



08, 09, 10 e 11 de novembro de 2022
ISSN 2177-3866

PERSONAL VALUES, OPENNESS TO CHANGE AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS: CONSERVATIVE BOARD MEMBERS AND CHANGE-MINDED MANAGERS?

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Personal Values of Board Members (BM)s can be considered determinant for the understanding of companies' behavior (Hambrick & Mason, 1984). Rokeach (1973) defines a personal value (PV) as a permanent belief in a model of conduct that is personally espoused by a person. As it is relatively permanent, the understanding of PVs leads to a stable understanding of behavior. Several organizational outcomes are viewed by many studies as reflections of the leaders' PVs. The reason for this inference is that a decision maker usually carries his or her individual values to the decision process. Regarding strategic decisions, decision maker's choices are typically grounded on their mental bases and on their value systems (Carpenter, Geletkanycz, & Sanders, 2004).

More particularly, understanding the PVs associated with Openness to Change (OC) - values related to "willingness to support change and positively influence the potential consequences of the change" (Wanberg & Banas, 2000, 132) - is relevant. As general environment changes around organizations, existing practices frequently miss their effectiveness. In this context, researchers have emphasized the relevance of studying person-related antecedents to predict change-oriented behaviors (Grant & Ashford, 2008). This emphasis is remarkably relevant because a certain behavior that is particularly consistent with inner individual characteristics is typically experienced by people as intrinsically rewarding (Gagné & Deci, 2005), while more extrinsically driven behavior may vanish as soon as the exterior recompense is obtained (Hui, Lam, & Law, 2000).

Understanding, therefore, the greater or lesser axiological propensity for change in BMs is crucial. Board member's involvement in strategy making can enhance the speed, innovation, and breadth of strategic action capabilities of the executive team (Kim, Burns, & Prescott, 2009). Despite the relative length of literature on board of directors' formation, most studies have relied on descriptive demographics (Guest, 2009) rather than on psychographic constructs. Some of the most common studies on Board of Directors formation, for example, focus on its independence from property (Filatotchev, Isachenkova & Mickiewicz, 2007), the impact of women presence (Huse, Nielsen & Hagen, 2009) and the influence of ownership structure (Bunninge, Nordqvist & Wirklund, 2007). In strategy literature, top management's personal attributes have been associated with their strategic choices. Nevertheless, when predicting these strategic choices, the attributes focused are no more than leaders' demographics.

The present article examines the individual values of Board Members (BM)s compared to those of the Middle Managers (MM)s to identify differences in value profiles, particularly investigating whether BMs are more (or less) opened to change. A profound understanding of this phenomena can contribute to the comprehension of how to choose BMs notably when a firm desires to increment its transformative actions. Because PVs are robust predictors of human actions (Schwartz, 1992), understanding the axiological profile of BMs can shed light to the presence of innovative behavior.

In view of these previous findings and theoretical gaps, this article aims to study the personal values of the BMs comparing them with MM)s. Such a comparison is necessary because of the reason often invoked to explain the similarities and differences between personal values: they are normally influenced by personal experiences (Rokeach, 1973). In this context, Harris (1990) states that there are differences in individual values advocated by corporate employees as they occupy different hierarchical levels. The literature also suggests that age –

frequently as a proxy for career stage - is a factor in determining values, as younger executives tend to dispense less importance to trust and integrity, and more importance to money and career than elder executives. The main literature, nevertheless, do not accurately explain whether a person's presence in board of directors is associated with certain types of personal values. In particular, there is no academic literature yet to present contributions about relations between the presence in BMs of a certain individual and his or her openness to change tendency.

Therefore, based on these discussions and gaps of the literature, the research problem of this paper is described as follows: *What are the differences - with regard to openness to change in terms of Personal Values - between Board Members and Middle Managers in Brazil?* In other words, could the presence of a certain person on a Board of Directors be an antecedent variable - nonetheless not necessarily a *causal* one - of the values advocated by that person? Answering this research question aims to determine if statistically significant differences exist in the Openness to Change values of individuals at different levels in the organizational hierarchy. If differences do exist, this research aims to identify the value's spheres in which they occur.

The present paper discusses the implications of the results and points out their possible impacts to business practice and theory. The original contributions of this article are: (i) presentation of consistent empirical data about highly relevant publics (notably BMs), (ii) analysis of the hypothesis that the greater (or lower) tendency to change may be related to hierarchical levels, a phenomenon not yet exhaustively debated in the literature. For the practitioners, in a world where social and technological transformation demands great openness to change, this paper deals with an important discussion. With regard to substantive reality, our research can generate value to the development of Brazilian business sector since the opening to change is among the most important competences for the contemporary management.

2. THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS AND HYPOTHESES

Amongst many possible variables that could contribute with the discussion of people and their decisions, Personal Values (PVs) stand out as an important behavior predictor (Schwartz, 1992) and the values of top executives play a central role in organizational practices (Adams *et al.*, 2011). Rokeach (1973) define value as a permanent belief in a behavioral model. Additionally, values can be understood as “trans-situational beliefs hierarchically organized that serves as a behavioral criterion” (Ros, 2006, 30). The values are still split in instrumental and terminal (Rokeach, 1973). Terminal values are end-states that a person seeks to achieve (eg., a comfortable life). On the contrary, the so-called instrumental values are modes of conduct (eg., honesty) rather than final states (Rokeach, 1973).

Unlike the constructs considered less central (as an example, opinions), values are considered relatively stable. For Adams *et al.* (2011, 1333), “values transcend specific situations”. The motivations associated to values may vary from each specific circumstance, nevertheless the values remain relatively unaltered (Schwartz, 1992). The mainstream theory indicates that individual values can be hierarchically organized based on its relative importance (Schwartz, 1992). In this context, the Schwartz' great contribution was the identification of the motivations that are expressed in form of values, showing the dynamic relations between the values and its subjacent motivations (Tamayo, 2007). Schwartz (2005) proposes that value theory describes aspects that are valid in all cultures. In addition, according to Schwartz (2006), motivational types can be compatible or conflicting with each another. From this observation, Schwartz points out ten distinct motivational types (TM) and specifies the dynamics of struggle and/or similarity among them. The ten motivational types of Schwartz (1992) are: Security,

Conformity, Tradition, Benevolence, Universalism, Realization, Stimulation, Hedonism, Power, and Self-Direction. When such motivational types are studied, it must be remarked the compatibility or conflict between dimensions. On the one hand, there is the dimension of Self-Transcendence (considering the motivational types of Universalism and Benevolence), which opposes Self-Promotion (Power, Realization and Hedonism). At the other pole, there is the Opening to Change dimension (especially Stimulation and Self-Direction), which opposes Conservation (Tradition, Conformity and Security).

Schwartz's model allows a discussion about the concepts of greater openness to change or, at an opposite extreme, a greater conservatism. This dimension captures the conflict between values that emphasize independence of thought and actions and values that underscore conservancy of the past. According to this model, Self-Direction is a group of values that emphasize the actions related to creation and exploration. It is derived from the need for autonomy and independence and accentuates the freedom to choose goals. Also connected with the openness to change, the stimulation value, according to Schwartz's theory, gives preference to excitement, novelty and challenges. On the opposite, more conservational values are conformity, tradition and security. This last one underscores harmony and stability and can be divided in two types of security: group security (for eg. national security) and individual security (such as searching of health). Conformity focuses on the restrictions of actions, inclinations and impulses that may harm – or be interpreted as harmful – both others and oneself. Finally, Tradition prioritizes the acceptance of customs and ideas that a particular culture provides (Schwartz, 2005).

The values related to openness to change emphasize self-government of thought and action. These values struggle with conservation values. Based on this relative dichotomy, compared with those employees who emphasize conservation, organizational members who worth openness to change are inclined to pursue autonomy in their day-to-day routine (Ros *et al.*, 1999). In addition, they typically are readier to adopt new technologies (Sagiv *et al.*, 2005) and express superior preparedness to organizational transformation (Sverdlik & Oreg, 2006).

Understanding the subject of Openness to Change has been a theme of much organizational analysis, as organizational changes are abundant in the current economic context. Scholars, however, have notably focused their studies on organizational or group dimensions such as Reengineering (Hill & Collins, 2000) or Organizational Culture (Bedingham, 2004). This tendency of analysis has led some scholars to espouse a microlevel perspective by investigating the individuals within the firms and, notably, the psychological factors that can influence change. Because of this way of thinking, the literature has been reaching a growing consensus that a key factor in determining the success of organizational transformation involves top management's change acceptance and values (Bartunek, Rousseau, Rudolph, & DePalma, 2006).

According to the theory of values, both individual aspects and those present in society may be antecedent factors of personal values. In addition, personal values are also antecedents of the attitudes and then, behaviors. Research suggest that these relations are, in fact, causal: values lead to actions in accordance with them (Verplanken & Holland, 2002). The literature also suggests that the main antecedent factors of values are life circumstances, education level and typology, age, and gender. The antecedent individual-level's elements influence values by a personal learning mechanism, thus exerting a historical role for the individual. On the other hand, the context within which individuals live equally impacts their personal values through an internalization mechanism. According to Parsons & Shils (1951,23), "Roles are institutionalized when they are congruous with the prevailing culture patterns" and "are

organized around expectations of conformity with morally sanctioned patterns of value-orientation”.

The interpretation of the relationship between values and behavior is not, however, uniform in the literature. Rokeach (1973) presents a functional link between individual values and behavior, nonetheless, asserts that such a relationship is not fully direct because it is interceded by attitudes. However, Schwartz (2005) interprets the relationship between values and behaviors as direct (without any interceptions). Despite such divergence, Rokeach and Schwartz agree on the centrality of values since both attitudes and behaviors are more peripheral, less general, and not as much stable (Schwartz, 2005). In addition, the circumstances of a person's life provide opportunities to express some values more easily. The literature points out, for example, that the level of health affords the pursuit of values related to power and individuals who act as liberal expert express more self-determination (Schwartz, 2005). This element emphasizes the importance of the group values as a predictor of the personal values.

Personal characteristics tend to explain people's greater or lesser inclination to change. Individual attitudes and idiosyncratic views around a change are likely to have considerable influence on equally progress and results of a certain change (Damschroder *et al.*, 2009). In this sense, some authors have argued that workers need to be opened to change in order to backing it (Armenakis, Harris, & Mossholder, 1993). Based on this argument, deficient openness to change among involved personnel – notably top management leaders - may be one of the reasons why several organizational change initiatives fail (Kotter & Schlesinger, 2008).

Therefore, in a circumstance in which a certain organization inductees an organizational change, those workers with higher openness to change in their values tend to pursue information and anticipate the future implications of the modifications more enthusiastically (Choi, 2011). These elements suggest that employees who are axiologically readier to change tend to be more positive, alert and connected to the environment. Therefore, people with higher openness to change values are propped to supporting and implementing changes both cognitively and affectively (Rafferty, Jimmieson, & Armenakis, 2012). On the other hand, the presence of change suspicion – or, as mentioned by some authors, ‘cynicism’ - has been found to have a negative association with work engagement in change (Kang, Lee, & Kim, 2008).

Despite all these contributions, little empirical research has focused on the relationship between openness to change and the level of hierarchy nor to the presence of individuals in board of directors. Among the few existing contributions, Claire (1979) found no differences in axiological priorities between members working in different hierarchical levels of such studied firms. Adams *et al.* (2011) demonstrated, in a study conducted in Swedish firms, that BMs acting as employee representatives tend to decide more in favor of non-stockholder stakeholders such as consumers and community. Adams *et al.* (2011) also presented results that lead to the conclusion that individuals from different hierarchical spaces in the organization tend to have dissimilar worldviews and to decide differently. Would BMs be more prone to change as, among other attributes, they tend to be more economically diversified? Would BMs be less inclined to change as they are typically called upon to perform a controlling role and are mostly older (Saito & Dutra, 2002)? The following topic discusses the hypothesis for these questions.

2.1 Research Hypothesis

Our hypotheses are based on contributions concerning the theory of Personal Values (Schwartz, 1992; Adams *et al.*, 2011, Hitlin & Piliavin, 2004 and others), the Similarity-

Attraction Theory (Schneider, 1987), theories concerning the roles of board members (McDonald *et al.*, 2008, Muller-Kahle & Lewellyn, 2011 etc.), and on the empirical studies that demonstrate demographic characteristics of BMs in Brazil (Saito & Dutra, 2002). Our theoretical hypothesis construction - outlined below - will argue that the PVs of the BMs must be statistically different from those advocated by the MMs, notably because BMs have different social and organizational roles. We will argue that board members tend to be less opened to change than MMs also because the functions and roles performed by BMs are usually associated, in Brazil, with the control of the executive actions. The already studied homogeneous board structures in Brazil (Saito & Dutra, 2002) are also a phenomenon that increase the likelihood to the firms select individuals who tend to agree with the existing value structure, thus being less opened to change. The superior BM's age tends also to privilege lower openness to change values.

Sociologically, low-status individuals, like MMs, have been shown to be more likely to initiate changes that diverge from the institutional status quo (Shils, 1975). These individuals are, nonetheless, likely not to have the necessary power to cause a change, which may frequently discourage them from commencing change (Kellogg, 2011). In what concern top managers, on the other hand, even though they normally have the power to employ organizational change, they are not typically open-minded about it (Miller and Friesen, 1980). Consequently, though they are normally— in terms of power - more skilled of initiating organizational change, the upper echelon of the companies is not likely to initiate it. The top executives might, instead, be prone to preserve the overall status quo in order to preserve their own power and safeguard their continuing control (Pfeffer 1981).

The literature on personal values describes that people's PVs vary depending on their life surroundings such as their age, education, gender etc. (Schwartz, 1992). There are, in this sense, significant value variances among managers with different ages: younger managers are customarily more creative and present a higher chance to contest the current system (Mishra & Jhunjhunwala, 2013). Additionally, individuals of similar age prefer to interact more intensively with those whom they notice to be alike them. This phenomenon can be explained by the "similarity-attraction" theory (Schneider, 1987).

Hence, this and other theoretical frameworks point out that through mechanisms of selection and socialization there is a tendency towards a relative congruence between people and the values of the group in which they work. According to Arieli, Sagiv and Roccas (2020), this selection is a two-fold process: organizational and personal selection. The first one is the process through which organizations select their members, including its BMs. The second one, called "self-selection", is the manner through which individuals prefer to join a particular organization rather than others. Yet the current literature and business practice has emphasized the organizational selection notably based on competences, actual accomplishments, and background (Elms, Nicholson, & Pugliese, 2015), individuals habitually select to work in labor conditions that at least espouse values like their own (Sagiv & Schwartz, 2000).

Some other authors, likewise, argue that the leaders tend to internalize the values institutionalized by the society and their groups (Parsons & Shils, 1951). Consequently, being in a board of directors' position may lead to a certain individual to pursue some principles more likely than professionals in lower positions (Adams & Giannetti, 2012). Therefore, despite the importance of this individual-level contributions, people working in the same context are normally exposed to similar organizational elements and values. Group members, therefore, tend to exchange interpretations of their situation with each other in their daily conversation

and this interaction - over time – is typically inclined to be converted into shared values (Kozlowski & Hattrup, 1992) and blossom similar mental models for how the group understand and respond to the work context (Mathieu, Heffner, Goodwin, Salas & Cannon-Bowers, 2000). Thus, the hypotheses are presented:

Hypothesis 1 (H₁): The members of the board of directors must have different axiological priorities than those of the middle managers

Hypothesis 2 (H₂): The members of the board of directors must be axiologically less open to change than the middle managers

The additional reasons for our H₂ refer to the fact that board members in Brazil are typically highly linked to the ownership structure (Saito & Dutra, 2002). H₂ is also advocated by virtue of the Brazilian corporate culture which, among other characteristics, is relatively conservative. The values advocated by the broader society tend to mark the values of the company leaders in particular. Based on some classic studies on Brazilian corporate culture (Motta *et al.*, 1997), it can be stated that, in this country, the predominant management paradigm is usually based on the concentration of power and conservatism, dictated by the classic patrimonial model described by Ribeiro (1995). According to Rodrigues (2001), the most notable features of the Brazilian business culture are: immediate vision, easy acceptance of delays, non-compliance with deadlines, aversion to changes, informality, and impulsive decision-making. Besides the mentioned characteristics of Brazilian Corporate culture, the more specific reasons for such hypothesis are related to the fact that BMs are typically older and, in particular, belong to structures of power that should privilege the maintenance of status quo. The roles normally expected by the BMs, in addition, should also explain a hypothetical lesser openness to change. The typical structures of the Brazilian councils, with low independence of ownership (Dutra & Saito, 2002), are also explanatory factors of the low inclination to transformation.

3. METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

The present investigation is descriptive with a quantitative approach. This research was a collection of primary data through the Schwartz inventory of SVI values (with 60 items), adapted and validated in Brazil by Tamayo (2007). As observed by Gollan and Witte (2013, p.454), “the circumplex theory of values by Schwartz (1992) has become the standard model in values research.” Questions were closed-ended, seeking to obtain judgment through a scale. The answers attributed an increasing degree of intensity from -1 (totally opposite) to 7 (extremely important) to each of the statements. The resultant Cronbach’s alpha index for the questionnaire containing 60 Schwartz values was 0.923, considered satisfactory. Complementary questions about the characteristics of respondents were carried out.

The questionnaire was sent via Internet (using software SurveyMonkey®) to board members participating in the Brazilian Institute of Corporate Governance (*Instituto Brasileiro de Governança Corporativa*, IBGC) to collect the board’s part of the sample. Only actual board members could answer the survey. Because of this criterion, some cases were left out from the sample. From this part of the sample, 145 questionnaires were answered, leading, ultimately, to 121 valid questionnaires. The other part of the sample - directed to middle managers of companies - was built from the database of a business school located in the city of São Paulo. Of a total of about 5,000 executives who studied in such a school, 442 replied. Of this total,

only 308 were considered valid. In a totalization, the present study analyzed a sample of 429 respondents.

It is necessary to comment on the validity and reliability of the data collection instrument. Capturing more intrinsic human elements tends to be challenging. However, the method and the theoretical underpinnings chosen for the present study are robust. The main suspicion of the Schwartz IVS questionnaire is the controversy over whether the axiological priorities captured by self-completion are true or only external manifestations socially required. If the latter suspicion were true, then the measured values could be understood only as reflectors of cultural conventions rather than expressions of the real internal values. Notwithstanding, previous studies have shown that there is no correlation between Marlowe-Crowne's social desirability scale and the values endorsed in the IVS instrument (Schwartz, Verkasalo, Antonovsky & Sagiv, 1997).

Regarding data analyzing, it was firstly found that it was not normally distributed through the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk ($\alpha p < 0.001$) tests for the 60 values and for the ten motivational types. The Mann-Whitney test was applied to determine whether the two independent samples (BMs and non-BMs) were drawn from populations with the same averages for testing the hypothesis H_1 . To test whether the board members are more open to change was used a Logistic Regression Analysis (LRA) (Peng, Lee & Ingersoll, 2002). Such a statistical instrument tends also to give explanations in the dependent variable x independent variable scheme without assuming normality of the data. For this case, it was conceptualized that the dependent variable would be the presence (or not) of the respondent in Board of Directors as a dummy variable.

4. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

4.1 Contextualization of the sample

This study investigates the research problem in the context of Brazil. Among the 121 BMs studied, it was noted that 95% of the respondents are male and only 5% female. In addition, the sample of BMs presented a concentration of 42% of individuals in the age groups between 41 and 50 years. The second most representative sample of BMs comprises the ranges between 51 and 60 years. Thus, such sample indicates that the more mature individuals occupy positions of BM, as intuitively expected. Regarding the data of non-BMs, the sample is made up of 308 managers of companies in Brazil, former students of a business school located in São Paulo. Approximately 67% of the respondents are male and 33% are female. The age distribution of the respondents is: 44% between 31 and 40 years, 37% between 41 and 55 years and 12% are dispersed in the other ranges.

Among the BMs, 62 individuals work on boards of directors, 15 individuals operate on a fiscal board and 2 respondents act on an audit board. This sample of BMs also indicated 42 individuals who work in other councils: 22 individuals indicated that they are members of advisory councils, 3 indicated that they participate in the council of risks and 2 indicated that they participate in the council of engineering. Still, regarding the sample of BMs, the companies considered as large (with a turnover above six hundred million Brazilian Reais a year) represented 34.7% of the sample. The companies considered averages (with a turnover of more than two hundred million to six hundred million) represented 16.5% of the sample, small companies represented 48.7% of the total sample.

4.2 Characterization of the personal values

The numbers described in Tables 1 and 2 denote the individualized 60 values of Schwartz model (Table 2) and each one of the 10 agglutinated motivational types (Table 1). Both tables show the differences and similarities among the sample of BMs and MMs (see Mann-Whitney test in both tables).

In essence, these two tables demonstrate that the PVs of the board members of the sample are partially different from those of intermediate managers. In general terms **managers who occupy intermediate levels in firms tend to significantly seek more self-direction, hedonism and stimulation than top-level organizational participants**. The lower presence of values associated with "self-direction" among BMs seems to suggest less inclination to thought independence when compared to intermediate managers. In addition to this, according to Schwartz (2002), the lower presence of self-direction among BMs seems to be associated with a lower tendency for creative actions, curiosity and independence. As explained in the model of the present research, we expected the greater presence of such conservatism, since values must be highly influenced by the social expectations. As also indicated earlier in this paper, board members in Brazil are mostly linked to Shareholders and are primarily men over the age of 50. In the same vein, the lower incidence of "stimulation" seems to indicate, also according to Schwartz, a reduced inclination to challenges and novelties. The combination of such factors leads to the suggestion that BMs in Brazil tends to prefer preservation of traditional practices, control and protection of stability.

Table 1 - Motivational types for the BMs and managers. Authors, 2022

| Motivational Types (MTs) | Board Members | | Middle Managers | | M-W |
|-----------------------------|---------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------|------|
| | Average | Hierarchy | Average | Hierarchy | |
| Universalism | 5,25 | 1 | 5,30 | 1 | 0,74 |
| Benevolence | 5,25 | 2 | 5,27 | 2 | 0,70 |
| Achievement | 4,93 | 3 | 4,80 | 4 | 0,18 |
| Self-direction | 4,85 | 4 | 5,25 | 3 | 0,00 |
| Conformity | 4,85 | 5 | 4,78 | 5 | 0,82 |
| Security | 4,60 | 6 | 4,62 | 6 | 0,93 |
| Hedonism | 3,40 | 7 | 3,91 | 7 | 0,02 |
| Stimulation | 3,33 | 8 | 3,74 | 8 | 0,01 |
| Tradition | 2,74 | 9 | 2,80 | 9 | 0,65 |
| Power | 2,12 | 10 | 2,27 | 10 | 0,46 |

When we observe the individualized values (Table 2) such conclusions are enriched. This table 2 demonstrates a much greater tendency for "independence" among managers (with 3.04) when compared with BMs (with 2.03). This data leads us to presume, at least for the sample collected, an important tendency of the BMs for behaviors associated with stability and rule following-up. This seems, once again, to denote the socially expected role BMs need to demonstrate: board members are typically chosen endogenously to firms' ownership structure relationships. In this same table 2, we highlight also a relatively constrasensual information. Table 2 also allows us to perceive other differences among the samples. BMs have been more inclined than MMs to have "self-discipline" (4,45 BMs x 3,83 MMs). Once again, we see the same colors that have been previously painted: the BMs are inclined to social conformity that can, according to the literature, increase the likelihood that the members will engage in similar behavior and to be guided by the maintenance of the business strategies. In addition to this point, the research also allowed us to observe that the studied BMs showed a great inclination to defend the values of "Honesty" (5.10 versus 3.96 of MMs). The empirical observation of Brazilian corporate reality helps us to understand these data: at the moment the study was developed, a thunderous volume of news indicating corruption at the top of the national organizational hierarchy should probably influence the responses in order to have corporate actors more attentive to this question.

Table 2 – Statistics concerning specific values comparing Board Members and Middle Managers with

| Motivational types (MTs) | Individual Values | Board Members | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|---------------|-------------------------|---------|
| | | Average | Standard Deviation (SD) | Average |
| Self-direction | Curiosity | 5,78 | 1,33 | 5,89 |
| | Creativity | 5,63 | 1,29 | 5,80 |
| | Freedom | 6,02 | 1,24 | 6,11 |
| | Self-directed | 5,61 | 1,25 | 5,87 |
| | Independent | 2,03 | 2,49 | 3,04 |
| | Self-respect | 4,05 | 2,25 | 4,73 |
| Stimulation | Bold | 4,42 | 1,94 | 4,78 |
| | Varied life | 1,34 | 1,90 | 2,21 |
| | Exciting life | 4,23 | 2,00 | 4,32 |
| Hedonism | Pleasure | 3,09 | 2,03 | 3,85 |
| | Life of pleasure | 3,71 | 2,42 | 4,07 |
| Achievement | Successful | 6,02 | 1,15 | 5,99 |
| | Capable | 5,07 | 1,91 | 4,77 |
| | Ambitious | 6,02 | 1,06 | 5,78 |
| | Influential | 3,66 | 2,20 | 2,89 |
| | Intelligent | 4,31 | 2,17 | 4,24 |
| | Smart | 4,50 | 1,97 | 4,85 |
| Power | Social power | 1,50 | 2,13 | 1,36 |
| | Authority | 1,70 | 2,18 | 1,56 |
| | Riches | 2,40 | 1,99 | 2,72 |
| | Public image | 1,90 | 2,13 | 2,48 |
| | Vanity | 2,58 | 1,98 | 3,17 |
| | Social image | 2,64 | 2,04 | 3,07 |
| Security | Clean | 4,40 | 2,14 | 4,30 |
| | National security | 1,86 | 2,50 | 2,15 |
| | Retribution of values | 6,16 | 1,30 | 6,00 |
| | Social order | 3,21 | 2,50 | 2,94 |
| | Family security | 6,45 | 1,02 | 6,45 |

| | | | | |
|--------------|-------------------------|------|------|------|
| | Sense of belonging | 4,71 | 1,67 | 4,97 |
| | Healthy | 5,38 | 1,79 | 5,60 |
| Conformity | Obedient | 3,77 | 1,97 | 3,75 |
| | Respect for the elderly | 5,50 | 1,61 | 5,81 |
| | Politeness | 5,68 | 1,40 | 5,79 |
| | Self-disciplined | 4,45 | 1,99 | 3,83 |
| Tradition | Conscious of limits | 5,64 | 1,47 | 5,36 |
| | Devoted | 1,79 | 2,44 | 2,15 |
| | Humble | 4,02 | 2,19 | 4,07 |
| | Respect for tradition | 1,48 | 2,19 | 1,63 |
| | Moderate | 0,22 | 1,47 | 0,30 |
| | Privacy | 3,27 | 2,25 | 3,55 |
| Benevolence | Helpful | 5,02 | 1,60 | 4,62 |
| | Honest | 5,10 | 1,83 | 3,96 |
| | Forgiving indulgence | 4,98 | 1,89 | 4,93 |
| | Loyal | 5,62 | 1,62 | 5,64 |
| | Responsible | 6,15 | 1,26 | 6,11 |
| | Work | 5,62 | 1,34 | 5,69 |
| | Spiritual life | 2,76 | 2,55 | 3,22 |
| | True friendship | 6,02 | 1,32 | 6,00 |
| | Mature love | 5,69 | 1,65 | 6,13 |
| | Meaning of life | 5,50 | 2,10 | 6,17 |
| Universalism | The environment | 5,53 | 1,46 | 5,39 |
| | Unity with nature | 4,11 | 2,10 | 4,01 |
| | A world of beauty | 4,34 | 1,98 | 4,43 |
| | Na open mind | 5,40 | 1,38 | 5,33 |
| | Social justice | 5,45 | 1,35 | 5,15 |
| | Wisdom | 5,85 | 1,34 | 5,69 |
| | Equality | 5,00 | 2,01 | 4,67 |
| | World peace | 4,86 | 2,22 | 5,06 |
| | Dreamer | 5,90 | 1,33 | 5,98 |
| | Inner harmony | 6,02 | 1,24 | 6,29 |

At this point, it is possible to declare that **hypothesis (H₁) is confirmed**: There are significant differences in values advocated by board members and managers. It is also noticeable, from the M-W tests, that also **hypothesis 2 can be accepted** and, indeed, the BMs are less open to change than the MMs. Notwithstanding such conclusions, more precise statistical techniques need to be used. Table 3 demonstrates Spearman's correlations between the so-called "higher order values" of the Schwartz model. The correlational analysis reinforces the findings so far: there is a significant correlation between the dummy variable "Presence as BM" and the openness to change with a negative sign (-0,196), a fact that indicates once again the greater inclination to conservatism among BMs. The value - 0.196 is significantly different from zero (at 0,01).

Table 3 –Spearman Correlations among model variables. Authors, 2022.

| | Presence in BM (Dummy) | Openness to Change | Self- Promotion | Conservation | Self- transcendence |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|--------------|------------------------|
| Presence in BM (Dummy) | 1 | | | | |
| Openness to Change | -0.196** | 1 | | | |
| Self-Promotion | -0.004 | 0.465** | 1 | | |
| Conservation | -0.004 | 0.340** | 0.458** | 1 | |
| Self-transcendence | -0.019 | 0.297** | 0.214** | 0.670** | 1 |

** The correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2 extremities).

The correlation described above, and the M-W test are strong enough to test the H₂ hypothesis. However, it is still worth adding the technique of Logistic Regression as a way to give greater accuracy to the results. As shown in Table 4, the beta of -0.433 was shown to be significant at 1%, pointing once again to the smaller (negative sign) slope of BMs at openness to change. As a result, giving priority to conformity and security values seems to indicate that the BMs emphasize order and control, because both these types emphasize preservation of social order and conservation (Schwartz, 2002). As can also be observed in the logistic regression analysis, two other control variables were presented as significantly related to BM presence. The respondents' ages were correlated to their presence on the board of directors (the oldest are more likely BMs).

Table 4– Logistic Regression Analysis. Authors, 2022.

| | Beta (β) of Logistic Regression | Nagelkerke Coefficient |
|--------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| Open. Change | -0,433* | 45,80% |
| Age | 6,38* | 45,80% |
| Gender | 2,55* | 45,80% |

* Significant at 1%

5. CONCLUSIONS

The research presented here aimed to compare the axiological profiles of members of boards and middle managers. Such a comparison aimed - in addition to descriptively characterizing the publics themselves - to make inferences as to whether the position of board member would explain different PVs. The hypotheses of the study pointed to the less openness to change in board members - a hypothesis confirmed by the present study. In addition to such

confirmation, logistic regression analyzes suggest that the additional explanation for differences in openness to change is explained by the older age of board members. As pointed out in the literature, it was already known that older individuals are statistically less inclined to changes. These results may lead to the belief that board members of companies located in Brazil tend to have more emphasis on control than on the creation of innovative strategies. It may also indicate, in some sense negatively, that career growth from managerial positions to board positions may be more associated with the maintenance of the status quo and less inclusion efforts.

Faced with such data, it is important to point out some implications. Brazil, despite its high level of entrepreneurship in society, presents a corporate universe with a high concentration of power (Dutra & Saito, 2002; Leal, Carvalhal-da-Silva & Valadares, 2002). Normatively, national business culture needs to change the mechanisms for selecting its board of directors to cope with the mutational manner of the contemporary society. The positive results of employing more independent board members and, also, compiling councils in a more diverse way are suggested.

Finally, understanding values and their associations with human behaviors may enable practical actions such as the selection of strategies that consider existing firm's axiological system, either to reinforce it or to encourage its change. In this way, the present research can contribute to the accomplishment of successful intervention actions. The present article presents results that go far beyond the demographic characteristics normally studied in the BM's literature. The results presented here bring aspects of the individuals' values and, therefore, present relatively stable decision-making tendencies (Schwartz, 1992). This multitude-theoretical-foundations approach (by bringing theories from Social Psychology to organizational studies domain) tries to diminish the typical reductionist line that typically characterize business disciplines (Crane *et al.*, 2018).

Despite the contributions, this paper presents limitations. Firstly, it is worth emphasizing the sample limitations. The research studied alumni managers of a business school situated in the city of São Paulo. Despite the relevance of such area, it cannot be said that the rest of the country has identical results. In addition, despite the difficulty in collecting data, 121 board members are not fully representative of the entire corporate universe. Finally, for further directions, it is recommended to conduct qualitative analyzes that illustrate the deeper social and personal mechanisms that may lead to less openness to change among BMs.

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