees in subordinate positions in the companies surveyed are the main limitations.

In this case, additional research could be applied to supervisors and managers (as they see their leaders), providing important comparisons with the findings obtained for now and, in addition, comparisons by different branches and sectors of the economy (agribusiness, industries, services, NGOs) are welcome. Comparative research with other variables of organizational behavior is also suggested, such as organizational citizenship, job satisfaction, commitment, justice and well-being. A qualitative analysis of the results would also greatly enrich the understanding of the phenomena studied, because it would take a step beyond the measurement of constructs, towards the explanation of the differences found in the contexts studied.

Despite the limitations presented, the results collected are contributory from the theoretical point of view because they presented specific nuances of the public and private sectors that can support the design of strategies, policies and fruitful practices of people management, which will be inspired by leadership and supported by organizational virtues. Only by knowing these perceptions will one know about the effectiveness of strategies, policies and organizational actions.

Thus, as practical implications, this research provided support for the search for constant improvements in the constructions studied. The human resource management process is dynamic and needs to be updated on an ongoing basis. When public servants and employees feel that the leader supports them, they will act reciprocally with the company in achieving results and, in this spirit of partnership, the work environment becomes more productive and healthy. Ensuring healthy environments, with good relationships and favoring people, should be the first goal of any organization (Demo, 2016).

The organizational virtues, in turn, provided evidence that is based on the mutual generation of trust between organizational actors for greater personal and professional achievement, presenting great predictance power on the perception of HRM practices (Batista, Demo, Silva, & Oliveira, 2018) and serving, therefore, as important representatives of the culture and tone that the organization wants to establish and communicate.

The managers of both types of companies then have a theoretical and empirical basis to guide a more contextualized and effective decision-making, leveraging better individual and organizational results.

6 CONCLUSION

The main objective of this work was achieved, since the results engendered showed significant differences in the perceptions of public servants and employees when leadership, organizational virtues and human resources management practices are on the agenda. Comparative studies with these organizational behavior variables were indicated as necessary to fill gaps still little explored in the literature (An et al., 2019; Blom et al., 2020; Javed et al., 2019; Qazi & Jeet, 2017; Ramakrishna & Rao, 2017; Saeed & Ali, 2019; Singh, 2018; Zheng et al., 2020). And there resided the main advance of this study.

Finally, it is expected that the study contributed to research in the field of people management and organizational behavior, because it provided theoretical and empirical support for organizational managers in the sense that employees and employees perceive differently the leadership, the virtues within the organization and the management practices implemented. Thus, from a more contextualized approach, respecting and considering the specificities of each sector, perhaps it is possible to finally approach the discourse of real organizational practice?

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