



Diversity and inclusion of minority groups in Brazilian civil construction: A reflection

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ABSTRACT

This article aims to research the challenges and importance of diversity policies in the Brazilian construction industry, in order to make them increasingly plural and competitive, especially in the inclusion of women in the sector, which is mostly dominated by men. . In the search for methods of building dialogue and increasing the participation of excluded groups, bringing greater balance in the diverse composition where there is no predominance of races, ethnicities, gender, people with special needs, religions, etc. Addressing how rich debates and exchanges of experiences are, stimulating creativity and flexibility in this work environment, which, in addition to being plural, provides positive results with plurality of ideas and innovation, economic and financial social responsibility, aiming for three major pillars in strategic management, socially responsible, increased competitiveness and profitability. Addressing the changes in paradigms, and the removal of the comfort zone of their leaders and followers and the effectiveness of this perspective in improving decision-making processes, and to achieve these objectives, the bibliographical research methodology with a qualitative approach was used, in elucidating how making the construction work environment more plural, and the challenges for sector leaders and leaders, in the search for the best results from the adoption of diversity inclusion policies.

Keywords: Civil Construction, Diversity in Civil Construction, Inclusion Policies, Inequalities.

1 INTRODUCTION

In Brazil, there is an artificial approach to the theme of diversity in organizations, especially with regard to the human side. (THOMAS, 1996), according to ALTOÉ et al. (2016, p.96), diversity apparently points to opposing fields in organizations, at one extreme the idea of equality between individuals and at the other the idea that there are specific characteristics and values that differ some groups from others.

Diversity and inclusion in the construction industry, in addition to an inclusive policy to be pursued, is a matter of survival, since its promotion will enrich the debate, broadening points of view, providing innovative solutions, especially in the sector where there is a technological transformation of industry 4.0. "Diversity management is a set of practices that aim both to increase the participation of excluded groups in organizations and to add value to companies" (FLEURY, 2000), such affirmative action policies should seek the greatest balance in the diverse composition, and inclusion, where there is no predominance of races, ethnicities, gender, people with special needs, In Brazil, studies related to diversity in organizations began to emerge in the 1980s, which questioned how individual differences influenced companies (IRIGARAY ET AL. 2011).



The concept of diversity expanded when individuals began to understand that differentiating visible characteristics such as race and gender are not the only ones types of forms of differentiation between workers. (KOCHAN et al., 2003)

For NISIHAMA (2020), "the distinct perspectives and experiences serve to form a broad, plural and rich repertoire, prepared to better answer questions, from the simplest to the most complex". When we seek inclusion, we are talking about adding individual principles and values to the organizational culture, opening a plural horizon, and that reflect the diverse reality in the locality where the organization is located. It's no easy task.

And along these lines, THOMAS, JR., (1991 p.10), states that the concept of diversity then began to include differentiating characteristics such as age, personal background, education, personality, lifestyles, sexual orientations, demographic origins, among others.

Santos (2003, p33) states that:

Emancipatory versions of multiculturalism are based on the recognition of difference and the right to difference and the coexistence or construction of a common life beyond differences of various kinds [...] the idea of movement, the articulation of differences, the emergence of cultural configurations based on contributions from different experiences and histories has led to the exploration of the emancipatory possibilities of multiculturalism, feeding debates and initiatives on new definitions of rights, identities, justice and citizenship (SANTOS, 2003, p. 33).

According to SLUSS et al. (2007), in the specific case of diversity, there are variables that move the problem beyond the formal sphere, such as the entrenchment of prejudices of the hegemonic segments and of the minority groups themselves regarding difference. In this way, the construction industry has to be pragmatic, especially in relation to and inclusion of female professionals, since according to a survey by CONFEA, they show that less than 20% of the 981,380 professionals registered throughout Brazil are women (CREA-MG, Online). Because, according to VALENTIM (2005), the idea of affirmative action is based on the understanding that social phenomena are not natural, but result from various social interactions, and there is a need, therefore, for political intervention to reverse the situation of inequality and exclusion. In essence, diversity is related to respect for individuality and its recognition (FLEURY, 2000).

2 OBJECTIVE

The present study aims to: Research the challenges and importance of diversity policies in the Brazilian construction industry, in order to make them increasingly plural and competitive, especially in the inclusion of women in the sector, which is mostly dominated by men. In the search for methods in the construction of dialogue and in increasing the participation of excluded groups, bringing greater balance in the diversified composition, where there is no predominance of races, ethnicities, gender, people with special needs, religions, etc...



3 METHODOLOGY

This article consists of an exploratory research, with investigation of secondary sources, through bibliographic and documentary research, with articles published in the electronic databases: Capes Portal, Scientific Electronic Library Online - Scielo and Google Scholar, as well as news portals. in the elucidation of how to make the civil construction work environment more plural, and the challenges for leaders and subordinates, in the search for the best results from the adoption of diversity inclusion policies.

3.1 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

3.1.1 Brief History of Civil Construction in Brazil

Since the dawn of humanity, construction processes have historically not used much technology, and in Brazil it was not much different, whose construction processes obtained most of the materials in a domestic production, in its vicinity, such as clay and wood. According to PEREIRA (1988, p. 2), it is defined as domestic production. The extraction of materials in places very close to the construction site was compatible with this production process. However, ZMITROWICS (2005, p. 48) states that, after the opening of the ports and the consequent integration of the colony into foreign trade, acquisitions began to be forced by foreign countries, mainly by England.

The solution found to meet this pressure was the prohibition or imposition of the use of certain materials. The concepts of the past, especially in the 40's, were not focused on efficiency in productivity, as they sought to solve the problems of unemployment, housing deficit, basic sanitation, Of course, productivity was important, however, it was not structured in an industrialized way.

Thus, the development of the Construction Industry was slow. According to REIS FILHO (2002) until 1940 (the year of the creation of the Brazilian Association of Technical Standards), the "industrialization of construction materials would be timid, on a modest scale, almost artisanal. The industry [...], with regard to construction, was only making a few advances (REIS FILHO, 2002, p. 64).

And since we had ABNT, standardizing and standardizing, we began to go through processes of technological innovations due to the scientific evolution that occurs in all sciences. These advances have a direct impact on the process of developing new materials and improving existing materials, especially in increasing the capacity to resist loads, the development of new materials, such as sealing elements, lighter bricks and with thermal and acoustic sealing capabilities. Which have a direct impact on the cost of producing buildings.

3.1.2 Diversity and Management in Civil Construction

The plural workforce, aimed at obtaining economic and social results, has gained emphasis since the 1980s, and in this context, organizations have been seeking to implement in their recruitment and selection



policies, as well as in the position and career plan, criteria that can make the unequal more equal and in the construction industry it is no different. This paradigm shift takes your leaders and subordinates out of their comfort zone. The effectiveness of this perspective can optimize the exchange of information about experiences, values, attitudes and the apprehension of new approaches, stimulating creativity, flexibility, innovation and change, in addition to improving the decision-making process (ARANHA et al. 2006).

Strategically introduce the theme of diversity in the organization's code of conduct, where clear guidelines are provided, which will guide employees in tolerated behavior in interpersonal relationships, as well as their limits, thus aiming to introject the guidelines on the subject into practice, so that what is planned is effectively practiced on a daily basis, between leaders and subordinates. Encouraging mainly minority groups, which in the case of civil construction are women, creating specific policies and strategies to promote inclusion. According to FLEURY (2000), the contribution of a strategic management of people in the field of diversity is noticeable with the identification of well-structured policies in organizations, but which fail in relation to practice. This cultural bottleneck has been decreasing over the years, as the promotion of diversity has become actively discussed by society, especially with the advent of social networks, which has contributed a lot to the debate. In this manifesto, we dialogue with knowledge and transformative practices developed in these social media.

The fight against the exclusion of minorities, and the distribution of income in all social strata, is a phenomenon that lacks broad and unrestricted support from the entire Brazilian society.

For ATANÁSIO et al. (2009, p. 16):

Social inclusion is an action that combats exclusion, usually linked to people of social class, educational level, people with physical and mental disabilities, the elderly or racial minorities, among others, who do not have access to various opportunities, that is, it is to offer the most needy opportunities to participate in the country's income distribution, within a system that benefits everyone and not just a layer of society (ATANÁSIO et al. 2009, p. 16):

On the other hand, for authors such as ALVES & GALEÃO-SILVA (2004), the management of diversity is more effective for confronting social inequalities, as they have meritocracy at their core. For them, diversity management is based on two major points: internal programs with a vision of fairness and; and the management of people diversity to create competitive advantage, elevating the company's performance.

The difficulties are inherent to the formation of the individual while still in school, which need to change:

The need to work on the issues of recognition in the school routine. [...], that to the extent that it recognizes that diversity is to fight against social exclusion, and this would also be a responsibility of the school in the construction of inclusive social values and practices [...]. In this way, the school would be contributing to the construction of egalitarian relationships, understood as the possibility



for each one to choose their own life path and be respected in these choices and living in a dignified way, according to their aptitudes, desires and values. However, it is difficult to work in this direction, taking into account both the values brought by the students from their family background, as well as their own professional and family education, which was not developed in the sense of building egalitarian relations between the different social groups. (MARQUES, 2009, p.72)

3.1.3 The Advantages of Promoting Diversity

In the construction industry, as in any other business sector, every day they want to leverage their profits, have longevity in business, in addition to being aligned on the competitive advantages of promoting diversity as an inclusive policy, but also as marketing.

And along these lines, BARBOSA (2001, p.41) states that diversity increases the capacity of organizations to innovate, adds value to products and services for the consumer, allows for better market knowledge, as it brings into the interior of companies the ethnic, regional, racial, religious and physical capacity differences that exist among consumers.

Thus, NISIHAMA (2020, online), states that:

The construction of a culture of inclusion and respect for others, with improvement of the organizational climate; Enrichment of the repertoire and intellectual capital of the company and employees; Encouragement of the exchange of ideas, effective communication and openness to feedback; Greater ease of solving complex problems, based on a plural assessment; More empathetic leaders and employees, able to put themselves in the shoes of colleagues and customers – which can result in humanized service; Building a positive reputation for the business; Talent retention, with a reduction in turnover rates; Increased employee satisfaction at work; Increased potential for innovation and risk mitigation and increased competitiveness and profitability (NISIHAMA, 2020, online).

In this line, the competitive advantages are numerous, and private companies, especially with an eye on profitability, especially multinationals, realizing that the correction of social injustices, caused by the lack of respect for gender diversity, has been adopting more and more diversity inclusive policies.

HUNT et al. (2018), concluded that:

"Gender diversity is correlated with both profitability and value creation." In the 2017 dataset, their research found a positive correlation between gender diversity in executive teams and the two measures of financial performance we adopted: worldwide, companies in the top quartile for gender diversity in executive teams were 21% more likely to have higher EBIT margins than their bottom-quartile peers; in addition, they were 27% more likely to create long-term value than their lower-quartile peers, as measured by economic profit margin" (Hunt et al. 2018).

4 FINAL THOUGHTS

In a modern society, it is imperative that we have organizations updated in their social inclusion policies, facing the social demands of today, especially in the construction industry, which is in full transformation to the new industrial revolution, Industry 4.0. where innovation is applied to construction sites and engineering management with the aim of improving quality, Reduce cost and risk. At the end of



this research, it was observed that Brazil has numerous challenges regarding good practices of diversity management in companies in the civil construction sector, with clear and objective policies, bringing the debate into companies, in order to transform desires for change into practices of change. The trend is that in the coming decades, we will increasingly have the inclusion of diversity as a central theme in human resources policies, given the level of awareness and maturity that we have already reached today, as we have legislation that provides good practices for the inclusion of diversity. And a business society that is increasingly global and connected with social cleanliness, since the promotion of plurality is a matter of survival and competitiveness, as highlighted in the research of IRIGARAY and VERGARA (2011), must be treated in a strategic way to manage people in the organization, but focusing on the market, directing efforts to a competitive advantage that is not sustainable.



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