

"ANOMIA Y RED TAPE EN LAS ORGANIZACIONES: PROPUESTA DE UNA AGENDA DE INVESTIGACIÓN"

“ANOMIE AND RED TAPE IN ORGANIZATIONS: A RESEARCH
SCHEDULE PROPOSAL”

“ANOMIA E RED TAPE NAS ORGANIZAÇÕES: PROPOSTA DE UMA
AGENDA DE PESQUISA”

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Resumen

Este estudio se centra en el análisis de dos fenómenos: la *rede tape* y la anomia organizacional. Considera los cambios a los que las organizaciones están sujetas y la necesidad de reinención constante de sus procesos y productos, tratando de ser más eficientes en el contexto de una competencia feroz. Sin embargo, cuando se considera el funcionamiento de una organización, es fundamental contar con una definición clara de cómo las cosas deben suceder, o qué reglas se deben seguir. La *red tape* significa la existencia de un conjunto de reglas que imponen gran carga administrativa si se siguen.

Anomia organizacional se refiere a la situación en la que las reglas han alcanzado un nivel de debilidad que se consideran cifras, meramente, como ilustrativas, ya que no son suficientes para guiar el comportamiento de los empleados en la organización. Por lo tanto, los patrones de grupo o incluso estándares personales toman su lugar.

Palabras clave: Anomia Organizacional; Cambio Organizacional, Red Tape, Grupos, Trabajo.

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Abstract

This study is focused on the discussion of two phenomena: red tape and organizational anomie. It has been widely discussed in the literature considering the time changes that organizations are subject to and the need for constant reinvention of their processes and products, seeking to become more efficient in the context of fierce competition. Nevertheless, when considering the functioning of an organization, it is crucial to have a clear definition of how things should happen, what rules should be followed. By red tape we mean the existence in an organization of rules that impose big administrative burdens when followed; Organizational anomie refers to the situation in which the rules have reached a level of weakness that they have begun to be considered only as illustrative figures, since they are not sufficient to guide the conduct of employees in the organization. Thus, group or even personal standards take their place.

Keywords: Organizational Anomie, Organizational Change, Red Tape, Groups, Work.

Resumo

Este estudo é focado na discussão de dois fenômenos: *red tape* e anomia organizacional. Tem sido amplamente discutido na literatura, considerando as mudanças que as organizações estão sujeitas e a necessidade de reinvenção constante de seus processos e produtos, buscando se tornar mais eficiente no contexto de uma concorrência feroz. No entanto, quando se considera o funcionamento de uma organização, é crucial ter uma definição clara de como as coisas devem acontecer, ou que regras devem ser seguidas.

Red tape significa a existência de um conjunto de regras que imponham grandes encargos administrativos quando seguidas. Anomia organizacional refere-se à situação em que as regras tenham atingido um nível de debilidade onde são consideradas apenas como figuras ilustrativas, uma vez que elas não são suficientes para orientar a conduta dos colaboradores na organização. Assim, padrões grupais ou até mesmo padrões pessoais tomar o seu lugar.

Palavras-chaves: Anomia Organizacional, Mudança Organizacional, Red Tape, Grupos, Trabalho.

Introduction

The dynamics of the business world are made up of cycles that carry the baggage of financial gains and losses resulting from the ongoing war for gains between the economic actors involved, be they organizations, states and/or populations. These business cycles do not fit into a foreseeable duration pattern or occur over a predictable number of years. In the past, mistakes were made in the projections by estimating that business cycles were predictable and regular appearances. Subsequent studies of economic time series, however, have shown that business cycles are irregular, despite the different theories created to try to systematize them, which has led to the incorporation of unpredictability as a relevant factor for business management (Korotayev & Tsirel, 2010).

This scenario makes organizations continually deal with the changes, which create new challenges over shorter and shorter time periods, so that new strategies are continually sought to secure their positions in the market. It should be noted that in many industries the solutions to meet these new demands have increasingly short efficiency cycles.

The striking feature of this contemporary continuous change creates a number of difficulties, starting with delineating what may be described as the context in which the organization belongs. If before organizations had to pay attention to their internal processes and transformations in the particular context in which they operated, their attention is now focused on monitoring and seeking to develop a strategy that allows an ever increasing degree of predictability into the future, and in some cases, for this to be considered globally.

Clegg, Kornberger and Pitsis (2011) devote an entire chapter of a book to discussing the management of globalization, or more specifically a new highly interconnected reality, which has profound consequences for organizations, companies, governments and the world of work in general. In fact, the notion of a changing world is an almost mandatory subject when discussing organizational phenomena. With each solution proposed new demands arise. Thus, organizations find themselves faced with the challenge of dealing with a reality in constant transformation, and this has implications for the organization itself. The organization's paradox is created whereby it needs to change to remain competitive without losing its identity. According to Tavares (2011) it is essential that the organization's identity be preserved; even in this context of uncertainty, this provides the group with a sense of stability, of being part of the organization. Following the same reasoning Neves (2011) considers that: ... organizations, permanently cohabiting with the uncertainties of the external environment (market, technology, social values, political expectations, etc.) are confronted with dilemmas, sometimes paradoxical, in terms of its operation, the resolution of which often goes by a compliance effort of different forces and balancing depends on the resolution quality (p. 522).

The quotation also supports the theory of constant changes of logic, giving rise to new demands, which are cyclical since they follow a direction shown by previous phenomena (Clegg, Kornberger and Pitsis; 2011). Nevertheless, this direction can be changed at any time by changes in context.

So with every new intervention to deal with a requirement, new requirements arise that demand further intervention, thereby creating a dynamic balance in the functioning of organizations.

Understanding the different ability that organizations have to change as a result of external pressures is still an important research topic, crucial to understanding the intra-organizational dynamics and the wishes of members of an organization to embrace new standards and behaviors, as well as the consequences that these strains put on the same (Bercovitz & Feldman; 2008).

The deepening discussion on the implications of employees' moods that come from the constant pressures they are submitted in order to meet the demands for constant change made by organizations implies a more detailed understanding of the dynamics of human behavioral reactions when faced with results based pressure situations or even a rupture in organizational cohesion in adverse situations.

This context of changes that contemporary organizations deal with daily has been discussed widely. However, heretofore developed studies have shown little interest in the rules of the organizations. According to Walker and Brewer (2008) study, standards are crucial within formal organizations; they regulate individual behavior and interactions between individuals in organizations. Thus, they are there to ensure accountability, fairness and ethical behavior.

In this present study two issues are highlighted. These are important for maintaining staff performance quality because of their importance for the organization as a whole.

They influence other variables, as well as the recentness with which these issues have been considered in the organizational context: red tape and organizational anomie. Both relate to the organization's standards and the way that its members adhere to them or not. The meaning of Red tape is related to rules that have to be, and are, followed, but which may be in some cases counterproductive for the organization. Organizational anomie refers to the rules not being followed.

According to McDavid and Harari (1984), "the most striking feature of any organized group is perhaps the feature set through which it tries to maintain uniformity among its members" (p. 276). In view of the influence of social norms on behavior, it is important to conduct studies to identify the conditions that promote or inhibit normative influence on behavior.

This effort will allow for the development of programs that aim change behavior, using the norms in organizations as a starting point (Lapinsky & Rimal, 2005; Schultz et al, 2007). Thus, the organization's standards can be thought of as securing uniformity of meaning and hence their operation, a factor that motivated the present study.

2. Development

2.1. *Counterproductive Standards in Organization (Red tape)*

Although it can be translated as a standard counterproductive to the organization, the expression *red tape* has its origin in sets of procedural documents, mainly from England in the 16th century, which were so old and bulky that they had to be tied together, this often being done with a red ribbon.

The term is currently used to indicate standards that bring more harm than benefit to the organization when followed. Since it is labeled as *red tape* in the literature on the subject, it will be kept as such in this article.

Rosenfeld (1984) was one of the pioneers in considering *red tape* as regulations, procedures, forms and government interventions that are perceived as excessive, difficult to implement, or useless for decision making or for the implementation of decisions. In fact, the definition points to this as a phenomenon that occurs more easily, and thus is easier to investigate, within a government context. This perspective remains the basis for the preparation of this study.

As evidence for this placement, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has several publications that aim to foster the development of strategies to eliminate *red tape* both in government and in public policies developed for specific sectors. The *red tape* comes from excessive regulations that may be redundant and bureaucratic, preventing action and impeding decision making. Excessive administrative procedures, documents and records to be created to comply with diverse laws, or for obtaining different licenses, would be examples of excessive bureaucracy that may be defined as *red tape*.

The *red tape* considered in a government context is based on the logic that both business and society in general are able to recognize the critical role played by the government, and that there is a need for regulations for it to perform this role effectively.

However, according to Department of Regulatory Agency - DORA (2011) it is also considered that excessive, unnecessary, and redundant processes and regulations have resulted in a huge burden both for businesses and for consumers, making clear the need to reduce or eliminate them by simplifying the regulatory functions of government. Research indicates that the public sector has increased red tape more than other sectors of the economy (Feeney & Bozeman 2009; Feeney & Rainey, 2010); it also shows that there is a greater degree of alienation at work in the public sector (Pandey & Kingsley, 2000). Of interest to the discussion proposed here is the consideration of *red tape* in the context of organizations, which may be defined as rules and costly procedures that have an adverse effect on the organization's performance (Yang & Pandey, 2009). In fact studies on *red tape* have, in general, demonstrated its negative effect on several variables in an organizational context. This effect has been reported both directly, with the *red tape* considered as an independent variable, and indirectly, with *red tape* considered as having a mediating or moderating role on the relationship between other variables (Pandey & Garnett, 2006). According to Bozeman (1993) organizational *red tape* can be regarded as rules, regulations and procedures that, while they remain in force, are only met with difficulty and are effectively non-functional. Generally, studies have been developed considering *red tape* principally in three contexts. The first is the governance of large corporations; the second refers to the study of phenomena in public organizations in general; finally, organizational red tape has also been considered in private organizations, even though these have a smaller amount of it than the contexts examined by the other two studies.

Rainey and Bozeman (2000) present a series of arguments concerning the distinction between public and private organizations, highlighting the fact that the authors who are dedicated to studies in an organizational area often have different opinions about the existence of phenomena that are unique to each type of organization. So while some authors consider that various relevant comparisons have been made between the two contexts, for others the differences found between the public and private sectors do not go beyond those that can be found within each sector.

Some phenomena are clearly differentiated when comparing public and private organizations, especially in countries like Brazil where there are different laws for each sector. Thus, Brazilian workers in public organizations do not deal with the series of tensions that seem common in private organizations, starting with the threat of dismissal. A clear distinction between the public and the private sectors on other topics, however, may not be so easily obtained, since studies have shown both similarities and differences when comparing such organizations.

Specifically considering *red tape* in the context of private organizations, it is clear that one can find indications of the existence of practices that do not contribute to the ultimate goal(s) of the organization, which may cause both:

- i) demands from influential members the organization as to who may or may not be promoted, as well as the creation of many complex rules and regulations that lower organizational performance,
- ii) difficulties with tracking changes required by the market, and/or iii) the absence in the organization of trained staff to deal with new technologies (Pandey and Kingsley, 2000).

The comparison between public and private organizations has provided little evidence that *red tape* is an organizational phenomenon unique to the public sector. This statement runs counter to common sense and to the argument usually made in comparative studies of public sector and private sector organizations.

Considering that in the public sector profit, generally speaking, is not the main focus, and also that public sector organizations are faced with a number of legal requirements that guarantee the standardized performance of certain acts, meaning that all of them present the consequences of similar operation; in this case, the occurrence of *red tape*. (Rainey & Bozeman, 2000).

For Pandey and Moynihan (2006) in an organizational context, *red tape* can be identified as the triumph of means over ends. In the proposed discussion, the authors place red tape only in a public sector context, considering that such organizations are under the aegis of a set of rules that are hard to change. The developed practice, then, is not associated with a decision taken by the organization, which is forced to follow rules in a broader context.

2.2. *Organizational Anomie*

The term "anomie" arose in ancient Greece signifying an absence of laws (*nómos*), standards or rules, and has negative connotations associated with concepts like disorder, inequality and cruelty. Besnard (1988) points out that the term reappeared in 17th century English theological texts and later in philosophical texts and French sociological texts from the 19th century, with a similar meaning.

The concept of anomie has been increasingly employed in order to explain some of the consequences of rapid and profound economic, social and political changes observed in recent decades on individuals and social groups. In fact, it can be said that the study of this concept has gained outstanding relevance in contemporary psychosocial research.

Initially Durkheim (1893) found that the anomie would be the result of an abnormal form of division of labor, characterized by the absence or lack of regulatory means to ensure cooperation between people with different social functions. Among the causes of anomie would be the economic crises and the conflicts between capitalists and workers.

The essence of the matter is the lack of interaction between individuals who perform different social roles, and eventually no longer perceive themselves as participating in a joint venture (Besnard, 1988).

Durkheim (1893) found that companies would place limits on the goals that individuals could possess. These limits were adjusted to allow individuals to have a reasonable chance of achieving their goals. Thus, individuals with greater resources would also have higher goals.

People would be able to restrict their desires only in response to a pattern or a milestone that they recognize as fair, which means that the limits should come from an authority that they respect. This authority was the company or one of its organs (Agnew, 1997). Durkheim (1893) also described three situations in which the companies would be unable to regulate individual goals properly: during periods of economic crisis; in periods of economic growth; and when society's ability to regulate individual goals decreases critically, to the point that anomie becomes a chronic state. In the first two cases, the standards by which the goals are regulated become obsolete with the natural confusion created by establishing new forms of organization. In the third case, however, the anomie ceases to be a natural phenomenon characteristic of a transitional period.

Despite the receptivity of the theory of anomie from the perspective of Durkheim, Merton (1968) offered an alternative theory arguing that societies differ in the relative emphasis they place on goals themselves and the standards that regulate the legitimate pursuit of these goals.

Cohen (1997) notes that Robert Merton identified three main components of a cultural structure. First come cultural goals: the desires or aspirations that are socially taught to individuals. These represent goals that are socially valued, how to be successful professionally, have status and material possessions, etc.. The rules prescribing the means that individuals can legitimately employ to achieve these goals make up the second element of this structure.

The distribution of facilities and opportunities to achieve cultural goals in a manner consistent with the rules, that is, the objective conditions for action, are the third component of this structure. Briefly, Merton believes that the cultural structure is defined in terms of the way the socially available means allow the achievement of socially valued goals.

Merton (1968) considers that the state of anomie is experienced by the individual when there is a discrepancy between goals and social means. In this sense, it analyzes the ways to adapt the individual to society by defining what is, for example: conformity (perfect adaptation of the individual to the society in which he lives), innovation (development strategies to achieve the established social goals, when the currently available means are perceived as inefficient), ritualism (adherence to social standards, while not believing in them as a result of a strong internalization of socially prescribed means), retreatism (rejection of goals and means), and rebellion (a non-passive rejection of goals and means, and an active search for setting new targets and obtaining more satisfactory means).

According to Manrique de Lara and Rodriguez (2007) the concept of anomie applied to the organizational context refers to the normative-evaluative weakness of an individual in his work, causing him to note that the organization does not provide a proper context for the development of his work activities. In other words, the worker has no predictability about what to expect from both the organization and his bosses, peers and subordinates in his day-to-day work.

By the same token, Tsahuridu (2010) considers anomie an important element for understanding the factors that affect the decisions and behavior of people in work; and believes that once it has been established, it results in moral regression and amorality. Thus, certain formal and informal aspects of organizations tend to be influenced by anomie at work. In such a context, severe damage to the health and quality of life of members of the organization may be expected to occur, with high levels of stress and growing uncertainty about the organizational environment.

As with social anomie, organizational anomie can arise in times of transition, characterized by rapid change, as in the cases of mergers, acquisitions and downsizing, leading to behaviors that deviate from the norm. In such conditions, the organizational anomie refers to a period prior to a new form of organization. This is the case in periods of organizational change, either in terms of social and economic changes that impose changes to the operation of the organization, or in the case of mergers and / or acquisitions.

According to Parales-Quenza (2008) anomie is no longer considered a transient phenomenon in those organizations that provide a context in which people cannot achieve their aspirations, or when this is possible only when they belongs to certain groups or when they adopt strategies not covered by the rules.

In some organizations there is no clarity about what really happens in situations related to dismissal, promotion or even choosing activities or functions that awaken people's interest (Souza & Ribas júnior, 2013).

Thus, the efficiency of the factors that strengthen social integration decreases while a dissociation takes place between the envisaged standards and those that are followed. In such a context difficulties for individual adaptation arise, resulting in loss of general guidance, development of feelings of insecurity and marginalization, the emergence of uncontrolled expectations and questioning of the legitimacy of the core values hitherto defended (Atteslander, 2007). There are situations, therefore, when organizations are faced with the clear inadequacy of their culture, which fails in its task of guiding the behavior of its members. Thus, the standards in the organization are different from those officially recommended. With every change that occurs in the organization, there tends to be a bigger gap between the standards proposed, transmitted and documented, and those actually followed by groups or even specific individuals within the organization.

2.3. *Red tape* to organizational anomie: the weakness of organizational norms

Considering the context in which the rules of an organization do not correspond to reality or are inefficient, DeHart-Davis (2008) proposes the concept of "*green tape*", referring, in contrast, to those standards that would favor the performance of the organization that combined presence of the following factors: i) written standards, ii) means-valid targets relationships, iii) use of adequate controls iv) that are consistently applied and v) have aims understood by those *stakeholders*, or all persons who have a direct or indirect interest in an organization and who may affect or be affected by the organization's actions.

Thus, this study proposes to investigate the effects that *red tape* and organizational anomie have on organizations.

If the rules of the organization are not written, the trend is that different interpretations based on the organizational reality start to occur. Even in the event that such standards are written, it is necessary that they influence what really happens in the organization. For example, it is quite common to find organizational rules in an office manual. Nevertheless, it is not as common to find an office manual that really brings together all the professional activities actually performed by the occupant of such an office. The same applies to the vision, mission and values of the organization. Although many organizations adopt a strategy of maintaining such information in sight, few workers can recall or repeat it clearly. Thus, the rules relating to the position, the vision, mission and values of the organization are no longer guides to action and are no longer to be found or remembered. Learning for the new members of the organization will be based on the logic of "this is the way things are done here".

Referring to a valid relationship between means and targets, it is considered that a rule is directly understood as a means by which an end is achieved. Thus, what is being sought by the standard is understood and broadly agreed. It is in this sense that the norm is viewed as the most logical way to attain something that is considered necessary in the organization.

The standard use of PPE, for example, for workers who do not understand the importance of safety at work, is seen as an unnecessary, unimportant standard that only disrupts the service. Participation in training activities, development and education promoted by the organization would also be an example of not understanding the means-end relationship. Many workers feel that if they can adequately perform, albeit according to their personal vision, the professional activities demanded, then there is no need for training.

Adequate control related to standards is defined as the degree of intensity that is used to achieve the end sought by the standard. There are rules that can be followed once understood by the workers, though it is appropriate to consider that others will require a greater degree of control. In the first case reference is made to standards that are not associated with any resulting damage. In this case, it is not necessary to place a supervising agent if the rule is followed by all. When a lesser degree of compliance with the rule, or it not being strictly followed, can cause damage, the use of greater control is justified.

In some organizations the detailed control of material consumption is performed in such a way that it creates embarrassment or even tension among workers. In others, it is impaired due to the paucity of control. Standards considered good, adequate or consistent, employ an optimum level of control, while standards where there is excessive and inflexible control tend to be perceived as bad. We could illustrate the exit of employees at the end of the day.

Is it necessary to search the employees? It is possible that good control of assets and material consumed is more effective and causes less damage to the organization than the daily frisk?

When it comes to consistently applying a standard, it is noted that some standards are enforced more strictly for some people than for others. The perception within the organization, then, is that some standards are valid (as well as the sanctions for non-compliance) while with others, it is seen that these do not have the same weight and can be ignored or only partially followed.

Socially, examples of impunity are frequently observed, leading ordinary people to understand that there are differences between them and other citizens. For some groups, organizations, societies etc., one might think that there are different interpretations of what one can and cannot do. It is therefore important that when exceptions are justified, this is disclosed, thus upholding their *raison d'être*.

Finally, it is important that the rules be understood by all persons who have a direct or indirect interest in the organization; when respect and adherence to standards are based only on supervision, either from other employees, supervisors or even detached agents, there is a loss to the organization because of the costs involved in such control. A standard becomes more efficient in that it is internalized by the workers. In many cases, understanding the reason that a rules exists means greater adherence to it.

In the organizational context, there are certainly norms that are internalized and standards that are not internalized. In the case of internalized norms the individual tends to behave according to the standard as an expression of his personality, and not according to cost-effectiveness or otherwise in its respect. In this case the individual joins the social norm for what is the right thing to be done, with or without external social sanctions. However, when the norm is not internalized, the individual tends to behave according to it only in order to avoid punishment or receive rewards, whether internal or external (Eisemberg, 1999).

Although not an item highlighted by DeHart-Davis (2008), one might add to the above the numbers of existing standards, and hence behaviors, procedures or conditions in an organization that demand control. There are situations that clearly cannot be governed by specific rules. When there are a large number of standards, the tendency is that the main ones are listed as more important, because it is easier to identify when they are not followed, or that there is a greater loss when there is some deviation from them. A specific parking space, clothing that the employee must wear while at the organization, the haircut he should adopt, etc., must be evaluated based on the norm, whether endogenous, referring to the organization, or exogenous, referring to a context that is not related to what happens in the organization or to the performance of professional activities.

That is why Perry (2007) alerts us to the fact that a standard has behavioral and social conditions of existence. It cannot exist without a standard that has some influence on someone's reason(s) for acting.

So if there is no constant reaffirmation of a standard, it tends to be discredited and, in effective terms, fade over time.

The checkout process, a context of *green tape* to *red tape* is replaced, beginning from the moment the points highlighted by DeHart-Davis (2008) cease to exist. It seems logical to believe that when *red tape* is the prevailing feature of the organization's standards, it opens a path to organizational anomie. In other words, if there is a relatively wide set of rules that tend to not be followed due to means related difficulties, the tendency is that they begin to fail to be effective, depending on ever greater control to be followed.

In this process, some still remain faithful to the rules, while others become completely oblivious. The individual positioning in relation to anomie has been highlighted by several authors, following the original ideas presented by Merton (1968). So, this phenomenon will depend on individual perception; one may find in an organization that employees adhere to standards without hesitation, demonstrating full compliance with them, even those who no longer believe in the logic contained therein and the suitability thereof.

For Fehr and Gächter (2000) even though there is no consensus on the standards, they must be followed and shared at a relatively high level. For Cialdini and Trost (1998) the fact of being shared is the main feature of a standard. Thus, we can say that those who live within the same social sphere tend to share the same social standards. Following this reasoning, it is possible to speak of different organizations when different standards are identified in the same organizational context.

The shared nature of the standard refers to the need for by the employee to identify a strong congruence between (i) the prescribed standards, (ii) the way one is expected to behave and (iii) the way one understands that the other members of the organization - bosses, peers and subordinates - behave. In this sense, the perception of the norm has two aspects. The first is the injunctive respect or understanding that the individual has for what is expected of him.

The second is the descriptive aspect, which is the perception that the individual has on the way people actually behave (Bichheri, 2006). The effectiveness of the standard is to be questioned when the three points highlighted above do not coincide.

Conclusion

The aim of this study was to discuss two phenomena related to an organization's standards: *red tape* and organizational anomie. There is a schedule of planned studies on the subject, given the importance that increasingly is being evidenced by organizational studies, showing the negative effect that these variables have on organizational contexts. We chose to keep the *red tape* expression due to the non-adoption in the literature of a term that could make the phenomenon more clearly understood from the way it is named.

The existence of standards that hinder the achievement of organizational goals when followed is a challenge that, even though present in public and private organizations in several countries, has received little attention from professionals and researchers who deal with organizations, particularly in Brazil.

The question takes on greater importance for the fact that the fragility of the rules puts the organization in an underprivileged situation when facing the dynamics of changing market cycles, which demand an attitude of proactivity and continuous adaptation. In such a context, the very survival of the organization in the market is compromised. This applies also to public bodies, as the loss of effectiveness is equivalent to the loss of usefulness to the society they serve and makes people rethink their role and existence as public organizations.

It is important to recognize that the phenomenon tends to perpetuate the extent to which organizations are faced with a number of legal requirements for their operation, arising from decisions taken at the international, national, state and even municipal levels. Added to such levies are the fact that many of the standards are developed for the purposes of control and not of productivity. However, even taking strict adherence to such rules as a principle, there are still many organizations in which standards could be improved in order to make them more efficient. Despite the difficulties and losses arising from the existence of counterproductive regulations in organizations, in this study the focus is on the possibility of them ceasing to be followed, giving rise to a state of anomie in the organization. For the required modernization in various organizations, it is proposed that the rules governing them be reassessed, and that those that are negative be separated from those that might undergo some sort of modification. Among these, it also proposes to distinguish between those that are aligned with organizational goals and those that are closer to being obstacles to the achievement of the goals pursued by the organization.

Seeking to synthesize the proposed discussion, two aspects are worth mentioning in relation to organizational standards. First, the rules of an organization should above all be effective, to serve as a guide for the conduct of the individuals and groups that comprise it. There is greater predictability of the other's behavior and therefore a greater chance for developing standards, when seeking new behaviors from members of an organization. When the rules of an organization fail to serve as a guide for the conduct of employees, and individuals and groups become strengthened as behavioral standards, the organization will have greater difficulty in managing the necessary changes in the face of new demands that arise. The second aspect in relation to organizational standards is that the behaviors derived therefrom should be behaviors that lead to the fulfillment of organization's goals. If the proposal of an organization is to seek modernity, this implies the adoption of a strategic approach, adapting the rules so that they contribute to the emergence of phenomena such as creativity and innovation, among many other aspects that characterize the modern approach in organizations.

Finally, it suggests the development of studies that seek to identify how the phenomena highlighted in this study influence Brazilian organizations. Investigations into private and public organizations that consider different variables, especially those related to the health and quality of life of workers and the organizational performance, could contribute to a better understanding of the way organizations' standards are related to their operation and guarantee their survival in a context of constant change and fierce competition.

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