



THE BUSINESS MANAGEMENT IN THE MODEL OF THE ECONOMY OF COMMUNION: CASE STUDY IN BRAZIL

Miguel Melo ¹
Dheborá Fonseca ²
Eduardo Silva ³
Jeferson Pereira ⁴
Vitória Oliveira ⁵

ABSTRACT: The objective of this work is to evaluate the business management model with the focus on the Economy of Communion (EoC). This model consists of directing the management of companies to constitute themselves as a community of responsible and motivated people, focused on the production of goods and services, in view of a solidary society with work possibilities. This model evidences a type of management not only based on the criteria of instrumental rationality as effectiveness, but also based on substantive rationality such as ethical values, social, moral and human responsibility. In order to analyze this type of administration, we carried out the preliminary data research with some companies located in Brazil. Regarding the results, in general, it is perceived that the averages reached by the companies are very close to the objective of the research, that is, they are engaged in the perspective of the economy of communion, needing only the concept and integration by all the interested parties inside and outside the organization.

KEYWORDS: Economy of Communion. Sustainability. Management. Social Responsibility

¹ Center University UNITA. Av. Portugal, 584, Caruaru, PE, Brazil - miguelmelo@ascas.edu.br

² Center University UNITA. Av. Portugal, 584, Caruaru, PE, Brazil - dheborafonseca.df@gmail.com

³ Center University UNITA. Av. Portugal, 584, Caruaru, PE, Brazil - avlis.edu@hotmail.com

⁴ Center University UNITA, Av. Portugal, 584, Caruaru, PE, Brazil - jefersonbetesda@hotmail.com

⁵ Center University UNITA, Av. Portugal, 584, Caruaru, PE, Brazil - mariavitoria2606@hotmail.com

1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this work is to evaluate the management of the companies focused on the Economy of Communion (EoC). This article has three sections, which address the fundamentals of the Economy of Communion in companies, the characteristics and their basic structure. In the last section, we present a field research with some companies analyzing the perception about EoC.

The basic principles of entrepreneurship through the Economy of Communion (EoC) emerged in the early 1990s in São Paulo by Dr. Chiara Lubich, founder of the Focolare International Movement. The proposal began with the creation of an Industrial Pole having as pilot city Mariápolis-Vargem Grande in the State of São Paulo (BIENER, 2002).

The Economy of Communion (EoC) consists in directing the management of companies to constitute themselves as a community of highly responsible and motivated people, focused on the production of goods and services, in view of a solidary society with work possibilities. And since it is understood that deep-seated people are necessary, there is a motivation to develop the structures of the “little towns”, called Industrial Poles of EoC, aiming at the formation of “new men”, beyond the increment to the company itself (ARAÚJO, 1992, SPECHT, 2018).

It is worth mentioning that it is not a question of fad or just putting money or aid pockets in order to achieve the aforementioned ends, but rather to create jobs and invest the profits of companies in expansion projects. Also included is the provision of equipment or services, pooling of experience obtained, management and managerial capacity as well as patents. The sharing should not be only of material goods, but also of purposes, time and capacities (QUARTANA apud SERAFIM, 2001). It is, therefore, a turnaround that places the talents, capacity and management of business production at the service of the common good (GIGLIO, 2015).

Its principles of action are based on the following main objectives: 1-To help those who are in need, offering them conditions of improvement of life and possibility of employment; 2-Increase your own company; 3-Develop structures aimed at the formation of New Men.

It should be noted that this new form of management has gained significant acceptance and immediate repercussion in various parts of the world. Currently, there are approximately 800 companies of varying sizes, located in five continents: 463 in Europe, South America 220, and 44 in other countries. Most of these companies focus on industrial poles as one of the basic elements that make the first intuition of the EoC, which serve as a visible laboratory and an ideal reference point for other companies in the project. (EdC, 2018).

Most of these companies are concentrated in productive or industrial centers, one of the basic elements that make up the first intuition of the EoC, which function as a visible laboratory and an ideal reference point and also operational for the other companies of the project.

2 THEORETICAL ANALYSIS

2.1 BASES OF BUSINESS MANAGEMENT IN THE ECONOMY OF COMMUNION

According to Monteni apud Vido (2004), the Economy of Communion (EoC) has the following main characteristics: 1-Presence in the market economy: The companies of the economy of communion are not an isolated group, but are within the reality of the market; 2 - Attention to both production and distribution of wealth: Unlike other social movements that turn only to the distribution of wealth considering the way of acting of the economic system as unacceptable, the economy of communion values the process in a global way, that is, from production to the distribution of wealth within society; 3-Freedom of participation: The economy of communion presents itself as an experience of freedom. Nothing is imposed and entrepreneurs are free to

formulate how profits will be allocated between the growth of the company, the help of people in economic difficulties and the spread of the culture of sharing; 4-Commitments that go beyond the limits of the company: The people involved in the EoC project are driven by an “ideal momentum”, the orientation to a commitment that goes beyond the limits of the company (FERRETTI, 2015).

The following principles and values of the EoC companies are (BARAÚNA, 1999):

- **Entrepreneurs, Employees and Company:** Entrepreneurs formulate strategies, objectives and business plans, based on criteria characteristic of a correct and participative management. They have as their main focus the human person and not the capital, adopting measures to help employees who have difficulties in valuing their individual talents;
- **Relationship with Customers, Suppliers, Civil Society and Third Parties:** The company seeks to offer products and services of quality and fair prices, highlighting the characteristics of the same, but without depreciating or highlighting the defects of products or services of its competitors.
- **Ethics:** The Company is concerned with compliance with laws and the maintenance of correct behavior towards the government, institutional organizations and all members of the company. It keeps paying its taxes on time and pays the maximum attention not to pollute, thus offering products and services with quality and respect to its consumers;
- **Quality of Life and Production:** In addition to the concern with complying with legal requirements related to the health and safety of workers, businessmen in the Economy of Communion are concerned with the quality of interpersonal relationships within the company, by stimulating innovations, increasing productivity, avoiding damage to the environment and saving energy and natural reserves during the production cycle;
- **Harmony in the Workplace:** The company adopts management systems and organizational structures, aiming to promote both group work and individual work;
- **Training and Instruction:** The entrepreneur should encourage the creation of an atmosphere where employees' talents, ideas and abilities are placed in a natural way, to the benefit of professional growth and company progress.
- **Communication:** The company that joins the EoC establishes an open and sincere communication with all members of the organization. Modern means of communication are used in order to maintain productive contacts at local and international levels.

In Table 1, Gonçalves (2004) presents the differences in the foundations of classical economics and communion. It is observed, therefore, that in the Economy of Communion (EoC) solidarity takes place over individualism, man has primacy over capital. There is no opposition between individual good and social good and having the culture of Being for Self replaced by that of Being with the other.

Table 1 - Differences of the Foundations of Classical Economy and Communion

Classic Economy	Indicadores de tendências
<p style="text-align: center;">Capitalist Mode of Production</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The original line of continuity between ethics and economics is interrupted</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Economy of Communion Operation Mode</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The original line of continuity between ethics and economics is</p>

Individualism on the basis of economic relations	Solidarity on the basis of economic relations
Culture of owning	Culture of giving
Rationality consists of utility, accumulation, and maximizing private profit	Rationality consists in the giving and sharing of profit and presupposes the personalization of relationship and human happiness
Homo Economicus, Homo individualistic consumer, hedonistic and selfish	Homo Donor, Solidarity, Spiritual Homo
Opposition between individual good and social good	Non-opposition between individual good and social food
Capital takes precedence over man	Man takes precedence over capital
Rationality always incorporates the element of conditionality	Rationality always incorporates the element of gratuitousness
Prevalence of instrumental rationality, ME rationality	Prevalence of substantial rationality, of the reasonability that according to Aristotle contains elements of wisdom. ME rationality with ALL
Individuals are not linked to each other by indivisible links before starting the exchange	Individuals are linked to each other by indivisible links before beginning the exchange
The culture of BE for YOURSELF	The Culture of Be with each Other
Private appropriation of surplus	Appropriation of the private and shared surplus with two beneficiary actors outside the productive process
Focus on the evaluation of the economic results of the market	Focus on social actors
Forgetting the anthropological premise	Affirmation of the anthropological premise
Company and Society	Company in Society

Source: Gonçalves (2004)

For the adhesion of the management of companies to the Economy of Communion companies should follow the principles of solidarity, common good, primacy of the work on the capital, universal destiny of the goods and human dignity, and respond to principles and ethic and spiritual values in the business. Solidarity can only exist when selfishness is silent (Lubich, 2002). Bruni and Uelmen (2006) describe this “self-giving” as providing a vision to the businesses that values relationship and seeks the happiness of others (YOUNG-SUN, 2013)

The principal focus of the model EoC is the reciprocity and respect for human dignity, it places the human person at the center of a business. The Economy of Communion Model is a true anthropological turn around of character not only economic, but also cultural (SPECHT, 2018, FERRUCI, 2005). In addition to these principles, EoC entrepreneurs should be guided by the seven dimensions of the management model. Although they exist separately and have intrinsic importance, they all converge to unity, similar to what occurs on Newton’s disc, where the sum

of all colors results in white, which is harmony shown in Figure 1 (LEIBHOLZ, 2002). They are:

- 1 - **Red**: represents the economic and sharing dimension, financial indicators, productivity and profit sharing as a result of communion;
- 2 - **Green**: Sustainability, the dimension of the health and well-being of the members and the recipients of the produced good and customer satisfaction
- 3 - **Orange**: the political dimension, irradiation in the sense of convincing the value of the proposal in its various aspects, mainly substantive;
- 4 - **Yellow**: the transcendental dimension and fidelity to the project in its fundamental and spiritual sense and social responsibility;
- 5 - **Blue**: the aesthetic dimension, harmony in the work environment, both in physical sense and human relations and practice of ethics;
- 6 - **Light Blue**: Development efficiency, innovation and research, beyond the balance of the mission, in the sense of wisdom behavior;
- 7 - **Violet**: the dimension of communication and exchange of experiences and interests among all related companies, through effective communion that maintains the unity of the project around its principles;

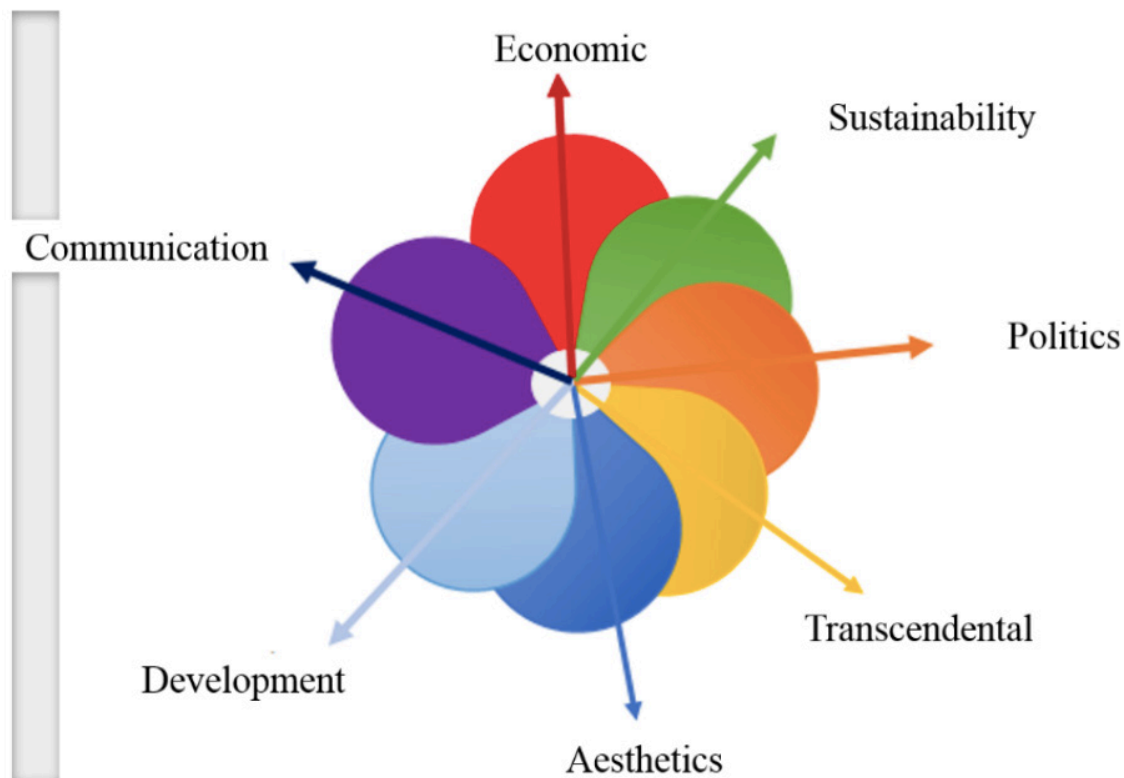


Figure 1: The seven dimensions of the EoC | Source: Author (2019)

One of the most characteristic aspects of the Economy of Communion (EoC) is the so-called Share Culture. According to this culture the human being is naturally called more to give than to have. That is, it is done more giving than possessing. Solidarity can only exist when selfishness is silent (LUBICH, 2002). For the adherence to the management of companies through Economy of Communion, companies are invited when they follow the principles of solidarity, common good, primacy of the work on the capital, universal destiny of the goods and human dignity, and respond to principles and values ethico-spiritual in the Business.

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It is considered that the company in human and environmental society directs the profit for three purposes: Reinvestment in the company; Sharing with those excluded from the current economic system; Formation of new men and women capable of affirming the rationality of communion (BRUNI, 2002). This concept is in accordance with what Bruni et al. (2008) deals with: the concept that the well-being of the individual is one of the most important desires that man desires.

Ferruci (2005) affirms that the project of Economy of Communion in freedom is a true anthropological turnaround of character not only economic, but also cultural. On the basis of the dominant economy is individualism, one of the fundamental qualities of Homo Economicus. In the Economy of Communion, on the contrary, the model of economic man is the person in relation to reciprocity with others.

Next, Table 2 presents the concepts and characteristics of capitalist enterprises, solidarity and Economy of Communion (EoC).

Table 2 - Concepts and Characteristics of Capitalist, Solidarity and Communion Companies

Capitalists	Solidarity	Economy of Communion
The basic purpose is to maximize profit without considering the means, and then be appropriated by shareholders and owners of the means of production	The basic purpose is to maximize profit, but the amount of labor	The basic purpose is to maximize profit without considering the means, and then to share with beneficiaries of the EoC
Authority and control belong to investors and shareholders	Authority and control belong to employees	Authority and control belong to entrepreneurs, or to employees when they are cooperatives
Separation between labor and the possession of the means of production is mediated by instrumental rationality	There is no separation between labor and possession of the means of production	The separation between labor and the possession of the means of production is mediated by the rationality capable of communion
Has profit that is appropriated by the capitalist and the investors	It has no profit because no part of its revenue is distributed in proportion to the shares of capital	Has the profit that is appropriated by the entrepreneur, the beneficiaries of the EoC or reserve when it comes to cooperative
The power of command is concentrated in the hands of the capitalists	Command power is concentrated in the hands of employees	The power of command is concentrated in the hands of entrepreneurs or cooperatives
Exemption from religious values	Exemption from religious values	Insertion of religious values

Source: Gonçalves (2004)

According to Serafim (2001), the bases of the management of EoC companies are expressed in two options: Individuals and Productive Organizations. In the Individual options you have:

- Aspiration to a communion with the other, made of reciprocal openness, esteem, respect and sharing of the human condition;
- A sober and critical style of consumption, respectful of the common resources of humanity and the natural aspiration for substantial equality with other men;
- Responsible use of one's wealth so that it serves the promotion of the common good;
- Sharing of one's own income and resources with the next one that is needed, in a relationship of equal dignity.
- In the option of Productive Organizations:
 - Conciliation of efficiency and profitability requirements, with the objective of making economic activity a true meeting place for all the subjects involved;
 - Active participation of workers in the life of the company;
 - Concrete commitment to the improvement of the social sphere in which the organizations operate, not outside the common good and the urgent needs of the less favored people with whom they come in contact;
 - Establishing reciprocal and trusting relationships between consumers, suppliers, competitors, between the local community and the public administration, with a focus on the general interest;
 - Experience in promoting full respect for ethics and the environment.

It is emphasized that the Economy of Communion (EoC) in freedom places man at the center of economic and organizational actions. In this way, organizations are made for the human being and not vice versa, focusing on a well-defined hierarchy of values between means and ends. But it is not enough for man to occupy the center, if he is an individualist. Thus, in order to legitimize the position of centrality of the human being, the New Man model emerges. This is the preliminary condition for the birth and operation of the proposal (SORGI, 1998). Adherence must be free from all market pressure, from every crisis of conscience, from any cost / benefit calculation, finally, from everything that can not be derived from a free choice that, among the alternatives, opts for what its conviction pointed out (ARAÚJO apud SERAFIM, 2001). In Table 3 is shown the costs and benefits of the Economy of Communion.

Table 3 - Costs and Benefits of the Economy of Communion

Costs	Indicadores de tendências
Investments in employees: Training, salaries/bonuses, increased number of employees	Increased productivity with greater collaborative spirit among employees
Investment in environment (technology)	Increased levels of innovation in a natural way across the enterprise, sharing the sense of ownership
Investment in occupational health and safety	Dedication of workers to work to overcome difficulties
Investments in the local community, voluntary services for local organizations. Focolare Community	Loyalty of customers. They value the production process and product

Investment in global society through the distribution of EoC profits	International network of support and contacts through Focolare. Autarchic power and technology sharing
Payment of Taxes according to legislation	Fiscal transparency that enables cautious planning in times of crisis
Loss of orders due to position against corruption	Spiritual motivation to withstand pressure instead of seeing failures in the project. Belief in "Proviência"

Source: Gold apud Silveira (2004)

According to Faller (2010, p.130) it is important to reinforce that the Economy of Communion does not present itself as a new form of company, as an alternative to those existing, as happened with the cooperative movement. It wants to transform, from within, the conventional structures of corporations (be they joint-stock companies, cooperatives or non-profits), impressing on relationships inside and outside the company a lifestyle of communion.

2.2 ELEMENTS OF THE EOC: RELATIONAL GOODS AND RECIPROCITY

The EoC structuring is not restricted to profit sharing as seen previously, but like any other management model, the project is based on some main elements that lead to the intensification of social life (FALLER, 2010).

One of the main characteristics of the EoC is its structuring from relational goods, that is, goods that cannot be measured by monetary values or financial indicators and reciprocity that will be defined later. For Lucas (2007, p.19) relational goods are:

... goods that can not be produced or consumed, that is, acquired by a single individual. They depend on modalities of interactions with others and can unjoined only if they are co-divided. They are represented as a particular form of local public goods, whose essential condition for existence is the demand for reciprocity and the fact that they can not be sought, that is, conquered independently; they depend on a subjective situation and the people involved. The goods where each can offer anonymously are not relational.

Relational goods have unique characteristics and can be described according to Bruni's (2006) conception:

- Identity: it concerns the identification of people who share this property; the opposite, that is, anonymity, is not an integral part of relational goods;
- Reciprocity: which refers to the understanding that are goods of relationship and this implies an involvement where each of the involved people gives and receives;
- Simultaneity: it corresponds to the moment in which the relational good is produced consumed (experienced), that is, this type of good is produced and consumed in a single moment by the subjectsinvolved;
- Motivations: it is the basis for the disclosure of the relational good. The motivation behind the behavior of the individual is what determines the characterization of the relational good;
- Emerging factor: it is the characteristic that the relational good is only relational because it emerges within a relation;
- Gratuitousness: it is understood that the relational good is not the means, but the end.

In this way, it is characterized by gratuitousness, that is, it happens without interests besides experiencing that good;

- Assets: Determines that it has a value but does not have a price.

For Bruni (2005), relational goods and reciprocity go hand in hand. This is due to the fact that relational goods are constituted of relations and, in turn, relations can only be enjoyed in reciprocity. With this, it is understood that reciprocity is characterized by bidirectionality, that is, it is a relation with the response of the other (FALLER, 2010, BRUNI, 2005; LUCAS, 2007)

From Lucas's (2007) assertion about genuine reciprocity, it is understood that genuine reciprocity is a phenomenon that occurs in the midst of a relationship with non-egocentric motivations or based on financial reward, for example, the presence of volunteers in associations or non-profit organizations. In addition, it is known that there are other types of reciprocity beyond the genuine, such as reciprocity-contract and reciprocity-communion (BRUNI, 2006).

For Luke (2007), communion can also be understood as a specific type of reciprocity or a specific way of understanding it. In this way, reciprocity-communion differs substantially from other reciprocities when it allows the action / well received by the other to not return to the one who did it, but to a third, so it is characterized or understood as communion.

3 METHODS AND MODELS

The present research has a qualitative and quantitative research strategy of an exploratory and descriptive nature based on a field study, using data collection methods, questionnaires, The questions selected were the methodology variables that the companies of the Communion Economy management model use. Twenty questions were asked and applied to 17 companies as shown in table 4. The companies would choose an index from 1 to 5 where: **1-NO, 2-Regular, 3-Medium, 4-Partly, 5-YES.**

Table 4 - Types of 17 Companies with the size and activity

Sector activity	Size according to the number of workers
Institution of higher education	Small business
Clothes, second-hand	Small business
Clothing made of jeans	Small business
Sports Association	Small business
Lingerie	Small business
Restaurant	Small business
Battery production	Mediumcompany
Clothing	Mediumcompany
Food production	Mediumcompany
Laundry	Mediumcompany
Electrical Installations Company	Mediumcompany
Supermarket network	Mediumcompany
Logistics Company	Big company
Metalurgical	Big company

Source: Own Author (2019)

In the answer of the Questionnaires the level was index de 1 to 5 are:

1- NO (), 2- Regular (), 3- Medium (), 4- Partly (), 5- YES ()

- Do you consider your company socially responsible?
- Does the company seek to motivate and profile employees with job qualifications?
- With regard to employee satisfaction with work how do you evaluate the company?
- Is There a reciprocal and respectful relationship among employees?
- Do employees feel fullfield personally?
- Is there a dialogue between the boss and the employees?
- How do you generally access the behavior pattern of the company?
- Does the Companies' economy have a social vision, in wich through ites profile, it seeks to help the community that is insert?
- Are the problems and the news of the company put in discussion with all the employees?
- Does the Company have a habit of talking into account the improvement or inovation proposals that employees share with bosses?
- How would one accept the proposals of dividing the company's profit in three parts, one of the growth of the company, another for the poor and the another for investment in training?
- Does the Company promoting regular meeting to develop interpersonal relationships and to help solve difficult situation into company?
- Does the Employees have the habiti of doing work groups?
- Does the company fulfil its tax obligation having a transparent relationship with the government state?
- Is the environment a factor that the company seeks to take into account and preserving the sustainability?
- Does the company promote interaction employees and his families?
- In General, how would the company be assesed in social and economic relation and factors personal?

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on data obtained from a survey carried out in the region of Pernambuco, Brazil, in 17 industrial companies in several areas of activity a statistical study was carried out to compile all the results, according to the radar graph as shown in Figure 2. In this radar diagram as the graphs approach the index 5, its become a circumference, this company has its closest management of the EoC model. In other words, for it to adopt the complete model, few initiatives would be missing.

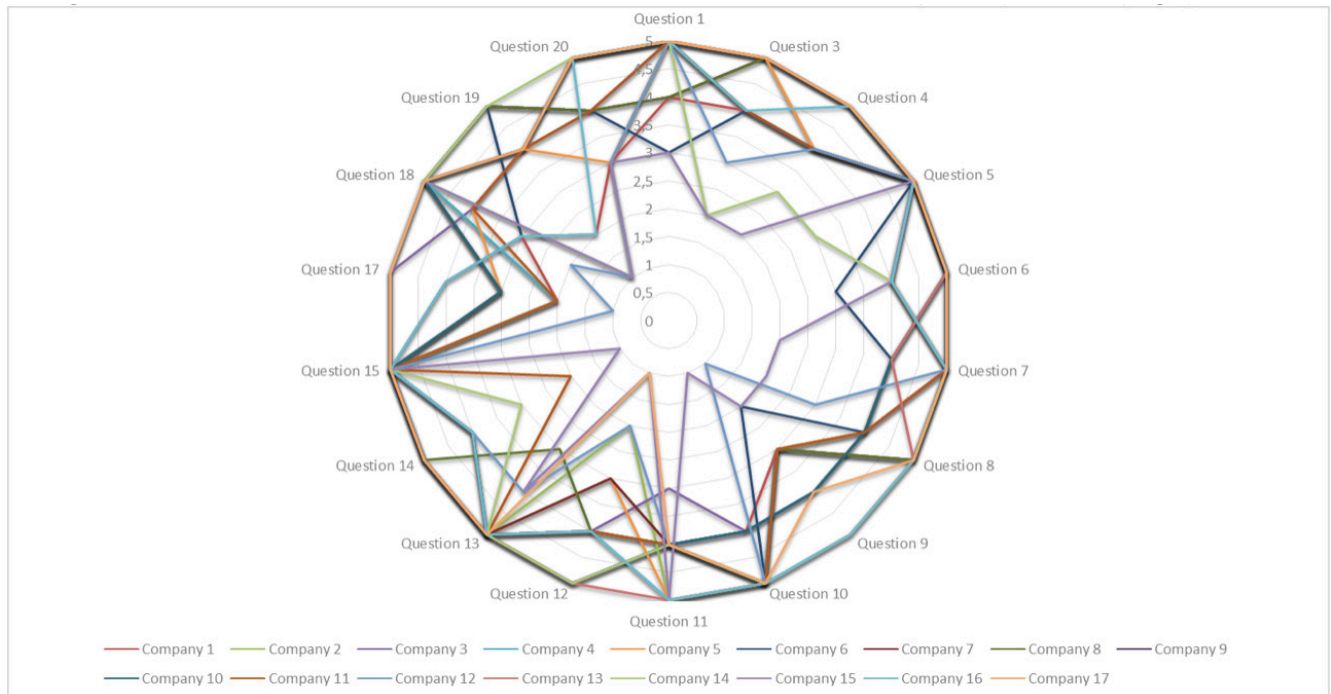


Figure 2: Evaluation of the EoC model, scale 1 to 5, where: 1(lower) and 5 (high) values
Source: Own Author (2019)

However, by making a general evaluation of the results, it can be seen that the averages reached by companies are very close to the objective of the research. This means that they are engaged in the perspective of the economy of communion management model, requiring only the concept and integration by all the interested parties inside and outside the organization. In question 5, as shown in Figure 3, which deals with the relationship of reciprocity and respect among co-workers, there was complete agreement, as in Question 15, which refers to the fulfillment of company obligations. In relation to the disagreement with the EoC, question 17, which questions the actions carried out in favor of the community, needs more incentive. In the case of divergence in the answers, it is noticed that in question 19, which deals with the integration of family members in fraternization in the organization, there was a greater value in the standard deviation.

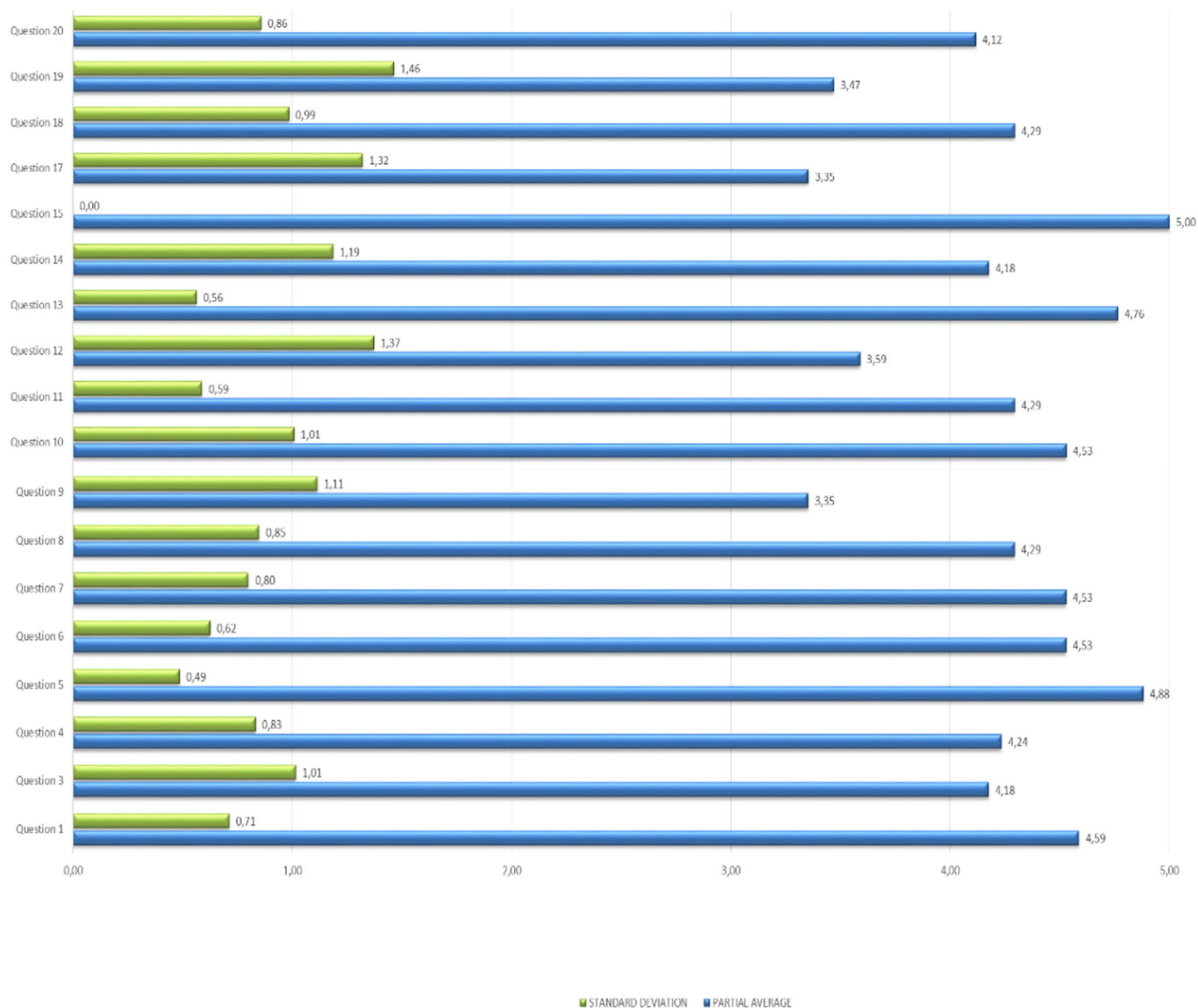


Figure 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of Results
Source: Own Author (2019)

5 CONCLUSIONS

The final considerations about this work are:

In the Economy of Communion (EoC) Companies model, collaborators consider themselves connected to each other, by benevolence; each one promotes and maintains towards their fellows the concept of unity and multidimensional ethical principles. It is emphasized that solidarity takes place on individualism and the culture of Being for Self replaced by that of Being with the Other.

Regarding the case studies in companies analyzed in the research, the average of the indicators are very close to those of management according to the Economy of Communion (EoC) model.

In the topics dealing with the relationship of reciprocity and respect among co-workers, there was complete agreement. The same is true in the indicators that refer to the fulfillment of the obligations of the companies.

A GESTÃO EMPRESARIAL NO MODELO DE ECONOMIA DE COMUNHÃO: ESTUDO DE CASO NO BRASIL

RESUMO: O objetivo deste trabalho é avaliar o modelo de gestão de negócios com foco na Economia de Comunhão (EdC). Esse modelo consiste em direcionar a gestão das empresas para constituir-se como uma comunidade de pessoas responsáveis e motivadas, focadas na produção de bens e serviços, tendo em vista uma sociedade solidária com possibilidades de trabalho. Esse modelo evidencia um tipo de gestão não apenas baseada nos critérios da racionalidade instrumental como efetividade, mas também na racionalidade substantiva, como valores éticos, responsabilidade social, moral e humana. Para analisar esse tipo de administração, realizamos a pesquisa preliminar de dados com algumas empresas localizadas no Brasil. Em relação aos resultados, em geral, percebe-se que as médias alcançadas pelas empresas estão muito próximas do objetivo da pesquisa, ou seja, estão engajadas na perspectiva da economia de comunhão, necessitando apenas do conceito e integração de todas as partes interessadas dentro e fora da organização.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Economia de Comunhão. Sustentabilidade. Gestão. Responsabilidade social.

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