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The Relationship Between Satisfaction and Conventional and Alternative Characteristics of Organizations

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ABSTRACT

In this quantitative study, through Multiple Correspondence Analysis, we explored the existence of a statistically significant association between conventional and alternative organizational characteristics and the attribution of satisfaction or dissatisfaction at work. The study had 172 respondents participating in an online survey. The results indicate that all characteristics of conventional organizations, to a greater or lesser extent, were associated with the perception of dissatisfaction, whereas characteristics of alternative organizations, in the same way, were associated with satisfaction. Four dimensions of comparison between conventional and alternative organizational modes stood out in terms of contribution and relevance, namely: i) technical orientation (efficiency *versus* conviviality); ii) economic orientation (growth *versus* sufficiency); iii) commercial orientation (market *versus* community); and iv) inter-organizational orientation competition *versus* cooperation). The results, specifically, show that the technical orientation toward productive efficiency, as well as the commercial orientation toward the market, is, at a strong level, associated with dissatisfaction, while the cooperative inter-organizational orientation is strongly associated with satisfaction. The investigation sheds light on a better understanding of organizational modes that oppose the dominant conventional logic.

KEYWORDS

Satisfaction in work organizations, Conventional and alternative characteristics of organizations

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Received: 07/27/2021.

Revised: 06/21/2022.

Accepted: 07/10/2022.

Published: 08/15/2023.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.15728/bbr.2021.1076.en>



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Modern work organizations have been repeatedly identified as environments that produce suffering, psychological insecurity, illness, and mental pathologies (Dejours, 2012), feelings of lack of meaning at work (Graeber, 2018), violence (Faria & Meneghetti, 2007), various types of moral harassment (Freitas, 2001; Silva et al., 2018), which results in feelings of dissatisfaction (International Stress Management Association – ISMA BR, 2011).

Complaints of precarious working conditions (Antunes, 2018), allied with the growing questioning of the legitimacy of ideas linked to the characteristics of conventional organizations, in the face of their numerous contradictions, have maximized, in recent years, the interest in alternative organizations and their characteristics, both in Brazil and abroad (Costa et al., 2018; Cruz et al., 2017; Phillips & Jeanes, 2018; Parker et al., 2007).

Conventional organizations, in general, are portrayed as forms of domination characterized by an instrumental rational logic oriented toward maximum technical efficiency, and therefore guide people's ways of being, acting, and thinking (Ramos, 1989).

Alternative organizations oppose conventional organizations, not submitting to their premises (Costa et al., 2018; Barcellos & Dellagnelo, 2013; Barcellos et al., 2014a, 2017; Misoczky, 2010; Serva, 1993; Rothschild-Whitt, 1979).

We recognize that our knowledge about the reality of work in alternative organizational spaces or not aligned with conventional work logic is still incipient. Specifically, it intrigues us to know whether, or not, perceptions of job satisfaction may be related to conventional or alternative organizational characteristics.

Investigations on job satisfaction (SAT) have a long tradition in the administration area (Almeida et al., 2018; Silva et al., 2018). However, we have not identified any study that has focused on comparatively investigating the association between characteristics typically attributed to conventional and alternative organizations and the perception of satisfaction among workers.

Therefore, the present study seeks to explore the existence of a statistically significant association between conventional and alternative organizational characteristics, with workers' perceptions of satisfaction and/or dissatisfaction. Methodologically, we estimated these associations via Multiple Correspondence Analysis.

The research brings important contributions to the advancement of investigations in the area of organizational studies. Firstly, it allows us to recognize associations between the perception of satisfaction and/or dissatisfaction in work organizations and conventional and alternative organizational characteristics, with the purpose of inferring possible ways when faced with problems in the work environment.

Second, this study explores four dimensions of comparison between the two organizational types, namely: i) technical orientation (efficiency *versus* conviviality); ii) economic orientation (growth *versus* sufficiency); iii) commercial orientation (market *versus* community); and iv) inter-organizational orientation (competition *versus* cooperation). Each of these is operationalized in order to allow the recognition of conventional and alternative organizational characteristics. The results achieved corroborate the contribution and relevance of these dimensions in the characterization of conventional and alternative organizational modes.

Furthermore, this investigation sheds light on a better understanding of organizational modes that oppose the dominant conventional logic. Additionally, it brings forward previous studies that sought to distinguish conventional and alternative organizational characteristics so as to compare them (Rothschild-Whitt, 1979; Serva, 1993, 1997). This way it intends to update the recent literature and advance knowledge through quantitative investigation of the association between organizational characteristics and the perception of satisfaction/dissatisfaction.

2.1. CONVENTIONAL AND ALTERNATIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF ORGANIZATIONS

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Studies of alternative organizations, in general, mention conventional organizations as a parameter of comparison between the two organizational types. However, there is no consensus in the specialized literature about precise definitions of the two organizational modes (Costa et al., 2018). In this context, we sought points of agreement in the literature to enable us to proceed with our study.

The dominant organizational mode is referred to by different nomenclatures, including the following: hegemonic (Barcellos & Dellagnelo, 2013), conventional (Vizeu et al., 2015), managerial (Gaulejac, 2007), bureaucratic (Rothschild-Whitt, 1979; Serva, 1993), mechanistic and functionalist (Paes de Paula, 2002) organizations.

In the specific literature, these organizations are identified for having the following characteristics: authority, hierarchy, control, centralization of decisions, rigidity, formal standardization rules (Rothschild-Whitt, 1979; Misoczky et al., 2008; Barcellos & Dellagnelo, 2013; Serva, 1993), formal specialized training, financial compensation, maximum division, and specialization of manual and intellectual work (Rothschild-Whitt, 1979), among others.

Alternative organizations (Barcellos & Dellagnelo, 2013; Meira, 2011), broadly speaking, are based on the possibility of opposing the current dominant way of organizing, not submitting to its logic (Parker & Parker, 2017; Rodgers et al., 2016; Barcellos et al., 2014a, 2014b, 2017; Rothschild-Whitt, 1979), thus constituting possibilities for liberation, emancipation, and social transformation (Misoczky, 2010).

There are some terms used to identify this organizational type, such as: substantive (Serva, 1993), counter-hegemonic (Barcellos & Dellagnelo, 2013), unconventional (Vizeu et al., 2015; Chiesa & Cavedon, 2015) e alternativas (Costa et al., 2018) and alternative (Costa et al., 2018) organizations.

Alternative organizations, although under different names, are identified by the following characteristics: horizontality, collaboration, cooperation, collectivity, participation in decisions, and consensual compliance (Misoczky, et al., 2008; Rothschild-Whitt, 1979; Sullivan et al., 2011; Barcellos & Dellagnelo, 2013), commitment, achievement, purpose, non-financial values, equality, shared moral and ethical values, personalization, self-management processes, recovery of the human condition (Rothschild-Whitt, 1979; Serva, 1993; Misoczky et al., 2008; Barcellos & Dellagnelo, 2013), friendships, relationship networks (Rothschild-Whitt, 1979; Serva, 1993), minimal division and specialization of manual and intellectual work (Rothschild-Whitt, 1979), among others.

Nonetheless, according to Paes de Paula (2002), some characteristics that the literature attributes to alternative organizations are appropriated by conventional organizations as a subtler and more effective instrument of domination. Cooperation, participation, openness, trust, commitment, teamwork, shared responsibilities, the absence of an authority figure, and democratization are some of the characteristics mentioned by the author (Paes de Paula, 2002).

Faced with this impasse and in order to contribute to a better recognition of the differences between conventional and alternative organizations, we suggest the addition of a different perspective to a basis of comparison that considers guiding characteristics of organizational conduct, arranged in four analytical dimensions: i) economic orientation (growth *versus* sufficiency); ii) technical guidance (productive efficiency *versus* conviviality); iii) interorganizational orientation (competition *versus* cooperation); and iv) commercial orientation (market *versus* community).

This view is proposed, first, by the insight generated by an argument of Paes de Paula (2002) regarding the appropriation that conventional organizations make of the characteristics that the literature attributes to alternative organizations. Second, by the recognition that the orientation toward growth constitutes the dominant ideology in contemporary economic relations (Seifert & Vizeu, 2015). Third, by identifying that the conventional way of organization is based on a logic of technical organization oriented toward maximum efficiency (Ellul, 1968). Subsequently, because, in our understanding, the commercial and also the inter-organizational orientation were not questioned by Paes de Paula (2002), thus raising our interest in these categories.

The aforementioned basis for comparison, disposed in four analytical categories, is based on reading the bibliography of the area, as shown below.

Economic growth is accepted as a universal feature of the modern human condition, based on unlimited desires and ambitions (Latouche, 2009). This view is grounded on the theories of Adam Smith (2003) who argues that human nature is essentially economic and the progress and wealth of nations fundamentally depend on people being motivated to satisfy their unlimited personal needs (Seifert & Vizeu, 2015). For Schumacher (1981), the ideology of growth defines an idolatry of gigantism, and an organizational action oriented toward economic growth at any cost.

Alternatively, recognizing that this ideology harms the environment and human dimensions, authors critical of growth point to the possibility of economic orientation toward other ends such as sufficiency, prosperity, and good living (Seifert & Vizeu, 2015; Raworth, 2017; Jackson, 2017; Adversi & Seifert, 2022). This alternative also admits the possibility for entrepreneurs to attribute different meanings to their businesses from those aligned with the logic of economic growth (Seifert & Vizeu, 2015; Souza & Seifert, 2018; Adversi & Seifert, 2022).

The technical orientation toward efficiency characterizes what Ellul (1968) calls the Technical Society and defines the incessant search for methods rationally capable of achieving maximum efficiency in all areas of human life through the intentional effort to master and organize things for reason, making quantitative what is qualitative, and accounting what is subconscious (Ellul, 1968). According to Illich (1976), such orientation is manifested mainly in the industrial production system, oriented to the satisfaction of artificially created needs, of which the human being becomes enslaved. For Gaulejac (2007), in managerialism, technical efficiency is what makes companies and individuals productive in the dominant business model. Or, as defined by Weber (1982), it makes the rational bureaucratic organizational model the ideal expression of maximum technical efficiency.

In contrast to the technical orientation that defines the dominant organizational system, Illich (1976) points out the possibility of conviviality, which provides human beings with autonomy, equity, and creative action in the order of social life based on their ethical values. This perspective comes closer to what Gaulejac (2007) identifies as existential. That is, an organizational orientation that is established in opposition to efficient technical productivism, thus allowing social organization by other records of the lived world, such as feelings, emotions, affective, loving, and social relationships. The empirical possibility of organization for conviviality and other aspects not defined by technical efficiency has been recognized and considered as a differential element of organization in urban spaces (Barker, 2017; Bates, 2018), entrepreneurial communities (Guercini & Ranfangni, 2016), in the development of new products and services (Lizarralde & Tyl, 2018), multicultural environments (Zafari et al., 2015), and community organization (Adversi & Seifert, 2022).

The inter-organizational orientation characterizes the organizational interdependence relationships and respective dynamics of cooperation, competition, and conflicts (Machado-da-Silva & Coser, 2006). In other words, it informs how resource and knowledge sharing relationships are established by the organization. In the competitive perspective, an organization is guided by the search for exclusive resources and advantages in relation to the other actors participating in its field of activity (Machado-da-Silva & Coser, 2006). In the cooperative perspective, the organization is guided by forms of collaborative interaction and solidary union, which allow mutual gains and benefits with their peers (Smith et al., 1995; Schneiberg et al., 2008).

Finally, the commercial orientation toward the market defines the logic of exchange operations in the capital system in which impersonality, imposed by the market, is established to the detriment of social bonds (Polanyi, 2000). In the market orientation, impersonality, imposed by the market, is established to the detriment of social bonds. In mercantile exchanges, impersonal and uncommitted figures are created: consumer and company, state and taxpayer (Vizeu, 2009).

In opposition to the mercantile exchange, the gift exchange is oriented toward the establishment of the social bond. This refers to exchanges characterized by donation, defined by giving and receiving, and not by means of buying and selling. Therefore, it comprises an act undertaken without the guarantee of return (Mauss, 2001; Vizeu, 2009). In gift-exchange, the main value considered is not the utility or value of the exchanged asset itself, but the value of the bond established from the exchange (Vizeu, 2009). Thus, unlike the impersonal relationship that informs the market orientation, the gift-exchange constitutes a system of exchanges based on the establishment of bonds and mutual social obligations of a community nature.

When considering the empirical possibility of recognizing and establishing distinctions between conventional and alternative organization characteristics, this study seeks to advance knowledge concerning the association between such characteristics and the perception of satisfaction/dissatisfaction at work.

2.2. JOB SATISFACTION

Studies on job satisfaction (SAT) emerged with a focus on explaining human motivations and were initiated by authors who have become classics, such as Maslow (1943) and Locke (1976). They are frequent topics of research in the areas of psychology, administration, and related disciplines. From a functionalist perspective, the premise is that satisfied workers are more productive and, therefore, bring more profitability to the company.

The search to better understand the relationship between satisfaction and organizational characteristics is growing in organizational studies. In a recent study, Arcidiacono et al. (2020) investigated job satisfaction in 21 Italian call centers. They observed that dissatisfaction is influenced by organizational characteristics (type of service, size, and organizational typology), in addition to working conditions (contract, salary, and length of service), and socio-demographic characteristics of workers (gender, age, educational background). Kjeldsen and Hansen (2018) when looking for the relationship between motivation and job satisfaction in the public service found that organizational characteristics such as bureaucracy, hierarchical authority, and lack of specificity of organizational objectives have negative influences on job satisfaction. Furthermore, they argue that the status of the public or private sector is more important for job satisfaction than other organizational characteristics. You et al. (2016) studied the relationship between job satisfaction perceived by secondary teachers in South Korea and individual personality traits,

interpersonal conflict handling styles, and organizational characteristics. The survey results revealed that organizational characteristics, specifically rewards, director support, collegiate relationships, and participation in organizational decision-making positively affect job satisfaction.

Despite the recurring concern to better understand the relationship between satisfaction and organizational characteristics, we have not identified any study that has considered the relationship between SAT and conventional and alternative organizational characteristics as proposed in this study. At the same time, we recognize that investigating job satisfaction is not a simple task. As Carlotto and Câmara (2008, p. 203) observe, SAT “is a complex phenomenon that is difficult to define because it is a subjective state, and may vary between subjects, according to different circumstances, and over time, for the same person”. According to Locke (1976, p. 1300), job satisfaction can be defined as “a pleasant or positive emotional state resulting from the evaluation of a job or work experience”. In these terms, it defines how much employees like their work (Kvist et al., 2014). As mentioned by Carlotto and Câmara (2008, p. 203), it encompasses the “set of favorable or unfavorable feelings with which workers perceive their work”. Therefore, changes in the level of satisfaction of an individual in relation to another are common, even when they perform identical activities (Lima et al., 2015; Martinez & Paraguay, 2003; Silva et al., 2018).

According to Martins and Santos (2006), the measures of job satisfaction identified in the literature have different conceptual bases. Generally, studies on satisfaction use SAT scales in which data can be obtained either directly, by questioning employees about their levels of satisfaction, or indirectly, by evaluating turnover rates, and absenteeism, among others. In this study, we chose to assess the SAT directly.

There are basically two ways to measure satisfaction directly. One is through the single global classification, which relates satisfaction to a one-dimensional feeling, measured by a single factor; the second is characterized by the sum of aspects, in which satisfaction is subdivided into specific dimensions (Spector, 2010). In this study, we used the Single Global Satisfaction Rating (Chiva & Alegre, 2009; Wanous et al., 1997) as a reference. Here, the SAT indicator is scored from 1 to 10 to obtain its classification, with 1 being completely dissatisfied and 10 being completely satisfied. Chiva and Alegre (2009, p. 329) argue that this approach is adequate to assess overall job satisfaction in relation to other variables of interest and that, although the “use of a single measure to assess job satisfaction work can be questioned, empirically no validity or reliability seems lost”. Furthermore, alternative multidimensional scales, though more refined, tend to be long, and thus, in addition to reducing the response rate, they could excessively divert the respondent’s attention from the central focus of this study: the relationship between satisfaction and conventional and alternative organizational characteristics.

Next, we present the methodological procedures used in the empirical research aimed at better understanding the relationship between satisfaction and conventional and alternative organizational characteristics.

3. METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

3.1. DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

The subjects investigated in this study are workers linked to some type of work organization. Data collection was carried out between January 6th and 18th, 2017, through the dissemination of a link to the “Survey Monkey” research platform via social networks, emails, instant messaging applications, and contacts of the researchers, requesting replication (snowball sampling) and allowing only one response per registered email. This database had 172 valid respondents.

As a data collection instrument, an online questionnaire was used containing nineteen questions distributed in three sections. The first section considers control variables as suggested by Hackman and Oldham (1975) and includes sex, age group, marital status, education, field of activity of the organization, weekly hours worked, and length of time the worker has been with the organization.

The second section verified the respondent's job satisfaction (SAT). As a reference, we used the Single Global Classification, also used by Chiva and Alegre (2009), operationalized by a single question and non-comparative gradual scale of semantic differential with ten categories (from 1 to 10), where 1 (one) corresponds to the option "totally dissatisfied" and 10 corresponds to the option "totally satisfied".

The third section verified the conventional and alternative organizational characteristics, in order to establish a distinction between them, as considered in the theoretical framework of this study. Eleven characteristics were verified and operationalized based on the 10-point Likert scale, where 1 corresponds to alternative characteristics and 10 to conventional characteristics. All questions present as possible answers a nominal option referring to those who "do not know or cannot answer". As will be seen later, in the correspondence analysis, the annotation in this option by the respondent was treated as a missing value.

Table 1 shows the operationalization of the data collection instrument based on the revised theoretical framework and indicates, respectively, the questions in the questionnaire, the variables considered, the response options, and the theoretical references.

3.2. DATA PRE-PROCESSING AND ANALYSIS PROCEDURES

Figure 1 (heat map) summarizes the proportion of respondents in each answer option (from 0 to 10) on the Likert scale of the variables included in the analysis (P8 to P19). The answer choices (0 to 10) are called class (Cx). The option "I can't/don't know how to answer" was allocated, just for this graph, in class zero. It is possible to observe the prevalence of answers 1 (C1) and 10 (C10) for the different questions/variables and the randomness of the distribution for the other questions. In the specific case of question/variable 8 (satisfaction/dissatisfaction) there is a higher concentration from class 6 (C6) on the scale.

After these observations, we performed the statistical procedure of transforming an ordinal variable into a nominal one. Thus, we dichotomized the database by the median class, which represents the cut-off point between two categories created, reducing the information imbalance in each group. Thus, we separated the database into two categories in which, for organizational variables P9 to P19, alternative characteristics are established in one category and conventional characteristics in the other category. As for the variable P8, one category refers to satisfaction, and the other to dissatisfaction. This procedure reduces the general problem of the gradual response (equilibrium), so that, from an expected response, the tendency of responses "below expected" and "above expected" is established as the response pattern.

In Table 2, it is possible to identify the cut-off point used to generate the categories for each question. It is also possible to observe that, for questions 15 and 18, the categories with the lowest loss of information were generated by cut-off points of 5. The other questions had less loss of information with the cut-off point ranging between 6 and 7. Table 2 also presents the frequency distribution in each category.

Table 1*Representation of the data collection instrument*

Question	Variable	answer options	Theoretical Reference	
P1	Sex	Female Male		
P2	Age group	16 to 23 24 to 33 34 to 43 44 to 53 over 54		
P3	Marital status	Single Separated/Divorced Married/Stable Union Widower		
P4	Education	Less than High School Completed High School Incomplete Higher Education Technical Diploma Bachelor's/Licentiate Postgraduate studies	Adapted from Hackman and Oldham (1975).	
P5	Sector	Education Commerce Industry Provision of Services Other		
P6	Weekly hours worked	Up to 20 h From 20 to 30 h From 30 to 40 h From 40 to 50 h more than 50 h		
P7	Working time in the organization	Less than 6 months 6 months to 1 year 1 to 2 years 2 to 5 years 5 to 10 years 10 to 15 years 15 to 20 years more than 20 years		
P8	SAT (satisfaction)	Totally Dissatisfied 1 <-...->10 Totally Satisfied I don't know/can't answer		Chiva and Alegre (2009).
P9	Economic guidance	Sufficiency/good living 1<-...->10 Economic growth/Profitability I don't know/can't answer		Schumacher (1981), Latouche (2009), Seifert and Vizeu (2015), Raworth (2017), Jackson (2017), Souza and Seifert (2018), Adversi and Seifert (2022).
P10	Technical guidance	Conviviality/Autonomy 1<-...->10 Productivity/Efficiency I don't know/can't answer	Illich (1976), Ellul (1968), Adversi and Seifert (2022), Barker (2017), Bates (2018), Guercini and Ranfagni (2016), Lizarralde e Tyl (2018).	
P11	Authority system	Compliance/Collective/Participation of all 1<-...->10 Formal authority: positions, functions, hierarchy, rules, protocols, formal votes I don't know/can't answer	Rothschild-Whitt (1979), Serva (1993), Misoczky et al. (2008), Barcellos and Dellagnelo (2013), Barcellos et al. (2014a, 2014b, 2017), Sullivan et al. (2011).	
P12	Rules	Minimally stipulated, unwritten, collectively negotiated, provisional 1<-...->10 Formal, written, legally defined, universal I don't know/can't answer	Rothschild-Whitt (1979), Serva (1993), Misoczky et al. (2008), Barcellos and Dellagnelo (2013), Barcellos et al. (2014a, 2014b, 2017), Sullivan et al. (2011).	

Table 1*Cont.*

Question	Variable	answer options	Theoretical Reference
P13	Control	Sharing moral values, ethics among participants 1<-...->10 Hierarchical supervision, standardized rules I don't know/can't answer	Rothschild-Whitt (1979), Serva (1993), Misoczky et al. (2008), Barcellos and Dellagnelo (2013), Barcellos et al. (2014a, 2014b, 2017), Sullivan et al. (2011).
P14	Selection process/ progression	Friendship, relationship networks, personal commitment 1<-...->10 Training, knowledge and skills formally acquired and certified I don't know/can't answer	Rothschild-Whitt (1979), Serva (1993).
P15	Compensation	Non-financial values: personal fulfillment, sense of purpose 1<-...->10 Financial compensation: salary, bonus I don't know/can't answer	Rothschild-Whitt (1979), Serva (1993), Barcellos e Dellagnelo (2013).
P16	Hierarchical stratification	Nonexistent. Equality 1<-...->10 Unequal distribution of privileges, prestige, power I don't know/can't answer	Rothschild-whitt (1979), Serva (1993) Misoczky et al. (2008), Barcellos e Dellagnelo (2013), Barcellos et al. (2014a, 2014b, 2017), Sullivan et al. (2011).
P17	Differentiation/specialization	Minimal division and specialization of labor. Everyone does everything 1<-...->10 Maximum division and specialization of work. Well-defined roles and positions I don't know/can't answer	Rothschild-Whitt (1979), Serva (1993).
P18	Inter-organizational guidance	Cooperation, commonality, collaboration 1<-...->10 Competition, hostility, antagonism I don't know/can't answer	Machado-da-Silva and Coser (2006), Smith et al. (1995), Schneiberg et al. (2008).
P19	Commercial guidance	Community 1<-...->10 Market I don't know/can't answer	Polanyi (2000), Mauss (2001), Vizeu (2009).

Source: elaborated by the authors.

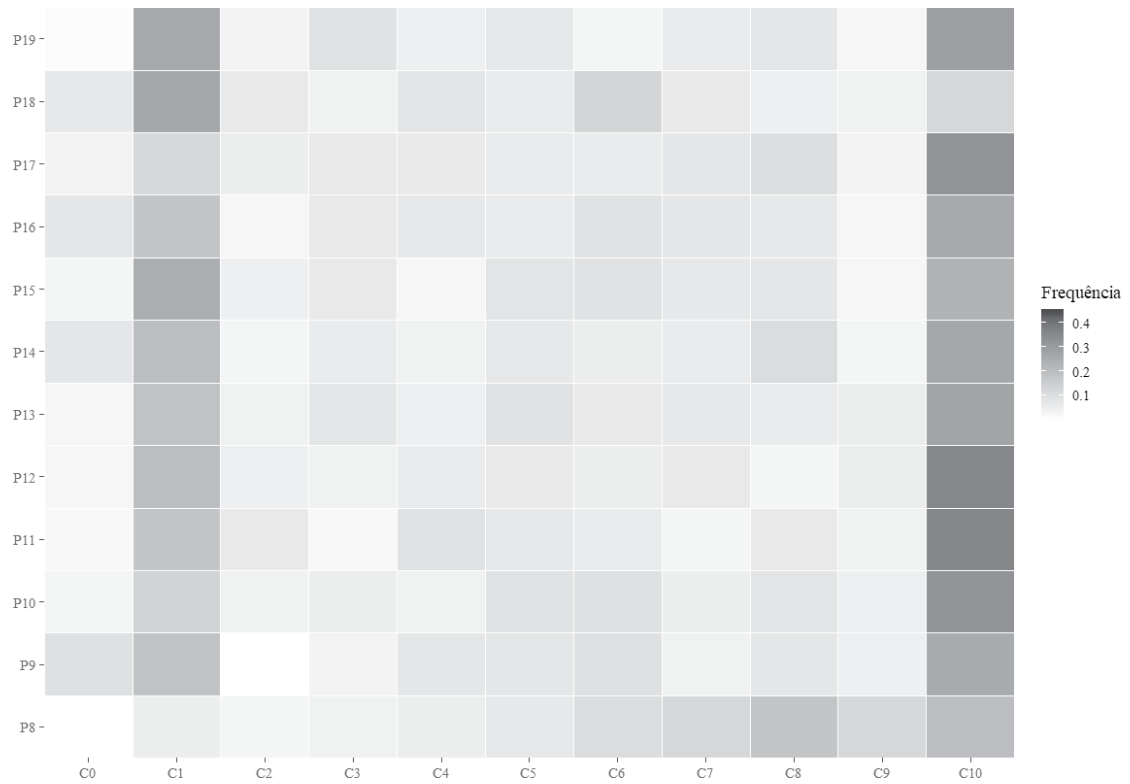


Figure 1. Proportions of respondents for each question.

Source: survey data

Table 2

Frequency, grouping of categories, and cut-off point

Question	No response (missing)	Low category	High category	Cut-off Low category	Cronbach's alpha (all items: 0.8374)
P8	1	85	86	7	0.8628
P9	18	82	72	6	0.8199
P10	6	87	79	7	0.8146
P11	4	86	82	7	0.8214
P12	5	79	88	6	0.8141
P13	6	88	78	6	0.8287
P14	15	78	79	6	0.8211
P15	6	80	86	5	0.8198
P16	14	82	76	6	0.8211
P17	7	86	79	7	0.8258
P18	14	88	70	5	0.8213
P19	3	91	78	6	0.8461

Source: survey data.

The scale used in the study is experimental and was submitted to two external evaluators with experience in the field of alternative organizations to assess face validity (Bryman & Bell, 2015). The scale's discriminatory capacity was validated using Cronbach's alpha statistics and point-biserial correlation, commonly used for questionnaire validation.

In Table 2, it is also possible to verify Cronbach's alpha for all items (reference), as well as for the case of exclusion of each question. In this sense, excluding item P8, Cronbach's alpha goes to 0.8628 and so on. Cronbach's alpha was 0.846 and remained above 0.8 for all scenarios, being greater than 0.846 only in the case of excluding question P8, as seen in Table 2. However, this variable was not excluded because it is exactly of our greatest interest.

As for the results of the significance of the level of association between the items (point-biserial correlation), the greatest associations are between question 8 and the other questions. Thus, the only variable that presents a high point-biserial association measure (greater than 0.2) is the question of interest to the research, reinforcing the perception that the instrument is useful for analyzing it.

However, this statistic is not enough to test the existence of a significant association between the variables and the respondent's degree of global satisfaction (variable P8). Therefore, we performed Chi-Square tests for each pair of variables (P8 x Pk). Questions P12, P13, P14, P17, and P19 did not provide data capable of rejecting the null hypothesis of random association in relation to variable P8 at a significance level (alpha) of 0.05.

Finally, in this research we analyzed the data through the **MCA – Multiple Correspondence Analysis**. MCA is a statistical technique of exploratory multivariate analysis of data that allows establishing associations between more than two categorical variables and their respective categories, as well as verifying the intensity of these associations. Using this method, this research jointly analyzes the correspondence between the perception of satisfaction/dissatisfaction and conventional and alternative organizational characteristics.

This technique is strongly recommended for studies that seek to examine associations between categories (Costa et al., 2013; Camiz & Gomes 2016; Fávero & Belfiori, 2017). In a database with several variables (questionnaire questions), in which each variable has two or more categories (answer options), this technique allows visually observing the association between the different categories of the different variables (Costa et al., 2013; Camiz & Gomes, 2016; Fávero & Belfiori, 2017). Thus, the objective of the technique is not to associate individuals, or even variables, which would be possible through cluster analysis and factor analysis by principal components, respectively, but rather to explore how the response categories are associated.

An aspect to be considered in the MCA for its calculation refers to the necessary absence of variables with null weight; that is, that the relationship between the categories is non-null (Camiz & Gomes 2016). For this reason, some relationships were not subject to analysis. Thus, they do not appear in the graphs, which is a limitation of the technique.

The next section presents the results and analysis of the survey data.

4. RESULTS

In this section, we present the research findings, analyzing, first, the profile of the sample. In the second moment, we verify the association between satisfaction and dissatisfaction and, later, the associations between conventional and alternative organizational characteristics, with the perception of satisfaction/dissatisfaction. Next, we analyze the distance, in terms of association,

between the opposing characteristics (conventional and alternative), which make up the pair of characteristics of each of the eleven variables. Finally, we observe the levels of associations between organizational characteristics and the perception of satisfaction/dissatisfaction.

The sample is non-probabilistic, defined by adherence. Thus, the possibility of parametric inference in the results of this study is restricted. The detailed profile of the respondents is explained in Table 3.

Table 3

Detailed profile of the respondents

Variables	Profile of respondents
1. Gender	59% female, 41% male
2. Age group	16 to 23 years old (5%), 24 to 33 years old (38%), 34 to 43 years old (31%), 44 to 53 years old (17%), over 54 years old (10%)
3. Marital status	married/stable union (46%), separated/divorced (13%), single (41%)
4. Education	less than high school (1%), complete high school (2%), technical diploma (5%), incomplete higher education (12%), bachelor's/licensed (25%), graduate (55%)
5. Sector in which the organization operates	13% commerce, 29% education, 9% industry, 30% services, 19% others
6. Workload	up to 10 h (8%), from 20 to 30 h (20%), from 30 to 40 h (35%), from 40 to 50 h (29%), more than 50 h (6%), did not inform (two%)
7. Working time in the organization	Less than 6 months (10%), 6 months to 1 year (13%), 1 to 2 years (13%), 2 to 5 years (21%), 5 to 10 years (20%), 10 to 15 years (10%), 15 to 20 years (6%), over 20 years (6%), did not inform (1%)

Source: survey data.

As for the profile of the respondents included in the sample (obtained by the univariate distributions of the control variables), shown in Table 3, we observed that there was a greater number of responses from women, and also from people aged between 24 and 43 years. Moreover, there is a greater number of respondents with bachelor's and postgraduate degrees. Regarding the sector of activity, there was a predominance of the education and service sectors. Additionally, the weekly workload was between 30 and 50 h. The working time in the organization was quite dispersed, with greater predominance between 2 and 10 years.

There was no significant association between the perception of satisfaction or dissatisfaction and the sociodemographic characteristics of the respondents. Furthermore, these control variables also showed no significant association with organizational characteristics.

The association between organizational characteristics (conventional and alternative) and the perception of satisfaction/dissatisfaction can be seen in the graph in Figure 2. Category (P8) satisfaction is located in quadrant 4 (Q4), while dissatisfaction is located in quadrant 2 (Q2). Examining the position of these items in the different quadrants of Figure 2 reveals that the perceptions of satisfaction and dissatisfaction are at diametrically opposite poles (Q4 *versus* Q2), indicating that there are no mixed feelings about the individuals' perception of satisfaction and/or dissatisfaction.

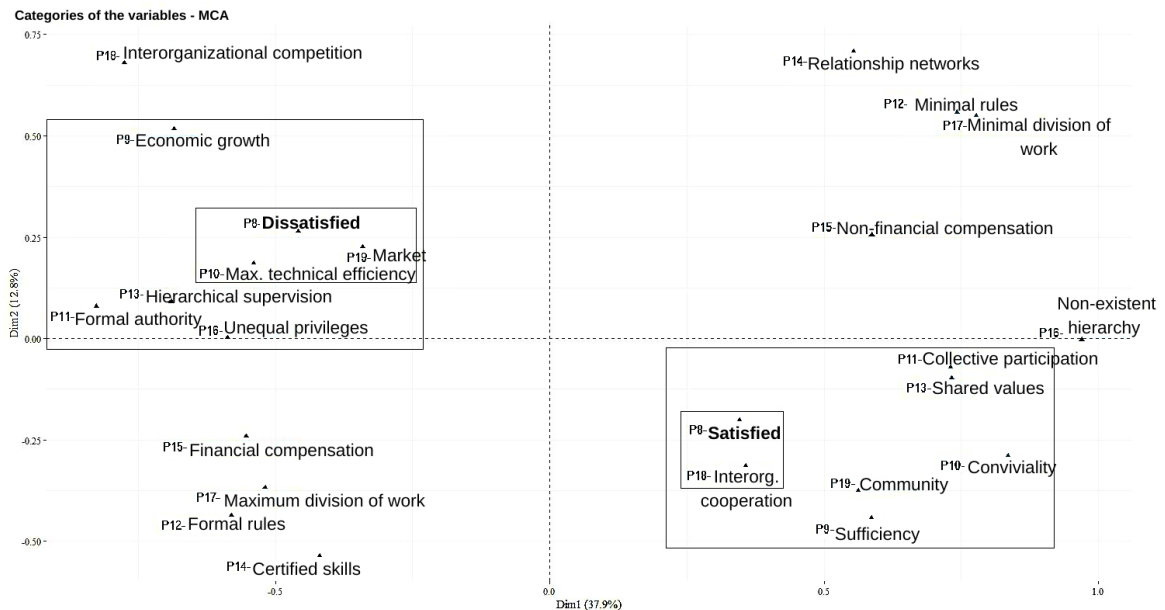


Figure 2. The graph of the association between organizational characteristics and satisfaction/dissatisfaction. *Source:* survey data.

In addition, it is possible to observe in Figure 2 that the perception of satisfaction and all characteristics related to alternative organizations are on the right of the ordinate axis, while the perception of dissatisfaction and characteristics related to conventional organizations are on the left. This position in relation to the axis indicates an association between satisfaction and characteristics of alternative organizations, and dissatisfaction and characteristics of conventional organizations.

The results allow us to recognize the relevance, in terms of statistical association, of the organizational variables used in the study, through the observation of the distance between the two characteristics (conventional and alternative) of each variable. It is possible to observe (Figure 2) that all characteristics grouped on the left side of the graph (Q2 and Q3) are aligned to attributes of conventional organizations, while all characteristics of alternative organizations, on the right side (Q1 and Q4), to attributes of alternative organizations. Thus, the results corroborate the significant distance, in terms of association, between the opposite characteristics (conventional and alternative), which make up the pair of characteristics of each of the eleven organizational variables, as operationalized in the study.

Finally, in Table 4, it is still possible to recognize different levels of association (strong, medium, or weak) between the characteristics of conventional and alternative organizations, and the perceptions of dissatisfaction and satisfaction. These levels are represented by the proximity position of the characteristics in relation to satisfaction (P8) and dissatisfaction (P9), and their respective color gradients.

It is worth noting that the cooperative inter-organizational orientation (P18) was strongly associated with satisfaction, while the commercial orientation (P19) toward the market and the technical orientation (P10) toward efficiency, strongly associated with dissatisfaction. These characteristics comprise the analysis variables proposed in the theoretical framework of this study.

The next section discusses these results.

Table 4*Associations arising from the examination of distances observed in the perceptual map (Figure 2)*

Membership level	Satisfied – Alternatives	Dissatisfied – Conventional
Strong association	P18-Interorganizational Cooperation	P19-Market P10- Max. technical efficiency
Average association	P19-Community P9- Sufficiency P10-Conviviality P13-Shared values P11-Collective participation	P13-Hierarchical supervision P16- Unequal privileges P9-Economic growth P11-Formal authority
Weak association	P15- Non-financial compensation P16- Nonexistent hierarchy P12-Minimal rules P17-Minimal division P14-Relationship networks	P18- Interorganizational competition P15-Financial compensation P17-Maximum division of work P12-Formal rules P14- Certified Skills

Note. The association levels were stipulated considering the standard deviation of the Euclidean distance between the characteristics and satisfaction or dissatisfaction (respecting the ordinate axis), in such a way that: up to one deviation the association was considered strong, between one and two deviations the association was considered average, and above three deviations the association was considered weak or non-existent.

Source: elaborated by the authors.

5. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

In Figure 2, it is observed that organizational characteristics explain 50.7% of the data variability. This result points to the influence of organizational characteristics on the perception of satisfaction/dissatisfaction. Specifically, the investigation identified that conventional organizational characteristics are associated with dissatisfaction while alternative organizational characteristics are associated with satisfaction.

This research brings relevant contributions to the advancement of investigations in the area of organizational studies since, so far, satisfaction studies have not focused on investigating conventional and alternative organizational characteristics.

In addition, the investigation finds that the pairs of opposite characteristics that make up the variables used in this study to characterize conventional and alternative organizations showed sufficient distance (dissociation) to be able to be understood as opposed to each other (Figure 2). Thus, our study suggests that, according to the interviewees' perspectives, there are no confusing understandings of the differences between conventional and alternative characteristics of organizations.

Furthermore, considering the arguments of critical studies of organizations that alternative characteristics are appropriated by conventional organizations, thus not constituting real opposition to the dominant premises, this study explored variables not covered by these criticisms. The variables are as follows: (P10) technical orientation (efficiency *versus* conviviality), (P19) commercial orientation (market *versus* community), (P18) inter-organizational orientation (competition *versus* cooperation), and (P9) economic orientation (growth *versus* sufficiency). By observing the behavior of these variables, we identified notorious results regarding the levels of association between satisfaction/dissatisfaction, as shown in Table 4. Especially, (P9) economic orientation and (P10) technical orientation corroborate the study by Adversi and Seifert (2022) that identifies these variables as a parameter of comparison between conventional and alternative organizations.

Likewise, we consider that, regardless of the alternative organizational characteristics presenting real opposition to the assumptions of conventional organizations, the organizational attributes that provide less dissatisfaction (and greater satisfaction) are important to be observed, given the scenario that caused this study. Identifying organizational characteristics associated with satisfaction/dissatisfaction allows us to infer the relationship that such characteristics exert on work environments, producers of suffering, psychological insecurity, illness and mental pathologies, precariousness, and feelings of lack of meaning at work.

Also, as noted in the theoretical framework, publications in the area suggest that alternative organizations are based on the possibility of opposing conventional organizations and challenging the current model, not submitting to its logic (Barcellos et al., 2014a, 2014b, 2017). Thus, they allow opening paths for greater emancipation, liberation, and social transformation (Misoczky, 2010). In this context, our study proposes that conviviality, as an alternative possibility (or opposition) to technical efficiency, constitutes an aspect that deserves particular attention faced with such objectives. The same happens with the commercial orientation toward the community, an alternative to the exclusive market orientation; inter-organizational cooperation, an alternative to competitiveness; and finally, sufficiency, an alternative to economic growth.

Another contribution of this investigation points to a specific result, explained in Table 4, which shows that dissatisfaction is strongly associated with the technical orientation towards efficiency (P10) as well as the commercial orientation toward the market (P19).

The technical orientation toward productive efficiency constitutes the main characteristic of modern society (Ellul, 1968) and this orientation is a determinant of the conventional mode of production (Illich, 1976). For Ellul (1968), technical efficiency is the “best one way”, that is, the best way to perform an activity through the interference of instrumental reason. Therefore, conducting activities is not spontaneous and can be understood as a form of loss of human freedom, as it submits the action to rationalization and to know-how. In contemporary times, technical efficiency is pursued aiming at maximum production, increased consumption (consumerism), profit maximization, and unlimited economic growth.

Thus, it is important to consider the possibilities of alternative (and/or complementary) orientations, such as conviviality (Illich, 1976). According to Illich (1976), in a convivial society citizens participate in the creation of social life, and ethical values surpass technical values. Thus, there is no submission to specialist technicians, given that access to community tools is free, on the condition that they do not jeopardize identical freedom of access to others. In these terms, conviviality offers the possibility of exercising more autonomous and more creative action, with the help of tools less controllable by others.

A similar analysis can be conducted when considering the strong association between dissatisfaction and commercial market orientation (P19). As Vizeu (2009) argues, in exclusively mercantile relationships, impersonal exchanges, uncommitted to social bonds and based on the immediate settlement of obligations, predominate. Given this, an alternative to be considered refers to the promotion of community relations with gift exchange experiments oriented toward the establishment of social bonds (Vizeu, 2009).

Regarding satisfaction, the results point to a strong association with cooperative inter-organizational orientation (P18). Sullivan et al. (2011) noted this possibility when analyzing the case of Indimedya, an organization concerned with organizing itself in logic resistant to competition, hostility, and antagonism dominant in the business world and which, alternatively, seeks to establish collaborative organizational strategies.

A similar logic was observed by Barcellos et al. (2017) when investigating the organizational dynamics of Circuito Fora do Eixo, a grouping of collectives of independent cultural production, based on collaborative and solidary relationships. In this direction, the results of our study suggest that organizations that present this characteristic have more satisfied workers.

Finally, the relationship between satisfaction/dissatisfaction and the other organizational characteristics investigated showed a medium and weak level of association. Although these results are significant, we believe that it is convenient to be cautious about specific inferences regarding these variables.

5.1. LIMITS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE STUDIES

As for the limitations of the study, we recognize that the sampling procedure designed by adherence does not allow inferences for the population and is subject to possible sampling biases, which may have influenced responses to the questionnaire. It is worth mentioning, however, as observed by Freitas et al. (2000, p. 106): “no sample is perfect; what may vary is the degree of error or bias”. Therefore, we suggest replicating this study and collecting new samples.

Another limitation refers to the data collection instrument, specifically to questions concerning the characteristics of conventional and alternative organizations. The quantitative scale was developed with exploratory research exclusively for this study since no measurement instruments of this type were found prior to this research. Thus, as observed in the methodological procedures, we resorted to verifying face validity with researchers in the area.

Moreover, time and resource constraints did not allow for the verification of the possibility of divergent interpretations among the respondents. Future studies that use a similar approach should, in addition to empirically testing the validity of measurements, offer detailed explanations about organizational characteristics, to minimize the divergence of interpretations by respondents.

We also recognize that the subjectivities involved, particularly in relation to the assessment of job satisfaction, cannot be captured in all their complexity by a quantitative research approach. Given this, it is prudent to admit such a limitation and suggest that future studies make advances toward qualitatively deepening investigations on satisfaction in conventional and alternative organizations.

Based on the results presented here, we also suggest that future studies should be dedicated to deepening and recognizing distinguishing characteristics between conventional and alternative organizations, with particular emphasis on technical, commercial, and inter-organizational orientation variables. Finally, we consider it complementary that later studies of SAT expand the investigations initiated here regarding its association with conventional and alternative organizational characteristics.

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AUTHOR'S CONTRIBUTION

RES: Guidance of the research and construction of the article, review, participation in writing, project coordination and funding. **RAS:** applying the methodology, conducting the analysis of results and participation in writing. **LGA:** participation in research and writing, structuring of information and editing.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

To the survey respondents.
To the reviewers of the Brazilian Business Review for their contributions to the text.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel - CAPES/DS (process nº 1614729) and the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development - CNPq (process nº 433438/2018-5).


COMPLIANCE WITH ETHICAL STANDARDS

The authors declare compliance with the Ethical Norms.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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