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Organizational Recognition of the Contributive Uniqueness: Construction of an instrument for its assessment

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Organizational Recognition of the Contributive Uniqueness: Construction of a questionnaire for its assessment

Abstract

People, by their unique and changeable character, are presently a valuable and active organizational factor that can make a difference in an organization. The present study aimed to create an instrument that could provide additional information about organizational recognition of employees' contributive uniqueness. After consulting the literature and analyzing interviews to 10 workers, the first version of the subsequent set of items was elaborated and applied to 384 employees. The KMO and Bartlett's test indicated that it was possible to proceed to the EFA. In the final solution, obtained with varimax rotation, the questionnaire had 20 items composed by 4 factors with Cronbach alpha's values above .70. We further conducted some differential studies with demographic variables. The results showed significant differences between the questionnaire's dimensions and the studied demographic variables and reinforced the importance of recognizing one's contributive uniqueness as an important asset for organizational development and increased value.

Key-words: Organizational recognition, Contributive uniqueness, Instrument's construction, Recognition of employees' contributive uniqueness

Reconhecimento Organizacional da Singularidade Contributiva: Construção de um questionário para sua avaliação

Resumo

Pelo seu carácter único e modificável, as pessoas são presentemente um factor valioso e activo que pode fazer a diferença numa organização. O presente estudo teve como objectivo criar um instrumento que forneça informação adicional acerca do reconhecimento organizacional da singularidade contributiva. Após consultada a literatura e analisadas 10 entrevistas a trabalhadores, a primeira versão dos subsequentes itens foi elaborada e aplicada a 384 trabalhadores. O KMO e teste de Bartlett indicaram que era possível proceder à AFE. Na solução final, obtida com rotação varimax, o questionário teve 20 itens composto por 4 factores com valores de alfa de Cronbach acima de .70. Posteriormente foram conduzidos estudos diferenciais com variáveis demográficas. Os resultados demonstram diferenças significativas entre as dimensões do questionário e as variáveis demográficas estudadas reforçando assim, a importância de reconhecer a singularidade contributiva como um importante contributo para o desenvolvimento organizacional e para a incrementação do seu valor.

Palavras-chave: Reconhecimento organizacional, Singularidade contributiva, Construção de um instrumento, Reconhecimento da singularidade contributiva dos trabalhadores

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Chapter 1: Focusing & Framing

Introduction

The aim of the study was to build an instrument that would grant the ability to acquire further knowledge about recognition practices that are implemented in organizations in general, and more specifically, the recognition of employees' contributive uniqueness.

According to Costa (2003), in the present society, characterized by an accelerated rhythm of change at all levels, the organizations tend to assume a particularly relevant role in satisfying workers' needs. By their unique and changeable character, people are presently a valuable and active factor of organizations that can make a difference.

Accordingly, nowadays in order to achieve success, it's not enough to just try to fix weaknesses. Instead, success may be more efficiently achieved by "breaking the rules" (Buckingham & Coffman, 1999, quoted by Luthans & Youssef, 2007) and challenging traditional assumptions. In fact, the organizational context has become increasingly unpredictable and if not well managed can have a major impact in the health, satisfaction and performance of employees. Ergo, it becomes extremely important for organizations to focus on the needs of its employees by developing programs that promote positive health outcomes and remediate negative stress (Munz & Kohler, 1997, quoted by Grawitch, 2007). Furthermore, it has to be considered that each employee has different expectations of work, backgrounds and values, making essential the assessment of actual practices, and the extent to which employees understand the value of those practices and are satisfied with them (Grawitch, 2007).

Despite the fact that it ranks second in priority - after family - as a life value (Bourcier & Palobart, 1997, quoted by Brun & Dugas, 2008), work is still very important to people. For many, work has even taken an excessive importance in their quest for identity and their need for personal fulfillment

(Brun, 1999, quoted by Brun & Dugas, 2008). Consequently, their recognition expectations tend to be much higher in this area of their lives (Brun & Dugas, 2008). Indeed, respondents to a UK survey of construction industry professionals (Bennet, Davidson & Gale, 1999, quot. by Brun & Dugas, 2008) ranked “recognition of their efforts” as the most important organizational practice or metric among those listed. However, both the qualitative and quantitative data suggested a discrepancy between this need for recognition and Human Resources management practices developed in the workplace (Linhart & Linhart, 1998, quot. by Brun & Dugas, 2008).

Not surprisingly, recognizing individual or group performance does have a positive outcome with job satisfaction and motivation. According to Brady, Cervi, Kravitz, Salbi and Quinzy (2004, quoted by Bophal, 2007) “employees who receive genuine and sincere acknowledgement for their contributions and value to an organization are likely to perform at higher levels than employees that work in an environment where such recognition is lacking”.

Taking into consideration that recognizing employees’ contributions is important to achieve higher levels of performance, it is clear that individuals need to feel recognized by their achievements and contributions that can sometimes add value to the working team and the organization itself. Then, according to Ulrich (1997, quoted by Bakker & Schaufeli, 2008) employee’s contributions becomes a critical business issue and in order to achieve success, companies have no choice but to try to engage not only the body but the mind and soul of every employee.

The phenomenon of groupthink is here addressed in a way to better understand the importance of employees’ differences in order to create value for the organization. According to the authors (Baron, 2005; Flippen, 1999; Essen, 1998; Troyer & Youngreen, 2009), groupthink occurs when people are deeply involved in cohesive ingroup and there is a need to preserve group harmony instead of diversity. In fact, Tetlock (1979, quoted by Esser, 1998) found out in his case studies, that speakers in the groupthink cases made more simplistic statements about the issues and made more positive ingroup references than those in the non-groupthink cases.

On the contrary, diversity can be conceptualized as the distribution of differences among the members of a team with respect to a common attribute (Harrison & Klein, 2007, quoted by Kearney, Gebert & Voelpel, 2009; Joshi & Roh, 2009; Mannix & Neale, 2005). Similar to metaphors in biology, Townley, Kloos, Green and Franco (2010) state that diversity in community settings could be a resource for solving social problems, while settings without much human diversity or those that did not value diversity would have difficulty surviving. According to these authors, in the interest of bolstering their competitiveness, organizations must find ways of turning diversity into an asset and the members of the team must actively realize their potential by their differences in knowledge, expertise and perspectives. Therefore, one important reason for developing teamwork is the need to effectively integrate different skills and knowledge bases (Whittington & Quick, 2003).

The need for uniqueness can be considered as a desire that a person feels of being unique as a human being (Fromkin, 1972) and, in the organizational world, as the employee’s desire of contributing with unique outcomes that adds value for her/his organization.

In the effort to engage this issue, the concept of Contributive Uniqueness is for the first time referred by Dos Santos (1999) by demonstrating that there is a positive and valuable way in which workers’ uniqueness can be contributive for the organization, team or group, and ultimately for the individual as a singular person.

Considering the importance of the above mentioned as well as the lack of empirical studies and available data about recognition of the contributive uniqueness, the main goal of the present study, as previously announced, was to create a questionnaire that will allow further investigations in the area of recognition of the employees’ unique contributions. Achieving this goal would produce a useful instrument for organizations in general for the better understanding of their employees’ needs and also in creating new forms of recognition of their efforts and personal contributions, in a way that allows employees to become more motivated and satisfied in the work environment, leading them to a better final performance.

The present study is divided in four main topics of theoretical background that cement the foundation of the subsequent work, and three other topics concerning the empirical research that has been done, including the construction of a specific instrument of assessment.

The first topic focuses on Human Resources practices and management (HRM) for the better understanding of what it is presently known – how it is characterized and most of all, the importance of its effectiveness and efficiency – about human resources management for the satisfaction and motivation of its workers. According to Costa (2003), individuals does not content in having a job that guarantees survival, expecting also to “like what they do”, “feel good”, “be challenged” and this expectation places new challenges for peoples’ management.

The second topic focuses on the concept of organizational recognition, presenting a general view of all the different but non-exclusive perspectives that emerged during the last years of research. The main goal of this topic is to create an accurate representation of the concept since it has only recently become a target of empirical analysis in the area of work and organizational psychology, and human resources. Furthermore, it’s this second topic’s goal to allow the understanding of the importance of recognizing one’s work.

The third topic explores the concept of contributive uniqueness as containing the unique positive characteristics that make people distinctive and unique to others. This concept, in our view, has an important role nowadays because of the uncertainty and constant change that we see happening in the world of organizations. The predictability in which people used to initiate the professional life allowed them to have an expectation of a relatively stable and known career. But nowadays the entrance in the professional life has become unpredictable, in which is essential a continuous investment in worker’s development to continue to be seen as valuable to the organization (Dos Santos, 1999).

The last topic of the theoretical background will introduce the empirical research, creating a theoretical framework by establishing a bridge between the two key concepts: Recognition of the Contributive Uniqueness.

The empirical study is divided in two main chapters that aggregate the method used in this investigation, the construction of our instrument and its psychometric study and finally the achieved results.

In the first chapter it is described the construction process of our instrument with its different phases and the psychometric study in order to support its validation. In this section it is also described the participants as well as the procedures used for the instrument's application. Finally, in the last chapter we present the results of our study by verifying significant differences considering our demographic variables.

The present study is finalized with the discussion of the obtained results, study limitations and future research, closing the last chapter with the final general conclusions.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Topic One: Human Resources and Performance Management

1.1. Summary

The first topic of our literature review will introduce the subject of Human Resources Management and its importance for the two key-concepts of our investigation.

Both in an organizational and social perspective it has become crucial to manage working people effectively and efficiently in order to achieve organizational success, and more important, its survival. As we'll explore, having employees' needs into account in the time of recognizing their performance by considering each employees' unique contributions can increase their levels of satisfaction and motivation. Being this the case, we considered the role of the psychological contract as an important factor to have into account in managing employees' expectations and acting accordingly with those specific and individual expectations.

Taking this into account, human resources are one of the many variables of a process, which result depends on the geniality of a strategy and/or dominant position of the organization, as a key element of interaction of the various resources available.

1.2. The Psychological Contract

The psychological contract emerged as a concept in the psychological literature almost fifty years ago, as a footnote in Understanding Organizational Behavior (Argyris, 1960, quoted by Freese & Schalk, 2008). It gained increased popularity in the 1980s and 1990s due to the large and small-scale organizational changes that lead to behavioral and attitudinal reactions among employees that put to a test the traditional employment relationship (Freese & Schalk, 2008). Here, the psychological contract was used to describe, analyze and explain the consequences of those changes.

The definition brought by Denise Rousseau defined and limited the psychological contract to the “individual beliefs, shaped by the organization, regarding terms of an exchange agreement between individuals and their organization” (Rousseau, 1995, p. 9, quoted by Zhao, Wayne, Glibkowski & Bravo, 2007; Freese & Schalk, 2008). Considering this definition, the psychological contract can be considered as an informal agreement, built in an individual level from each individual’s inside perspective that represents employees’ perceptions concerning the duties that they have to the organizations, being an important factor of how they act within the organization (Cunha, Rego, Cunha & Cabral-Cardoso, 2007).

Freese and Schalk (2008) went further and considered that the psychological contract can be described based on two different views.

In the unilateral view, the psychological contract is an individual belief of the mutual expectations and obligations in the context of a relationship. This belief further shapes the relationship, and governs behavior. It refers to the employee perspective on employee and organizational expectations and obligations, limiting the psychological contract to an intra-individual perception (Rousseau, 1990, quoted by Freese & Schalk, 2008). According to the authors, employers’ perception of the employment relationship has long been neglected, and has received increasing attention in recent years (McClear, 1996; Coyle-Shapiro, & Kessler, 2000; Guest & Conway, 2002; Tekleab & Taylor, 2003, quoted by Freese & Schalk, 2008).

Considering this last point, the authors refer the bilateral view on psychological contracts that take into account the employer as well as employee perceptions on exchanged obligations. This bilateral approach brings a useful tool to clarify those differences, which could resolve organizational conflicts and improve organizational performance (Freese & Shalk, 2008).

Another point that needs to be considered in this topic is the different types of psychological contracts that lead to different outcomes. Macneil (1985, quoted by Freese & Schalk, 2008) introduced a distinction between two types of contracts, the transactional contracts and relational contracts that can differ on five dimensions (Rousseau & Parks, 1993, quoted by Freese & Schalk, 2008): with respect to the focus of the contract, time frame, stability, scope and tangibility. Therefore, according to Chambel and Oliveira-Cruz (2008), if the relational contract is based on loyalty and stability between the two parties involved, in which the employee is motivated and search for different opportunities, the transactional is characterized only by low involvement and implication. Moreover, when employees feel that the psychological contract is violated, they might respond in conformity, converting a relational contract (based on loyalty and full delivery) to a merely transactional one, characterized only by the accomplishment of the contractual obligations (Cunha et al., 2007). Thus, psychological contract violation can be described as “the emotional and affective state that may, under certain conditions, follow from the belief that one’s organization has failed to adequately maintain the psychological contract” (Robinson and Morrison, 2000, p. 230, quoted by Freese & Schalk, 2008).

Taking into account the above mentioned it is clear that psychological contracts need to be looked upon Human Resource Management, in a way that only by considering the beliefs and expectations of each employee could be possible to adequate the management practices, to increase the incidence of workers with a relational contract basis. Then, with the construction of a questionnaire that measures the recognition of employees’ unique contributions, the results can provide to HRM important information to reinforce the existence of a relational contract. The individual sees his/her expectations considered and recognized, and doesn’t feel like the contract is violated, and therefore it contributes to a major level of commitment and retention in the organization.

1.3. Human Resources Management

In the actual management paradigm, it is considered that the main competitive factors in an organization are not the financial, logistic or technological resources but its people (Fernandes & Caetano, 2000). Furthermore, if the organizations could provide a more positive and well-being promoter environment, it would lead to more dedication and motivation of their workers and, consequently, more success for the organization itself (Fernandes & Caetano, 2000).

Managing people is managing the last truly competitive advantage factor of organizations – it is the only one that is able to change, evolve, learn, know, innovate and teach and most of all, the key factor for organizational success (Costa, 2003; Gomes et al., 2008). Thus, it is a resource that can be developed, that can grow, adapt and multiply with high level of resistance to imitation from other organizations (Costa, 2003; Gomes et al., 2008).

Human Resources Management (HRM) became, according to Costa (2003), a hard, but stimulating mission. Hard because it deals with a resource that, by its independent nature, not always reacts the same way to a certain stimulus, being extremely important to appeal to adequate methods and management techniques (aligned with the economic situation of the company and/or market and with its strategy). Furthermore, there are still difficulties in disposing of accurate instruments that could measure the real contribution of value for the organizations (Costa, 2003).

Being so, managing people is a mission that is constantly evolving and mutating and it demands for a permanent confrontation between theoretical models and practical results, depending ultimately on the commitment level and the involvement of all its parts (from top management, to team leaders, and through each employee). According to Costa (2003), only in organizations that encourage free-thinking it is possible to find workers that are engaged and motivated because the effective perception of the contribution that is given to the organization and the value that the organization gives to its workers happens in a day-by-day basis (Costa, 2003).

According to Almeida (2003, quoted by Costa, 2003), in an organization the human resources' performance is measured by how they can be contributive for a certain operational result, or as behaviorally convergent to certain pre-defined dimensions that can be organizationally efficient and effective. The impact of people management on organizational performance has been empirically demonstrated by multiple investigation work – the oldest ones mentioning the impact of specific practices such as compensation, training or performance management systems, and the recent ones mentioning the influence of progressive practices of HRM or the virtuous effect of human resources' sophistication (Gomes et al., 2008).

Management in human resources refers then to the politics, practices and systems that influence behavior, attitudes and performance of the organizational members in a way that increases organizational competitiveness and learning abilities. These processes include: 1) The determination of the human resources needs (HR planning); 2) The attraction of potential new members (recruitment); 3) The processes of choice and hiring (selection); 4) Training of the work conducts and development of future skills (i.e. development and training; career management); 5) Evaluation (performance assessment); 6) Retribution and motivation (compensation); and 7) Creation of a positive work environment (i.e. positive organizational climate, constructive work relationships, occupational health and work hygiene) (Gomes et al., 2008).

These practices can be structured in a way that attracts, develops and retains the human capital essential for the achievement of the organizational goals, being a source of competitive advantage. Thus, an effective HRM has to be strategic – that is, it must contribute for the organization's "big picture" strategy, participating in its implementation and strengthening it (Gomes et al., 2008).

According to the above mentioned, and considering that there are still difficulties in disposing of accurate instruments that could measure the real contribution of value for the organizations (Costa, 2003), the present study aims to create an instrument that could measure the recognition of the unique contributions given by employees as a “wake-up” call for HRM to understand and have a more clear notion of how are their employees being recognized and how can HRM improve the recognition practices in an organization.

1.3.1. Differences between Human Resources Management and Personnel Management

Talking about Human Resources Management isn’t, however, the same as talking about Personnel Management (PM). According to Gomes et al. (2008) there are significant differences between what is nowadays called Human Resources Management (and more recently People Management) and what used to be applied as Personnel Management. HRM has a proactive and strategic nature, assuming that individuals are active and should be managed accordingly with the long-term goals of the business. By contrast, PM was essentially an operational and disconnected management of general management.

Another difference concerns the perspectives by which management used to align by HRM adopts an integrated perspective of people management and a holistic vision of the organization – this task requires comprehension of the organization behavioral concepts, as well as culture and power. PM only used techniques, more or less sophisticated, that didn’t constitute or anchor in a coherent and global concept (Gomes et al., 2008).

The third difference that these authors refer is that HRM takes into account the individuality of each employee, trying to develop in each one the consistent behaviors of a commitment culture. Contrarily, PM used to resort to the “peoples’ ” standardized treatment and used to base the efficacy of its action in control mechanisms that were external to the individual.

The fourth difference stated by the authors is that HRM assumes itself as a management activity – and, therefore, as a responsibility of all managers – while PM used to be left to the experts, with reduced interaction with the business team (Gomes et al., 2008), which would probably lead to a decreased level of significance felt by its employees (Brun & Dugas, 2002).

Finally, HRM adopts a more unified vision of the organization, i.e., it admits that the individuals' and the organizational goals can converge in mutual benefit. PM used to maintain an adversative perspective of the industrial relations (Gomes et al., 2008).

In the traditional model of personnel management, the management activities were mostly of administrative and operational nature, with relative alienation of the business area and with breaches in communication with all the parts involved. The adoption of a new model (HRM) allowed an easy access of the human resources manager to the top management creating a connection between management and workers (Gomes et al., 2008).

Once more, by creating an instrument that could measure recognition of employees' unique contributions, could add more knowledge for the HRM about each individual expectations in a way to develop their work, to increase their level of organizational significance and to converge the individuals' and organizational goals in mutual benefits – all aims of the new human resources management.

1.4. Performance Management

Job performance is defined as the total expected value to the organization of the discrete behavioral episodes that an individual carries out over a standard period of time (Motowidlo, 2003), helping them to achieve their goals, and, therefore, to achieve professional success (Camara, Guerra & Rodrigues, 2010; Costa, 2003).

According to the author, the performance is an aggregated property of multiple, discrete behaviors that occur over time. In addition, performance is a variable that distinguishes between sets of behaviors carried out by each individual and by the same individual at different times and being so, this set of behaviors are likely to contribute to or detract from organizational effectiveness. In a word, variance in performance is variance in the expected organizational value of behavior (Motowidlo, 2003).

Because performance behaviors have varying positive or negative consequences for the organization, according to Motowidlo (2003), behaviors in critical incidents are better candidates for the performance domain than are behaviors in task activity statements. Therefore, critical incidents describe work behaviors that are particularly effective or ineffective. As seen in the examples of police officer performance, they do capture essential behavioral features that differentiate degrees of contribution to organizational goal accomplishment.

Campbell (1990, quoted by Motowidlo, 2003) proposed the professional performance as a multidimensional concept composed by eight behavioral dimensions (job-specific task proficiency; non-job-specific task proficiency; written and oral communications; demonstrating effort; maintaining personal discipline; facilitating team and peer performance; supervision; and management and administration). The performance in each behavioral dimension could be defined according with the expected values for each dimension. However, according to Motowidlo (2003) these dimensions should be viewed concerning the work reality in which a person works, because it may not be possible to incorporate all these dimensions.

Furthermore, Borman and Motowidlo (1993, quoted by Motowidlo, 2003) distinguished between task performance and contextual performance, in which task performance can involve the activities that are directly linked to the organization’s products and contextual performance in terms of behavior that contributes to organizational effectiveness through its effects on the psychological, social and organizational context of work - individuals can contribute through the context of work in several different ways (Motowidlo, 2003). To the extent, an individual’s actions promote positive affect in others, defuse hostilities and conflict, and encourage interpersonal trust and consequently such actions will have positive expected organizational value because their effects on the social context of work improve interpersonal communication and cooperation and make it easier to coordinate individuals’ efforts on interdependent tasks. In addition, employees' actions that show unusual dedication to the task or organization are modeled by others who become inspired to behave similarly themselves in order to exert greater effort in the accomplishment of organizational objectives (Motowidlo, 2003).

Considering the above mentioned, Performance Management, in a strategic management of human resources, has to be 1) an instrument of diagnosis and development of the worker (by giving clues for her/his improvement and progression); 2) an instrument of leadership (by allowing the team leader to reward workers with better performance and to create and manage expectations, work and development planning); and 3) a tool of information integrated in people management (by giving information about performance, training, career progression and salaries, amongst others) (Costa, 2003).

Considering the definition brought by Motowidlo (2003), performance gives respect to variables that distinguishes between different sets of behaviors in which they are likely to contribute to or detract from organizational effectiveness. This variance in performance corresponds to the variance in the expected organizational value of behavior. Therefore, performance management needs to be seen in a strategic way in which should be an instrument of diagnosis and development, leadership and information. The questionnaire that the present study aims to create and apply can have a role in the concreteness of the performance management in the three areas mentioned as well as to distinguish the behaviors that are likely to contribute for the organization by analyzing the recognition given to the unique and positive contributions of each employee.

1.4.1. Performance assessment

In the human resources management's level, performance assessment has important and meaningful consequences in productivity, both directly – as a performance control process – and indirectly – through its relation with the selection, training, professional development, promotion and organizational reward (Fernandes & Caetano, 2000).

Performance assessment can be defined as a process of communication and negotiation in which all the organizational parts are involved and in which the social validation of judgments emerges as a determinant factor of its efficacy (Caetano, 1996, p.396, quoted by Fernandes & Caetano, 2000). Furthermore, it is a formal and systematic system that allows the appreciation of the employees' developed work inside the organization (Fernandes & Caetano, 2000).

McGregor (1957, quoted by Fernandes & Caetano, 2000) considers that there are three main goals that lead an organization to the implementation of a performance assessment system. At the organization's level, performance management helps in the administrative decisions connected to transfers, rewards and so on. At the individual level, it allows the assessed one to know the appreciation that is made concerning his/her work and it also allows the evaluator to counsel the employee in his professional route. In addition, it is a process that has as a goal to judge or estimate value, excellence and the qualities of a person, and, most of all, employees' contributions to the organization.

In addition, Cleveland et al. (1989, quoted by Fernandes & Caetano, 2000) stated that the majority of the organizations use the performance assessment to 1) individual comparisons that include salary and promotions' management with workers' performance; 2) intra-individuals comparisons, that include identification of training needs, provide to workers feedback about their performance and identification of their strong and weakened points; 3) planning of future training needs, evaluation of the workers' proposed goals and identification of organizational development needs.

Ultimately, these numerous main goals can be integrated into three general categories: goals that allow management and organizational development; goals considering the individual development; and goals centered in reward's management (Caetano, 1996, quoted by Fernandes & Caetano, 2000). Therefore, the first goal includes the determination of the needs for training and organizational development and to negotiate the goals for the next period. The second goal (individual development) includes the acknowledgement and recognition of the employee’s performance, by identifying the performance‘s deficiencies and give feedback about his/her performance. The last one, the goals of reward’s management, includes the decision in attributing rewards and other benefits and to decide about salaries (Fernandes & Caetano, 2000).

Finally it is important to mention that the performance assessment is not only the one that is measured, i.e. formal assessment, but it can also happen in an informal way and can emerge from different sources. Indeed, performance assessment can be given by the hierarchical superior, by colleagues, by the employee itself, by subordinates and also by clients (Fernandes & Caetano, 2000).

Once more, the aim of our study was to create an instrument that could provide some clues about the employees’ performance is being assessed and, most of all, its acknowledgement and how can HRM improve the implemented assessment systems.

1.5. Conclusion

This first topic presented the human resources management as an important area to attract, develop and retain human capital. Nowadays, an effective HRM is one that develops appropriate activities concerning each employee’s needs and contributions. Being so, the main and ultimate goal of HRM consists in empowering the contribution of each individual to the company’s organizational competitiveness by taking into account the contribution relative to each employee as well as each employee’s different strategic importance of skills and interests. In a nutshell, performance assessment should promote the performance improvement, by taking into consideration the acknowledgement of employees’ strong points and by promoting the discussion of weak points accompanied with suggestions of improvement. Therefore, it is this study's aim to evidence the importance of finding talented people and acknowledge their organizational value by the unique contributions that they give to impulse the organization's growth.

Topic Two: Organizational Recognition

1.1. Summary

In this second topic, recognition theories are analyzed, establishing a theoretical framework for this research.

As many other concepts, recognition has been the target of many definitions and perspectives from different areas of study and backgrounds. Here it will be presented actual four main non-exclusive perspectives in the area of recognition as well as its different levels and practices for the better understanding of what is presently known about the concept and in what way it is applied in the organizational context. This topic will establish a basis for the construction of our instrument of assessment.

1.2. The Modern Context

According to Tweedie (2009) work can affect people's ability to flourish in several ways. In work people may find satisfaction in the exercise of their capabilities or skills, develop more complex capabilities and skills through repeated action and training, and develop characteristics conducive to a fulfilling life outside of work, such as complex social skills or self-confidence.

Socially organized work gives life meaning, structures a person's day and expands the human horizon by providing people with the possibility of exercising their rights of codetermination and by participating in decision making processes in the workplace (Notz, 2009). This kind of work conveys important social experiences in a way that it constitutes the backbone for the formulation of collective goals and creates a common ground in which it can take on the form of a person's identity (Notz, 2009).

The globalization phenomenon as well as technological development and competition at an international level have been causing an impact at the organizational level, changing the nature of work and job definitions and blurring boundaries between previously distinct spheres of life (Brun & Dugas, 2008; Nierling, 2007). The effects of these transformations that emerge from the need to develop competitive advantage in the labor market not always have a positive outcome, leading sometimes to dramatic changes in the meaning of work (Ardichvili & Kuchinke, 2009; Brun & Dugas, 2008). A growing feeling of uncertainty among workers, as a result of the unpredictable nature of these transformations, may undermine the sense of one's belonging to the organization, leading to an increase in questioning the trust relationships established between employer and employee (Brun & Dugas, 2008).

To respond to those negative consequences as well as to increase productivity and organizational efficiency, numerous researchers have examined the impact of motivation in work performance (Herzberg, Mausner & Snyderman, 1959; McGregor, 1960; Vroom, 1964; Porter & Lawler, 1968, quoted by Brun & Dugas, 2008), ultimately concluding that employee recognition is in fact an essential component of motivation or, in the least, a vector of motivation (Dutton, 1998, quoted by Brun & Dugas, 2008, Appelbaum & Kamal, 2000; Saunderson, 2004, Grawitch, Gottschalk & David, 2006), identity (Dejours, 1993, quoted by Brun & Dugas, 2008) and a component of meaningful work (Mow, 1987; Morin, 1996/2001, quoted by Brun & Dugas, 2008). In fact, Brun et al. (2003, quot. by Brun & Dugas, 2008) have revealed that lack of organizational recognition constitutes the second major risk factor to psychological problems in the workplace. Furthermore, they found that employees tend to express the need to be recognized by their supervisors, co-workers and clients, regardless of their job status or type, which means that work recognition acts as a personal development agent extremely important to workplace mental health. Moreover, recognition promotes on-the-job learning (Lippit, 1997, quoted by Brun & Dugas, 2008) and is a building block of learning organizations (Griego, Geroy & Wright, 2000, quoted by Brun & Dugas, 2008).

In addition, the findings of Kropf (2005, quoted by Nierling, 2007) imply that recognition in the field of work is fundamental for the formation of identity and the self-conception of the employees. Thus, an extensive recognition of the person is claimed in the sphere of work.

Given employees' urgent need for workplace recognition and the growing organizational challenges in the areas of Human Resource Management, workplace quality of life and worker engagement - all of which share recognition as a contributing factor -, it's crucial that we achieve a better grasp of this concept (Brun & Dugas, 2008).

1.3. Definition and Evolution of the concept of recognition

The concept of recognition is composed by the judgments made by all of those that inhabit the workers' environment – judgments that concern his or her contributions in terms of work practices but also in terms of the personal investment and mobilization. Overall, it consists in the evaluation of the results of one's work.

According to Laitinen (2007), Maslow's hierarchy of needs presents a good basis for the need of recognition. In a sequential order of their priorities in obtaining a response for their needs, humans have 1) physical, material and biological needs; 2) the need for security; 3) the need for belonging and love; 4) the need for esteem and respect and 5) a general need to develop, sustain and exercise various "truly human" or "person-making" capacities (cognitive, aesthetic, emotional, practical, evaluative, communicative) and undergo related experiences. Accordingly, these needs constitute the basis for the pursuit of satisfaction by its agents of 6) various growth needs for self-actualization (and transcendence) through the accomplishment of optimal goals, projects, focal aims and through exercise of their capacities in some specific way that matters to the person and is constituent of her/his practical identity.

The need for recognition can, then, be found in the last levels of the hierarchy but is also present at the second, third and fourth levels, being that people need to receive love, esteem and respect as forms of recognition (Laitinen, 2007).

1.3.1. The origins of the concept

According to Heidegren (2004), one point of departure of the discussion of the concept was Adam Smith, who emphasized the importance of the other for how an individual comes to see him or herself. Several authors followed this discussion, but an even more important point of departure was Hegel.

Hegel's original insight was driven by the distinction between different basic modes of recognition and by envisaging a struggle for recognition (Heidegren, 2004). Building on Hegel, but also narrowing his scope, Marx stressed the importance of recognition in the labor process, and gave the name 'alienation' to the experience of disrespect in work. Moreover, among the classical sociologists, Durkheim's insistence on a pre-contractual solidarity points to the importance of mutual recognition as a basic medium of social integration (Heidegren, 2004).

The concept of recognition has advanced, according to Heidegren (2004), into a key concept within the area of moral, social and political theory. The authors that were responsible for this growing interest were Charles Taylor ("The politics of recognition") in which is cemented the question of multiculturalism, and claims the importance of minority groups has being recognized by the majority society (Taylor, 1994, quoted by Heidegren, 2004) and Axel Honneth ("The struggle for recognition") which theory lies on the morally motivated social conflicts (Heidegren, 2004).

In the German debate on sociology of work, the topic of recognition has only recently been discussed and sustained in empirical studies (Holtgrewe, Voswinkel & Wagner, 2000; Voswinkel, 2002, quoted by Nierling, 2007).

Axel Honneth's recognition approach was an important reference to the prosecution of other organizational recognition studies. Honneth's core idea is that certain kinds of recognition (the three different dimensions of recognition – love, respect and social esteem) are necessary for a person's development and to the sustainment of positive relations to the self (self-respect, self-esteem and self-confidence) (Baldwin, 2009; Cooke, 2009; Heidegren, 2004; Ikäheimo, 2009; Laitinen, 2007; Leeuwen, 2007; Nierling, 2007; Petterson & Willig, 2004; Schweiger, 2009; Smith, 2009; Tweedie, 2009).

The dimension love can be found in the private sphere in personal relationships where individuals are encouraged in their feelings and personal needs. Respect is formed by the mutual recognition of individual rights through all members of the society. Solidarity covers the field of recognition that arises from certain contributions to societal aims. Based on this, individuals are able to assess their skills and their performance (Baldwin, 2009; Cooke, 2009; Heidegren, 2004; Holtgrewe, Voswinkel & Wagner, 2000, quoted by Nierling, 2007; Ikäheimo, 2009; Laitinen, 2007; Leeuwen, 2007; Petterson & Willig, 2004; Schweiger, 2009; Sitzer & Wiezorek, 2005, quoted by Nierling, 2007; Smith, 2009; Tweedie, 2009).

Nonetheless, critics to this model were announced by Nancy Fraser by considering that Axel Honneth’s theory was based on a dubious moral psychology, and by not providing a more solid empirical point (Heidegren, 2004).

Stephan Voswinkel, in his contribution, argues that a change was gradually taking place concerning the basic mode of recognition in work. Given that recognition in work is related to the principle of achievement, it was now necessary to question what kind of achievement is then, recognized (Heidegren, 2004).

Voswinkel (2002, quoted by Nierling, 2007; Schweiger, 2009; Heidegren, 2004) distinguishes two modes of recognition, “appreciation” and “admiration”. By appreciation the author means the valuation of work in the context of social affiliation as traditional institutions by recognizing the pure membership of a worker. In contrast, admiration marks the recognition that is given for extraordinary achievements, success or originality. His assumption is that recognition in work in terms of admiration becomes more and more important while the relevance of recognition in terms of appreciation diminishes, developing this thought critically by stating that the loss of the recognition of “normal achievements” can result in discouragement and the disability to guarantee recognition in the long term (Nierling, 2007; Schweiger, 2009; Heidegren, 2004).

1.3.2. Actual recognition perspectives, levels and practices in the sphere of work

Recognition practices have a quotidian base (regular or punctual) and it has both formal/informal, individual/collective, private/public and financed/not financed manifestations. From the point of view of one's evaluation of him/herself and his or her characteristics, recognition can have symbolic, affective, concrete or financial value (Brun & Dugas, 2002). Ergo, the act of recognition needs to be considered from an interactional perspective that encompasses the notion of reciprocity, taking into account the bidirectional nature of all human relationships (Brun & Dugas, 2008).

According to the authors, there are, until now, four non-exclusive approaches of recognition identified in the scientific literature (Brun & Dugas, 2002/2008).

The *Ethical perspective* promotes the idea that the recognition is a question of human dignity and social justice, and not only organizational performance or a mental health problem at the workplace. In this perspective, the worker cannot be designated as a number, case or file, but on the contrary, with a notion of equality among people (Brun, 2002; De Konink, 1999, quoted by Brun & Dugas, 2002/2008). On this level, recognition displays relations with the concept of organizational justice that can be infused into an organization through certain practices such as by having a senior management that clarifies organizational standards regarding the distribution of rewards, and treat workers fairly in accordance with those standards and the effective contribution of groups and individuals or, as another example, by acknowledge past mistakes and the negative impact of poor decisions on employees (Brun & Dugas, 2008).

Then, the *Humanistic and existential perspective* concerns a fundamental trust in the humanity and in the potential of people and communities. According to this perspective, if you provide proper work conditions to employees (financial and material, but also good relationships, communication, power and independence) it will be easier for them to work in a positive way and align with the organizational aims. More specifically, it consists of an a priori recognition, which means, the recognition immediately granted to everyone based on the principle of equality among people (Bourcier & Palobart, 1997; Jacob, 2001, quoted by Brun & Dugas, 2002/2008). For employees, the indicator of existential recognition is the impression that others acknowledge their existence and take their needs into account and also that they feel respected as a whole person, having unique physical, emotional, psychological and cognitive characteristics (Brun & Dugas, 2008).

The third is the *Work psychodynamics school* which relates with the subjective experience of people in the workplace, as well as defense strategies of the individual or group to maintain the psychological balance in disconcerting working conditions. According to this perspective, the recognition is an expected reward by the subject, involving two components: the recognition in the sense of acknowledging the capacities, or the recognition of the contribution of the subject to the organization (extra-work). Here, the recognition also exists in the sense of gratitude, by enlightening the contribution of a specific worker during her/his work performance (Dejours, 1993, quoted by Brun & Dugas, 2002/2008). In this perspective the main practical recognition is focused on employees' results. Being so, the recognition made by peers - that are in a better position to judge the quality of work performed and the effort put in by the person - brings the sense of being appreciated. In addition, by being acknowledged for their particular way of doing things and the characteristics that make them stand out from others, they begin to feel recognized for the unique contribution they bring to their professional life (Brun & Dugas, 2008).

The last perspective is called the *Behavioral perspective* in which the concept of recognition is viewed as a method of positively reinforcing observable on-the-job actions and behaviors considered desirable by the organization (Nelson, 2001, quoted by Brun & Dugas 2008). This perspective also refers to the recognition of results, focusing on the efficacy, benefits and value of the employee performance.

The recognition can also happen at five different but also non-exclusive levels (Brun & Dugas, 2002/2008): 1) *Horizontal level***:** It refers to the recognition developed between colleagues and members of the working team; 2) *Vertical and hierarchical level*: It concerns to the recognition relationships between the manager and employee or team; 3) *Organizational level*: The policies and programs stating the organization's intention to recognize the work performed by its members; 4) *External level*: It involves not only the recognition that is provided by suppliers and customers, but also consultants and partners as well; and 5) *Social level*: Is concerned with the relationship between the organization and its employees have with the community.

Voswinkel (2005, quoted by Nierling, 2007) also identified three levels of recognition, that are the *interpersonal recognition* (micro level), *organizational recognition* (meso-level) and *societal recognition* (macro level). Within these levels the aspects of Honneth's theory previously explained come into play.

The *Interpersonal recognition (micro level)* happens through the interaction between what individuals give and receive as recognition or in opposition, the disregard. The forms of interaction can be seen by the politeness and respect (or impoliteness and ignorance), commendation and gratitude. In the sphere of employment, the interactions can take place between colleagues, with supervisors and customers (Nierling, 2007).

The *Organizational recognition (meso-level)* is considered a pattern of recognition that is expressed in the organizational rules. Within employment, recognition is implemented in a manifold way: through payment, careers, operational symbols of status, assessment of performance or rules of seniority (Nierling, 2007).

Finally, the *Societal recognition (macro level)* concerns the recognition on the level of society, in which the recognition of a person or social groups appears, on the one hand, through legal principles and, on the other hand, through social esteem. *Recognition via law* reflects equally distributed rights as well as regulations of the welfare state for certain social groups. Certain privileges of the welfare state are linked with employment, like social insurance and pension claims. *Social esteem* can be measured by i.e. wealth, position, power, certificates of education or prominence. Within employment prestige can arise from the occupation *per se*, the position in the organization and the use of the qualification. Therefore recognition in the sense of social visibility is the appreciation of work in the sphere of life as contribution to society.

Considering the theoretical perspectives previously referred, the recognition can be expressed at work by four practices (Brun & Dugas, 2002/2008), that are 1) *Personal Recognition*: Focused essentially in the workers as distinctive individuals, with their identities and specific experiences, that can be expressed and showed on the day-by-day interaction, by their level of autonomy in their individual decisions (Jacob, 2001, quoted by Brun & Dugas, 2008); 2) *Recognition of the work practices*: It relates with the way in which an employee performs a task, having into account her/his behavior, professional qualifications and experience, creativity, innovation and continuous improvement; 3) *Recognition of work dedication*: Refers to the quality and quantity of employees' efforts, by taking into consideration they're contributions, risks and energy taken, regardless the results by itself; and 4) *Recognition of results*: It concerns to the product directly finished. It's a judgment and a form of gratitude based on the efficacy, utility and quality of the performed work by the employee or team. These four practices can be ultimately expressed then in formal and informal recognition in which formal recognition gives respect to direct and mostly financial recognition and informal recognition by the recognition that is given on a day-by-day interaction.

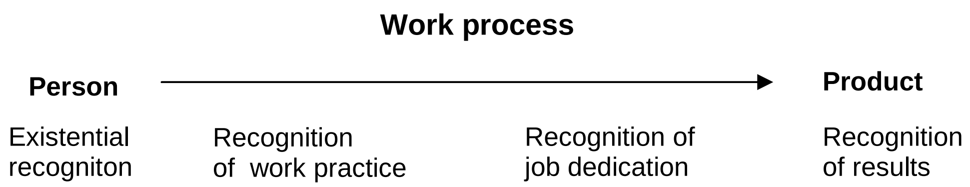

Figure1. The four employee-recognition practices (source Brun & Dugas, 2008)

According to the authors there are eight quality criterion of recognition practices that should be taken into account: 1) *Honesty*: The expression of recognition towards the other must be sincere and authentic (Brun & Dugas, 2002); 2) *Reactivity*: The recognition of a worker should be made immediately after the achievement of the positive result, act or work behavior in question (Brun & Dugas, 2002); 3) *Hierarchy proximity*: In general, recognition is effective and productive if communicated by a superior that has major proximity to the worker in question. When the employee is recognized by a superior that is not involved in her/his work, the employee will not appreciate and value that recognition, at least as much as if there was proximity and involvement (Brun & Dugas, 2002); 4) *Variability*: It is also important to maintain a certain diversity concerning the ways of recognizing employees. It is necessary to adjust the recognition to each individual, and diversifying the possible forms of recognition for the employee in question (Brun & Dugas). For example, some employees may value their autonomy and would prefer to be thanked in private. Other employees may be interested in having the recognition highly visible to increase their promotion opportunities. Finally, some may prefer rewards that recognize the team's or group's contributions; 5) *Personalization*: The recognition practices should be adapted to the individual characteristics or to the characteristics of the team. There are few universal recognition practices that can be applied to everyone (Brun & Dugas, 2002). In addition, time taken by peers or subordinates to recognize a job well done can also be very effective. In fact, these types of upward recognitions can even act as a greater reward because they are unexpected and not required from the colleague; 6) *Legitimacy*: The sources of recognition should be significant and credible for the worker. Again, the recognition will be more appreciated and taken into account when it's given by a person that intimately knows the work developed by that employee (Brun & Dugas, 2002); 7) *Specificity*: The recognition should always be given in a specific way, meaning it should always relate to a specific effort, event or behavior (Brun & Dugas, 2002); and 8) *Coherency*: The recognition practices should be aligned with the mission and priorities of the organization. Furthermore, the voice of the organization that is incorporated by management should be congruent with the adopted actions and attitudes of that organization (Brun & Dugas, 2002).

1.4. Factors and Effects connected to Employee Recognition

As already explored in the beginning of this topic, employee recognition has been related with other variables to emphasize its importance in the organizational world. By examining the impact of motivation in work performance, several researchers concluded that employee recognition is a vector of motivation (Dutton, 1998, quoted by Brun & Dugas, 2008, Appelbaum & Kamal, 2000; Saunderson, 2004, Grawitch, Gottschalk & David, 2006), having an important role in workers' identity (Dejours, 1993, quoted by Brun & Dugas, 2008) and a component of meaningful work (Mow, 1987; Morin, 1996/2001, quoted by Brun & Dugas, 2008).

This section will mention other factors that are connected with the concept, which results have been demonstrating the importance of recognizing one's work.

1.4.1. Recognition and Performance

As we explored in the first chapter of this literature review, employee's performance gives respect to variables that distinguishes between different sets of behaviors in which they are likely to contribute to or detract from organizational effectiveness that could provide organizational value (Motowidlo, 2003). Despite the fact that there's still a considerable lack of empirical studies in the area of recognition to understand better how this concept is connected to other key-concepts, there are some studies and some theoretical background that sustains the relationship between good recognition practices and performance improvement.

Bishop (1987) demonstrated in a conducted study that the recognition of results through salary (bonuses and incentives), i.e., financial compensation, has had little effect on employees' performance.

In fact, Kralovensky (2006) conducted a study in which the main purpose was to explore various ways an organization (in the particular case, the Corporation of the City Windsor that employs 2500 workers) could demonstrate to its employees that their work is valuable and therefore appreciated. By creating and fulfilling a recognition program, this study showed that a well-developed employee recognition program can have an important role to reinforce outstanding performance, acknowledgement of commitment to the organization and appreciation to the work force, giving also employees opportunities to grow and evolve.

Finally, by contributing to employee's job satisfaction, the recognition of their work has a positive impact on organizational productivity and performance (Appelbaum & Kamal, 2000).

1.4.2. Recognition, Engagement and Workers' Retention

Work engagement can be defined as a positive, fulfilling, affective-motivational state of work-related well-being. More specifically, it refers to a persistent affective-cognitive state that isn't focused particularly on an object, event, individual or behavior (Schaufeli, Martínez, Pinto, Salanova & Bakker, 2002). Accordingly, engaged employees accomplish high levels of energy, are enthusiastic about their work, and are often fully immersed in their job (Macey & Schneider, 2008; May, Gilson & Harter, 2004; Schaufeli & Bakker, in press, quoted by Bakker, Schaufeli, Leiter & Taris, 2008; Piersol, 2007). Being so, engagement is assumed to produce positive outcomes, both at the individual level (personal growth and development) as well as at the organizational level (performance quality) (Bakker et al., 2008).

According to Bakker & Schaufeli (2008), recognition from colleagues and supervisors (as well as other factors such as support, performance feedback, opportunities for learning and development) has an important role in developing engagement and motivation in employees.

In 1986 a recognition program was conducted for one year as part as a 3 years study using the posting of attendance certificates as the primary method of employee recognition. When compared with sick leave during 1985, the 73 employees in the recognition group decreased their use of sick leave by 28%. In 1987, the year following the end of the recognition program, the average sick leave returned to a higher level. In addition the sick leave of the control group of 48 employees showed an increase each year from 1985 to 1987, with their use in 1986 being 16% greater than the recognition group (Werner, 1992).

In another study (Henryhand, 2010) was found that the perceptions of employee recognition and employee engagement have a significant impact on overall job satisfaction and intent to leave the organization. For the accomplishment of this study, surveys were administered to 900 state employees at a medium to large sized agency in South Carolina in which participants were asked to respond to questions related to their perceptions of current recognition programs and engagement practices in their agency, as well as questions relative to job satisfaction and turnover intentions. Although job satisfaction was not found to have a direct negative relationship to intent to leave, the findings supported the hypothesis that the level of satisfaction with recognition and engagement practices is a significant predictor of turnover intentions.

Another recent real-world example concerning the effectiveness of employee recognition is provided by Yaeger (1998, quoted by Luthans, 2000). According to the author, a company named *Dierbergs Markets* was concerned with the exceedingly high turnover rates of their employees. To overcome this problem, *Dierbergs* implemented a formal recognition and feedback program. As a result, turnover has almost been cut in half over a six year period - from 50% to 28% currently.

Moreover, work recognition was considered one of the most important sources of organizational mobilization and engagement (Wills, Labelle, Guerin

& Tremblay 1998, quoted by Brun & Dugas, 2008; Tremblay, Gay & Simard 2000, quoted by Brun & Dugas, 2008).

An instrument that measures the recognition of employees' unique contributions can be an important tool for management to understand if their recognition practices are well implemented and perceived by employees and, if not, in which way they can be improved upon. Establishing good recognition practices, as exposed in this section, will lead to higher levels of engagement, satisfaction and employees' commitment, preventing turnover intentions.

1.4.3. Recognition and Health

Occupational Health Psychology emerged from the need for applying psychology in the organizational context in a way to improve quality of work life, protection and employees' security and, most of all, to the promotion of healthy work environments (Quick, Tetrick, Adkins & Klunder, 2003). In addition its purpose was to prevent lesions and diseases, by the creation of secure and healthy work environments and in the development and maintenance of employees' health and well-being (Quick, et al., 2003). Furthermore, the Occupational Health Psychology showed that it is inappropriate to not recognize as relevant the positive aspect of work in peoples' lives (Salanova & Schaufeli, 2004; Schaufeli & Salanova, 2007).

Being so, the health content of most workplace programs grew out of efforts to reduce heart disease risk factor, namely improving nutrition, reducing stress, stimulating physical activity, etc. Strategies to improve each of these risk factors are fairly straight forward, the behavioral and biometric health benefits are relatively easy to measure and the process to measure financial benefits is straightforward, if not easy. The Psychologically Healthy Workplaces Award focuses on five areas: employee involvement; health and safety; employee growth and development; work-life balance; and *employee recognition* (O'Donnel, 2007).

Among managers, for instance, recognition would appear to constitute a stress-tolerance factor and a key element in their ability to handle difficult professional situations (Dany & Livian, 2002, quoted by Brun & Dugas, 2008).

A final representative example that is linked not only to employees' well-being, but also performance and turnover intentions, is provided by Boyle (1996, quoted by Luthans, 2000) who noted the important contribution of the "100 club" employee recognition program implemented by the *Diamond International Corporation*. Since formalizing their employee recognition system, the company has experienced a 16.5% increase in productivity, a 48% decrease in absenteeism, and a 41% drop in industrial accidents (Luthans, 2000).

1.5. Conclusion

The aim of this second topic was to create a more concrete idea about the concept of employee recognition and its constituents.

We explored the various perspectives of recognition that have been analyzed until now, from the origin of the concept in Axel Honneth's approach to what we presently know in the area of human resources, as well as the levels and practices in which recognition could happen.

The present study will have as a reference for the construction of the questionnaire the definition by Brun & Dugas (2008), in which the concept of recognition is viewed as the evaluation made by all the parts involved (four main levels of recognition) on employee's environment about her/his contributions in terms of work practices and personal investment.

Topic Three: Contributive Uniqueness

1.1. Summary

This topic will explore the concept of uniqueness as an important value for the organizational context and more important, for the individual as a person that can add valuable outcomes for the organization based on his/her personal contributions and unique skills.

Along this topic, theories such as the Uniqueness Theory and the Optimal Distinctiveness Theory will be presented in a way to better understand the role of a Contributive Uniqueness, concept first time presented by Dos Santos (1999), by considering the uniqueness of each individual valuable within the organizational aims, including the organizational belonging as one of the structural elements of identity, privy of the unique idiosyncrasies of each one individual.

Based on the theoretical framework analyzed, the concept of contributive uniqueness emerges as a positive “weapon”/value to employees deal with the actual uncertainty on the organizational world, by bringing unique characteristics and faculties that are greater benefits for the company in which they are involved.

1.2. Evolution and different contributions for the concept’s development

There are many references in psychology concerning the need of individualization and uniqueness that manifests along the ontogenetic development (Dos Santos, 1999).

According to Maslow (1043; 1970) the concept of progressive differentiation was crucial along the human motivational development, being enchased in the highest levels of the hierarchy of needs. Furthermore, this process, as a motivational development happens as a progressive differentiation, i.e., while the low levels of the hierarchy have homogeneous satisfaction mechanisms, in the higher levels the motivated behavior is much more differentiated among individuals. For example, the need of self-actualization has a major inter-individual variability.

1.2.1. Social Identity Theory and Self-Categorization Theory contribution

Owens (2003, quoted by Andrijiw & Hyatt, 2009) defined identity as the "categories people use to specify who they are and to locate themselves relative to other people" (p. 207). In addition, Dos Santos (1999) defined identity as the answer that each individual gives to the question "*who am I*".

In Social Identity Theory (SIT), Tajfel and Turner (1979, quoted by Dovidio, 2008) proposed that a person's need for positive self-identity can be satisfied by membership in prestigious social groups that will motivate social comparisons that favorably differentiate ingroup from outgroup members. Although positive distinctiveness can be achieved by identifying dimensions by which the ingroup is already superior to the outgroup, needs for positive distinctiveness may also motivate actions that actively place the ingroup in a superior position.

Although similar to SIT, Self-Categorization theory puts greater emphasis on the cognitive processes involved in identification and on the continuum from personal to collective identity (Dovidio, 2003). According to Self-Categorization Theory (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher & Wetherell, 1987), the self-definition that emerges from the belongingness to a certain group is antagonistic of the self-definition as unique and distinct subject. Moreover, the opposition postulated by this theory is a functional opposition, i.e. as more as the individual perceives himself as a unique person, less the individual perceives himself as member of groups or categories and, as he perceives himself as a member of groups or categories, less he perceives himself as a unique person (Dos Santos, 1999), being at the center of this theory the notion of depersonalization as a psychological process that leads to a major uniformity and homogeneity of behaviors and representations inside a group, and a minor salience of personal identity in benefit of the collective or social identity (Lorenzi-Cioldi & Doise, 1996).

Being so, the following authors have been trying to reformulate the functional antagonism proposed by this theory and for the Social Identity Theory.

The Inter and Intragroups differences Co-Variation Model proposed by Deschamps & Devos (1996; 1998) postulates that the co-variation of the personal and social identity becomes salient, instead of the reciprocal inhibition proposed by Turner et al., (1987). According to this model, instead of a unique bipolar continuum, two dimensions (personal and social identity) are considered in which they will function with relatively independence. Although this theory integrates the functional antagonism brought by Turner et al. (1987) in a vaster conceptualization, it still leaves open the possibility that the self-definition of an individual emerges not only as seeing his/her as members of an organization/group but also as a unique person (Dos Santos, 1999).

Based on this theory, the Lorenzi-Cioldi & Doise (1996) proposal emerges from the importance of the conceptual distinction between collection and aggregated groups. The first ones are the ones with a high social prestige. The aggregated groups have low social prestige and their members perceive themselves as less differentiated between them (Lorenzi-Cioldi & Doise, 1996; Lorenzi-Cioldi & Doise, 1994 quoted by Dos Santos, 1999). However, once again, according to Dos Santos (1999), these authors didn’t sufficiently clarified how it is possible for a person to perceive him/herself as member of the in-group (similar to others) and as a unique person as well (different from others).

1.2.2. Optimal Distinctiveness Theory contribution

Brewer (2001; Brewer, 2003, quoted by Andrijiw & Hyatt, 2009) sustains that, according to the Optimal Distinctiveness Theory, the social identity derives from a fundamental tension between, on one hand, human needs of inclusion and similitude among others, and on the other hand, a need for differentiation, uniqueness and individuality. Hence, this theory proposes that individuals seek to find a balance between the need to fit in and the need to stand out, and if the balance is tipped, compensatory actions ensue to regain a balance (Pickett, Silver & Brewer, 2002, quoted by Walsh & Smith, 2007).

There are four postulates by which this theory is built on: 1) The social identification will be more intense for social groups or categories at the inclusive level that solve the conflict among differentiation needs of the self and assimilation to others; 2) The optimal distinctiveness is independent of evaluative implications of the group belongingness and despite the rest of the equal variables, the individuals will prefer positive group identities than negative ones; 3) The distinctiveness of a certain social identity is specific to a context. It depends on the scope in which the social possible identities are defined in a certain moment that can go from the participants in a specific social reunion, till the whole human race; and 4) the optimal level of categorical distinctiveness or inclusiveness is function of the intensity of the opposite impulses for assimilation or differentiation. For any individual, the intensity that emerges from these two needs is determined by cultural standards and rules, by individual socialization and for the recent experience (Brewer, 1991, pp.478)

Furthermore, the Optimal Distinctiveness Theory has two thoughts that are important to mention: First of all, the assumption that the identification with a group in some way thwarts the individual uniqueness, otherwise the needs for assimilation and differentiation do not obligatorily articulate on a group of intermezzo dimensions; and second, the idea that need for assimilation and differentiation manifests simultaneously and not, for example, alternately. According to Dos Santos (1999), the doubts concerning the functional antagonism among personal and social identities take us to predict a possibility of self-perception, as a member in a larger group, as a feeling of belongingness, allowing the subject to have a feeling of differentiation, as a unique person.

1.2.3. Dual Identity Theory contribution

According to the Common Ingroup Identity Model, a common, inclusive identity could promote better intergroup relations (Dovidio et al., 2000; Gaertner et al., 1993), being the consequence of categorization the redirection toward the establishment of these relations (Nier et al., 2001). However, some recent research has shown that holding a dual identity may also enhance intergroup relations (Brown & Wade, 1987; Deschamps & Brown, 1983; Hornsey & Hogg, 2000, quoted by Coleman et al., 2004).

Dual identity represents a form of re-categorization that can facilitate positive intergroup relations for minority group members. Huo, Smith, Tyler and Lind (1996, quoted by Dovidio, Gaertner & Esses, 2008) concluded that having a strong identification with a superordinate group can redirect people from focusing on their personal outcomes to concerns about achieving the greater good and maintaining social stability while also maintaining important racial and ethnic identities. This process will therefore lead to better cooperation, by creating a sense of belongingness to the superordinate group as well as to the previous groups.

The recognition of common identity, while acknowledging one's own and others' subgroup identities, allows groups to capitalize on the novel ideas and the various perspectives of members of different groups to enhance their effectiveness in achieving success in superordinate goals. These processes are important for realizing the potential benefits of diversity by encouraging the full participation of the different groups to relinquish some of their advantages to pursue collective goals. Successful outcomes in these circumstances also facilitate intergroup trust. Thus, cooperation is central to politics of intergroup relations, for achieving justice and equality (Dovidio et al., 2008).

1.2.4. The Uniqueness Theory contribution

The need for uniqueness has been related to a number of constructs, including activity performance level (Snyder & Fromkin, 1980), valuation of scarcity (Fromkin, Olson, Dipboye & Barnaby, 1971, quoted by Snyder & Fromkin, 1980), attitudes and beliefs held (Snyder & Fromkin, 1980), character of social networks constructed (Weinraub, Brooks & Lewis, 1977, quoted by Burns & Brady, 2001), and consumption endeavor (Grubb & Hupp, 1968, quoted by Burns & Brady, 2001).

The predictions of the Uniqueness Theory use the concept of self as a basic explanatory dynamic, having as expression the comparison of individuals (Snyder & Fromkin, 1980; Thomas & Sydney, 1984). According to the theory, a comparison attribute is a percept or cognition by which the individual designates him/herself and discriminates persons, either him/herself or others. Attributes can be ordered into attribute categories, such as personality traits, attitudes or opinions and physical characteristics. A person can perceive that her or his opinions, physical characteristics, and so, are (slightly, moderately or highly) similar to those of another person. Then, individuals are comfortable with the idea that are moderately different from others, i.e., that are moderately unique. In that way, according to theory, individuals don't like to think that they are highly similar (need of differentiation) or highly different (need of similitude). Being so, the state of extremely high similarity may threaten the need to view oneself as a differentiated and unique individual (Snyder & Fromkin, 1997; Snyder & Fromkin, in press, quoted by Snyder & Endelman, 2006).

When there is a state a high similarity or high dissimilarity, the theory predicts that it will be a cognitive and/or behavioral attempt by the person to reestablish the feeling that is only moderately similar (Snyder & Fromkin, 1980; Snyder & Fromkin, 1980, quoted by Thomas & Sydney, 1984).

Thus, it is hypothesized that moderate similarity generates the highest sense of acceptability of the uniqueness identity dimension and that increases or decreases relative to moderate similarity both lessen the degree of encoded acceptability (Snyder & Fromkin, 1980; Thomas & Sydney, 1984).

This need, different from individual to individual and from situation to situation, appears to determinate, in general, the particular uncomfortableness of not being unique, which is clearly distinct of being similar (Fromkin, 1972). Therefore, the need for uniqueness can be considered as a desire to be different or a unique human being, and not just another face in the crowd. According to Snyder & Fromkin (1980) this need for uniqueness comprises three factors: lack of concern regarding others' reactions to one's ideas and actions; a person's desire to not always follow traditional rules; and a person's willingness to defend his or her beliefs publicly.

Marketing professionals know how to manage their campaign in order to favor this human need in selling marketing products, in a way that products or services are often linked to uniqueness and distinctiveness of consumers (Lynn & Snyder, 2002). This happens because the objects that individuals possess are often felt as an extension of the self and so, part of their identity (Belk, 1988, quoted by Dos Santos, 1999). Therefore material expressions of one's differentness from others are particularly valued because they satisfy the need for uniqueness without risking severe social penalties (Snyder, 1992, quoted by Tian, Bearden & Hunter, 2001).

According to Burns & Brady (1992, quoted by Dos Santos, 1999) the uniqueness need is culturally learned. Thus, Snyder & Fromkin (1980) postulated that the origin of these environmentally induced needs is the learning process, i.e., that these needs are learned through the interpersonal acculturation process within a society. In a study conducted by Burns & Brady (1992, quoted by Dos Santos, 1999) they found significant differences among subjects of United States (with more manifestations of uniqueness) and Malasia subjects (with less uniqueness needs). For these authors, the uniqueness has three components based on the three factors previously mentioned by Snyder and Fromkin that are, according to Dos Santos (1999), a vision concerning the culture where they belong: 1) The indifference in relation to the reactions of others, to the individual ideas and actions; 2) The desire of not following the traditional rules, and 3) The desire of publicly defending their beliefs.

The distinctiveness can both be seen as originality and uniqueness, or as deviation (Fromkin, 1972; Snyder & Fromkin, 1980). Despite it could be told that in collective cultures, the group acquires a major prominence than in individualist cultures and on those the individual and his need for uniqueness has a much greater significant weight, both aspects are present in the psychological life of human beings and several authors had expressively referred the simultaneity of their presence.

As previously mentioned, the Uniqueness Theory predicts that the need for uniqueness has an optimal medium point in which the individual sees him/herself has moderately similar and different from others (Snyder & Fromkin, 1980). Complementarily, Taylor & Dubé (1986) defend that the individuals have the need of social component of identity in a way to locate the self on a social network, maintaining the level of similarity with others and still preserving their unique character.

1.3. The concept of Contributive Uniqueness

Janis' model of groupthink is arguably the most widely publicized application of psychological principles to high level military, political and technical group decision-making in the history of experimental psychology (Baron, 2005). According to his model, very strong group cohesion was the primary antecedent condition for groupthink provided that it was complemented by several other group and situational antecedent conditions (Essen, 1998; Flippen, 1999; Hogg & Hains, 1998, quoted by Baron, 2005; Troyer & Youngreen, 2009).

The author proposed that groupthink occurs when the group reduces the stress of decision making by suppressing critical inquiry and can lead to defective decision-making processes that affect ultimate group performance. This list included: a) inadequate contingency plans for failure, b) inadequate information search, c) biased assessment of risks, costs, benefits and moral implications (e.g. inadequate consideration of worst case scenarios), d) incomplete consideration of the full range of decision options and e) failure to reconsider the extent to which original/fundamental objectives were served by the advocated action (Baron, 2005).

Numerous of studies have been conducted to reinforce the concept. As previously mentioned, Tetlock (1979, quoted by Essen, 1998) found that, consistent with the theory, speakers in the groupthink cases made more simplistic statements about the issues and made more positive ingroup references than those in the non-groupthink cases. Furthermore, Moorhead and Montanari (1986, quoted by Essen, 1998), found one result which was consistent with the groupthink prediction—that cohesive groups were more discouraging of dissent than non-cohesive groups. However, contrary to the theory, they also found that cohesive groups reported less self-censorship and generated more alternatives than non-cohesive groups.

Also consistent with groupthink theory, Turner et al. (1992, quoted by Essen, 1998) found that cohesive groups were more confident in their decisions and perceived their decisions to be less risky than did non-cohesive groups.

Contrary to the concept, workplace diversity focuses on the differences and similarities that people bring to an organization. Dovidio et al. (2008) already mentioned the importance of realizing the potential benefits of diversity by allowing groups to capitalize on the novel ideas that lead to an enhancing of their effectiveness in achieving success in superordinate goals.

As a concept, diversity is considered to be inclusive of everyone, by creating the workplace environment and organizational culture for making and exchanging differences at work. In fact, according to the findings of Natale & Ricci (2006), critical thinking within teams improves organizational performance and enhances any training and development initiatives.

As already brought into subject in the introduction chapter, the following authors made a comparison between the concepts of diversity used in biology and apply the concept to the social environment. Their assumption was that diversity in community settings could be a resource for solving social problems and those that didn't value diversity would have more difficulty surviving (Townley, Green & Franco, 2010).

In a study where it was explored the importance of diversity in a team, Kearney, Gerbert and Voelpel (2009) conceptualized diversity as the distribution of differences among the members of a team with respect to a common attribute. With respect to the conceptualization proposed by Harrison and Klein (2007, quoted by Kearney, Gerbert & Voelpel, 2009), the authors assumed that both cognitive and demographic diversity can be an indicator of variety—that is, differences in task-relevant resources such as knowledge and experience, can reflect a potential for improved team performance.

Indeed, according to the information/decision-making perspective (Williams & O'Reilly, 1998, quoted by Kearney, Gerbert & Voelpel, 2009), the broadened range of task-relevant resources (such as knowledge, skills, and perspectives), suggests that diversity may enhance team outcomes (Kearney, Gerbert & Voelpel, 2009).

More important, according to the authors above mentioned, in the interest of bolstering their competitiveness, organizations must find ways of turning diversity into an asset, and that was the aim of the hypothesis suggested in Dos Santos' contributive uniqueness concept.

The concept of Contributive Uniqueness is for the first time referred by Dos Santos (1999) by showing what it is lacking on the previous theories and demonstrating that there is a positive and valuable side in which workers' uniqueness can be contributive for the organization, for the team or group and ultimately for the individual as a singular person.

More particularly, in his work, Dos Santos (1999) contested the notion presented on the Self-Categorization Theory in which the social identity helps cooperation and, on the opposite side, the personal identity doesn't, and proposes that uniqueness can be indeed a contribute for cooperation.

According to Dos Santos (1999), the contributive uniqueness can be designated as the specificity and uniqueness of individuals as a benefit for the group: "The collective *we* is built and enriched by the diversities of the several members; each individual perceives himself as a unique person, contributing with their uniqueness for the group cooperation", in which are important the salience of personal identities, associated to the self-uniqueness perceptions, will lead to the perception that we have unique characteristics that provide to the group a valid contribute for cooperation; the high salience of the unique characteristic unites with the high salience of social identities, in a way that the differentiated element with his uniqueness is part of the group; the participation emerges as an essential element in this cooperation process, because it is through it that the individual contributes, with his uniqueness and specificities for the group cooperation; and, finally, the social identities are then simultaneously collective (by belonging to a certain group) and unique (Dos Santos, 1999).

1.4. Conclusion

In this topic we explored the concept of contributive uniqueness brought by Dos Santos (1999) to create a different perspective about how can a person be unique and be an asset for the organization and working team. For a long period of time the theories here presented, more particularly the Self-Categorization Theory sustained the idea that a person by being unique, with her/his particular characteristics and knowledge could be dissociative of a good benefit and strength for the group. Dos Santos (1999) in his study brought a new and fresh idea that the uniqueness of a person, of a worker is in fact important for group's growth.

This concept is important for the present thesis by establishing a link between the need for uniqueness, diversity and most of all innovation as a crescent benefit to organizations to grow, and the urge for workers' acknowledgement of these important qualities – see next topic.

Topic Four: Recognition of the Contributive Uniqueness

1.1. Summary

In the last topic of the literature review the purpose was to introduce the importance of creating a formal questionnaire in which the two key-concepts (employee's recognition and contributive uniqueness) are brought together to become an assessment tool for organizations to know how their employee's contributive uniqueness is recognized by the parts involved.

1.2. Recognition of the Contributive Uniqueness

Organizations are the election stages of cooperation, by being the context in which the majority of people develop their professional activity (acquiring social importance), and where interactions happen with the purpose of creation of richness, as well as symbolic spaces of assertion of identity and social recognition by its members (Dos Santos, 1999).

The organizational identification was defined by Pratt (1998, quoted by Dos Santos, 1999) as the process that occurs when "the beliefs of an individual about his organization become self-referenced or self-defined. For that, the organizational identification occurs when the individual starts to integrate the beliefs about his organization in his identity" (p. 172).

Snyder & Fromkin (1980) stated the following: "we approve the person that sometimes makes an effort to participate and cooperate in the traditions and conventions on the society, as well as the person that sometimes try to transcend the ways of thinking and action of society". In fact, "both processes can be seen in the same person in different moments" (p. 216).

Considering the theoretical referential previously presented, it becomes clear that despite organizational recognition is considered an emergent theme and object of a particular attention by the human resources management because of the positive consequences that have been demonstrated on people and organizations (Bishop, 1987), according to Brun & Dugas (2008) it would be important to obtain more inputs about the impact that recognition practices (or its absence) has on workers and organizations.

Recognizing people has as a global goal to understand if employees perform in an adequate way their work functions and by creating conditions to reward good performance and acknowledge it explicitly (Costa, 2003).

Any recognition and performance management system has to have as a base the organizational culture (mission and values) and the business (strategy and aims). These elements should therefore constitute the main points of the recognition system of the organization. In addition, it is from these referential that emerge the critical capabilities of the organization, i.e., what employees have to do and do it well so that they achieve success (Costa, 2003).

Thus, it became necessary to create a theoretical framework as a base for the elaboration of an instrument that could clarify those questions providing more concrete data about the recognition of the contributive uniqueness in employees.

Then, for the assessment of employee's contributive uniqueness recognition we took into account the several types and actual practices of recognition (already discussed in a previous topic) as well as the levels in which recognition can happen. Particularly, and considering that the concept of contributive uniqueness is a more personal and unique characteristic, it would be difficult to assess the recognition of one's individual by the social environment and/or society itself and for that, for the present study this level will not be considered.

Moreover, the questions elaborated for the questionnaire were based on the definition of Brun & Dugas (2008) of recognition: Judgments made by all of those inhabit the workers' environment concerning their contributions in terms of work practices and personal investment, having into account that those recognition practices have a quotidian base (regular or punctual) and it has both formal/informal, individual/collective, private/public and financed/not financed manifestations; and on the definition of Dos Santos' (1999) contributive uniqueness, as the unique characteristics and specificities that employees bring to an organization considered valuable for its development and well-function.

Considering the above definitions, the present concept (recognition of the contributive uniqueness) is here defined as the manifestation, formal or informal, of the appreciation for the individual's differentiated and unique contribution for projects or goals considered valid by the social and organizational system.

The present questionnaire has as aim to emphasize the value of recognizing employees' contributive uniqueness for the individual as well as to the organization itself. For the organization by allowing diversity of contributions to emerge as well as creativity, free-thinking and innovation – all these practices will increase the organizational value, as well as allow the organization to achieve a sustainable development. For the workers by seeing acknowledged the value of their contributive uniqueness and consequently to doesn't oblige them to devaluate others, a picture often seen in competitive structures.

The next chapter will present the collected data, its analysis and consequent results of the elaborated questionnaire and its value for the scientific and research community, more specifically in the area of Work and Organizational Psychology.

1.3. Conclusion

Along this first chapter the aim was to present a state of the art about the two key concepts of the study and its importance for the HRM, in a way to better understand what have been studied until now and what still needs more empirical study and further data. Having into account that we are looking to two extremely recent concepts it was necessary to create a framework in which the study could be based on. This last topic creates, then, the link between the theory and the empirical research that will be further analyzed.

Chapter 3: Research Method

According to what was explored in the literature review and considering the main aim of the present study it was necessary to create an instrument that could measure the recognition of employees' contributive uniqueness.

3.1. Questionnaire's construction and psychometric studies

According to Drenth (1998, quoted by Rebelo, 2006), the instrumental investigation is one of the five investigation types more frequently studied in the area of Work and Organizational Psychology. This type of investigation focuses on the construction and validation of instruments that could be applied in organizations in general where rigor is needed. Therefore, the main aim is to furnish to the investigation as well as to the organizational world, reliable instruments that allow the investigator to fulfill studies about a specific theme to better understand its meaning and contribution and to provide a better grasp of knowledge about particular aspects of an organization.

Hence, the present topic aims to present the development phases of *ORCUQ*'s construction and psychometric study - Organizational Recognition of the Contributive Uniqueness Questionnaire, using exploratory factor analysis to better adequate the questionnaire and demonstrate its value by considering the reliability analysis.

3.1.1. Phases of the *ORCUQ*'s construction

The *ORCUQ*'s construction was structured, as you may confirm by the information in Table 1, in three phases, having in each one some nuclear activities that will be presented in a more detailed way further.

Table 1

Phases and activities for the construction of the ORCUQ

Phases	Activities
1st Phase: Formulation and definition of the instrument	• Literature research and review • Interviews with employees from different types of work
2nd Phase: Conception and Construction of the instrument	• Definition of the theoretical dimensions • Composition of the instructions and items • Graphic formulation of the instrument
3rd Phase: Pre-test of the instrument	• Revision of the instrument by a panel of experts • Realization of a aloud reflection with workers • Application of the questionnaire

According to the need of having an instrument that could assess the recognition perceptions of workers' unique contributions in the organizational context, it was build the *ORCUQ* based on the phases already mentioned.

In the first phase – *Formulation and definition of the instrument* – it was necessary to build a theoretical frame and practical referential of knowledge that allow to sustain the various conceptual and methodological options, made along the process of construction of the instrument itself. Then, we analyzed literature research, privileging the scientific referential of authors specialized in the domain of organizational recognition and the concept of contributive uniqueness. Furthermore, we conducted exploratory interviews with 10 workers of different professional areas (Appendix I), with the purpose of exploring the perceptions and beliefs of recognition of the contributive uniqueness, as well as the main elements taken into account by employees. The analysis of these interviews allowed us to organize an assemblage of clues for the conceptualization of the instrument and for the further composition of its items. In fact, it was based on the collected interviews and its qualitative analysis that was possible to create the dimensions that became integrated in the first questionnaire's version.

3.1.1.1 Obtained categories based on the interviews' analysis and related literature

- Category 1 – **Recognition Practices**: It deals with how a person is recognized for his /her unique contributions. According to the interview's results (and consistent with the theory) it was possible to aggregate two main different but non-exclusive recognition practices, that are formal and informal recognition practices. Formal recognition gives respect to bonuses, prizes and/or opportunities of career progression. Informal recognition is linked to recognition that is given that usually happens in a daily-work basis (recognition expressed verbally, of a thank note or e-mail, for example).

This category is represented by the items:

36. In my organization I can be promoted by my unique contribution
20. In my organization there is an opportunity of progression in terms of career
30. I'm financially recognized by my contribution to the organization
31. I receive compliments from my superior for my contribution to the organization
25. I receive messages of gratitude for my contribution to the organization

- Category 2 – **Recognition's levels** – Also consistent with the theory and interviews' outputs, it concerns with the recognition of contributive uniqueness that is given by the different organizational levels. A person can be recognized by her/his superior, colleagues, clients and in some cases (but not included in this particular questionnaire) the society.

This category is represented by the following items:

37. In my organization, my colleagues recognize my contribution

40. In this organization, my colleagues appreciate the unique contribution that each person gives

39. I'm recognized / complimented by the clients for a job/service well done

8. In the hierarchically level, the different contributions of the different workers are valued

17. My organization recognizes that I give a contribution that others don't give

31. I receive compliments from my superior for my contribution to the organization

- Category 3 – **Implemented recognition culture** – It concerns with the recognition of contributive uniqueness culture that is implemented in an organization. It gives respect to the frequency in which a worker is recognized by the given autonomy level, diversity promotion, openness to critics and hierarchical involvement in their work.

This category is represented by the following items:

1. Even if I did a great work, it would be ignored by my organization

3. What each person does could be made, in the exact same way, by other members of the organization

4. This organization recognizes the workers that really make the difference

5. In this organization each one is recognized by the unique contribution that he/she gives

10. The original ideas of the members are formally complimented by the organization

6. People in this organization are afraid of presenting their ideas
7. In my work I have the opportunity to do what I do best
11. In my organization there is openness for me to express my opinions
14. It is common practice in this organization to give us recognition for our unique contributions
12. Each member of the organization has autonomy to take initiatives at work
15. In this organization the critiques done about my work are accompanied by an explanation of how to improve
16. In this organization it is frequent to hear constructive criticism concerning to my work
19. Diversity of ideas and opinions is encouraged in this organization
21. I feel recognized in this organization because my contribution is appreciated
23. I feel that my contributions are appreciated in this organization
24. In this organization people feel inhibited to criticize ideas or proposals that someone has presented
26. People in this organization feel that their contributions are appreciated
27. My hierarchic superior is involved in the majority of the subjects related with my work
29. My opinion is important to my superior
28. In my organization it's important to compliment a job well done
33. I feel recognized by my work daily
34. When I give a significant contribute for some task/project, I'm recognized by the organization
32. My organization appreciates the extra contributions that I may give
35. In this organization the critiques about the ideas are rapidly transformed into personal criticism
41. In this organization people debate ideas without feeling repressed
38. In this organization, my contribution is legitimated because it is recognized
42. In my organization, I feel like my opinions are ignored

- Category 4 – **Consequences of the recognition practices in employees' behavior**: It relates with the consequences that can emerge from the recognition of employees' unique contributions. This dimension was mostly based on the interview's analysis in which it was possible to point out four main consequences of their felt recognition, such as an increase in motivation levels, the crescent feeling of personal value, personal and professional growth and the need to constantly evolve and develop.

This category is represented by the following items:
22. When I'm recognized in my organization by a job well done, I seek to do even better in the future
18. In this organization, because we are recognized by our contributions, we develop ourselves more in a professional sense
9. In this organization, the fact that we are recognized for our contribution helps us to grow as a person
2. In my organization, the chiefdom motivates me to do by work better and better

In the second phase – *Conception and Construction of the instrument* – it was defined the characteristics of the instrument to build, namely the purposes of evaluation, its theoretical dimensions, the format and scale of answer and the items were written. Thus, being the purpose of the instrument to "evaluate the employees' perceptions in recognizing one's contributive uniqueness", it was defined that the instrument would be a questionnaire based on the theoretical dimensions explored in the literature review. Concerning the punctuation of the questionnaire, it has a *Likert* type scale that varies between 1 and 7 (1 – Completely disagree; 2 – I strongly disagree; 3 – I slightly disagree; 4 – I don't agree or disagree; 5 – I slightly agree; 6 – I strongly agree; 7 – Completely agree), evaluating the level of concordance of workers with the aspects presented in each item, being the highest punctuations the indication of higher perceptions of recognition of the unique contributions (except for 5 items which need to be inverted - item 1, 6, 24, 35 and 42). After that, it was constructed the instructions and items of the scale based on the conjoined information collected during phase one, resulting in 43 items.

Finally, in the third phase – *Pre-test of the instrument* – the purpose was to i) test the accessibility of the vocabulary used in the scale; ii) guaranty the comprehension of the instructions and items; iii) test the adequacy and pertinence of the items; and iv) refine the scale, in a way to achieve an adequate version for the administration in a pilot-study. For that, the *ORCUQ* started to be revised by a panel of 3 experts in Methodology and Evaluation in Organizational Psychology resulting in important contributions for the improvement of the content of the items. It was also suggested the elimination of an item, due to its redundancy. After the introduction of the experts' suggestions, the *ORCUQ* was constituted by 42 items (1 eliminated item by not bringing valuable information considering the remaining items). Later, there were conducted sessions in a small group with 12 subjects active in the labor market of both genders. This session included one initial moment of enlightenment of the goals of the session and one final moment of aloud reflection with the subjects about the scale, its fulfilling and perception. After this session the investigator took into account some comments and suggestions used to improve the questionnaire. Aspects such as possible difficulties of the participants in the interpretation of all items, the clarification of what was supposed to be answered in a certain item, identification of ambiguous items, and the overall reactions and thoughts about the instrument in terms of content, time of response and adequacy were here considered. This session allowed us to reformulate some of the items based on the group's outputs.

Later, it was necessary to submit the items in a random distribution, obtaining the final version of the questionnaire of 42 items, distributed by the four dimensions, previously discussed in the interviews' results, further applied to our study sample (Appendix II).

3.2. Procedures

For the concreteness of the present study it was necessary to apply the questionnaire to a sample with minimum of 300 employees. For that we first explored the possible organizations that could accept to participate and a letter of permission to be part of the study was sent by e-mail or directly delivered addressed to the responsible of the organization (Human Resources and/or Management – Appendix III). After the consent response, it was settled a meeting with the purpose of discuss the aims of the present study and how the application would slide to manage a better way of not disturbing the normal functioning of the organizations. Then it was settled the day of application in which was distributed to the employees that accept to be a part of the study a questionnaire and an envelope that they should seal after answering it. After the collection of questionnaires it was necessary to attribute a code for each questionnaire in a way to better manage them for further analysis.

All those mentioned procedures had into account the anonymity and confidentiality as well as to guarantee for each participant that their answers would only be considered for the academic purpose and only consulted by the investigator and her supervisor. Furthermore, in some organizations we elaborated a declaration, signed by the investigator, in how after the results achieved and the study discussed it will be presented the final general results (more and more often we see organizations that don't want to participate on these studies because of the absence of feedback of the final results and for that it was necessary to create this document to guarantee the trustiness of our study). Based on this issue, after collecting the sample it was send to the participant organizations an e-mail in which we thanked for their participation as well as to reinforce the posterior feedback solicited.

The present investigation focused on the psychometric studies of the Organizational Recognition of the Contributive Uniqueness Questionnaire – ORCUQ. Having into consideration the aims previously defined, we used the SPSS statistical software, which results will be explored in more detail in the next chapter.

3.3. Participants

For the purposes of the present study we collected a sample, selected by convenience, of 384 employees from diverse work sectors having as a result a sample of doctors, nurses, professors, psychologists, technical and operational assistants, bankers, accountants, gas distributors, civil construction and militaries. This population was chosen with the criteria of an active person in the labor market with a supervisor or a hierarchically superior above her/him –i.e., an employee. During the process, 15 questionnaires were removed due to the incomplete or incorrect fulfilling.

In addition, participants in this study were drawn from the working populations in the district of Évora in Portugal, namely Évora, Vendas-Novas, Montemor-o-Novo, Portel, Viana do Alentejo, Reguengos and Mourão.

As you may observe in Figure 2, in terms of gender, the sample of 384 employees is constituted by 150 male participants (39,1%) and 187 female participants (48,7%) with 47 missing responses.

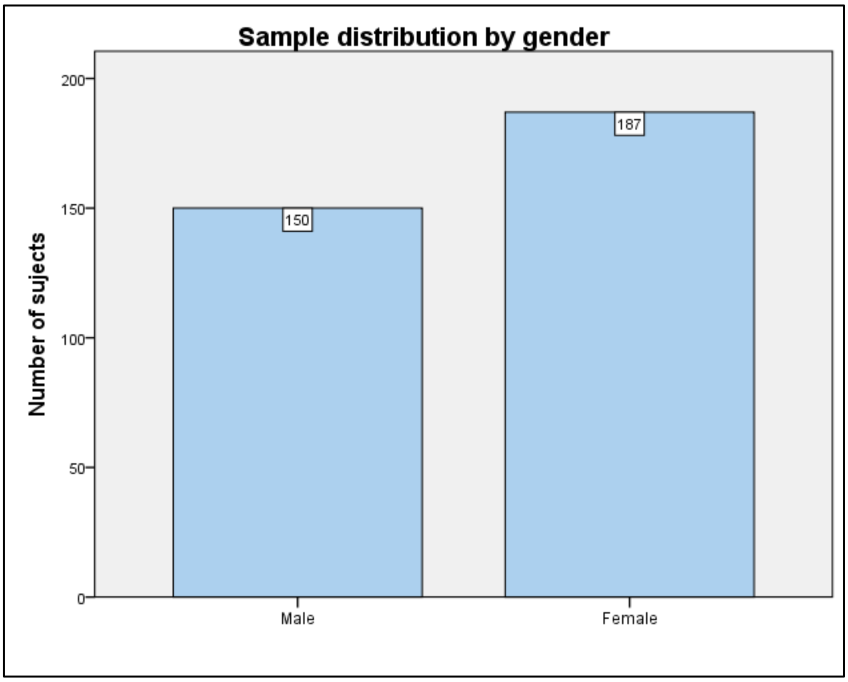

Figure 2. Sample distribution by gender

The next figure presents the sample distribution by the respondents' age. Accordingly, 11 respondents were 20 to 25 years old, 45 between 26 to 30 years old, 60 respondents had between 31 to 35 years old, 59 had 36 to 40 years old, 64 participants had 41 to 45 years old, 58 with 46 to 50, 38 with 51 to 55 years old and finally, 24 respondents with 56 to 60 years old. As we may see, the majority of the participants were distributed between 31 and 50 years old, with a total of 25 missing responses. Based on the results we can consider that the population has few respondents that recently entered the working life (with only 11 subjects between 20 and 25 years old) and, being so, it is a population that are already active workers with some experience in the labor market.

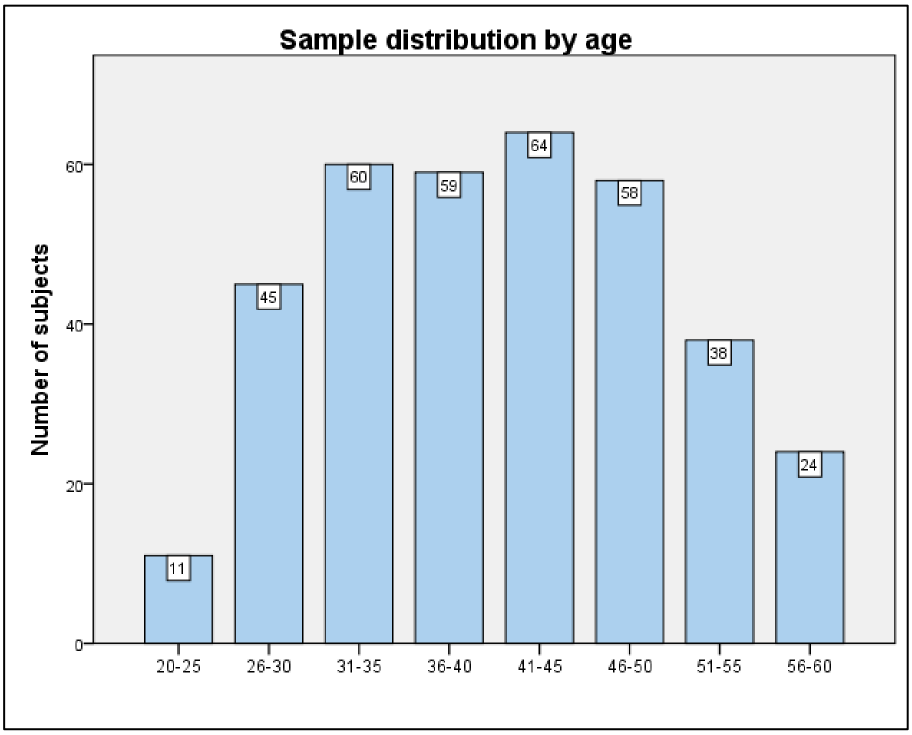

Figure 3. Sample distribution by age

Concerning the participants' academic degree the results are showed in the next figure. For the present study we had 12 respondents with elementary school degree, 47 with the middle school degree, 131 participants with the high school degree, 124 participants were already graduated, and 44 of them had a post-graduation degree. The average of participants' academic degree was High school (34,1%), with a total of 26 missing responses. Taking into account this result it is clear that the present sample is constituted by people who have gone to a reasonable amount of formal education (with 131 high school degree's participants and 124 that are already graduated).

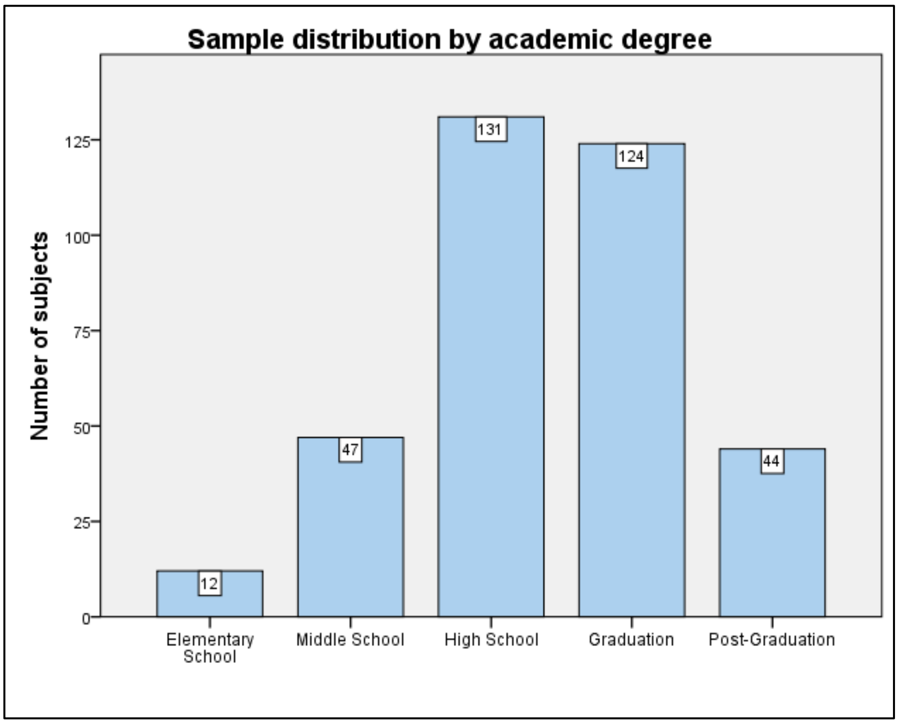

Figure 4. Sample distribution by academic degree

Another demographic aspect considered for this study was the number of workers in an organization. As we may observe in figure 5., 89 participants work in an organization with 10 or less workers, 115 work in an organization with 11 to 50 workers, 31 participants are employed in an organization with 51 to 100 workers, 39 participants work in an organization with 101 to 200 employees, and finally, 42 workers are in an organization that gathers more than 200 employed people. According to the available data it is possible to assume that the majority of workers are in a small (23,2%) and medium-size organization (29,9%), with 68 missing responses. One possible explanation for the high missing responses could be that employees in certain organizations, such as the ones considered in the health sector had difficulty to calculate and know for sure the exact number of workers and for that they decided not to answer to this item. In fact, during the collection of the sample some employees indicated that they didn't know for sure the organizational size because they were in some specific sector of a whole organization and for that they decided to leave that answer without information.

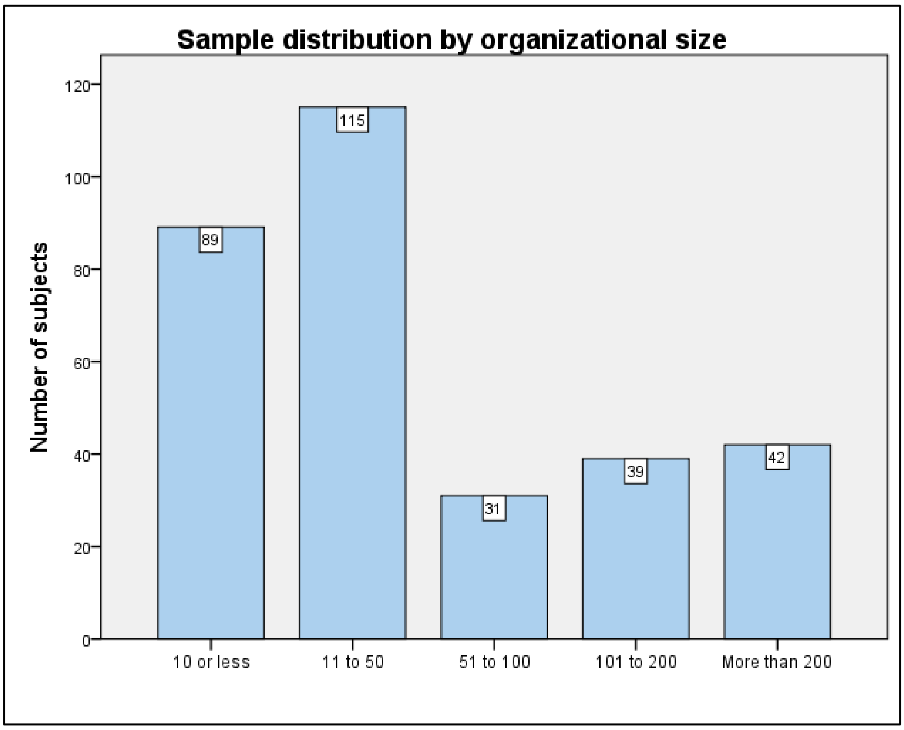

Figure 5. Sample distribution by organizational size

Finally, in the last figure it is presented the distribution by the participants' professions in which is possible to see the vast number of professions gathered in this study, with three sectors that stand out: technical or operational assistant (29,9%), employees in the health sector – nurses, doctors and assistants (10,2%) and superior technicians (9,1%). Considering only the professions with more than 10 respondents we collected a sample in which 10 respondents work as cultural producers, 16 in administration, 24 as teachers, 27 respondents work in the commerce sector, 35 are superior technicians, 39 participants work in the health sector (nurses and doctors) and 115 subjects are technical and/or operational assistants.

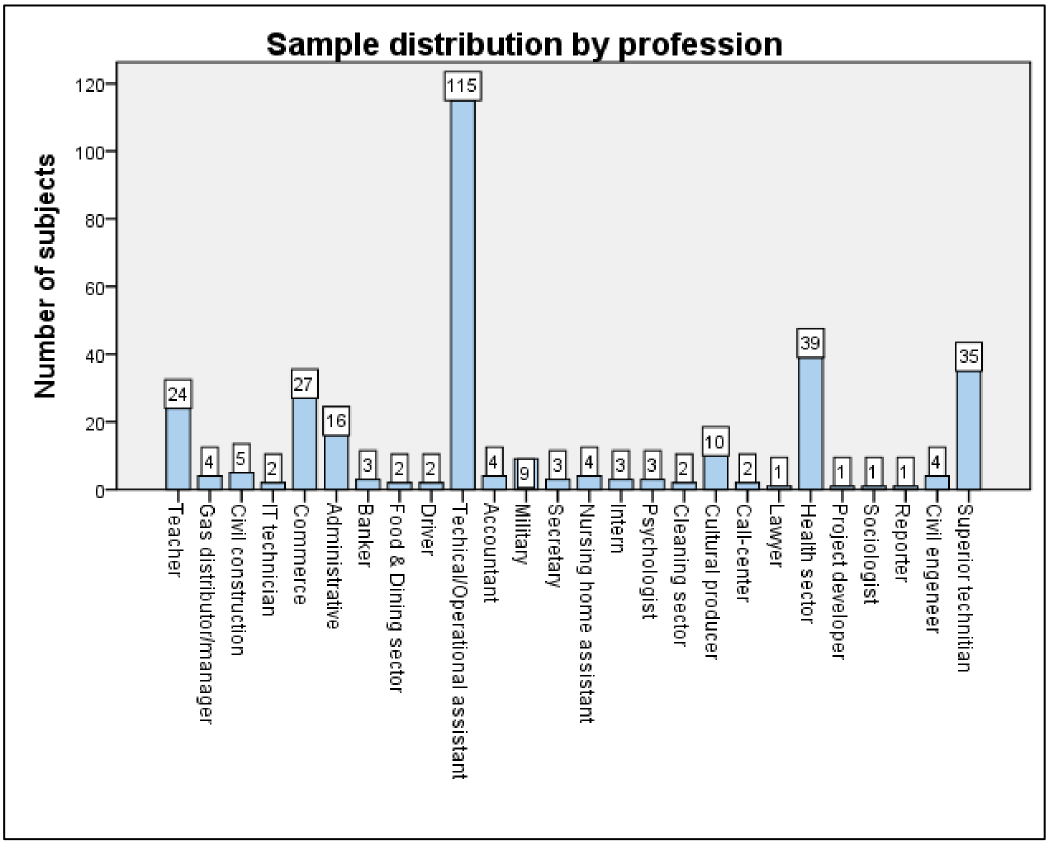

Figure 6. Sample distribution by profession

Chapter 4: Research results and Data analysis

With the purpose of studying the psychometric qualities of the Organizational Recognition of Contributive Uniqueness Questionnaire – ORCUQ, it was conducted its quantitative analysis to obtain a first study of the psychometric qualities of this questionnaire. The obtained data was introduced in a data base of the informatics application Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), version 17 for Windows.

To proceed to the identification of the ORCUQ's measured dimensions it was used the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA). According to Maroco (2003), factor analysis is an exploratory data analysis technique that allows the investigator to discover, based on an amount of inter-related variables, the ones that form sub-conjunctions relatively independent between them, called factors. EFA is considered an adequate method to evaluate constructs in the development of instruments and in this case it was used with two main goals: a) identify the potential dimensions of the ORCUQ and b) identify the final quantity of items in order to maximize the explained variance, fidelity and consistency of the questionnaire. For the rotation of the identified dimensions it was used the *Varimax with Kaiser Normalization* method and for the intern consistency analysis we used the *Cronbach Alpha*.

Furthermore, in the factor analysis it was took into account the following item elimination criterion: saturation of an item in a factor inferior to 0,40, total explained variance superior higher than 45% and also the possibility to interpret the obtained structure with a solid theoretical framework. In the next topics it will be described the relevant steps for the concreteness of the statistical study.

4.1. Descriptive analysis of the ORCUQ's items

The statistical study had as first procedure the descriptive analysis of the 42 items that are part of the psychometric instrument, that indicate a reasonable distribution for the possible response options. In fact, no item was eliminated with this procedure with a response percentage of less than 50%.

4.2. Exploratory factor analysis procedures

4.2.1. Free factor analysis (without forcing factors) (Appendix IV)

Without forcing any specific number of factors we identified a structure of 7 dimensions with an explained variance of 63.77% and a KMO value of .96.

This factor rotation allowed us to point out some items that were problematic with a tendency to present high saturations in more than one factor (namely items 2, 12, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 23, 26, 28, 31, 32, 33, 34, 38, 39 and 41).

With the obtained results we conducted further exploratory analysis to achieve the final items of the questionnaire.

4.2.2. Exploratory factor analysis (First trial) (Appendix V)

In this first trial we eliminated the previous problematic items to analyze the factor analysis results and verify if further items needed to be eliminated. Here, the results saturated in 5 factors with a total variance explained of 59.43% and a KMO value of .92. Based on the factor solution we verified that item 3 was still a problematic item being completely isolated from the other items which could indicate that it was measuring something different and apart. For that we conducted an exploratory factor analysis without the item 3 to understand if its elimination could strengthen the instrument.

4.2.3. Exploratory factor analysis (Second trial) (Appendix VI)

With the item's elimination, the results saturated in 4 factors with a slight decrease in the total variance explained (57.04%) and an increase of the KMO values (.93). In this analysis the items 5 and 10 continued to represent problematic items with saturation in more than one factor with results in both factors above or really close to 0.40. For that reason we explored the hypothesis of eliminating the items 5 and 10.

4.2.4. Exploratory factor analysis (Third trial) (Appendix VII)

In the third trial, the results showed that the saturation in 4 factors (see Table 2) was also maintained, with a slightly increase of the total variance explained (57.93%) and with eigenvalues equals to 1. With the elimination of these two last items we achieved a final solution constituted by 20 items, in which the first dimension explained 35.64%, dimension 2 explained 10.13%, the dimension 3 explained 6.22% and finally, the fourth dimensioned explain 5.92% of the variance.

The first factor is constituted by items that measure the effect of the recognition culture for employee's unique contribution in her/his process of learning, development and performance improvement (eg: q22 – "When I'm recognized in my organization by a job well done, I seek to do even better in the future"). In addition, this factor analyzes both employees' unique contributions that are recognized by their organization, and their willing to grow and develop as a consequence of that acknowledgement.

The second factor is related to the tangibility of recognition that can be demonstrated by objective and direct rewards and recognition for an employee's unique contributions (eg: q36 – "In my organization I can be promoted by my unique contribution").

The third factor is more connected with the openness and acceptation-integration for divergent opinions and personal contributions. According to the analysis of its constituted items we understood this factor as the one that clearly demonstrate the openness of an organization and, most of all, the management for the creation and looming of unique ideas and contributions. The inverted question number 6 expresses that explanation: “People in this organization are afraid of presenting their ideas”.

Finally, the last factor is constituted by only 2 items, and despite the fact that it could not be considered an independent factor, this solution is theoretically interpretable by measuring the recognition of an employees’ unique contributions by their colleagues (eg: q40 – “In this organization my colleagues appreciate the unique contribution that each person gives”), and for that it was decided to maintain this 2-item factor.

In a note, according to the final version of the questionnaire and its factors, only the horizontal, vertical and organizational levels (Brun & Dugas, 2008) or the micro and meso-level (Voswinkel, 2005, quoted by Nierling, 2007) were considered due to the elimination of weak items.

Table 2.

Factor saturation of the organizational recognition questionnaire (ORCUQ)

	Components			
	1	2	3	4
q13 - "My organization recognizes that I dedicate myself to my work"	.699			
q11 - "In my organization there is openness for me to express my opinions"	.689			
q9 - "In this organization, the fact that we are recognized for our contribution, helps us to grow as a person"	.687			
q8 - "In the hierarchically level, the different contributions of the different workers are valued"	.663			
q29 - "My opinion is important to my superior"	.656			
q27 - "My hierarchic superior is involved in the majority of the subjects related with my work"	.646			
q7 - "In my work I have the opportunity to do what I do best"	.633			
q15 - "In this organization the critiques done about my work are accompanied by an explanation of how to improve"	.619			
q22 - "When I'm recognized in my organization by a job well done, I seek to do even better in the future"	.609			
q36 - "In my organization I can be promoted by my unique contribution"		.816		
q30 - "I'm financially recognized by my contribution to the organization"		.771		
q20 - "In my organization there is an opportunity of progression in terms of career"		.694		
q25 - "I receive messages of gratitude for my contribution to the organization"		.613		
q24 - "In this organization people feel inhibited to criticize ideas or proposals that someone has presented"			.717	
q6 - "People in this organization are afraid of presenting their ideas"			.702	
q42 - "In my organization, I feel like my opinions are ignored"			.692	
q35 - "In this organization the critiques about the ideas are rapidly transformed into personal criticism"			.671	
q1 - "Even if I did a great work, it would be ignored by my organization"			.551	
q40 - "In this organization, my colleagues appreciate the unique contribution that each person gives"				.843
q37 - "In my organization, my colleagues recognize my contribution"				.801

With the elimination of weak or dubious items concluded, it was necessary to analyze the instrument's intern consistency, described in Table 3.

Table 3.

Fidelity coefficients of the ORCUQ's factors

Factors	Present Study N=386
F1 - Effect of recognition culture	.88
F2 - Tangible recognition	.79
F3 - Openness and acceptance	.73
F4 - Colleagues' recognition	.74
Total questionnaire	.89

As we may observe from Table 3, the Cronbach alpha's value is, among all factors, high. According to Almeida and Freire (2003), Cronbach alpha's values above .70 are indicators of high fidelity, and above .80 are indicators of extremely high fidelity and, therefore, it reinforces the intern consistency of this questionnaire since the total scale reached a value of .89 (above .95 it would not be desired because it can indicate the existence of redundant items) (Almeida & Freire, 2003).

In addition, the communality values are good for the majority of the items, with results above .50 (only the items 7, 22, 27 and 35 are slightly inferior to .50). Furthermore, the indicator displayed by the KMO test (*Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy*) indicate that the sample is adequate for the prosecution of the factor analysis, by indicating a value of .91, which, according to Maroco (2003) when KMO's value is above .90 the adequacy is considered "Excelent", and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity concluded that the variables in the study are significantly correlated between them ($p<0.001$).

4.3. Descriptive Statistics

In the following table (Table 4) are presented the mean values of the obtained punctuations for each variable, as well as their standard-deviation.

Table 4.

Means and Standard-Deviations of the studied variables

Variables	Mean	St. Deviation
F1 – Effect of recognition culture	4.55	1.22
F2 – Tangible recognition	3.06	1.40
F3 – Openness and acceptance	4.37	1.18
F4 – Colleagues' recognition	4.29	1.44
Total questionnaire	4.18	0.99

Since it is the first time this instrument is studied, it was not possible to compare it to other similar instruments' studies. Nonetheless, these are the obtained results of the first psychometric study of the instrument considering the punctuations for each variable that could guide future analysis of the instrument. According to the obtained results, the factor that achieved higher mean values was the first one (F1 - Recognition culture's effect), with factor 2 achieving the lowest mean values (F2 – Tangible recognition).

4.4. Validation of the assumptions to use parametric tests

According to Maroco (2003) to proceed with the use of parametric tests it is necessary the simultaneous verification of two conditions: 1) Normal distribution of the sample and 2) Homogeneity of the population variances.

Therefore, to test if the sample follows a normal distribution it was used the K-S test (*Kolmogorov-Smirnov*), and to test the homogeneity of the variances it was used the Levene test, one of the more powerful tests for this specific measure (Maroco, 2003). The results are displayed in tables in appendix VIII.

Considering the K-S test, as observed in appendix VIII, the levels of significance are not above the significance level (p-value .05) and for that the normality of the sample was rejected. Nonetheless, the Levene’s test revealed that the levels of significance of the variables were above .50 and, therefore, the homogeneity of the variables was not rejected.

Since the premise above mentioned to validate the possibility to use parametric tests wasn’t possible to verify, for the present study it will be used the equivalent analysis to non-parametric tests.

4.5. Descriptive data analysis

To better understand the sample of the present study we proceeded to a descriptive data analysis to find out if there were any relations between the instrument’s variables and the socio-demographic variables (gender, academic degree, number of workers in an organization and profession). For gender analysis, as pointed out in the previous section, we resorted to the non-parametric tests equivalent of the t-student test, the Mann-Withney test. For the rest of the socio-demographic variables we also resorted to non-parametric tests, in particular, the Kruskal-Wallis test.

4.5.1. Gender

For the present analysis we used the Mann-Withney test to compare means with the intention of verifying if there were any significant differences between the means of both genders (Appendix IX).

According to the obtained results, we didn’t find significant differences between this demographic variables and the three first factors, but the results concerning the recognition of the employees’ unique contributions by colleagues show significant differences in the mean ranks between male and female participants (p<0.05), being the men the ones that manifest higher results (184.83) in comparison to women (156.30).

4.5.2. Age

Kruskal-Wallis test was used for the study of the participant's age (Appendix X). The results show that there are significant differences in the mean ranks between participants' age and two factors: 1 – Effects of the recognition culture of employees' unique contributions in the learning process, development and performance improvement (p=0.02 <0.05) and 4 – Colleagues' recognition of employees' unique contributions (0.03 <0.05). Taking into consideration the first dimension the highest value is between the participants with 36 to 40 years old and the lowest value between the participants with 56 to 60 years old. In the second dimension, the highest value was between participants within 36 to 40 years old (very proximate to the participants' age between 26 to 30 years old) and the lowest value between participants within 20 to 25 years old.

4.5.3. Academic degree

To study this variable it was necessary to resort once again to the Kruskal-Wallis test to compare means, since it is also a variable with more than two categories (Appendix XI). Considering the results, there are significant differences in the mean ranks between the academic degree and the tangibility of the recognition - factor 2 - (p=0.01 <0.05), with participants that has elementary and high school and graduation the ones with high values (265.00; 184.94; and 182.10, respectively). However these results must be analyzed with caution considering the number of participants in each academic degree. Being so, the elementary school has only 12 participants which may interfere with the analyzed data.

4.5.4. Dimension of the organization

The Kruskal-Wallis test to compare means was also used for this analysis (Appendix XII). Considering the number of workers in an organization the results of this analysis showed that there are significant differences between the organization's size and the recognition's tangibility – factor 2 – ($p=0.04 <0.05$). It is also verified that organizations that has medium and large dimension are the ones that are considered by the participants to have more tangible recognition (mean rank of 194.45 between 51 to 100 workers; and 171.17 with more than 200 workers).

4.5.5. Professions

Finally, for the analysis of the differences concerning the profession of the participants (Appendix XIII) it was used the Kruskal-Wallis test which results showed once again a significant difference between the professions and recognition's tangibility ($p=0.02 <0.05$). However, these results need to be also interpreted with some caution considering the fact that this sample gathers 26 professions in which some are constituted by less than 10 participants. Nonetheless, considering the ones that gathers more than 10 participants (teachers, commerce sector, administratives, technical and operational assistants, health sector and superior technicians) the higher mean rank results are within the commerce sector (182.48) and teachers (166.19) and the lowest results within the administrative (118.59) and health sector (141.13).

4.6. Non-Parametric Correlations

For this study, we also analyze the possible correlations that could exist between the four factors that measure our concept. For that we used the

Sperman’s correlation test adequate to Non-parametric samples. The results can be seen in Table 5:

Table 5.

Correlations between the variables in study

	1	2	3	4
Factor 1 – Effect of recognition culture	-			
Factor 2 – Tangible recognition	.600**	-		
Factor 3 – Openness and acceptance	.508**	.255**	-	
Factor 4 - Colleagues’ recognition	.463**	.371**	.215**	-

** p<0,01

The results demonstrate that the four dimensions of contributive uniqueness’ recognition are strongly connected, with positive and significant values (p<0.01).

Chapter 5: Discussion and Research Implications

With the concreteness of the psychometric qualities of our questionnaire, it is now possible to say that the final version of statistical treatment has very satisfactory results. In fact, it showed that it is an instrument, oriented to the organizational context, that can measure some of the dimensions considered nuclear to explain employee's recognition of her/his contributive uniqueness.

The psychometric study indicated that ORCUQ presents consistent measuring values of the four dimensions that are positively correlated between them: Dimension 1 – **Recognition culture's effect** of the contributive uniqueness (in learning, development and performance improvement); Dimension 2 – **Tangible recognition**; Dimension 3 – **Openness and acceptance-integration** for divergent opinions and valorization of contributes; and Dimension 4 – **Colleagues' recognition** of the contributive uniqueness.

These results came to confirm the importance of recognizing employees' contributive uniqueness.

The next topic will discuss each of the found dimensions and their relation with the theoretical framework.

5.1. Questionnaire's dimensions

5.1.1. Dimension 1 - Recognition culture's effect

This first dimension was the most difficult to interpret considering their constituent items. In this dimension it is possible to find not only the implemented recognition culture but also the consequences of recognizing one's contributive uniqueness in her/his behavior, more specifically in learning, development and performance improvement. Creating a link between this dimension and the categories that were created after the qualitative analysis of the conducted interviews, this dimension aggregates the third and four category

(Category 3 – Implemented recognition culture; Category 4 – Consequences of the recognition practices in employees' behavior).

The results came to reinforce the importance of recognizing individual performance by its positive outcome with job satisfaction and motivation, so that "employees who receive genuine and sincere acknowledgement for their contributions and value to an organization are likely to perform at higher levels than employees that work in an environment where such recognition is lacking" (Brady et al., 2004, quoted by Bophal, 2007). Accordingly, Ulrich (1997, quoted by Bakker & Schaufeli, 2008) also stated that employees' contributions became a critical business issue and to achieve success organizations need to focus on recognizing those important contributions.

The implemented culture of the contributive uniqueness' recognition was reflected in the items:

q13 - "My organization recognizes that I dedicate myself to my work"
q11 - "In my organization there is openness for me to express my opinions"
q8 - "In the hierarchically level, the different contributions of the different workers are valued"
q29 - "My opinion is important to my superior"
q27 - "My hierarchic superior is involved in the majority of the subjects related with my work"
q7 - "In my work I have the opportunity to do what I do best"

The items that more focused in the concrete effects of recognizing one's contribution were:

q9 - "In this organization, the fact that we are recognized for our contribution, helps us to grow as a person"
q15 - "In this organization the critiques done about my work are accompanied by an explanation of how to improve"
q22 - "When I'm recognized in my organization by a job well done, I seek to do even better in the future"

5.1.2. Dimension 2 - Tangible recognition

This second dimension didn't offer many doubts about what it was measuring. It was clear that the items were more linked to a formal type of recognition practices in which a person is recognized considering the opportunity to progress in terms of career, financial bonuses and promotions. However there is one item that can be linked to a more informal type of recognition practices by using verbal and/or written acknowledgments of employees' contributions. For that reason, once more this dimension can be connected with the first category brought to discussion in the qualitative analysis of the interviews in which it was considered the recognition practices (formal and informal).

According to the theory, there are four practices that can be expressed in formal and informal ways. The 1) Personal recognition that focuses essentially in workers as distinctive individuals, with their identities and specific experiences is more closely related with our concept of contributive uniqueness and it can be showed on the day-by-day interaction, by employees' given level of autonomy (Jacob, 2001, quoted by Brun & Dugas, 2008); 2) Recognition of work practices relates with an employee's performance, having into account her/his behavior, professional qualifications, creativity and continuous improvement (once again linked to our concept of contributive uniqueness); 3) Recognition of work dedication that refers to the quality and quantity of employees' efforts by taking into consideration they're contributions, risks and energy taken; and finally, 4) Recognition of results that is connected with the product directly finished (Brun & Dugas, 2008). All these types of recognition can be demonstrated in a more formal or informal way and, as explored in our literature review, has to take into account the individuality of each employee to properly adequate the best recognition practice.

The items that were connected with a more formal recognition were:

q36 - "In my organization I can be promoted by my unique contribution"

q30 - “I’m financially recognized by my contribution to the organization”
q20 - “In my organization there is an opportunity of progression in terms of career”

The following item is still considerate tangible recognition but it happens in a more informal basis:

q25 - “I receive messages of gratitude for my contribution to the organization”

5.1.3. Dimension 3 – Openness and acceptance-integration

Considering the items that compose the third dimension of our questionnaire it was possible to identify that it was linked also with the recognition culture that is implemented in an organization that can be specifically reflected in the acceptance and more important, the valorization of divergent (and contributive) opinions. According to the theory, recognizing the unique contributions of an employee, as well as her/his personal identity can have a major impact in team performance by creating an environment in which different opinions and contributions are brought to reinforce, improve and most of all, add value to an organization (Dos Santos, 1999; Dovidio et al., 2008; Kearney, Gerbert & Voelpel, 2009; Townley, Green & Franco, 2010)

The items that are part of this dimension (punctuated in the negative form) are:

q24 - “In this organization people feel inhibited to criticize ideas or proposals that someone has presented”
q6 - “People in this organization are afraid of presenting their ideas”
q42 - “In my organization, I feel like my opinions are ignored”
q35 - “In this organization the critiques about the ideas are rapidly transformed into personal criticism”
q1 - “Even if I did a great work, it would be ignored by my organization”

5.1.4. Dimension 4 - Colleagues' recognition

This last dimension is only composed by two items but, as already stated in the previous chapter, it was decided to maintain them as part of a specific dimension because this solution was theoretically interpretable by considering one of the recognition levels.

According to Brun and Dugas (2008), this level is expressed by the Horizontal level in which the recognition of one's work is developed between colleagues and members of the working team. In addition, we could also consider the levels sustained by Voswinkel (2005, quoted by Nierling, 2007) in which this type of recognition is reflected in a micro level (interpersonal recognition) where these interactions can take place between colleagues, supervisors and customers.

As already mentioned in the previous chapter, only the horizontal, vertical and organizational levels (Brun & Dugas, 2008) or the micro and meso-level (Voswinkel, 2005, quoted by Nierling, 2007) were considered in the final version of the questionnaire due to the elimination of weak items.

The two items that are part of the fourth dimension are:

q40 - "In this organization, my colleagues appreciate the unique contribution that each person gives"

q37 - "In my organization, my colleagues recognize my contribution"

5.2. The ORCUQ

In a global view, the final version of our questionnaire presented a coherent structure with the theoretical framework, although according to the statistical results, the obtained structure was not consistent with the initially formulated dimension.

Overall, the final structure was good, with coherence and consistency. It was also possible to interpret the results considering the theory in a way to build an organized and comprehensible structure.

For that reason, it is our intention that this instrument can become a significant contribution in the development of psychometric studies' area in the recognition of contributive uniqueness subject. For that, one of the purposes of creating this questionnaire was the opportunity to analyze the concepts of contributive uniqueness' recognition and how they could manifest in a particular sample. This is the goal of our next topic discussion.

5.3. Relations of the instrument with the socio-demographic variables

For the better understanding of our sample as well as to complement our validation study, we conducted several analysis with the socio-demographic variables in which it was possible to obtain some interesting results.

According to gender it was possible to obtain significant differences with the fourth dimension – recognition of the unique contributions by colleagues – in which men achieved higher results than women. Despite the fact that this is only the first study using our instrument it would be interesting to find out the reason for these results and to which are they connected with (for example, are they connected with cultural stereotypes, or is there a considerable difference in the unique contributions given by each gender).

Concerning the variable age, the results also showed some significant differences between participant's age and the first and fourth dimension (1- Effects of the recognition culture of employees' unique contributions in the learning process, development and performance improvement and 4 - Colleagues' recognition of employees' unique contributions). Having into consideration the first dimension, the results show that workers in the age of 36 to 40 achieve higher values, which means that the recognition culture have an impact in the performance, development and need for learning of this specific group age. In contrast, the results showed that the lowest value was in employees with 56 to 60 years old. This result is particularly interesting since we are talking about workers that are in the last phase of their career, before the reform and one possible reason for this fact is that this particular group age feels that there isn't a need for continuous improvement, since they are already close to enter to the reform. In the fourth dimension, results showed that the highest value was between the age of 36 to 40 years old and the lowest value within the age of 20 to 25 years old. Considering the results, it would be also interesting to understand this phenomenon. One possible explanation is that people in their 20's are now entering the labor market and for that possibly have less experience and that can result in less recognition given by their colleagues. In opposition people in their 30's and 40's have already achieved work experience, and even status, that could contribute for the acknowledgement by their colleagues. Interestingly, a study conducted by Busch, Verkichalam and Richards (2008) showed that younger employees were more positive about informally recognizing their colleagues' accomplishments, whilst at the same time being more enthusiastic (than their older colleagues) with regard to attaining formal recognition. These results demonstrate once more the need to develop further investigation between recognition and this particular demographic variable in order to achieve a better grasp of the presently obtained results.

The third analyzed variable was employees' academic degree in which it was possible to verify significant differences with the second dimension, tangible recognition. Based on the results, the more a person progress in terms of academic degree, the more a person receives tangible recognition. However, as explored in the results chapter, these results must be analyzed with caution considering the number of participants in each academic degree. Being so, the elementary school has only 12 participants which may interfere with the analyzed data.

Also in the organizations' dimension the results showed significant differences with tangible recognition. In this case, organizations that has medium and large dimension are the ones that the participants considered that they received more tangible recognition. It would be interesting to explore the reason for this phenomenon – is it because people are more recognized in larger organizations or is there different types of recognition that are applied in smaller organizations.

Finally, the analysis of the differences concerning the profession of the participants showed once again a significant difference between the professions and recognition's tangibility. However, these results need to be also interpreted with some caution considering the fact that this sample gathers 26 professions in which some were constituted by less than 10 participants. Nonetheless, considering the ones that gathered more than 10 participants, the higher results were found within the commerce sector and teachers and the lowest results within the administrative and health sector. For future studies this analysis could be interesting to verify within more consistent professional groups.

5.4. Limitations of the study and future research

The present study has some limitations that should be brought into discussion.

First of all, this investigation was based on a transversal study, and the longitudinal studies are more dynamic, allowing us to more consistently empirically test theories and relations that a transversal study possibly cannot accomplish. In particular it would be interesting to conduct a longitudinal study to verify the influence of a recognition program (before and after the implementation) in employees' perceptions of the recognition of their value for the organization that could add valuable data for this investigation.

Another point of discussion is the fact that sometimes it wasn't possible to directly apply the questionnaire to the participants (in particular in the health and administrative sector) because of their particular work. However, as previously mentioned, the confidentiality criteria was assumed and guaranteed by the distribution of an envelope that was sealed by the participant after her/his response.

In terms of future research, it would be interesting to test the results of the questionnaire in other samples or groups, for example, to analyze if there are any differences between the public and private sector in terms of recognizing their employees' unique contributions. Also it would be interesting to add other demographic variables such as employees' organizational antiquity to find out possible relations between this variable and the dimensions of the questionnaire and to complement and support the findings concerning the participants' age with the first dimension. Another possible suggestion was to test the effect of an organizational culture that promotes the recognition of the contributive uniqueness in workers with other variables connected with workers' performance, satisfaction, engagement, motivation and so on, with the purpose of obtaining a more concrete idea of how and how much this type of recognition may affect workers' well-being. Finally, since it is the first time this questionnaire is studied it would be also important to find out possible reasons and justifications that could sustain the presently achieved results.

5.5. Final conclusions

The present study aimed to 1) create an instrument that could measure the recognition of employees' contributive uniqueness by studying its psychometric qualities, as well as, 2) apply it to a selected sample of workers and analyze its results.

Despite the already mentioned limitations, some interesting results emerged from this study, not only from the theoretical point of view, but also as a way to intervene in organizations in general. In this perspective, the recognition of workers' contributive uniqueness, by having possible effects in the organizational performance level, sees its importance reinforced, becoming an organizational variable that takes into account all the parts involved within an organization. Being so, management should see it as an interesting investment to implement a culture oriented to recognizing its workers.

In a nutshell, considering the obtained results it would be important to continue the investigation of the ORCUQ's psychometric qualities as well as the relations of this construct with other nuclear variables to sustain the importance of organizational recognition, in specific, the recognition of the unique contributes given by an employee.

As stated by Nelson (1994, p. 13, quoted by Kralovensky, 2006), "People want to feel that what they do makes a difference". Thus, when recognition is provided to workers "they're inspired to keep succeeding" (Clemmer, 2003, p.185, quoted by Kralovensky, 2006).

For that, in order to achieve success, human resources management has the important role to acknowledge workers' differences, unique contributions and innovative ideas that generate new organizational value for the working team, and ultimately for the organization in which they are actively involved.

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Appendices

Appendix I – Interview guide

Appendix II – Questionnaire's applied version and translated version

Appendix III – Authorization letter sent to the participant organizations

Appendix IV – Factor analysis (without forcing items)

Appendix V – Factor analysis (first trial)

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Appendix VIII – Normality and Homogeneity of the variances tests

Appendix IX – Relations between the studied variables and gender

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Appendix I

Interview Guide

Guião de entrevista sobre reconhecimento da singularidade contributiva

Pré-Entrevista:

- Apresentação (com explicação do que se pretende alcançar com a entrevista)
- Cuidados deontológicos:
    1) Consentimento informado
    2) Será mantido o anonimato das respostas e nenhum dos entrevistados será identificado;
    3) Os dados da entrevista serão apenas acedidos pelos elementos da equipa de investigação (entrevistador e orientador);
    4) Após transcrição da entrevista, esses dados serão eliminados;
- Preparação para a entrevista em si:
    1) Se não estiver a ser clara em algum momento da entrevista, agradeço-lhe que me questione para que eu possa reformular a pergunta;
    2) Esta entrevista terá duração de aproximadamente 15/20 minutos
    3) Agradecer a disponibilidade e a contribuição

Objectivo: Conhecer de que forma se expressa o reconhecimento do carácter único e contribuição única no trabalho dos entrevistados

Entrevistado: Colaborador

Questões

1. Já sentiu em algum momento da sua carreira profissional que lhe foi reconhecido o contributo único que deu para o sucesso de determinada tarefa ou projecto? Poder-me-á descrever essa situação e de que forma sentiu que foi reconhecido?

    1.1. Em que local de trabalho ocorreu? – se não clarificado ainda

    1.2. Quais as partes envolvidas no reconhecimento do seu contributo? (Colegas/chefia/clientes)

    1.3. Com que frequência existe no seu local de trabalho o reconhecimento do seu contributo?

    1.4. Em que consistiu o reconhecimento? – se não suf. clarificado ainda

2. Para si, o que deveria ser feito para que sentisse que o seu trabalho e contributo pessoal seja valorizado?

3. Sente que na sua organização é dada importância à sua opinião e ideias sobre os vários assuntos discutidos/abordados? De que forma tal acontece?

4. No seu local de trabalho, sente que as tarefas que desempenha, poderiam ser feitas da mesma forma pelos seus restantes colegas ou existe um reconhecimento de cada colaborador pelo seu papel e valor na organização? Pode dar-me um exemplo concreto que espelhe esse reconhecimento?

5. Reporte-se agora a um acontecimento em que tenha sentido que tenha sido reconhecido pela sua contribuição (pode ser o mesmo que falou há pouco…) Que consequências teve para si o reconhecimento do seu trabalho? Ou seja, o que sentiu quando viu o seu esforço e contributo ser valorizado e reconhecido?

6. Na sua organização existe algum tipo de reconhecimento formalizado do contributo dos colaboradores para a mesma?

Caracterização geral do entrevistado:

- Ano de nascimento
- Formação de base
- Anos de experiência profissional
- Profissão/ cargo actual

Agradecimento pela participação.

Appendix II

Questionnaire applied to the participants and translated version

Caro(a) participante,

Gostaria de pedir a sua colaboração para o preenchimento deste questionário. Não levará mais do que 10 minutos.

O questionário será anónimo e os dados serão tratados, enquanto fontes individuais de informação, de forma confidencial, apenas tendo acesso directo a cada um deles a equipa de investigação.

Pretende-se com o mesmo apenas a recolha de opiniões e, como tal, não existem respostas certas ou erradas, interessando-me exclusivamente **a sua opinião pessoal**. A sua participação dar-nos-á informação importante sobre o tipo de experiências pelas quais as pessoas passam no seu local de trabalho.

Para cada questão deve marcar **uma e só uma resposta** na escala (com uma cruz), assinalando a que lhe parecer mais adequada.

Peço que leia atentamente as questões que colocamos e que não deixe nenhuma por responder. Caso queira receber uma síntese com os resultados do estudo e/ou tenha alguma dúvida poderá contactar-me através dos endereços abaixo citados.

Cordialmente,

Carla Sofia Cabo Leitão
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Muito obrigado pela sua participação.

QRSC

Diga até que ponto concorda com as seguintes afirmações sobre diversas práticas relacionadas com o seu trabalho, tendo como referência a organização/empresa onde exerce actualmente a sua actividade profissional ou, no caso de mais do que um local de trabalho, tendo como referência aquele que considera mais representativo da sua actividade profissional. Responda a cada um dos itens de acordo com a escala de respostas que se segue, assinalando com uma cruz a sua escolha, entre 1 (discordo totalmente) e 7 (concordo totalmente).

Discordo totalmente	**Discordo bastante**	**Discordo ligeiramente**	**Não concordo nem discordo**	**Concordo ligeiramente**	**Concordo bastante**	**Concordo totalmente**
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**

1. Mesmo que fizesse um óptimo trabalho, isso seria ignorado na minha organização	1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐
2. Na minha organização, a chefia motiva-me a fazer o meu trabalho cada vez melhor	1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐
3. O que cada um faz poderia ser feito exactamente da mesma forma pelos outros membros da organização	1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐
4. Na minha organização existe reconhecimento dos trabalhadores cujos esforços fazem a diferença	1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐
5. Nesta organização cada um é reconhecido pela contribuição única que dá	1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐
6. As pessoas nesta organização receiam apresentar as suas ideias	1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐
7. No meu trabalho, tenho oportunidade de fazer aquilo que sei fazer melhor	1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐
8. A nível hierárquico as diferentes contribuições das diferentes pessoas são valorizadas	1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐
9. Nesta organização, o facto de sermos reconhecidos na nossa contribuição, ajuda-nos a crescer como pessoas	1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐
10. As ideias originais dos membros são formalmente elogiadas na organização	1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐

11. Na minha organização existe abertura para que possa expressar as minhas opiniões	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐	7 ☐
12. Cada membro da organização tem autonomia para ter iniciativas no trabalho	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐	7 ☐
13. A minha organização reconhece que me dedico ao meu trabalho	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐	7 ☐
14. É prática comum nesta organização sermos reconhecidos pelas nossas contribuições singulares	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐	7 ☐
15. Nesta organização as críticas sobre o meu trabalho são acompanhadas de explicação sobre como melhorar	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐	7 ☐
16. Nesta organização é frequente ouvir críticas construtivas face ao meu trabalho	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐	7 ☐
17. A minha organização reconhece que dou um contributo que os outros não dão	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐	7 ☐
18. Nesta organização, como somos reconhecidos pela nossa contribuição, desenvolvemo-nos mais profissionalmente	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐	7 ☐
19. A diversidade é estimulada nesta organização	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐	7 ☐
20. Na minha organização existe oportunidade de progressão de carreira	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐	7 ☐
21. Sinto-me reconhecido(a) nesta organização porque a minha contribuição é valorizada	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐	7 ☐
22. Quando sou reconhecido(a) na minha organização por um trabalho bem feito, procuro no futuro fazer ainda melhor	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐	7 ☐
23. Sinto que os meus contributos são valorizados nesta organização	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐	7 ☐
24. Nesta organização as pessoas sentem-se inibidas de criticar as ideias ou propostas que alguém apresentou	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐	7 ☐
25. Recebo mensagens de agradecimento pelo meu contributo para a organização	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐	7 ☐
26. As pessoas nesta organização sentem que as suas contribuições únicas são valorizadas	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐	7 ☐
27. O meu superior hierárquico está envolvido na maioria dos assuntos relacionados com o meu trabalho	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐	7 ☐
28. Na minha organização é importante elogiar um trabalho bem feito	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐	7 ☐
29. A minha opinião é importante para o meu superior hierárquico	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐	7 ☐
30. Sou reconhecido monetariamente pelo meu contributo para a organização	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐	7 ☐

31. Recebo elogios do meu superior hierárquico pelo meu contributo para a organização	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐	7 ☐
32. A minha organização valoriza os contributos extra que possa dar	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐	7 ☐
33. Sinto que sou reconhecido(a) pelo meu trabalho no dia-a-dia	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐	7 ☐
34. Quando dou um contributo significativo para determinada tarefa/projecto, sou reconhecido(a) por parte da organização	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐	7 ☐
35. Nesta organização as críticas às ideias transformam-se rapidamente em críticas pessoais	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐	7 ☐
36. Na minha organização posso ser promovido(a) pela minha contribuição única	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐	7 ☐
37. Na minha organização os colegas reconhecem o meu contributo	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐	7 ☐
38. Nesta organização, a minha contribuição é legitimada porque é reconhecida	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐	7 ☐
39. Sou reconhecido/elogiado pelos clientes/utentes pelo trabalho/serviço bem feito	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐	7 ☐
40. Nesta organização, os colegas dão valor aos contributos singulares de cada um	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐	7 ☐
41. Nesta organização as pessoas debatem as ideias sem se sentirem reprimidas	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐	7 ☐
42. Na minha organização, sinto que sou ignorado(a) nas opiniões que dou	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐	7 ☐

Dados adicionais

Idade	20-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	51-55	56-60
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Escolaridade	4ª classe/4º ano	9ºano	12ºano	Licenciatura	Pós-graduação
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Nº Colaboradores	Até 10	[11 – 50]	[51 – 100]	[101 – 200]	> 200
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Profissão/Cargo actual	

Dear participant,

I would like to ask for your cooperation to answer the following questionnaire. It will not take more than 10 minutes.

Your responses will remain private and your identity anonymous - all the data will be analyzed individually in a confidential manner, with only the research team having access to it.

The aim of this questionnaire is to collect opinions and, therefore, there aren't correct or incorrect answers – We're interested exclusively in your **personal opinion**. Your participation will give us important information about the kind of experiences which people go through in their workplace.

For each question you must choose **one and only one answer** within the scale (marking a cross), being that answer the one that indicates more accurately your own experience.

We ask of you to carefully read the questions that we present, not leaving any behind without a proper answer. If you want to receive a summary with the results of the study and/or if you have any question you may contact me from the following direction presented down bellow.

Cordially,

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Nuno Rebelo dos Santos (Scientific supervisor)
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Thank you so much for your participation.

RCUQ

Say to which extent you agree with the following statements related to your work, having as a reference the organization/company in which you work presently or, in case of having more than one Job, the one which you feel that is more representative of your professional activity. Answer to each item taking into consideration the scale that follows, marking with a cross your choice between 1 (Completely disagree) to 7 (Completely agree).

Completely disagree	I strongly disagree	I slightly disagree	I don't agree or disagree	I slightly agree	I strongly agree	Completely agree
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Even if I did a great work, it would be ignored by my organization	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. In my organization, the chiefdom motivates me to do by work better and better	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. What each person does could be made, in the exact same way, by other members of the organization	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. This organization recognizes the workers that really make the difference	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. In this organization each one is recognized by the unique contribution that he/she gives	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. People in this organization are afraid of presenting their ideas	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. In my work I have the opportunity to do what I do best	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. In the hierarchically level, the different contributions of the different workers are valued	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. In this organization, the fact that we are recognized for our contribution, helps us to grow as a person	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. The original ideas of the members are formally complimented by the organization	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. In my organization there is openness for me to express my opinions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12. Each member of the organization has autonomy to take initiatives at work	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13. My organization recognizes that I dedicate myself to my work	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14. It is common practice in this organization to give us recognition for our unique contributions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
15. In this organization the critiques done about my work are accompanied by an explanation of how to improve	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
16. In this organization it is frequent to hear constructive criticism concerning to my work	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
17. My organization recognizes that I give a contribution that others don’t give	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
18. In this organization, because we are recognized by our contributions, we develop ourselves more in a professional sense	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
19. Diversity of ideas and opinions is encouraged in this organization	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
20. In my organization there is an opportunity of progression in terms of career	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
21. I feel recognized in this organization because my contribution is appreciated	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
22. When I’m recognized in my organization by a job well done, I seek to do even better in the future	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
23. I feel that my contributions are appreciated in this organization	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
24. In this organization people feel inhibited to criticize ideas or proposals that someone has presented	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
25. I receive messages of gratitude for my contribution to the organization	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
26. People in this organization feel that their contributions are appreciated	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
27. My hierarchic superior is involved in the majority of the subjects related with my work	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
28. In my organization it’s important to compliment a job well done	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
29. My opinion is important to my superior	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
30. I’m financially recognized by my contribution to the organization	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

31. I receive compliments from my superior for my contribution to the organization	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐	7 ☐
32. My organization appreciates the extra contributions that I may give	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐	7 ☐
33. I feel recognized by my work daily	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐	7 ☐
34. When I give a significant contribute for some task/project, I'm recognized by the organization	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐	7 ☐
35. In this organization the critiques about the ideas are rapidly transformed into personal criticism	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐	7 ☐
36. In my organization I can be promoted by my unique contribution	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐	7 ☐
37. In my organization, my colleagues recognize my contribution	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐	7 ☐
38. In this organization, my contribution is legitimated because it is recognized	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐	7 ☐
39. I'm recognized/complimented by the clients for a job/service well done	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐	7 ☐
40. In this organization, my colleagues appreciate the unique contribution that each person gives	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐	7 ☐
41. In this organization people debate ideas without feeling repressed	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐	7 ☐
42. In my organization, I feel like my opinions are ignored	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐	7 ☐

Aditional data

Age	20-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	51-55	56-60
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Educational level	4th grade	9th grade	12th grade	Graduation	After Gradutation
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Nº Collaborators	Till 10	[11 – 50]	[51 – 100]	[101 – 200]	> 200
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Profession	

Appendix III

Authorization letter sent to the participant organizations

Ex. Sr./Sra.

Venho por este meio solicitar autorização para contactar profissionais da organização que V. Exª. dirige, no sentido de obter o seu consentimento para a aplicação de um pequeno questionário no âmbito de um projecto sobre práticas de trabalho. Este projecto enquadra-se no Mestrado em Psicologia do Trabalho e das Organizações (Departamento de Psicologia da Universidade de Évora).

A presente investigação será pautada pelos princípios deontológicos relativos à prática da investigação em psicologia, incluindo a confidencialidade dos dados individuais e o anonimato no tratamento da informação.

O tempo previsto de duração do preenchimento do questionário será de aproximadamente 7 minutos.

As organizações participantes receberão uma síntese dos resultados obtidos, o que lhes permitirá reflectir sobre as suas actuais práticas de trabalho, nomeadamente enquadradas num âmbito mais alargado da totalidade dos elementos participantes.

Ao dispor para qualquer esclarecimento.

Cordialmente,

Carla Leitão
Aluna de Mestrado
Universidade de Évora
carlacabo@gmail.com
Nuno Rebelo dos Santos (orientador científico)
Universidade de Évora
nrs@uevora.pt

Appendix IV

Factor analysis (without forcing items)

Table 1. Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	18,229	43,403	43,403	18,229	43,403	43,403	8,929	21,259	21,259
2	2,232	5,313	48,716	2,232	5,313	48,716	6,720	16,001	37,261
3	1,696	4,038	52,754	1,696	4,038	52,754	2,909	6,927	44,188
4	1,382	3,291	56,044	1,382	3,291	56,044	2,796	6,658	50,846
5	1,232	2,934	58,978	1,232	2,934	58,978	2,719	6,475	57,320
6	1,011	2,407	61,385	1,011	2,407	61,385	1,555	3,702	61,022
7	1,003	2,389	63,774	1,003	2,389	63,774	1,156	2,752	63,774
8	,918	2,187	65,961						
9	,868	2,067	68,028						
10	,781	1,860	69,887						
11	,764	1,819	71,706						
12	,714	1,700	73,406						
13	,701	1,670	75,076						
14	,667	1,588	76,664						
15	,636	1,515	78,179						
16	,596	1,420	79,599						
17	,571	1,359	80,958						
18	,557	1,327	82,285						
19	,507	1,208	83,494						
20	,494	1,175	84,669						
21	,476	1,134	85,803						
22	,428	1,020	86,822						
23	,408	,972	87,794						
24	,401	,955	88,749						
25	,393	,935	89,684						
26	,382	,910	90,594						
27	,353	,841	91,434						
28	,351	,835	92,270						
29	,331	,788	93,058						
30	,315	,750	93,807						
31	,304	,724	94,532						
32	,272	,648	95,180						
33	,253	,601	95,781						
34	,247	,589	96,370						
35	,241	,574	96,945						
36	,224	,533	97,478						
37	,212	,504	97,982						
38	,201	,479	98,461						
39	,185	,442	98,903						
40	,172	,408	99,311						
41	,153	,363	99,674						
42	,137	,326	100,000						

Table 2. Rotated Component Matrix

	Component						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
q14	,699	,418					
q9	,685					,348	
q5	,684	,337					
q13	,671						
q4	,670	,369					
q8	,657						
q18	,639	,512					
q10	,627	,355					
q12	,619			,424			
q19	,618	,443					
q23	,607	,489					
q15	,581	,394					
q7	,578			,300			
q11	,558				,353		
q16	,538	,417					
q2	,497				,430		
q28	,397						
q36		,711					
q30		,709					
q25	,332	,660					
q26	,454	,632					
q34	,473	,611					
q21	,527	,608					
q32	,475	,600					
q20		,569					
q33	,468	,552			,312		
q17	,430	,487					
q35			,707				
q42			,706				
q24			,671				
q6			,663				
q1	,363		,529				
q40				,767			
q37				,718			
q41	,418		,305	,498			
q38	,378	,479		,494			
q27					,759		
q29	,313	,320			,633		
q31	,335	,521			,540		
q22	,301					,671	
q39				,463		,549	
q3							,809

Table 3. KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.964
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	10624.981
	Df	861
	Sig.	.000

Appendix V

Factor analysis (first trial)

Table 1. Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	8,612	35,882	35,882	8,612	35,882	35,882	5,708	23,784	23,784
2	2,105	8,771	44,653	2,105	8,771	44,653	3,084	12,850	36,634
3	1,286	5,356	50,009	1,286	5,356	50,009	2,613	10,887	47,521
4	1,211	5,048	55,057	1,211	5,048	55,057	1,696	7,065	54,586
5	1,050	4,375	59,432	1,050	4,375	59,432	1,163	4,846	59,432
6	,886	3,693	63,125						
7	,863	3,595	66,720						
8	,729	3,036	69,756						
9	,683	2,845	72,602						
10	,681	2,837	75,439						
11	,654	2,726	78,165						
12	,595	2,478	80,643						
13	,543	2,262	82,905						
14	,507	2,111	85,016						
15	,471	1,962	86,978						
16	,455	1,897	88,875						
17	,428	1,782	90,657						
18	,412	1,715	92,372						
19	,351	1,464	93,837						
20	,345	1,439	95,275						
21	,317	1,320	96,596						
22	,289	1,205	97,801						
23	,273	1,138	98,939						
24	,255	1,061	100,000						

Table 2. Rotated Component Matrix

	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
q9	,734				
q13	,720				
q8	,717				
q11	,671				
q7	,645				
q4	,643	,375			
q10	,642	,365			
q15	,633	,357			
q5	,604	,345			-,322
q29	,603	,337			
q27	,577				
q22	,546				,303
q36		,790			
q30		,782			
q20		,689			
q25	,352	,585			
q24			,714		
q6			,690		
q42			,685		
q35			,677		
q1	,384		,540		
q40				,835	
q37				,810	
q3					,773

Table 3. KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		,927
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	3980,116
	df	276
	Sig.	,000

Appendix VI

Factor analysis (second trial)

Table 1. Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	8,598	37,381	37,381	8,598	37,381	37,381	5,377	23,378	23,378
2	2,052	8,923	46,304	2,052	8,923	46,304	3,417	14,858	38,235
3	1,277	5,551	51,855	1,277	5,551	51,855	2,657	11,554	49,789
4	1,193	5,188	57,043	1,193	5,188	57,043	1,668	7,254	57,043
5	,963	4,186	61,229						
6	,867	3,769	64,999						
7	,735	3,197	68,195						
8	,684	2,974	71,169						
9	,682	2,965	74,134						
10	,655	2,846	76,980						
11	,597	2,596	79,576						
12	,547	2,376	81,952						
13	,518	2,254	84,206						
14	,473	2,056	86,262						
15	,456	1,982	88,244						
16	,432	1,878	90,122						
17	,424	1,843	91,965						
18	,352	1,528	93,494						
19	,347	1,510	95,004						
20	,324	1,408	96,412						
21	,297	1,293	97,704						
22	,273	1,188	98,893						
23	,255	1,107	100,000						

Table 2. Rotated Component Matrix

	Component			
	1	2	3	4
q9	,702			
q13	,695			
q11	,680		,302	
q8	,674	,312		
q29	,635			
q7	,628			
q27	,616			
q15	,614	,381		
q10	,604	,431		
q22	,598			
q4	,575	,493		
q5	,525	,489		
q36		,806		
q30		,759		
q20		,670		
q25	,317	,615		
q24			,715	
q6			,701	
q42			,692	
q35			,673	
q1	,359		,545	
q40				,832
q37				,809

Table 3. KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		,930
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	3932,459
	df	253
	Sig.	,000

Appendix VII

Factor analysis (third trial)

Table 1. Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	7,129	35,647	35,647	7,129	35,647	35,647	4,495	22,473	22,473
2	2,027	10,134	45,781	2,027	10,134	45,781	2,824	14,118	36,591
3	1,246	6,229	52,009	1,246	6,229	52,009	2,609	13,045	49,636
4	1,186	5,928	57,937	1,186	5,928	57,937	1,660	8,302	57,937
5	,856	4,281	62,219						
6	,819	4,097	66,316						
7	,704	3,522	69,838						
8	,680	3,400	73,237						
9	,678	3,389	76,626						
10	,607	3,036	79,662						
11	,549	2,746	82,408						
12	,530	2,650	85,058						
13	,466	2,329	87,387						
14	,433	2,163	89,550						
15	,426	2,131	91,681						
16	,366	1,828	93,508						
17	,359	1,796	95,305						
18	,336	1,679	96,983						
19	,326	1,628	98,611						
20	,278	1,389	100,000						

Table 2. Rotated Component Matrix

	Component			
	1	2	3	4
q13	,699			
q11	,689		,302	
q9	,687			
q8	,663			
q29	,656	,300		
q27	,646			
q7	,633			
q15	,619	,387		
q22	,609			
q36		,816		
q30		,771		
q20		,694		
q25	,317	,613		
q24			,717	
q6			,702	
q42			,692	
q35			,671	
q1	,361		,551	
q40				,843
q37				,801

Table 3. KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		,915
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	3053,432
	df	190
	Sig.	,000

Appendix VIII

Normality and Homogeneity of the variances tests

Table 1. Normality Test (K-S)

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov	
	Statistic	Sig.
F1 – Recognition culture’s effect	,064	,001
F2 – Tangible recognition	,074	,000
F3 – Openness and acceptance	,062	,001
F4 – Colleagues’ recognition	,118	,000

Table 2. Test of Homogeneity of Variances

	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
F1 – Recognition culture’s effect	2,490	1	335	,115
F2 – Tangible recognition	1,699	1	335	,193
F3 – Openness and acceptance	3,147	1	335	,077
F4 – Colleagues’ recognition	2,228	1	335	,136

Appendix IX

Relations between the studied variables and gender

Gender

Table 1. Mann-Whitney Non-Parametric test

	Recognition culture's effect	Tangible recognition	Openness and acceptance	Colleagues' recognition
Mann-Whitney U	13853,500	12769,000	14017,000	11650,000
Wilcoxon W	31431,500	30347,000	25342,000	29228,000
Z	-,193	-1,416	-,009	-2,693
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	**,847**	**,157**	**,993**	**,007**

Table 2. Significant differences with Colleagues' recognition - Ranks

	Gender	N	Mean Rank
Colleagues' recognition	Male	150	184,83
	Female	187	156,30
	Total	337	

Appendix X

Relations between the studied variables and age

Participants' age

Table 1. Kruskal Wallis Non-Parametric Test

	Recognition culture's effect	Tangible recognition	Openness and acceptance	Colleagues' recognition
Chi-Square	15,688	3,412	2,908	15,010
Df	7	7	7	7
Asymp. Sig.	**,028**	**,844**	**,893**	**,036**

Table 2. Significant Differences with Recognition culture's effect and Colleague's recognition – Ranks

	Participants' age	N	Mean Rank
Recognition culture's effect	20-25	11	165,50
	26-30	45	192,38
	31-35	60	179,33
	36-40	59	211,64
	41-45	64	178,56
	46-50	58	168,55
	51-55	38	180,64
	56-60	24	117,83
	Total	359	
Colleagues' recognition	20-25	11	134,18
	26-30	45	205,57
	31-35	60	177,47
	36-40	59	206,42
	41-45	64	151,86
	46-50	58	184,68
	51-55	38	181,01
	56-60	24	156,56
	Total	359	

Appendix XI

Relations between the studied variables and academic degree

Academic Degree

Table 1. Kruskal Wallis Test

	Recognition culture's effect	Tangible recognition	Openness and acceptance	Colleagues' recognition
Chi-Square	2,058	13,052	2,124	8,188
df	4	4	4	4
Asymp. Sig.	**,725**	**,011**	**,713**	**,085**

Table 2. Significant Differences with Tangible Recognition – Ranks

	Participants' academic degree	N	Mean Rank
Tangible recognition	Elementary School	12	265,00
	Middle School	47	156,38
	High School	131	184,94
	Graduation	124	182,10
	Post-Graduation	44	157,33
	Total	358	

Appendix XII

Relations between the studied variables and organizational dimension

Organizational Dimension

Table 1. Kruskal Wallis Non-Parametric Test

	Recognition culture's effect	Tangible recognition	Openness and acceptance	Colleagues' recogniton
Chi-Square	3,963	9,533	3,207	1,969
Df	4	4	4	4
Asymp. Sig.	**,411**	**,049**	**,524**	**,741**

Table 2. Significant Differences with Tangible Recognition – Ranks

	Number of workers in an organization	N	Mean Rank
Tangible recognition	Até 10	89	140,25
	11-50	115	160,84
	51-100	31	194,45
	101-200	39	151,03
	Mais de 200	42	171,17
	Total	316	

Appendix XIII

Relations between the studied variables and professions

Participants' profession

Table 1. Kruskal Wallis Non-Parametric Test

	Recognition culture's effect	Tangible recognition	Openness and acceptance	Colleagues' recognition
Chi-Square	30,273	50,377	27,147	36,443
df	25	25	25	25
Asymp. Sig.	**,214**	**,002**	**,349**	**,065**

Table 2. Significant Differences with Tangible Recognition – Ranks

	Participants' profession	N	Mean Rank
Tangible recognition	Teacher	24	146,60
	Gas distributor/manager	4	149,00
	Civil construction	5	218,30
	IT technician	2	74,25
	Commerce	27	203,61
	Administrative	16	124,78
	Banker	3	271,17
	Food & Dining sector	2	206,00
	Driver	2	242,75
	Techical/Operational assistant	115	154,29
	Accountant	4	256,38
	Military	9	232,72
	Secretary	3	138,17
	Nursing home assistant	4	180,13
	Intern	3	241,83
	Psychologist	3	169,67
	Cleaning sector	2	237,00
	Cultural producer	10	210,90
	Call-center	2	183,50
	Lawyer	1	122,00
	Health sector	39	108,46
	Project developer	1	65,00
	Sociologist	1	237,00
	Reporter	1	138,50
	Civil engeneer	4	157,00
	Superior technitian	35	166,86
	Total	322	