

SOCIETY VALUES IN PORTUGAL: REPLICATION OF THE GLOBE PROJECT 17 YEARS
LATER AND IMPLICATIONS FOR MANAGEMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to describe the societal culture in Portugal in terms of practices and values. We tried to answer the following research questions: How are cultural practices and values characterized in Portugal? What is the evolution of the Portuguese cultural profile since the first application of the GLOBE project (1996) to the present?

The results can be useful to investigate the influence of societal culture on organizational culture and human resource management practices in the country.

The social practices, norms and values at the macro-level affect the way people behave in social and organizational life, as well as the various organizational processes (Zhao et al., 2011; Zhaidman and Brock, 2009 Zhao et al., 2004) . A number of studies have shown that human resource management practices differ from country to country reflecting the values of the national culture in which they are inserted (eg Alas et al., 2008, Aycan 2005, Stone et al., 2007) .

In the collection of data, the societal culture scale developed by GLOBE (House et al., 2004) was used to measure cultural values ("how things should be") and cultural practices ("how things are"). The application was made using a questionnaire to which 353 participants responded.

As in the other studies that used the GLOBE model, differences were found between what the participants believe to be the norms that should be applied and those that correspond to the current behaviors present in society. In Portugal, the highest values are assertiveness, gender equality and distance from power, while the lowest are the orientation to human performance and orientation. Practices with the highest levels are human orientation, performance orientation, avoidance of uncertainty, and assertiveness. At lower levels, distance to power and endogrupal collectivism arise. Comparing with the results of GLOBE (1996) it is verified that at the level of the values, all the dimensions present at present lower levels except the distance to the power and the assertiveness. As for practices, there are significant decreases in distance to power and in endogrupal collectivism.

Knowledge of cultural values and practices has the potential to contribute to promoting the adequacy of human resources management in order to positively influence the well-being of workers and the effectiveness of organizations.

Keywords: Culture, values, practices, human resources management.

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