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Decent Work, life satisfaction, and stress in the Portuguese Social Economy

ANA CAROLINA COELHO PEREIRA DA SILVA

UNIVERSIDADE DE COIMBRA

TANIA FERRARO

UNIVERSIDADE PORTUGALENSE INFANTE D. HENRIQUE

LEONOR PAIS

UNIVERSIDADE DE COIMBRA

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Introdução

The Social Economy or third sector economy includes different types of organizations. They are mission-driven organizations compared to those that are profit-driven (Akingbola, 2013; Akingbola et al., 2019), putting the people first, with the objective to meet human needs. Although the Social Economy is a very active and diverse ecosystem, presenting a great empirical diversity of social enterprises, as far as we know, there are no studies about the levels of decent work (DW) in this sector. Not even about DW's interactions with the life satisfaction and stress of workers in this sector.

Problema de Pesquisa e Objetivo

The current study aims to explore the interactions between Decent Work (DW) and Life Satisfaction (LS), DW, and Stress and verify the impact of Stress on the Life Satisfaction of employees of the Portuguese Social Economy sector.

Fundamentação Teórica

The definition of Social Economy organizations involves economic, social, and governance aspects that include their private nature and a legal form of independence from the State. Profit distribution is invested in the organization, not having as main objective the individual appropriation of the profit, and generally has participatory and inclusive governance (Defourny & Nyssens, 2017; Ferreira, 2021). These orgs are non-profit private institutions that strive to fulfil the moral duties of solidarity and justice in areas the government cannot.

Metodologia

The sample of this study comprises Portuguese individuals from five different Social Economy organizations (N=313). The Decent Work Questionnaire (DWQ), the Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS) and the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) were applied. Confirmatory factor analyses and multiple linear regression were conducted for this research.

Análise dos Resultados

The research findings showed that DW impacts Life satisfaction positively, and a lack of DW is associated with the presence of Stress. The woman's role in our set of variables proved to be significant, bringing curious results when focusing on this difference in our sample, especially in the relationship between DW and LS.

Conclusão

The results suggest that: (a) higher Decent Work (especially some of its dimensions) impacts positively Life Satisfaction; (b) lack of DW is associated with high Stress; and, (c) low Stress could promote Life satisfaction. It is important to consider these findings, which state that DW is an important variable when it comes to preventing Stress in the workplace, and overall promoting worker's LS. These results are relevant from a practical standpoint, as they bring to light the value DW can bring to a third sector organization.

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