

The McMaster Journal of Communication
Vol 12 No 1
2020

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The incorporation of corporate social responsibility guidelines in the organizational culture of Eletrosul

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Abstract

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) has been increasingly discussed in the market as well as by academia. The subject first gained prominence in the 1960s due to pressures exerted by society that required more societal and environmental commitment from organizations. This attitude has made organizations re-adapt their management approaches and, consequently, re-think their beliefs and practices. Within this context, this research study analyzed the incorporation of corporate social responsibility guidelines in the organizational culture (OC) of Eletrosul, an electric utility located in Florianópolis, Brazil. Since 2004, Eletrosul has adopted corporate social responsibility as a primary business focus and develops more than 100 socially responsible initiatives per year.

The research methodology utilized in this paper was qualitative, involving documentary analysis and interviews with representatives in different departments of the organization. The main results indicated that the insertion of corporate social responsibility guidelines occurs throughout some elements of organizational culture, especially within its communications. The researchers also determined that the largest number of projects developed by the company are targeted toward their employees and the community, although their employees do not often associate the company's internal actions as being socially responsible.

Keywords: corporate social responsibility, organizational culture, Eletrosul, Brazil

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Introduction

Dias (2007) posited that it was common for entrepreneurs to only be concerned about generating profit for their businesses, regardless of the consequences. This thinking was perpetuated for many decades, until a new management approach arose in the early 1900s that slowly began changing organizational guidelines: the corporate social responsibility (CSR).

This new concept emerged as society started to become concerned about issues such as human rights, social equity, and natural resources – the latter of which spurred an intensification of environmental legislation meant to limit the exploitation of natural resources (Dias, 2007). In this sense, companies saw in CSR a way to survive in the market. Dias (2007) further stated that up until then, the businesses that only aimed for economic development realized the need to invest more effectively in their relationships with their stakeholders⁴ in order to remain competitive and shape a positive reputation. In fact, CSR should be incorporated in all processes of an organization. Therefore, it is important to engage stakeholders, particularly employees, the group most responsible for consolidating an organization's culture. Although other concepts such as social investment and sustainability are commonly associated with organizational culture, this study only focused on corporate social responsibility.

In order to understand the relationship between organizational culture (OC) and corporate social responsibility, this study explored the following research question: What is the process of incorporating corporate social responsibility guidelines in the organizational culture of Eletrosul? The general objective of this article was to analyze the incorporation of corporate social responsibility guidelines in the OC of Eletrosul, with the aim of understanding the following: determine the reasons that led the company to implement these practices; identify the CSR activities developed by the organization and its target audiences; understand the

⁴ Freeman (1984) defined a stakeholder as "any group or individual that may affect or is affected by the achievement of the company's objectives" (p. 46).

perception of CSR by representatives in different departments of Eletrosul; and identify the strategies used by the organization that allowed for the insertion of social responsibility in its organizational culture.

The choice of this subject matter serves as a relevant contribution to existing academic studies in the field of corporate social responsibility, which by its scope allows for the contextualization of several other concepts, including organizational culture. Moreover, following a review of the databases for the Brazilian Society of Interdisciplinary Communication Studies (Intercom), the Shared Indexing of Journal Articles (ICAP), and the Coordination of Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (Capes), few studies have been conducted focusing on corporate social responsibility and organizational culture. The choice of Eletrosul as the research subject was due to its remarkable investment in the CSR area, and because of the numerous initiatives it developed targeting stakeholders with whom the organization has relationships. The subject was also chosen for the proximity and ease by which the authors could obtain information about the organization.

This article has been organized as follows: an examination of the theoretical framework of corporate social responsibility and organizational culture, followed by the methodological procedures that guided the study. The researchers then discuss their results, and propose a conclusion, before touching on research limitations and suggestions for future studies.

Corporate Social Responsibility

The concept of corporate social responsibility and its practices is not a recent subject. The first conversations regarding the topic emerged during the French Revolution in 1789, with the fall of an authoritarian regime that wasn't concerned about its citizens' rights. Soon after, during the Industrial Revolution, business owners started to experience public pressure regarding the precarious working conditions of company workers (Zarpelon, 2010). At the same time, industries began to manufacture on a large scale, which contributed to increased environmental pollution, mainly caused by the inappropriate disposal of industrial waste and by the inefficient use of resources (Franco & Druck, 1998). Right after the Industrial Revolution, Andrew Carnegie released "The Gospel of Wealth" in 1899, which Maximiano (1997) believed to be the first published mention of CSR. In the article, Carnegie affirmed that "the principle of social responsibility is based on the assumption that organizations are social institutions" (as cited in Maximiano, 1997, p. 308), and supported the members of the population who realized that current management approaches did not prioritize social well-being and the environment.

Although society started mobilizing for change, Donaire (1995) stated that it was not until the mid-twentieth century that "the subject gained more prominence among scholars and organizations" (p. 20). A large milestone that stimulated a more in-depth reflection about CSR occurred as a result of the book, *Social Responsibilities of the Businessman*, by Howard Bowen, which was published in 1953 in the United States (Zarpelon, 2010). Henceforth, authors such as Fitch, Carroll, and Schwartz significantly contributed to the topic with the publication of theoretical models and articles, which were fundamental for the development of studies in the field (Moretti & Gomes, 2007).

In Brazil, the Charter of Christian Principles of Brazilian Companies was created by the Association of Christian Business Leaders (ADCE Brazil) in 1965. It was one of the first formal records of social and environmental practices in organizations. The document stated that the

abandonment of Christian principles was the cause of economic issues, social inequality, and global crises in the world (Simões, 2008).

In relation to the conceptualization of CSR, Machado Filho (2006) posited that there is still no single definition. However, in Bowen's study (as cited in Alves, 2003, p. 40) one of the most widely accepted definitions is that corporate social responsibility refers to "the obligations of businessmen to adopt guidelines, make decisions, and follow lines of action that are compatible with the purposes and values of our society". The concept advocated by the Ethos Institute, a Brazilian non-profit organization that helps companies self-diagnose their management styles to become more socially responsible, is that corporate social responsibility is a management approach. Socially responsible management occurs through ethical and transparent relations between an organization and its stakeholders, which cares for the environment and culture, social equity, and respect for diversity (Ethos Institute, 2013).

While there are businesses that execute actions to comply with the legislation imposed and mitigate impacts, only a minority of businesses have truly incorporated these practices into their belief systems (Baldissera, 2011). Therefore, making CSR intrinsic to an organization is the key to creating a truly socially responsible management approach.

The pursuance of socially responsible initiatives brings several benefits to an organization, including a more positive reputation, the ability to attract better employees and suppliers, the chance to prospect more clients, and greater access to the capital market (Donaire, 1995), in addition to generate better economic performance (Drucker, 1995). For an organization to be considered socially responsible, it needs to consider all its stakeholders and comply with the economic, legal, ethical, and philanthropic dimensions in all its organizational processes (Schwartz & Carroll, 2003).

To engage stakeholders, social obligations must be presented through perceptions, actions, projects, and behaviours that are related to social, cultural, environmental, political, economic, and ethical issues (Baldissera, 2011). Moreover, to engage stakeholders with CSR, the organizational culture and sociocultural context in which the organization and its publics operate must be considered (Velooso, 2005). This is important because organizations do not operate in isolation, they are a part of society and there will always be factors influencing them.

Thus, corporate social responsibility arises as an opportunity for organizations to reduce the impact of their business initiatives, comply with stakeholder expectations, and help shape a positive reputation. These factors challenge managers to create strategies that stimulate stakeholders, particularly employees, to contribute to business growth and assist with the incorporation of these new guidelines into the existing organizational culture.

The Organizational Cultural and its Elements

To date, the most research about organizational culture was generated during the 1980s. Studies at that time sought to improve the definition and understanding of various aspects related to the subject (Motta & Caldas, 1997). Curiosity in the topic was justified "by showing a more flexible way to understand how organizations work and how is, indeed, the life that pulsates within them" (Marchiori, 2006, p. 65).

Organizational culture gathers all the behaviours and symbolic representations of an organization and functions as a kind of unifying factor for its members around the same goals

and behaviours (Srouf, 1998). According to Freitas (1999), organizational culture is comprised of a set of “social imaginary representations that are built and rebuilt in everyday relationships within the organization” (p. 25). These aspects guide the people involved in the organization’s processes to follow the same direction, in order to form a strong and recognized unit.

It should be noted that the company's leadership can also exert great influence in the construction and maintenance of organizational culture, since the leadership imposes their beliefs and values on a group, and the success of these beliefs and values can only survive through the group’s adherence to them. The members of the group will pass these values to the next generation and these concepts become increasingly rooted. With the acceptance and continuous reproduction of these values, the members of the group simply accept these aspects to be non-negotiable. After a while, these assumptions become the group’s identity and are presented to new members of the group as the correct way of thinking, acting, and feeling (Schein, 2009).

Any and all social units, whether it is a large company or a group of people that has shared history over time, would have developed a culture. Aside from the time it has been in effect, the stability of the culture will depend on the commitment and emotional intensity of the interactions shared among group members. After its development, the organizational culture covers the entire operation of the organization or group and influences all its processes, from its internal operational procedures to the organization of its environment (Schein, 2009).

The fact that organizations are open systems allows them to be both influenced by, and pose influence on, the environment in which they are residing. This occurs as a result of the presence of some elements of organizational culture, as outlined in Table 1.

Element	Meaning
Beliefs and Values	They guide the daily operations required by the organization to achieve the planned results, and influence employees to act according to the leadership’s will.
Assumptions	These are the values that are so rooted in the employees’ behaviours that they have become unquestionable truths.
Rites, Rituals, and Ceremonies	These are planned activities that emphasize the way staff should behave and have fun. These often consist of engaging moments, which are usually remembered by employees.
Stories and Myths	These are narratives regarding the organization whose veracity has not been proven.
Heroes	These are people who personify the values of the organization and have skills that have contributed to the business’ success.
Norms	These are the rules that the organization expects employees to follow, whether formalized or not.
Communication	This is the strategy that allows for the creation, sustainance, transmittance, and transformation of the organization’s culture, just as culture also influences the way employees communicate.

Table 1. Elements of Organizational Culture. Sources: Freitas (1999) and Marchiori (2006).

The elements of OC pass on norms that the founders and/or current leadership believe to be correct and acceptable in the organization’s daily operations (Freitas, 1991). Schein (2009) mentions other aspects, complementary to those of Freitas and Marchiori, that reinforce the guidelines established by the leadership, such as: organizational structure; systems and organizational processes; rites and rituals; stories about events and important people; workplace design; and formal statements of philosophy, creeds, and organizational codes.

These constituent elements of organizational culture are often imperceptible and have subjective value. However, they have a great influence on the behaviour of employees and on organizational processes, so they can not be disregarded. Thus, it is imperative that leaders understand how they can transform organizational culture in both the medium- and long-term, and how they can then steer this culture in the favour of the organization's objectives.

Methodology

To achieve the proposed objectives, this study used qualitative exploratory research, an approach that enables the researchers to interpret and understand the meanings that interviewees attribute to a phenomenon (Denzin & Lincoln, 2006).

Methods of data collection included bibliographic research of national and foreign literature on corporate social responsibility and organizational culture, and a documentary analysis of materials developed by Eletrosul. Eletrosul's materials included their 2012 Annual Report; 2012 Sustainability Report; website; internal newspapers (2010 to 2013); 2013 newsletters; Strategic Planning; Policy of Social Investment; People Management Policy and Sustainability Policy. Six in-depth interviews were also conducted with representatives in the Departments of Corporate Social Responsibility, Marketing and Communications, Legal, Human Resources, Business Management, and Engineering. The interviewees were chosen because they held leadership positions or were influential within the organization, making non-probabilistic sampling in an intentional way. They were also chosen based on the likelihood of securing an interview (Malhotra, 2005).

The instrument for data collection was a semi-structured interview script, utilized both in-person and through e-mail by the researchers, that was disseminated between the dates of October 4th to November 1st, 2013. This method made it possible for researchers to ask new questions as the need arose. The interpretation of the data was performed using content analysis which, according to Fonseca Júnior (2006), is organized in three stages. One, planning the work to be elaborated and attempting to systematize data. Two, exploring the collected material and its categorization within seven elements of organizational culture (Freitas, 1999): beliefs and values, assumptions, rites, rituals and ceremonies, stories and myths, heroes, norms, and communication (see Table 1). And three, interpreting all information obtained in order to achieve the defined objectives.

Presentation and Discussion of Results

The data obtained was presented based on the objectives of the study. The data articulated the information extracted from Eletrosul's documents; the literary review; and the categorization of information and interviewees' statements, which are identified by the letters, A / B / C / D / E and F, to ensure the respondents' privacy.

Presentation of Eletrosul

Eletrosul is an organization founded in 1968 in Florianópolis, in the state of Santa Catarina, Brazil. It is a subsidiary of the Eletrobrás Group. It operates in the area of electricity generation and transmission to different regions of Brazil. In 2013, Eletrosul had 1,700 employees, was headquartered in the city of Florianópolis, Santa Catarina, and had operations in four other Brazilian states. In 1998, its activities were compromised by the government's privatization of the country's power generation services, thus Eletrosul could only operate in

the sector of energy transmission for five years. In 2004, the organization received the license to return to power generation operations and, from then on, adopted corporate social responsibility as one of its business focuses.

Motivations of Eletrosul to practice CSR

When analyzing Eletrosul documents, the researchers were able to verify that the organization has a history of high investment in socially responsible projects. During the year 2012, it contributed a total of R\$ 10,500,000 (around CAD \$3,500,000) to such projects. In its Strategic Planning 2010-2020 document, Eletrosul stated that its aim is to perform two functions: the first is to be a company which aims to ensure excellence in the generation, transmission, distribution, and commercialization of electric power; and the other is to be a part of the Brazilian government, with a responsibility to support and execute programs of social interest which aid the development of Brazil.

As it is a government-owned organization, half of the interviewees believed the organization has a greater concern for its employees' quality of life and with the environment in which it operates compared to private companies. Interviewee A affirmed this position by explaining that "Eletrosul is one of the government's arms, and because of that it watches over people's well-beings, so [...] it does more than private companies." Several interviewees emphasized the same thinking, echoing the organization's speech on its concern about the country and CSR. Therefore, it is possible to consider this statement as one of the assumptions of Eletrosul's OC.

It is part of the company's beliefs and values to promote actions that cause positive impacts in the environment and in the cultural, economic, and social development of the communities where it operates. Other factors that prove Eletrosul's commitment are its signing of a 2006 cooperation agreement with the UNDP⁵, its committing to help the United Nations achieve the Millennium Development Goals⁶, and its joining of the Global Compact⁷ initiative. Considering this, Interviewee E pointed out that Eletrosul focuses on being sustainable, because "if the organization damages resources and does not respect the environment, it will not survive. Everything needs to be done well so that the organization can also thrive."

Eletrosul explicitly states in their institutional materials that their motivation to engage with environmental and social issues is a business strategy, a fact highlighted by Interviewee B. However, their focus on corporate social responsibility did not start because managers believed this was the correct attitude (Freitas, 1991), but because it made the organization more competitive. In its "Social Investment Policy", for example, Eletrosul proposes contributing to the management of social and environmental impacts generated by its business and letting its stakeholders recognize investments made in CSR. Thus, Eletrosul has positively projected its reputation as a result, which has allowed them greater ease when attracting new businesses and accessing capital markets (Donaire, 1995).

⁵ The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is the global development network of the United Nations (UN) that establishes partnerships to improve the quality of life of the world's population.

⁶ The Millennium Development Goals were the eight international development goals for building a more sustainable world. These goals were to be accomplished by UN member countries by 2015.

⁷ The UN's Global Compact is an initiative focused on companies committed to aligning their management with the universally accepted principles of human rights, labor, environment, and the fight against corruption.

Socially responsible practices of Eletrosul

From the documentary analysis, it was clear to the researchers that Eletrosul implements several CSR initiatives targeting various stakeholders, particularly emphasizing its employees, community, environment, and government. Even though the analyzed documents had different objectives, they presented the same position and contributed to the construction of a culture capable of guiding employees to follow a single direction (Srouf, 1998). In its “Social Investment Policy,” Eletrosul explained that its practices are aligned with its strategic planning, the National Quality Foundation criteria of excellence (FNQ), and the Corporate Sustainability Index (ISE). The latter consists of guidelines to help companies establish strategic objectives to achieve the best organizational performance and contribute to a sustainable development.

Eletrosul’s initiatives were categorized in this article in the same way as they were presented in its sustainability report, considering the classification suggested by the Global Reporting Initiative⁸ (GRI). The GRI separates its indicators into three dimensions: economic, environmental, and social. In order to better analyze the identified practices, the researchers selected the 25 best-known initiatives out of the 100 initiatives accounted for in the 2012 report, considering the ones emphasized in the documentary research and in the interviews with conducted. They are arranged in the three GRI dimensions, according to focus (Table 2).

⁸ The Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) is an international NGO whose mission is to develop and disseminate sustainability reporting guidelines for companies around the world.

Dimension	Initiative	Stakeholders
Economic	Megawatt Solar Project	Employees/Environment
	ISO 9001 Certification	Community/Clients
	São João Hydroelectric Programs	Community/Government/Environment
Social	Cultural Space	Employees/Community
	3D1 Program	Contractors/Employees/Family members
	Education of contractors and employees	Employees/Contractors
	Internal Week of Prevention of Accidents at Work	Employees
	Quality of Life Week	Employees
	Retirement Orientation Program	Employees
	Career and Compensation Plan	Employees
	Pro-equity Program for Gender and Race	Employees
	Training and Development	Employees
	Corporate Volunteer Program	Employees/Former Employees /Family members
	Program for the Prevention and Treatment of Alcohol Dependence and Other Drugs	Employees
	Eletrosul Donation Program	Community
	Eletrosul Choir	Employees/Community
	People Project - Eletrosul Program for Safety, Occupational Health and Social Assistance	Employees
	Eletrosul in Movement	Employees/Family members
Ethics Committee	Employees/Clients/Government/Suppliers/other Stakeholders	
Environmental	Eletrosul Let's Plant	Community/Environment
	Community Gardens	Community/Environment
	Efficient House	Community/Environment
	Open House Program	Community/Environment
	Fires Program	Community/Environment
	Waste Recycling	Community/Environment
	Program Relight	Community/Environment

Table 2. The main CSR practices of Eletrosul. Source: 2012 Eletrosul Annual and Sustainability Reports.

By observing Table 2, it is possible to conclude that out of the 25 main socially responsible initiatives mentioned, those within the social dimension are the most performed. The number of practices aimed primarily at employees demonstrates how concerned Eletrosul is in involving its staff in a work environment of cooperation and quality, while also extending several benefits to the employees' family and contractors. However, most interviewees responded that their department's employees do not perceive these benefits and internal campaigns to be socially responsible initiatives.

Few of the initiatives selected fit the economic-financial dimension, as there were fewer of those in comparison to the other dimensions. The researchers also observed the consistent involvement of Eletrosul with environmentally related projects within the communities where the company operates; an action spurred by the company's belief that it is a socially responsible organization and that its activities have large impacts on the environment. Interviewee F explained that he classifies Eletrosul as a socially responsible organization mainly because it has an ethics committee, an ombudsman's office, and it complies with current legislation. This statement demonstrates the company's concern with ethical and legal aspects, as mentioned by Schwartz and Carroll (2003), and the organizational value of Eletrosul being ethical and transparent.

It should be noted that Interviewee C explained that the onboarding of new employees, for example, is one of the rites used by the Human Resources department which contributes to the involvement of Eletrosul staff with the organization and CSR projects.

Perception of Eletrosul's departments' representatives on CSR

Through the interviews it was determined that the interviewees' opinions diverge regarding corporate social responsibility practices. Interviewees B, C, and E, who are directly related to CSR initiatives, see CSR as a subject beyond social projects that is aimed at the community and the environment. As stated by Interviewee B, while Eletrosul considers its internal initiatives as a demonstration of CSR, employees do not perceive the activities in the same way. According to the interviewees' answers, the corporate volunteer program was the most remembered internal initiative, probably because the main target was the community.

For Interviewee A, projects aimed at employees are widely publicized, but are not seen by or reported to employees using common CSR nomenclature. As a result, Interviewee A suggested that Eletrosul changes its approach to create and improve easily recognizable associations between their initiatives and corporate social responsibility. These factors were also observed by the researchers when analyzing the company's internal newspapers from 2013, in which the Social Responsibility section only addressed topics related to the environment and the community. It can be asserted that this contributed to the employees' perception that the socially responsible management of Eletrosul is beneficial to only its external stakeholders.

The organizational values detected through the interviews are related to the company's commitment and the employees' awareness of the socio-environmental issues affected by the nature of the business. Interviewee B stated that even employees have unconsciously adopted the company's values regarding the reduction of activities that negatively impact the environment in which they operate. These values are then passed on to different generations and become increasingly rooted in the company (Schein, 2009). Regarding the assumptions related to organizational culture, there was no consensus among interviewees on the scope of CSR, since not all interviewees mentioned the employee-facing projects being socially responsible initiatives.

Comparing changes in employee behaviour from when the company first began to implement socially responsible management to present day, Interviewee E believed that, above all, employees belonged to society and wanted to contribute to it. Thus, Eletrosul also followed the larger society's attitudes towards change, which led them to start thinking about social and environmental matters, outside of economic matters (Drucker, 1995). The change observed is in line with what Veloso (2005) explained about sociocultural context directly influencing the organization in which it resides.

Strategies to incorporate CSR in the organizational culture of Eletrosul

Communication, one of the seven elements of organizational culture (Freitas, 1991), is key to ensuring that employees stay informed and engaged in activities related to CSR. According to Interviewee D, information is the main facilitating factor for a person to be involved in a cause, because through it there is identification, understanding and, consequently, adhesion. An aspect that is confirmed by Baldissera (2011) asserts that projects should involve a range of social, cultural, environmental, political, economic, and ethical issues in order to

create greater employee identification with at least one of the issues and engage the employees in socially responsible management.

Based on the documentary analysis and interviews performed, the main communication strategies used by Eletrosul in the dissemination of CSR guidelines are the Eletrosul internal newspaper; newsletter “Know More”; corporate TV; and internal awareness campaigns and events, which are categorized as rites, rituals, and ceremonies. The most remembered event is the Quality of Life Week, which aims to value employees and their well-beings, one of Eletrosul’s core values.

The different forms of communication were perceived by Interviewee A to be a necessity because staff demographics have changed over time, with younger professionals now working at Eletrosul. The Interviewee affirmed that the more engaging the messages, the more impact they will have. Therefore, alternative communications channels were used to inform about initiatives such as the awareness campaign against smoking in the 3D1 program, which focused on contractors, employees, and family members. These channels were also used to promote safety policies at work during the Internal Week of Prevention of Accidents at Work.

Another element used for the insertion of CSR guidelines is the establishment of norms, as seen in the following Eletrosul documents: “People Management Policy”; “Sustainability Policy”; “Strategic Planning”; and the “Code of Ethics.” These items guide people involved in organizational processes to follow the same direction (Freitas, 1999), and solidifies the socially responsible behaviour expected by Eletrosul and their employees.

Conclusion and Limitations

Corporate social responsibility has been heavily debated by the media and has increasingly gained importance within organizations, as society has now demanded that businesses adopt initiatives that benefit their stakeholders and respect the environments in which they are located. Eletrosul is an example of an organization that has been working for almost two decades to promote actions that develop their business in a socially responsible way while considering stakeholder management.

The purpose of this study was to analyze the incorporation of corporate social responsibility guidelines in Eletrosul's organizational culture. In order to understand the topic, a qualitative research methodology was used, via a documentary analysis and interviews with representatives from different departments of the organization.

Spurring the company’s motivations to allocate resources toward socially responsible actions are the management of the socio-environmental impacts that these actions cause within the community and environment, the strengthening of the company’s reputation, and the recognition by the public of its investment in CSR. In addition, there is also the fact that it is a government-owned company, which causes Eletrosul to worry about the development of the country, as well as to understand CSR as an important business strategy.

The researchers identified more than 100 initiatives that could be characterized as socially responsible, and these initiatives target diverse publics such as the government, community, environment and, in greater number, their employees. However, interviewees had different perceptions about corporate social responsibility. Those most involved with the initiatives see this management approach as practices that go beyond the strictly social interests

of the community and environmental protection. Others, however, see CSR more narrowly, often associating corporate volunteering as the main action of this strategy. Almost all interviewees also stated that employees in their departments do not perceive internal projects to be CSR initiatives, a fact certainly reinforced after analyzing communication materials that do not relate these practices to corporate social responsibility.

In this context, it was possible to answer the question of CSR guideline insertion within the organizational culture of Eletrosul by diagnosing the occurrence across the following elements: norms; beliefs and values; assumption; rites, rituals and ceremonies; and, mainly, communications (Freitas, 1999). Directly or indirectly, the interviewees confirmed that the information disclosed to stakeholders is the main conduit responsible for making employees aware of the subject, and for inserting these values into Eletrosul's OC.

Regarding the other elements, it was identified by the researchers that the policies and documents of Eletrosul, categorized as norms, serve to guide the employees' behaviours and practices that are expected by the organization. The assumptions – one is that Eletrosul invests in CSR because it is a government-owned organization – can be thought of as so ingrained in employees' minds that they are taken to be truth within the organization. Lastly, rites, rituals and ceremonies are strategies used by the organization to create differentiated and important moments to strengthen a cause, such as the Quality of Life Week. No person (hero) has been recognized as extremely important to boost the development of CSR practices, nor do stories or myths play any involvement in the evolution of the organization's socially responsible management (Freitas, 1999).

One limitation of this study is the fact that it only used a qualitative approach, with an intentional sampling, which concentrated on interviews with employees who held leadership positions or were appointed by their leaders. This occurred because Eletrosul already had three internal surveys scheduled to be released within the same period.

As a recommendation for future studies, the use of quantitative research is suggested to complement and confirm the perception of corporate social responsibility among employees at other levels within the organization. As much as a manager can mirror the staff of his or her department, opinions about corporate social responsibility may differ by level or affiliation, as observed during the interviews.

This study is relevant because, as seen at Eletrosul, it revealed that the concept of CSR and its scope may not yet be clear enough within organizations. This lack of clarity could mean that initiatives are not as valued as they should be by its stakeholders. The importance of the communication element in informing stakeholders about all the dimensions within CSR cannot be under-emphasized because, as seen in the interviews, it is through information that the organization can engage its stakeholders, strengthen its reputation, and incorporate socially responsible management within all organizational processes.

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