

verbal communication tool. Therefore, it is worth mentioning that this research contributes to the description and reflection of how important ethical communication is for the organizational environment.

Key words: Organizational communication; Ethic; Organizational Ethics.

1. Introduction

In the present study, we intend to understand the concepts of organizational ethics and communication in the contemporary organizational environment from recent experiences, where, according to Sousa and Miranda (2015, p.7) “communication is highlighted as a fundamental factor for the constant search for quality improvement at work”, because good communication within the company contributes to the reduction of internal conflicts in addition to making work more motivating. Ethics, as a subjective value of human action, is present in a significant number of everyday decisions in business activity (WEBER & WASIELESKI, 2001). We know that, currently, ethics is essential within a company due to the great competition that exists at the global level, where companies use ethics as a competitive differential, thus adding value to its image. Garrison et al (2013, p.14) corroborates these arguments, as he states that “it is vitally important that business is conducted on an ethical basis that builds and sustains trust”.

Within an organization, ethics is treated in an applied manner, as it seeks to use specific theories to solve specific problems of that social life. That is, each company has its own formula for management and this formula must be followed by its managers and employees. Thus, the absence of procedures linked to organizational ethics may harm the company's performance in the context of the knowledge societyⁱ, such as demotivating employees, fines, relationship conflicts. Thus, as noted by Nash (1993, p. 3):

“Business ethics is the study of the way in which personal moral norms apply to the activities and objectives of the commercial company. It is not a separate moral standard, but the study of how the business context creates its own problems and exclusive to the moral person who acts as a manager of that system”.

With regard to organizational communication, it can occur in different ways in the context of an organization, and can be carried out through social media created, internal newspapers, e-mails, which facilitates the work of managers with employees. According to Cardoso (2006, p. 9):

“In the internal sphere of business organizations, relations with employees, different administrative styles, as well as human actions, demand new management directions that surpass linear, vertical and imposing models and reach new forms of administrative action that involve and value team work based on greater participation and autonomy of those involved. In the external sphere, business relations demand innovative proposals for service, market and marketing activities and special attention to cultural, ethical and social issues that involve organizational actions.”

Therefore, based on the importance that organizational ethics plays in the competitive development of contemporary organizations articulated to the field of ethics in communication, the present study is situated by presenting the following research question: How can the exercise of ethics in organizational communication contribute and influence the

competitive growth of contemporary organizations? For this, we will develop a qualitative-descriptive research. The study sample consists of eleven companies located in Caruaru-PE. We justify the performance of this study, because the analysis on the theme allows an assessment of its current degree of involvement with the growth of organizations in different segments. Like this,

Although there are so many contributions that can be proposed by ethics in the context of organizational communication, its application is not so simple. It is not reasonable, for example, to create a code of ethical conduct, if there is not, an effective communication that aligns this code with the organization's objectives, so that all employees understand and are willing to put it into practice. Likewise, it is useless to think that communication ethics works only in specific or higher positions, where it is necessary for everyone in the organization to understand their role so that the entire organizational structure flows efficiently (BUENO, 2014 apud ENDO, 2015) .

The work is divided into five sections. The first concerns this introduction, which specifies the problem of the study and the justification for the proposed approach, followed by the Theoretical Framework that addresses topics on Ethics, Business Ethics, Code of Business Conduct, Business Communication and the Importance of Ethical Communication for organizations. The third section consists of the methodology, containing the tools used for data collection and analysis. In the fourth section, the data analysis and the results obtained are exposed. Finally, in section five, the final considerations of the research are made.

2. Theoretical Reference

In this section, we will explore the concepts of ethics and communication, in addition to the insertion of these concepts in the business environment, based on literature from cases in the organizational scope so that it can facilitate the understanding of our central objective and to guide the analysis of the data that were collected during the research corroborating the composition of the final results.

2.1 Ethics and its Foundations

The word "ethics" appeared in ancient Greece and refers to the custom, the habits of men. Many consider ethics to be a part of philosophy and even a science, which deals with the understanding of the notions and principles that underpin the foundations of social morality and individual life.

“Ethics is part of the practical philosophy that aims to elaborate a reflection on the fundamental problems of morals (...), but founded on a metaphysical study of the set of rules of conduct considered as universally valid. Unlike morality, ethics is more concerned with detecting the principles of a life according to philosophical wisdom, with elaborating a reflection on the reasons for wanting justice and harmony and on the means of achieving them”. (JAPIASSÚ; MARCONDES, 1996, p. 93).

The concept of ethics is also linked to the idea of what we believe to be correct, due to our customs derived from the groups to which we belong. According to Valls (1994, p.7) "we also call life itself ethics, when it conforms to the customs considered correct".

Ethics arises at the moment when we realize the consequences that our actions may cause for other people and society, or even for ourselves. These acts can be good or bad and

this is what will determine whether our behavior is truly ethical, according to our values and principles. The author Andrew J. Dubrin (2003, p. 69) defines ethics as "[...] the moral choices that a person makes and what that person should do", is when we transform our values into action.

Since ancient Greece, the philosopher Aristotle spoke in his thoughts on ethics as the virtuous and moral conduct for the pursuit of happiness, as a path to the individual and the whole society, with human action formed by such conscience. "Every action and every purpose is for the good, the good being understood for what all things are for." (ARISTÓTELES, 1996, p.118)

“According to character, people are such or such, but it is according to actions that they are happy or the other way around. Therefore, the characters do not act to imitate the characters, but acquire the characters thanks to the actions. Thus, actions and fable constitute the purpose of the tragedy, and, in everything, the purpose is what matters most” (ARISTÓTELES, *Arte Poética*, p.25).

Today, the concept of ethics extends to fields other than the individual, such as the environment corporate being considered a set of applied attitudes and values, being, therefore, fundamental for the progress of the company's activities and, of course, for the good relationship between employees. According to Moreira (2002, p. 31), “the ethical procedures facilitate and solidify the ties of business partnership, either with customers, with suppliers, or even with effective or potential partners”.

As Arruda (2001, apud BAHR 2006, p. 03) argues, studies on ethics in the business world have been disseminated over the years, due - in large part - to the expansion of multinationals. THE professional ethics has been one of the most discussed issues in Brazil, as the country experiences a period of questioning the practices of professionals considered unethical due to the way they act in various organizational sectors, such as executives of large companies and political leaders who take ownership of resources improperly or who act in bad faith in the function they perform, causing serious damage to society. According to a recent news item published in *Jornal Estadão* (2015, p.1), a study carried out by Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), points out that corruption affects four fundamental sectors for the country's development: extraction industries, infrastructure (and public services), health and education. Therefore, being an ethical professional is what determines both your professional success and the success of the organization to which you are linked.

Due to increased competition, many professionals end up overriding norms, values and even laws so that their goals are achieved, one of the factors that also contributes to this behavior is the lack of experience that leads the professional to be insecure and not knowing how to make a decision that may harm other people, due to the fact that they are outside of what is ethical in that environment and in that society.

2.1.1 Business Ethics

Ethics leads us to the idea of a moral university and makes people behave appropriately towards a given society, which shares the same signs and meanings. Álvaro Valls (2000) thus brings a more comprehensive definition of ethics, where he understands it as habits and behaviors accepted in a certain period of time and in a given location according to current customs, while considered moral by the majority of society, making clear the

situational condition of ethics. That is, without it, we would not be able to establish rules, respect, values and character. Due to the numerous scandals that occur in large companies, such as the accusations of corruption involving executives affiliated to Petrobras S / A, which according to news published on Portal G1 (2016) “the scandal of Petrobrasit was voted the second largest case of corruption in the world in the vote for Transparency International, an NGO based in Germany and a reference in the work to combat this type of crime”, the lack of motivation of employees and the loss of confidence on the part of customers, there is an increase in the search for the establishment of tools from business ethics. Business ethics is seen as a branch of ethics that has been directly linked to organizations in order to guide their professionals to act according to established primary conditions.

For Denny (2001), business ethics consists in the search for a common interest, that is, the entrepreneur, the consumer and the worker.

Business ethics is a form of applied ethics. Its objective is to introduce a sense to the managers and employees of a certain organization about how they should manage and carry out their work responsibly. Due to the fact that the term “ethics” is not used in the same way in all international contexts, several companies choose to reformulate their concept of business ethics, calling it integrity, good business practices or ethically responsible conduct (ACEGE, 2011, p.1).

Business ethics can be seen as a set of values, rules and principles, to which they are related to the company's mission and the society to which it belongs, aiming at its recognition before the target audience. A company that stands out in relation to ethical conduct becomes transparent and, consequently, more reliable with its consumers. Thus, ethics is now considered as an instrument that enables support for business expansion. An ethical performance in conducting business can be a source of profits, as stated by Francis J. Aguilar in his book “Ethics in Companies”.

Many companies are creating codes of conduct and ethics to facilitate the dissemination of their values, their mission and vision, and how to act ethically so that the company's goals are achieved, this process also contributes to improving the interaction between employees and work as a team, as the professional who does not adapt to the company's culture ends up losing the chance to grow professionally. According to Da Silva and Gomes (2009, p.115) “the codes of ethics came to be seen as an important control tool so that the company's values were properly disclosed to employees and other interested parties”. Below, table 1 shows examples of companies that have a code of conduct.

Table 1: Companies that have codes of conduct and ethics

Companies	Code of Conduct Link
Ambev	http://www.ambev.com.br/conteudo/uploads/2016/07/Codigo_de_Conduta_de_Negocios1.pdf
Citibank	https://www.citibank.com.br/resources/pdf/institucional/codeconduct_ptp.pdf
Embratel	http://www.embratel.com.br/Embratel02/files/secao/11/12/8380/AFJF_Codigo_de_Etica_port_SI TE.pdf
Grendene	ri.grendene.com.br/PT/Governanca-Corporativa/Codigo-de-Conduta
Fiat	www.fiat.com.br/content/dam/fiat-brasil/institucional/Codigo_de_conduta.pdf

RBS Group	http://www.gruporbs.com.br/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Codigo_Etica_CondutaGrupoRBS.pdf
Marisa	http://ri.marisa.com.br/marisa/web/conteudo_pt.asp?idioma=0&tipo=10545&conta=28

Source: The authors themselves (2016)

Moreira (2002, p. 28), conceptualizes business ethics as “the behavior of the company understood to be profitable when it acts in accordance with moral principles and the rules of good behavior accepted by the community (ethical rules)”. In this way, the company adds value to its image and gains prominence over its competitors, thus becoming a potentially successful company.

Business ethics seeks to establish an adequate path to establish the strategic actions that will be adopted in the company, as well as its daily actions. In order for this whole process to result in mutual benefits for the image and success of the company, everyone involved must understand, respect, live and transmit these ethical concepts within the internal organizational environment and also throughout society, with due respect for the existing context and values . According to Sousa (2009, p.2) "it is it is necessary to be aware that the whole society will benefit through ethics applied within the company, as well as customers, suppliers, partners, employees, the government ".

2.1.2 Ethical management

There are a number of problems that can be generated by the mismatch with an unethical posture in the company and that cause “corporate disruption”; however, ethical management generates trust for employees towards the organization and, consequently, with all its stakeholders. Ethical management is based on the concepts of professional ethics, which according to Bernt Entschew (2014) it can be understood as the set of practices that determine the adequacy in the exercise of any profession. It is through ethics that interpersonal relationships at work are made possible, aiming, in particular, at respect and well-being in the professional environment.

Companies that invest in ethical management for a variety of purposes, including to maximize profits, base their attitudes on actions that also target the interests of their audiences. This is reinforced by the study developed by Ashley (2002, p. 50), when she argues that “it seems legitimate to say that, today, organizations need to be aware not only of their economic and legal responsibilities, but also of their ethical responsibilities, moral and social ”.

Unethical behavior in the organizational sphere is addressed by the study by Sung (1995, p. 67), in which he emphasizes “that the lack of ethics and the simple defense of self-interest endanger the survival of companies, and therefore of their own jobs; it is the survival instinct speaking louder than theories learned in schools ”. In this passage, we can reflect that the adoption of ethical management is conceived as a strategic issue for the survival of organizations, since it can benefit all employees involved. In this sense, Aguilar (1996) emphasizes that the ethical company will benefit, by strengthening relationships with its employees, with its customers, with its shareholders and other audiences, through the adoption of appropriate conducts,

2.1.3 Code of business conduct

Codes of ethics are an eminently American practice and were born based on aspects of a legal, disciplinary and punitive nature in the face of the demands of external stakeholders:

government, society and consumers (CRESSEY; MOORE, 1983).

Companies are investing more and more in strategies to publicize the importance of professional ethics, through the preparation and dissemination of the business ethics code. As it is a subjective matter, each company understands and disseminates its values in different ways, however, 'common sense' must always prevail. The code of conduct seeks to highlight the company's values, principles, rules and mission so that all employees of the company can act within the standards required in the organization, which will contribute to a good relationship between all the people who work in that organization. environment. According to Arruda (2002), the elaboration of a code of ethics occurs from the definition of the base of principles and values expected from the employees of a certain organization.

Professional ethics is a set of rules that guide the behavior of individuals during the exercise of their profession. As a result, there are codes of ethics and conduct, which are prepared by the councils and federations that inspect the professions and by the companies that hire them as service providers. Codes of conduct began to be adopted in the United States around the 1900s as a result of reforms that were instituted in the country at the end of the 19th century. These codes offer benefits to the company it uses, as it improves the relationship between employees and encourages their commitment, assists in resolving conflicts, as well as providing greater reliability to its consumers and partners. According to Moreira (2002, p.33):

"The Code of Ethics, when adopted, implemented correctly and regularly obeyed, can constitute legal proof of the determination of the company's management, to follow the precepts reflected in it".

Although the code of ethics and conduct covers several principles that depend a lot on each professional group and on the various existing companies, there are some rules that are universal for everyone. Among them, stand out the act of doing well, not harming co-workers and fulfilling the values established by the organization and society. Barbosa, Queiroz and Alves (2011, p.83) also mention some principles that are applied in most codes of ethical conduct, such as, "always defending the public good, not using your profession to obtain personal advantages, fighting for better working conditions and defend professional dignity". It is also necessary that the code of conduct has some changes over the years so that it can adapt to the current reality of the company and society.

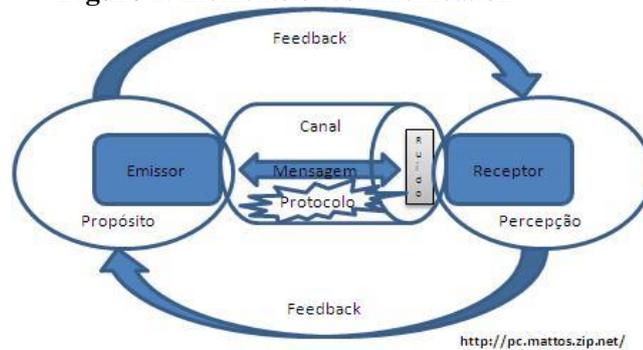
2.2 Communication

In the Aurélio dictionary (2001, p. 170) the word communication derives from the Latin "communicare", which means:

"Act or effect of communicating (yourself); process of sending, transmitting and receiving messages by means of agreed methods and / or systems; the message received by these means, and the ability to exchange or discuss ideas, to dialogue, with a view to good understanding between people".

According to Gasnier (2008), there are nine basic elements of communication: sender, receiver, purpose, channel, message, protocol, perception, barriers and feedback.

Figure 1: Elements of communication



Source: Paulo Mattos Blog (2010)

The communicator is the person by whom the message will originate. At first, we can imagine the communicator as the one who sends the message, but that is not all. Communication is not only possible in one way. After the information has been sent, it is necessary for the communicator to realize if it was understood by the receiver. This understanding is felt at the time of feedback, which, according to Matos (2007), is something very important:

Without feedback, there is no feedback in the communication, which ends up making the effectiveness of the act unfeasible, that is, the receiver understanding what the sender wanted to transmit. Without human contact there is no interaction with the interlocutor or understanding of the different nuances and facets that a message can contain, in addition to the words that compose it.

There are several types of communication used daily, such as verbal, written and non-verbal communication. Non-verbal communication is characterized by a simple gesture, look, a sign or even our posture; the communication covers our writing and in it only the sender is active and any error can compromise the decoding of the message made by the receiver. When talking to a person in person, we are using oral communication, however, it is also used when listening to the radio, a recorded message or watching television. As Pimenta points out (2009, p.78):

Verbal language is the spoken or written word, in which the first can be used in oral communication face to face or at a distance (telephone, radio, television, etc.) and the second in written communication through books, magazines and newspapers, among others.

2.2.1 Business communication

Corporate communication - both for internal and external audiences - plays an essential role in the task of highlighting, spreading and valuing such principles inside and outside a company. However, internal communication has a greater importance for the

development and growth of an organization, because, according to Nassar (2007, p.1), “internal communication is the tool that will allow to make common messages destined to motivate, stimulate, consider, differentiate, promote, reward and group the members of an organization”. If this communication is failed, it can cause several problems for the organization and that can compromise its growth, such as the lack of understanding about a new form of production in the company that can cause a drop in production.

Organizational communication is extremely important for organizations, as it aims to pass information, make correct decisions and develop relationships that integrate and coordinate all parties. It involves a whole set of tasks, performance, tools that seek to reinforce the company's image in conjunction with its stakeholders. However, it was not always that important, because, according to Nassar (2007, p.1), "organizational communication has been directly influenced by the great political and economic events that have changed Brazilian society in the last forty years".

Business success depends on an effective communication system and this applies both to internal communication and also to communication in the external environment, since external communication contributes to the formation of the company's image and what will differentiate it from the others; and internal communication contributes to the relationship between employees and the correct flow of information that moves the business environment. The inaccurate, ambiguous and insufficient transmission of information has contributed to the fall of many companies. In order to improve business communication, Miranda (1999) recommends paying close attention to technical capacity. Technical skills involve the following questions: (a) how to convey information, (b) how to educate the audience and c) how to be clear and concise.

To facilitate the company's internal and external communication process, leaders use various means of communication, such as newspapers, e-mails, among others. These means facilitate the processing of data collected in information and also its dissemination to other employees, so that the decision-making process occurs more quickly. Companies create their own newspapers, radios, intranet systems, pamphlets, bulletin boards, meetings, so that the communication process can flow more quickly and clearly, providing better performance for the entire organization. These means by which information is disseminated are called channels, which can be formal or informal. For Pimenta (2002), formal communications are those where official and authorized messages circulate by the company, and informal ones are those known as “Rádio Peão or Rádio Corredor”. Formal communications are more reliable, as they start from the highest levels of the hierarchy, while informal ones can start from anywhere, often without the legitimacy of the company.

Business communication has become part of the strategy of companies and aims to

Build an institutional image of the company; adjust workers to increased competition in the market; meet the demands of consumers more aware of their rights; defend interests with the government and politicians; and refer union issues related to environmental preservation (PIMENTA, 2002, p.100).

It is the responsibility of the company's communication sector to spread the idea that it is possible to obtain financial results without sacrificing social responsibility and to make it clear that ethics is not a choice, but a necessity, an essential ingredient in all sectors of the organization. . More than that: what ethically responsible attitudes are expected from the members of that corporation. Once this culture is disseminated within the company - through internal communication - those who act in another way feel intimidated and encouraged to change.

2.3 The importance of ethical communication for organizations

Communication can both build and damage corporate reputations, public credibility and institutional images. Therefore, communication is closely related to ethics and social responsibility. The company's planning must involve, in addition to business interests, the interests of the society to which it belongs so that the whole environment becomes more just. For Kunsch (1998, p.147) "planning must be guided by coherence with the social environment, with needs, with the reality of organizations and their audiences".

In this perspective, corporate communication must be guided by the ethical commitment to build channels of dialogue and the full exercise of social responsibility. Communication must be characterized by truth, respect for the diversity of internal and external audiences, the elimination of prejudice of any kind and the maintenance of a favorable climate for the sharing of information, ideas and knowledge (PIENIZ and GONÇALVES, 2011).

The companies that best mirror ethics are those that communicate and promote internal and external communication as an extension of their principles and values. These are the companies that recognize the strategic function of communication for the establishment of socially responsible business management.

Ethical, efficient and effective communication in organizations is able to increase productivity whenever it allows employees to know the organization's goals and get involved in achieving them; it also allows employees to make sensible decisions, because it allows them to know the expected behavior and the ethical standards valued in the organization; it must consider the target persons of the information and enable feedback, so that its efficiency can be measured; in addition, it is able to instill in people ideas, thoughts, intentions and common, collective points of view, that is, it can change values and ethical and moral standards, insofar as it refers to elements that form the social conduct of individuals. The purpose of communication is to make everyone aware of what the organization wants to achieve, their purposes and goals, and their standard of ethical behavior. In this way, it will enable the emergence of moral and ethical standards and values, for the establishment of a common conduct, followed by everyone (DAMKE, 1998, p. 2).

The previous statement defines that communication is due and responsible for good organizational development, in addition, communication reveals ethical values, conduct that is valued and expected by organizations.

Another relevant aspect in this matter, concerns the ability and capacity of the organization to interact with the external public, so that its success will depend on this whole process. And, once again, the communication sector - which encompasses related areas such as advertising and marketing, marketing, administration and communication consultancy - is responsible for showing the company's stance. Not only for making their actions transparent, but also for making it clear that that corporation is a partner of its client or consumer in all stages of the process of marketing a product or offering a service (PLAISANCE, 2011).

3. Methodological Foundations

For the elaboration of the study, it was decided to do a bibliographic research, which,

according to Markoni and Lakatos (2010), is based on the development of the research based on the published bibliographies in relation to a certain theme, thus making use of , from secondary sources.

The study was based on qualitative research, as it is a research that has as premise, to analyze and interpret deeper aspects, describing the complexity of human behavior and also providing more detailed analyzes of investigations, attitudes and behavior trends (MARCONI and LAKATOS, 2010). Then, through questionnaires, we sought to collect, read and analyze the opinions of managers of some organizations on communication and ethical conduct in them, identifying and highlighting the main points inherent to this subject.

Regarding qualitative research, as reported by the study by Cooper and Schindler (2011), it would be a set of interpretive techniques that seeks to describe, decode, translate and, otherwise, apprehend the meaning. The qualitative approach, therefore, is responsible for studying the use and collection of a variety of empirical materials on the aegis of methods such as case study, personal experience, introspection, life history, interview, artifacts, texts and cultural productions, texts observational, historical, interactive and visual - responsible for describing the moments and meanings of individuals' lives. We opted for this type of research due to the fact that we seek to deepen the issues raised and also to understand how the process of ethical communication takes place in selected companies.

The approach of this research is descriptive, which according to Triviños (1987) requires from the researcher a series of information about what he wants to research. This type of study aims to describe the facts and phenomena of a given reality. We opted for such an approach due to the nature of the qualitative study and its respective objective of outlining an outline of a subject, describing and interpreting it.

3.1. Data collection roadmap

In a first stage, some market segments operating in the city of Caruaru-PE were chosen. Given this population, some large and medium-sized organizations were selected within these segments to apply the questionnaire on ethical communication with managers. This step involved the construction of a questionnaire and its application in the organizations chosen in the city of Caruaru-PE. Based on this questionnaire, it was identified how formal ethical communication takes place in these organizations. The application of the questionnaire was carried out in the chosen organizations and resulted in eleven different segments. The list of segments that covered these organizations was: Food, Consulting, Communication, Clothing, Education, Pharmaceutical, Financial Institution, Construction Material, Non-Governmental Organization, Health and Textiles.

At a later time, a categorical analysis of all of the questionnaires was carried out so that our research objective was successfully achieved. Table 2 shows the list of companies that were analyzed and their respective segments.

Table 2: Presentation of the surveyed companies

Identification codes	Company	Segment
E1	Big Well	Pharmaceutical
E2	Cazanova	Construction material
E3	CIEE	Non-governmental organization
E4	Colombo	Clothing
E5	Contacts Accounting	Consultancy
E6	Municipal School	Teaching

E7	Hospital	Cheers
E8	Jordan Morais	Textile
E9	McDonalds	food
E10	Santander	Financial institution
E11	TV Asa Branca	Communication

Source: The authors themselves (2016).

After the application of the questionnaires, the data analysis process was initiated, where the points in which the companies converged or diverged with the concepts exposed in the theoretical framework regarding the action of ethics in organizational communication were observed. In the data collection instrument, a semi-structured questionnaire was used. In this sense, the following analysis categories were defined in this research: 1) Training on ethics; 2) Communication channels; 3) Employee participation in the decision-making process; 4) Company / customer communication; 5) Importance of ethical communication; 6) Code of conduct. It is known that the ethical communication process involves a series of other categories, however this study focuses on the six categories mentioned above. Acting ethically not only in the communicative process, but in attitudes it can define how successful a career can be. Jacomino (2000, p. 28) reinforces that, “the attitude of professionals in relation to ethical issues can be the difference between their success and their failure”.

4. Data analysis

Next, the results of the research that was carried out with organizations located in Caruaru-PE will be presented, so that there can be an analysis of the responses of the managers interviewed and to be able to confront them with the speech of some scholars on the topic discussed, through the theoretical basis that was created throughout this study.

When asked whether organizations applied ethics-related training to employees, which informed them, for example, about ethical and moral conduct to be followed within the organizational environment, most managers who responded to the questionnaire stated that yes, the company does training related to ethical and moral conduct. Only one of the eleven organizations addressed does not subject employees to this type of training.

According to two of the managers of the organizations that apply the training, it happens as follows:

E2: "Through daily actions and instructions, through feedback, examples and small individualized and / or not meetings."

E4: “Employees who are employed undergo theoretical / practical training that seeks to clearly explain the mission of both the company and the employee, making it clear how to receive the customer.”

The conduct of these companies is in line with what Arruda, Whitaker and Ramos (2001) say, where they state that promoting training with employees serves to disseminate the ethical culture in the organization as well as to keep the code of conduct up to date.

When asked about the types of formal channels that organizations used for communication between employees, management and the community, all organizations stated that they use these types of channels, and the answers about which channels were used were quite diverse. Table 3 contains the list of how many companies use each type of communication channel.

Table 3: List of the number of companies and the communication channels.

Types of communication channels	Number of companies	Percentage (%)
Intranet Systems	07	63.63
Meetings	06	54.54
Murals	06	54.54
Newspapers	03	27.27
Sites	03	27.27
Social networks	02	18.18
Email	02	18.18

Source: The authors themselves (2016).

Based on table 3, we can see that the most used channel by these organizations was the intranet system, since seven of the eleven organizations addressed use this type of channel to carry out internal communication, adding up to a percentage of 63.63%, followed by through meetings and murals, where six of the eleven organizations make use of each and slightly less used, but no less important newspapers and websites were cited, where three of the eleven organizations make use of each of them and e-mails and networks where two out of eleven organizations make use of it.

Regarding the main channel used by the companies observed, we see that they are evolving together with technology and the virtual world by creating their own social networks, which are called Intranet, which serve both to facilitate communication between internal employees and also in some cases with suppliers and customers, in addition to maximizing the use of information. According to Zimmerman & Evans (1997, p.19):

The ultimate purpose of the Intranet is to encourage and facilitate communication between employees so that they can do their essential work more quickly. The proper use of the Intranet can simplify many work processes and improve the goods and services produced.

Regarding decision-making, it was asked whether employees participated in this process. Only in four of the eleven companies does this happen. In the other seven, it was mentioned that only management positions could participate in the decisions related to the organization. In organizations in which the employee participates in decision-making, the importance of the employee contributing ideas for improving organizational and relationship processes within the organizational scope was emphasized, which is in line with the words of the authors Antônio, Carla and Isabel (2006, p. 129):

Participatory management is a philosophy or policy of people management, which values your ability to make decisions and solve problems. Participatory management improves job satisfaction and motivation. Participatory management contributes to the better performance and competitiveness of organizations.

In one of the responses, a manager cited an example of employee participation in decision making:

E5: “It was explained that to fulfill the 44-hour week, employees could work from Monday to Thursday, 9 hours a day and on Friday 8 hours, or choose 8 hours a day from Monday to Friday and work 4 hours more at Saturdays. It was decided among the employees to discard the idea of work on Saturdays, and the decision was incorporated by management ”.

This example goes against what Chiavenato (2004, p. 275) says, "which shows that in participatory administration the use of decision making is joint". If the company adopts participatory management in its decision-making, the employee's opinion will always be valid regardless of the position he occupies, which will make that same employee feel more valued within the work environment.

When analyzing the post-sale behavior of the observed companies, we find that all of them maintain an after-sales communication with their consumers. One of these companies offers only a basic service as a guarantee, since it is in the clothing segment and the service offered is only exchange of products in case of defect. The other companies, in addition to maintaining an after-sales communication, are also open to questions about the use, complaints and problems with the guarantee of the product or service offered. In one of them, communication related to after-sales is not formal, however, it is already among the projects that will be formalized and executed in 2017, to ensure better service to customers who have this need.

For Berro (2010), the after-sales service is not only a competitive differential, but also a vital tool in the customer loyalty process. Also according to Berro (2010) when the company does not know the customer and does not monitor after-sales service and satisfaction, it loses the chance to correct any flaws in the process. According to the speech of two of the interviewees, we can see how much after sales communication is important for the company's continued quality:

E8: “There are people within the commercial sector responsible for this after-sales communication with the customer to find out the degree of satisfaction with the product offered. With this post-sale screening, we create a bond between company and customer ”.

E5: “The company offers a continuous service as a product, we are hired to accompany the organization for long periods, so there must be good communication with the customer. There is room for complaints, doubts and suggestions, as we believe that this also helps us to improve qualitatively ”.

One of the objectives of the questionnaire was to measure the degree of importance of ethical communication for organizations. After analyzing all the answers, we observed that ethical communication in all companies is considered to be something of great importance for the organization's functioning, as it is believed that it is based on good communication that well-being is maintained and high productivity in the organizational environment, in addition to adding value to the company's image before its customers, society and competitors. According to one of the interviewed professionals:

E2: “Ethics means management transparency, representing the conduct, the 'character property' of the company, in addition to being part of the values defended by the company. It is present in all strategic decisions, always maintaining consistency between discourse and practice ”.

Regarding the existence of codes of ethical conduct in organizations, we found that 10

of the 11 companies studied have their own codes of conduct, because for these companies this tool facilitates good relationships with employees and customers because it is a way of maintaining transparency and the relationship of trust with everyone involved in the organization, both in its internal and external environment, in addition to explaining the values of each organization. In one of the companies, a bimonthly assessment is carried out in order to analyze whether the code of ethical conduct is being followed correctly by all employees.

The code of ethical conduct also serves to highlight the set of rights and obligations of each employee so that the relationship between everyone can flow correctly according to the concept of professional ethics, which according to Durand (2003, p. 85) is defined as being : “Reflection on the requirements of the professional in his relationship: with the client / user; with the public; with your colleagues; and with your corporation, with the other professionals ”.

At the end of the data analysis, we observed that even though the companies analyzed being of different sizes and different segments, they have points in common to obtain the same objective, which is to have an ethical company, with an effective and efficient communication, so that this facilitates the relationship among all involved and make them more competitive in the face of the active market and the society in which they operate.

5. Final considerations

The objective of this study was to understand the behavior of the ethical communicative process practiced by some organizations located in the Municipality of Caruaru, Agreste Pernambuco, being from different segments, considering the importance of this theme for the functioning and growth of organizations in the current market, through qualitative analysis. After a thorough selection of organizations, 11 organizations were selected and are distributed in 11 segments. Therefore, we proposed the following research guiding question: How can the exercise of ethics in organizational communication contribute and influence the competitive growth of contemporary organizations?

The results reveal that most organizations are concerned with applying training on ethical and moral conduct to be followed, mainly, through the holding of meetings and daily action instructions. However, the focus of this training in most cases is on how to address the customer ethically. It was observed that there is a diversity of formal communication channels in these organizations, where they already use intranet systems, followed by meetings, murals, newspapers, websites, e-mails and social networks. Most organizations stated that only management positions participate in the decision-making process. However, those who leave this process open to employees emphasize the importance of participating in their opinions to improve organizational processes.

It was also identified that all organizations maintain an after-sales communication with the consumer. However, one of them only offers basic services as a guarantee, while the other companies remain open to doubts about the use, complaints and problems with the guarantee of the product or service offered. In one of them, the communication related to after-sales is not exercised by formal communication vehicles, however, it is already among the projects that will be formalized and executed in 2016, aiming to guarantee a better service to the clients that have this need.

All organizations recognize ethics as a factor of great influence for their smooth functioning. However, we find some divergences when we see that some are only concerned with ethics directed to the client, not mentioning the importance of ethics in work relationships, where the lack of ethics in these work relationships can cause problems ranging

from small gossips, intrigues, as well as financial deviations and even moral or sexual harassment.

In our analysis, we found that the vast majority of organizations have their code of ethical conduct, which includes the company's mission, values, standards and behaviors to be followed by all employees who form the organization, so that the relationship can flow more effectively, which will reflect on its performance.

In short, the results obtained in this study contribute to demonstrate how ethical communication contributes to the improvement of organizational processes, as well as the well-being of the relationship between the entire organization. When ethics-based communication is used, information processing takes place in a transparent and reliable manner, which are indispensable factors for the smooth functioning and growth of the organization. If ethical communication is maintained at all levels of the organization, all employees will feel valued, as there will be no distinction of positions regarding the communicative process, which can result in greater employee motivation and increased productivity.

We realize that in the face of this competitive market in which there is often no concern with the means to obtain the ends, establishing that your organization constitutes the pillar of ethics, will bring you competitive advantages, since there is an appreciation by the consumer towards the company that follows its values and is guided by ethical decisions for the development of the organization.

We conclude that an ethical communication, when presented clearly to all employees of the organization, through the establishment of a code of ethical conduct is considered a determining factor for the growth of the organization, as it increases the confidence of employees in relation to its importance in the organizational environment. Thus, this measure ends up increasing its productivity, facilitating decision making, improving the relationship with customers and suppliers and, consequently, making the organization improve its image before the active market and society as a whole, becoming a reference for other organizations.

Thus, the results obtained in this study contribute to expand and complement the knowledge of research already carried out, serving as a basis for consultation for future research on the topic. Finally, it is suggested for future research to replicate the questionnaire, considering new organizations and new segments, comparing with other indexes and making use of different methodologies when necessary.

The study carried out presented important limitations regarding its population and sample. The definition of the sample can also be considered a limiting factor in view of the fact that it is not random. Another limitation observed refers to the sample size, which when presented in a small number, allows to consider the results found only for the population in question, which refers to some organizations in the city of Caruaru-PE of different segments.

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ⁱ Contemporary context where the different communication structures, the intense flow of global information and the transition process from the industrial economy to the knowledge economy determine a new organizational logic, as pointed out by the studies by Castells (2016) and Silva (2014).