"I came from there (but no one warned me!)": reflections on people management policies that target intranational interculturality

Aline Craide
Virginia Drummond-Abdala
Tânia Maria Diederichs Fischer
Alexandre Cestari de Brito

Aline Craide, Bacharel e Mestre em Administração de Empresas e Especialista em Gestão Estratégica de Recursos Humanos pela Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul, Doutora em Administração pelo Núcleo de Pós-Graduação em Administração da Universidade Federal da Bahia, é Professora Adjunta no Colegiado de Administração do Instituto de Ciências Ambientais e Desenvolvimento Sustentável (ICADS) da Universidade Federal da Bahia (CEP 47800-100 – Barreiras/BA, Brasil) e Professora Permanente do Programa de Pós-Graduação do Centro Interdisciplinar de Desenvolvimento e Gestão Social (CIAGS) da Escola de Administração da Universidade Federal da Bahia.
E-mail: alicraide@hotmail.com
Endereço:
Universidade Federal da Bahia
Colegiado de Administração do ICADS
Rua Professor José Seabra, s/n
47800-100 – Barreiras – BA

Virginia Drummond-Abdala, Doutora em Gestão pelo CREPA – *Université Paris-Dauphine* (França), é Professora afiliada da *EM Strasbourg – Université de Strasbourg* (França) e Professora Titular da Fundação Dom Cabral, na área de Pessoas e Comportamento Organizacional (CEP 30140-083 – Belo Horizonte/MG, Brasil).
E-mail: virginia.abdala@fdc.org.br

Tânia Maria Diederichs Fischer, Doutora em Administração pela Universidade de São Paulo, é Professora Titular da Escola de Administração da Universidade Federal da Bahia (CEP 40110-903 – Vale do Canela/BA, Brasil), Coordenadora do Núcleo de Estudos sobre Poder e Organizações Locais (NEPOL), Pesquisadora nível DTI 1ª CNPq, Coordenadora do Programa de Desenvolvimento e Gestão Social.
E-mail: nepol@ufba.br

Alexandre Cestari de Brito, Engenheiro Mecânico pela Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul, Mestre em Gestão e Tecnologia Industrial pelo SENAI/CIMATEC, é Coordenador do Curso de Engenharia de Produção Mecânica na Faculdades Integradas Ipitanga (Unibahia) (CEP 41750-166 – Salvador/BA, Brasil).
E-mail: britolis@yahoo.com

RESUMO

"Eu vim de lá (mas ninguém avisou!)": reflexões sobre estratégias de gestão de pessoas voltadas à interculturalidade intranacional

No presente artigo, tem-se por objetivo analisar como profissionais que assumiram a intramobilidade em suas carreiras e que foram contratados por organizações do polo industrial de Camaçari, localizado no estado da Bahia, no Brasil, percebem, nessas organizações, o desenvolvimento de estratégias de gestão de pessoas direcionadas à interculturalidade intranacional. Para atender a tal objetivo, além de revisão e análise teórica sobre os conceitos de mobilidade e gestão intercultural e gestão de pessoas nas organizações, foram entrevistados 13 profissionais que migraram de diferentes estados brasileiros para trabalhar em empresas do referido polo. Os resultados apontam que, de forma geral, as organizações ignoram os aspectos interculturais, o que reflete em uma lacuna de estratégias de gestão de pessoas. Uma das evidências refere-se à falta de suporte inicial, que gera problemas para os indivíduos que chegam, com boas expectativas, ao novo local de trabalho. Ademais, evidenciou-se que os subsídios financeiros não são suficientes, sendo necessário oferecer atenção também aos aspectos subjetivos que envolvem o deslocamento e a consequente interculturalidade intranacional. Por fim, acredita-se que a ampliação do foco de estudos sobre gestão intercultural, com um olhar sobre o intranacional, possibilita apreender lições teóricas e práticas, em função das experiências dos atores que vivenciam o processo, uma vez que a gestão intercultural e a gestão de pessoas podem gerar vantagens competitivas para as organizações.

Palavras-chave: interculturalidade, gestão de pessoas, mobilidade.

1. INTRODUCTION

Research into interculturality in organizations, which analyzes the dynamic process that result from the meeting of two or more different cultures (DEMORGON, 2002) within the work environment, became more frequent as from the late 1980s (FREITAS, 2009b). Concern with cultural interaction within the organizational context, which is largely the result of globalization and the consequent opening up of the markets, meant that strategies were altered in search of favorable economic production and service provision conditions that were in line with business tactics, whether in terms of operating costs or tax incentives. This situation, combined with the greater possibility that people and companies have of moving, gives rise to a heterogeneous workspace and dictates the development of new aptitudes and skills in this multicultural coexistence (FREITAS, 2009a).

Many studies on organizational interculturality are concerned with the debate about expatriations, being essentially supported in comparative studies between national cultures (FREITAS, 2009b). Concerning Brazilian research on this theme there are studies that debate the adaptation of foreign executives to Brazilian culture and how they perceive the local culture (NEUVIRTH, 2005). These studies point to factors that contribute to this adaptation, or otherwise, and bring up the issue of family adjustment in the moving process (PEREIRA, PIMENTEL and KATO, 2004).

Some authors (MATOS, 2002; RODRIGUEZ-FILHO, 2002; DE PAULA, 2005; NEUVIRTH, 2005) cite Brazilian ways of management, drawing comparisons with the organizational practices of other countries (Brazil vs. India; Brazil vs. Canada; Brazil vs. France; Brazil vs. Italy; Brazil vs. the United States; Brazil vs. Germany; Brazil vs. Spain). Others emphasize the importance of studying the factors that help the expatriate to adjust to his/her new psychological, socio-cultural and working dimensions (GONÇALVES and MIURA, 2002; SILVA, 2003; HOMEM, 2005; CARDOSO, 2008). There are also studies (GUIGUET and SILVA, 2003) that refer to the variables indicated by Hofstede (2003) in his classic research (distance from power, rejection of uncertainty, individualism and masculinity) to explain how foreign executives see such issues in Brazilian culture, while others (GONÇALVES and MIURA, 2004; DE PAULA and STAUB, 2006) use the classification drawn up by Freitas (1997) (hierarchy, personalism, roguery, sensualism and adventurer) to understand the same phenomenon.

To mark the issues that involve aspects inherent to sending professionals abroad many organizations have an International People Management area, which looks after matters relating to people in internationalization situations. This area is responsible for establishing the policy guidelines and for implementing different practices to attract, develop and retain professionals, with a view to making the change less traumatic for the individual and his family and more successful for the company (HOMEM and TOLFO, 2008). Therefore, great importance has been attributed to International People Management (TANURE, EVANS and PUCIK, 2007).

An understanding of the interaction between different cultures within the organizational environment is one of the great contemporary challenges faced by organizations and by professionals who work by crossing borders (HOMEM, 2005). In this case the author correctly relates the term "borders" with "international limits", because the tendency is to interpret the intercultural issue as a situation arising from the internationalization of organizations and professionals.

However, as Adler (2002) says, it is often unnecessary to go abroad to find someone with a different cultural background. Similarly, Schneider and Barsoux (2003) warn that it is fairly difficult to know when a border between countries is more significant than its internal **borders**. According to the authors, in specific cases similarity between countries creates regional cultures that go beyond the borders of a nation. Within national cultures, they may be an important cultural diversity to be considered, because regional cultures involve geography, history, political and economic forces, language and religion (SCHNEIDER and BARSOUX, 2003; DUPUIS, 2008).

The statements of these authors lead to a reflection on the reality of Brazil, a country of vast continental dimensions, major cultural diversity and other aspects, and raise the following questions: does a professional need to cross international borders in order to perceive cultural variation? In migrating between states in Brazil, does he not experience cultural, social, climatic, educational, economic and political differences, etc. and become a foreigner within his own country? Should organizations take into consideration aspects of cultural diversity in their management strategies? It is also important to consider that, though all speak the same mother tongue, which facilitates integration, many words and expressions have different meanings in different regions, which may make communication at some moments of interaction difficult.

Thus, based on the statements of Motta (1996), according to whom cultural difference has do with the habits and behavior of a group or society in relation to others, it is unnecessary to cross international borders to perceive and experience this variation. This allows one to think about interculturality in a more concentrated and focused way than what was put forward by Demorgon (2002), since in his concept the author does not explain in what sphere this cultural encounter takes place. On this basis, interculturality can be defined as a process arising from the meeting and interaction of two or more different cultures, whether belonging to the same country, or not (DEMORGON, 2002). In the case of this article, interest in the discussion and understanding of the concept of interculturality is inward looking; in other words, it centers on **intranational interculturality**. This process is thought to arise from the meeting and interaction of individuals from different cultural regions

in the same country and/or between the individual and the daily aspects that are inherent to a place other than his home region.

The statements of Drummond-Guitel (2008) corroborate this point of view, since according to the author, interculturality is not necessarily restricted to the international level; it can also happen within a country if the existence of interactive cultures and sub-cultures is considered on the various levels to which the individual belongs. It must also be stressed that interculturality occurs as a consequence of the mobility of people within the geographical limits of a country, an action that is called **intramobility** in this article. As a result of this displacement, challenges must be faced and differences and similarities will be noticed between people from different regional cultures. Moreover, when intramobility occurs for professional reasons, one of the *sites* where this meeting takes place among people is in those organizations that hire professionals born in different parts of the same country. One can find in such organizations an environment permeated with interculturality, which suggests that organizations should develop people management strategies that target fulfilling the intercultural needs arising from these individuals being hired, for them to be quickly accepted by the new culture and perform better professionally.

As a function of such issues and the problems indicated, this article analyzes how professionals who decided to experience intramobility in their careers and who were hired by organizations from the Camaçari (Bahia)[1] industrial complex perceive, within these organizations, the development of people management strategies directed at intranational hirings and interculturality. To achieve this, 13 professionals who had moved from various states in Brazil to work in different companies in the aforementioned industrial complex were interviewed. This is an exploratory and qualitative study. Therefore, besides the theoretical analysis of the subjects related to this discussion, the data collection technique used was the semi- structured interview, the results of which were integrated into three categories and dealt with using the content analysis method. Having presented the initial thoughts on this article, the theoretical framework will be outlined. Then the methodological procedures adopted are presented, as is the analysis of the data collected in the interviews. In conclusion, the final thoughts of this study are outlined.

2. MOBILITY

In the dictionary[2] the meaning of the word "mobility", which comes from the Latin *mobilitate*, is given as the property of that which is mobile or that obeys the laws of movement. The sociological definition of mobility is the displacement of individuals, groups or cultural elements in the social arena. For Freitas (2009a), mobility is the order of the day and seems to be emblematic of modern times. Similarly, Bauman (1999, p.85) states that all are in movement, even if physically stopped, because in the world in which we live distance seems not to

have the importance that is due to it and often only exists to be annulled

● "as if space were no more than a continuous invitation to be disrespected, refuted and denied. Space has ceased to be an obstacle, because only a fraction of a second is sufficient to conquer it. There are no more natural borders or obvious places to occupy".

Mobility is an arm, therefore, a way of fighting for independence, according to Fernandez (2002).

Nevertheless, just like the intercultural reality that may characterize it (DEMORGON, 2002), mobility is part of the history of humanity. As far back as the era of the great navigations, the search for the exotic and the discovery of new territories meant that trailblazers ventured over the sea, spending long periods far from their motherland. At the time, the situations around such displacement were undoubtedly more precarious. Whether fortunate or not, the situation is now different. The means of transport are faster and take people quickly to new destinations, besides being heavily concerned with the safety of the passengers and their comfort during the journey. Therefore, an important category for the greater number of journeys currently undertaken is due to the improved transport conditions (FERNANDEZ, 2002).

Regarding the organizational context specifically, professional mobility today is greater because of the ease of moving people from one place to work in another, regardless of the hierarchical position to be occupied (MACHADO and HERNANDES, 2003). Freitas (2009a) corroborates this statement when she states that the world of borderless employees, formerly represented by soldiers, missionaries and diplomats, currently extends to different categories of professional, who tend to make the global arena their work environment. According to Freitas (2009a, p.95), new occupations are springing up in various parts of the planet with special profiles that attract candidates from different places,

● "whether to multilateral community action organizations, which are looking for volunteers, or to companies that are recruiting candidates for their vacancies".

Debate over the number of migrants in search of work was recently a central theme in the 2009 Human Development Report (HDR) of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). One of the conclusions of this report is that approximately four times more people move intranationally than internationally. The HDR (UNDP, 2009) estimates that in Brazil there are around 17 million internal migrants, those who at some stage in their lives have migrated intranationally. The HDR (UNDP, 2009) also points out that many of these intranational displacements emerge from the desire for a new personal experience, financial need and the wish to pursue education opportunities for children. Added to this list from the HDR (UNDP, 2009) is mobility as a function of professional

aspects, in other words, people who are looking for career opportunities outside the state in which they were born, but within the same nation.

However, when mobility is discussed, the tendency is often to relate it exclusively to international relocations, as a consequence of the globalization process (FERNANDEZ, 2002). Moreover, it is usual to consider mobility as a search of professionals, the only responsibility of organizations in this process being that of opening their doors and giving these people a special opportunity (FREITAS, 2009a). However, mobility cannot be merely seen as the result of the individual desire of professionals, as Freitas (2009a) warns. Even if this might be the case in an underlying way, it is an imposition of the new organizational scene in which companies value, encourage and demand this attribute, considering it indispensable in the résumé of people. An example of this situation is recruitment texts that target hiring talented young people. In many selection processes **international experience** and an **availability to relocate** are explicitly mentioned as additional requirements and, in one way or another, they may become the cut-off line in the final selection of the candidates. In other words, being potentially mobile nowadays seems to be an additional competence required in the profile of professionals. It is also important to consider that it is not only an international relocation that offers new opportunities for a person's career, because it is believed that intramobility may also add both to the professional lives of individuals as well as to the organizations that hire them.

Therefore, since the attribute of mobility is an interesting factor for corporate strategy, it becomes essential for companies to be prepared to deal with the challenges arising from this relocation of professionals in both the international and the intranational spheres. However, as the introduction of this article points out, in the international people management policies and practices of many corporations there is already a concern with the movement of employees to other countries and with the cultural interaction that arises as a result of such relocations. Issues will now be discussed relating to intercultural management, focusing on the intranational sphere and its possible relationship with the management of people in organizations.

3. INTERCULTURAL AND PEOPLE MANAGEMENT

In analyzing the theme of interculturality, it can be seen that, along with the issue of mobility, intercultural encounters are as old as humanity itself and began when two different tribes met for the first time (DEMORGON, 2002; TANURE, 2007). Bueno and Domingues (2008) state that the Romans, for example, during the expansion of their empire, can be seen as the pioneers of the so-called expatriation process, which occurred in a minimally structured way when citizens were sent from that empire to work in their new dominions. These movements were undertaken with the idea of trading among different groups and they often resulted in conflict. Therefore,

for Tanure (2007), the same principles of comparison, prejudice and creation of stereotypes seen today must have existed thousands of years ago, because intercultural contact does not immediately generate mutual understanding.

It becomes essential, therefore, to look for constructive interaction, especially within the organizational context, within which an encounter among people from different cultures is more likely to happen. It was from the late 1980s that the theme of interculturality became more evident in organizational studies (FREITAS, 2009b). This subject emerged because of the market expansion movement of major companies and little by little, theoretical discussions have been constructed (BUENO and DOMINGUES, 2008).

With regard to the managerial issues that involve interculturality, Barmeyer *et al.* (2003) guarantee that intercultural management is a recent specialty, which developed out of research into intercultural communication, corporate management and organizational behavior. The aim of intercultural management comes closest to the latter, because it regards the interaction among people within organizations – including communication and cooperation among individuals from different cultures (BARMEYER *et al.,* 2003) – as a core concern. One must agree with Drummond-Guitel (2008), therefore, when he argues that the intercultural aspect includes one of the dimensions of human management in organizations, because at all levels there are interactions among people, whether they share the same culture or not. Barmeyer *et al.* (2003) also states that because good management must above all adapt to the contexts in which human beings interact, the idea of intercultural management is born on this basis.

Given the propositions of the authors, it became evident that one of the responsibilities of the people management area is to outline policies and practices for dealing with intercultural themes within organizations. Furthermore, it is believed that people management strategies linked to interculturality should not be developed merely thinking about in the international environment, when people are prepared and sent abroad, because it is unnecessary to be a foreigner to experience an intercultural situation in the daily work routine (DRUMMOND--GUITEL, 2008). This brings up the discussion about the need to have forms of management that meet the requirements of the professionals who move intranationally in search of career development and to meet and interact with people from different regional cultures from the same country within the organizational environment.

Research in Brazil into interculturality, which has been carried out via projects, like the one coordinated by Professor Maria Ester de Freitas, from the Getulio Vargas Foundation, into French executives in Brazil, and another one on foreigners in organizations in Bahia, coordinated by Professor Tânia Fischer from the Federal University of Bahia as from the end of the 1990s, are examples of interest on the theme in Brazil. Authors such as Tanure, Evans and Pucik (2007), Bueno and Domingues

(2008), Homem and Tolfo (2004) and De Paula and Staub (2006) make important contributions in their research to the discussion of interculturality and the consequent management practices in situations in which there is a meeting of national cultures.

However, in the case of Brazil, intercultural people management strategies with an intranational focus are still debated infrequently. This was corroborated by a survey[3] carried out by the authors of this paper of the annals of the main management congresses, of periodicals and of a database of dissertations and theses defended in Brazil, in order to discover what focus has been adopted in the treatment of intercultural management. In this survey it was seen that only four pieces of work reflected on the interactions established between Brazilian regional cultures (RODRIGUES, CRAIDE and TUDE, 2007; MUZZIO and CASTRO, 2008; RODRIGUES, 2008; RODRIGUES and TUDE, 2008), which is in line with the concept of intranational interculturality considered in this article. However, no piece of work highlighted the existence of a more careful look at the people management area when faced with intranational intercultural questions.

A plausible explanation for this gap is based on some of the propositions from the classic work *A casa e a rua* [The house and the street] by Roberto DaMatta. Though the author considers that there is a clear distinction in Brazil between the social arenas of the home (where we are unique and irreplaceable) and the street (a workplace and danger and where there is neither respect nor friendship), DaMatta (1997, p.14) states that there is in the country

● "a complicated home, where apparently unique and even mutually exclusive styles seem to co-exist in a close relationship [...] the capacity to relate the high with the low, the sky with the earth, the human with the divine, the past with the present [...]".

Therefore, according to DaMatta (1997), in the case of Brazil, when faced with problems and relationships, even when there is a distinction between the social arenas of the house and the street, there is a tendency to treat Brazilian society like a large family, all living under the same roof and being considered, therefore, all equal. This does not, however, justify the absence of people management in organizations directed at the sphere of intranational interculturality. Given these proposals and findings, one should check whether this gap occurs merely on the theoretical plane or also in reality within the organizations surveyed, from the viewpoint of their professionals, as will now be discussed.

4. METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

This study is exploratory and qualitative. It is exploratory because it sought to understand issues about a topic that is still incipient in literature, i.e., organizational people management strategies that target intranational interculturality. The qualita-

tive option was suitable for this, since it was based on a survey of the perceptions of professionals who migrated from their own states to work at the Camaçari industrial complex. It was based on the propositions of Godoi and Balsini (2006, p.91), who argue that in qualitative research, there is no search for regularities but for an understanding of the agents; additionally,

● "this undertaking is only possible if the individuals are heard from the standpoint of their rationale for the explanation of their reasons".

The research, therefore, started with a theoretical review of the literature. From this, it was possible to outline the first version of the semi-structured interview script used with the professionals (FENNETEAU, 2007). It is important to point out that once the preliminary tool had been prepared a pre-test of it was conducted. This concluded that both the tool and the interview time were suitable for the purposes of the research. This enabled drafting the final script used in the 13 interviews with professionals from the various Brazilian states who had chosen to work in organizations in the Camaçari industrial complex. These respondents were chosen for their accessibility and out of convenience, which happens when the researcher, according to Gil (2002), selects some elements to which he has access because of his social network, this type of sample being commonly used in qualitative research. However, it is important to clarify that care was taken to carry out interviews with professionals who came from different regions in Brazil and who had chosen to work in different companies from the geographical region chosen for this study. Following the indication of Godoi and Mattos (2006), the number of interviews was not predetermined and, therefore, the principles of saturation and redundancy were employed.

A text was sent to the 13 professionals by e-mail, which detailed how the interview would be carried out, its planned duration and above all clarifying that the information of the professionals and of the company was confidential and would be only used for academic purposes. The interviews were also scheduled and the professionals were offered four alternatives: a face-to-face interview, by telephone, via Skype® or by MSN Messenger®. The combination of the use of computer and telephone was the one most often chosen; of the 13 professionals, only one chose the face-to-face interview. The others suggested the conversation should be by telephone (8 people) or Skype® (3 people). In one case, the professional himself chose to reply to the script in writing and sent his replies by e-mail to the researchers. One should clarify that there was no loss of quality in the replies of the 11 interviews carried out at a distance, since most of the discourses were rich in detail and also because, by being able to perceive variations in intonation in the voice of the respondents, which both the telephone and Skype® allow, reactions to certain questions could be noted and flagged in the transcriptions of the interviews. Authorization to record was requested before starting each of the interviews.

All interviewees agreed with the procedure but asked that their personal details and details of the organization be kept confidential, which led the researchers to create pseudonyms for both, the reports being entirely transcribed by the researchers.

The data was dealt with by the content analysis technique, supported by Bardin (1977). It is important to emphasize that this technique, as Vergara (2008) points out, aims to identify what is being said about the topic. Furthermore, the demographic data of the interviewees and companies were used to clarify their characteristics. After the material collected in the interviews had been brought together, in order to extract the useable parts in accordance with the objective of the research, three categories were established: the reasons indicated for intramobility, organizational people management strategies directed at intranational interculturality and the consequences of intranational interculturality at work. The professional profile of the interviewees was also drawn up.

Before the results of the data collection are presented, the summary profiles of the interviewees and of the organizations that hired them in Camaçari are set out in Table 1.

5. RESULTS

The data described in this item were grouped into the three thematic categories chosen for this study. The main aspects obvious in the interviews carried out with the 13 professionals were summarized for each of them.

However, one should first mention the professional profiles of the interviewees. Therefore, in analyzing the data it was seen that six of the participants in the research (E1, E2, E7, E9, E10 and E13) had started their professional careers when they were still at college, working as trainees in companies. In this sense it is known young people have been starting in the job market earlier and earlier (an imposition of the market itself), commonly via the internship programs offered by various companies. Upon graduating a further three interviewees (E3, E6 and E11) began working in their own state, where they were living at the time. When E12 finished college, he said he took part in trainee program selection processes, an opportunity that some organizations offer for hiring those about to graduate or recent graduates from university courses. On being accepted by two companies this interviewee chose the one for which he currently works in Camaçari, which is when he moved to Bahia. E4, E5 and E8 were already full employees, but only E5 was involved with activities that coincided with the theoretical knowledge he had learned at college. Finally, all interviewees said during the interview that they were working in organizational areas that coincide with the theoretical knowledge of the college courses they had studied.

5.1. Reasons indicated for intramobility

This phase of the interview aimed at identifying the reasons that led the professionals to move intranationally to work in

Table 1

Profile of Participants and their Organizations

Interview/Gender	Age	Home State	Organization	Size
E1 - Male	31	Rio Grande do Sul	Foreign Multinational	Large$^{(*)}$
E2 - Female	28	Rio de Janeiro	Foreign Multinational	Large
E3 - Female	32	São Paulo	Foreign Multinational	Large
E4 - Male	43	Pernambuco	Foreign Multinational	Large
E5 - Male	54	São Paulo	Foreign Multinational	Large
E6 - Female	35	São Paulo	Foreign Multinational	Large
E7 - Female	34	São Paulo	Foreign Multinational	Large
E8 - Male	46	Pernambuco	Brazilian Private-Sector Firm	Large
E9 - Female	31	Rio de Janeiro	Foreign Multinational	Large
E10 - Male	26	São Paulo	Foreign Multinational	Large
E11 - Male	26	DF/Brasília	Foreign Multinational	Large
E12 - Male	26	São Paulo	Foreign Multinational	Large
E13 - Male	31	São Paulo	Foreign Multinational	Large

Note: * A large organization was considered to be one with more than 500 employers.

Bahia and what knowledge they had about the city in which they were going to work and reside. Here, it is important to clarify that no interviewee lives in Camaçari, but in nearby cities, such as Lauro de Freitas and Salvador. This is because, according to E4, Camaçari still does not offer the infrastructure needed for people to live there.

Attention was drawn to the fact that of the 13 people interviewed, only 2 already knew Bahia. One of them, E2, had lived for some years in the capital, Salvador, and another, E12, had spent some time there, but according to him, he had stayed at a beach resort, far from the local reality. Some interviewees reported that they had carried out research on the Internet into the new location. Most, however, said that at the time they had no idea of what they might find either in Salvador or in Camaçari:

● "I came here without ever having visited the northeast [of Brazil]. I went with my eyes closed [...] I knew it was a capital, didn't I? Salvador. I knew that it was a little smaller than São Paulo" (E3).

According to E11,

● "I confess that as far as I was concerned Camaçari was a complete unknown [...] I didn't know anything about Camaçari. In fact, I'd never been to Bahia, other than on a stopover on a flight".

In view of this, we might assume that, since there was no prior knowledge, the encounter with issues inherent to the day-to-day routine of the new location might have been easier, as there were no expectations. However, expectations always do exist, as will be discussed later, and the lack of any prior knowledge, even very little of it, might make the adaptation of these professionals difficult because it provides more chances of not fulfilling their desires. The fact of having gone to work in Bahia without having visited it or been there previously was a very risky decision, as E7 reported. In explaining this issue, Brislin and Yoshida (1994) argue that unfulfilled expectations are a delicate factor, particularly when people have high expectations with regard to what they are going to feel and experience in the new destination, because almost always intercultural encounters tend to give rise to strong feelings.

Therefore, it is important to think about the motives that led the interviewees to face this challenge **in the dark**. All of the reasons mentioned by the professionals for migrating from their states to Bahia were largely linked to professional aspects. Some were looking for a salary rise and a career boost, as E11 said:

● "I came here more because of the company[(4)] itself, for the opportunity of joining a multinational, with a good salary".

For E12, the move to Bahia, even having opportunities in other states, would provide him with both professional and salary enhancements. However, others wanted to work in organizational areas that were on the up in the Camaçari industrial complex, i.e., the automotive industry:

● "The proposal was interesting and I came here; I'd be working in vehicle project management in a company" (E1);

and the product development area:
● "Basically the same employment, the product development area, which I didn't see in the market in São Paulo" (E3).

To clarify what drives executives to accept living and working in other countries, Freitas (2009a) says that the professional often constructs expectations about this project, because his career will benefit and his personal and family life will acquire new elements, culturally. The author also claims that, in breaking some of the ties with their past, some people are motivated by a taste for the challenge. Supported by these ideas of what happens in the life of individuals during internationalization, but focusing on the intranational, in this study it became evident that four professionals (E2, E6, E7 and E13) had moved to Bahia for personal reasons. One of them decided to go to Camaçari

● "out of curiosity and because of wanting to learn to live alone in a new culture, another climate and another professional activity" (E13).

However, it is noticeable in the discourses that, although the initial driver for the move was of a personal nature, none of them separated their career from this move; this also led to positive consequences in the professional sphere:

● "[...] it was a personal decision; it was my choice; it was much more personal than professional. I didn't know Salvador, I'd never been here before, and so it was much more personal than professional. Thank God it worked out professionally too" (E6).

5.2. Organizational people management strategies targeting intranational interculturality

This stage in the interview was fairly rich in detail and many of the interviewees gave vent to their feelings at length when describing the process of moving to Bahia. According to Becker (1999), this tends to avoid respondent duplicity and researcher partiality, because it makes it difficult for the latter to restrict his observations in such a way as to see only what supports his prejudices and expectations.

An attempt was made to find out how organizations carry out their strategies for attracting professionals intranationally, i.e., how they publicize their opportunities, recruit, select and act to receive people prepared to move state to work in Bahia. From an analysis of what was said it is evident that despite the way the interviews were conducted (at a distance), there are no particular aspects attached to the policies and practices used for attracting professionals from other parts of the country. Therefore, in general, most of the interviewees felt a lack of support from the organization that was hiring them and pointed out that the people management had failed in this sense.

First of all, to understand the relocation process of the professionals, they were questioned about their expectations regarding the city in which they would work or reside and how the local reality lived up to their expectations. The replies of the interviewees to this item varied widely, because many complicating aspects, especially for the interviewees who live in the capital, were cited, like the high levels of violence in Salvador, which frightened them, the high cost of living in this particular city and the great distance between Salvador and the Camaçari industrial complex. Another point highlighted by the interviewees concerns the cultural, social and relationship differences and the ways of communicating they perceived on their move to Bahia. Furthermore, the respondents indicated factors linked to the weather, the times when trade and services function and the local hygiene standards as aspects that made their initial adjustment difficult:

● "I expected it would be poorer and hotter here and that I'd find it more difficult to adapt, but [I didn't expect it to be] as big as it actually is. When I arrived here, I had a lot of problems with food-borne infections, because the standards of hygiene are very different. You get problems even with filtered water" (E12).

E3 reported:

● "We come from a background where it's necessary to ask permission to do things, that you can't jump line, you can't keep bumping into people and acting as though nothing has happened. There, if you bump into someone you say you're sorry. There's a certain politeness in the way you treat people. This aspect is complicated here. There's a lot of dirt in the street and an unpleasant smell; that was very complicated for me [...] So it was a very big cultural shock. The way you locate streets here is by point of reference; in São Paulo it's by street, neighborhood and number".

Table 2 lists some of the issues that emerged from the reports of the 13 interviewees of this research, with which they either agreed or disagreed.

Such data and reports are important and lead to reflections on the statement of Brislin and Yoshida (1994) that people need to belong to social groups and when they feel excluded they suffer, particularly when they were prepared to form part of that environment. In this exclusion situation, the authors claim that a feeling of anxiety arises, which means that adults feel like newborn babies who need to be looked after in the new culture, because they apparently know nothing about the social manners of behavior and language and feel lost with the transport and supermarket systems and even with the use of toilets. It seems that some of the interviewees experienced, and are still experiencing such feelings, which generate cultural adaptation problems. This suggests the possibility of having organizational practices to try to minimize these upsets, as will be presented later.

However, despite the difficulties of some interviewees upon their arrival in Bahia, others said that they were positively surprised by aspects of daily life in the new place, especially in Salvador:

● "My expectations were positively surprised. I was far more satisfied than I imagined I would be" (E7).

This is the cultural enigma that characterizes Bahia and that finds in Salvador, its capital,

● "a synthesis that translates its singularity and, in the articulation between the various social actors, reproduces that which we call '*Bahianess*'", as Fischer (1997, p.259) writes.

Table 2

Agreements and Disagreements in the Discourses of the Interviewees

	Agreement	Disagreement
Cultural issues	Party cult.	Cultural issues do not interfere in day-to-day life in Bahia.
Relationship	Local people do not respect the privacy of others.	Local people are friendly, thoughtful and kind.
Social issues	There's a lot of poverty in Bahia's capital.	–
Communication	People in Salvador have their own particular way of communicating.	–
Weather	The hot weather is pleasant.	Misses colder weather and this also has an impact on living in Bahia.
Availability of services	There are deficiencies in the local services offered, especially with regard to achieving good service.	–
Local issues	High levels of criminality in Salvador. High cost of living in the city. Local hygiene (water treatment, streets etc.).	Positive surprises.

The author complements this by stating that culture in Salvador is not restricted to a secondary role, but assumes the very expression of its identity "that is unique and does not allow simple comparisons with other cities and populations" (FISCHER, 1997, p.259). This tends to lead people either to love or to hate the cultural meanings and expressions that are inherent to Salvador.

To become part of the Bahia labor market, most of the interviewees sought employment opportunities via the Internet, where companies posted their vacancies in Camaçari. Professionals send their résumés and await contact from the interested company. There now follows a detailed report of interviewee E1 on his selection process.

● "I found the announcement on an Internet site and I sent in my résumé. They got in touch very quickly to see if there was any interest or not. The interview was directly with the company manager, who would be my manager. It was a two and a half-hour interview by telephone. After a week or two, there was a new interview with the supervisor and the manager, also by phone. Then one or two weeks later, the girl from HR rang me to settle figures and dates. Then I had to have a medical. They indicated a company in Porto Alegre to handle the hiring paperwork and as soon as I had sent this paperwork to them, the date was settled and the agreement was finally closed. It was two or three weeks after I had been contacted that I had to start".

It is important to remember that recruiting and selecting people to work in the organization must be a careful process, because besides the expectations of both parties it also involves cost and time. Furthermore, the recruitment and selection processes must be differentiated because of the position to be filled, as well as the locality where professionals will be chosen from and selected.

However, such a concern seems to have been forgotten by the people management area of these organizations, because according to the majority of the interviewees the selection process was done exclusively by telephone interview, carried out only between the manager/supervisor of the hiring area and the candidate. The above-mentioned report is also evidence of a routine selection process, i.e., of a professional who had graduated some time before and, by choice, was looking for a new position in the labor market. Except with regard to the way of carrying out the interviews, justified by the geographical distance, one can see that there is nothing specific related to the hiring of a professional from another state, which is unlike what happens when employees are sent abroad. When there is a selection for expatriation, for example, Dowling, Festing and Engle (2009) state that organizations tend to concern themselves with various aspects, like technical skills, intercultural adjustment, language and family, country and company requirements. Excluding the issue of language, it is felt that the other points should be taken into consideration in

the case of the intranational hiring of employees, because the more careful this process, the greater the chances of success and the less traumatic the professional's arrival in the new context.

Once the hiring has been completed, the relocation process to the new place of residence and work begins. Just as important as the careful recruitment and selection process, it is believed that the reception in the new place of those hired is a way of attracting good professionals. On this point, except for the financial help offered by some organizations, according to the interviewees there was no great concern with welcoming them to Bahia. However, it was during this move period in the life of the professionals that the main problems inherent to relocation arose. With the idea of helping the professional some organizations pay return tickets to the new destination in order to put the finishing touches to the move, the cost of transporting personal belongings and some days hotel accommodation, but the numbers of days varies a lot among the companies (from 3 to 30 days). Others are also prepared to act as sureties for the lease of homes. Nine interviewees, however, (E1, E2, E3, E4, E9, E10, E11, E12 and E13) indicated lack of support from the company in terms of helping them look for a residence and a lack of information about the cost of living in the city and of the best places to live as the main organizational omissions:

● "Because it is a tourist city the cost of living in Salvador is high. Here people earn a lot, but the cost of living is high. School fees are high and everything is very dear; house rents are high. And the organization didn't help me with this, by informing me. I believe it could have told me" (E4).

Another interesting point that emerged from the interviews was that the interviewees reported that support for dealing with issues of the new reality, like tips about where to live, ways of getting around, restaurants and other information about daily life in the new city, did not come from the company in an institutionalized way, but from friends:

● "I was lucky that I knew a couple who were already living here and they gave me a lot of support with regard to this: tips, like which are the best neighborhoods (E3)".

And particularly from work colleagues, who sympathized with the difficulties of the interviewees or had already experienced such troubles, which was exemplified by the statement from E4:

● "And the part to do with indicating a place, generally who does that are people who you have become friendly within the company. I was helped by a person who suggested somewhere for me to live in a condominium, which is a better and safer place for the family; he gave me some indications".

These reports show that once again the people management area of organizations seems to be remote from issues inherent to the intranational move process and the arrival of these professionals in Bahia:

● "The only direct contact you have with HR is for the induc-tion training, getting your name badge and picking up your uniform. It's very limited" (E9).

However, this lack of initial support can generate various problems for these professionals, who arrive at their new work-place with great expectations. The discomfort created ends up interfering in their professional development and gives rise to resistance that might be reduced or avoided altogether.

The integration process in the new work environment is now dealt with, the objective being to find out from the professionals how organizations acted in this regard. One interviewee (E1) reported that his integration process, which included all those who start working for the company, was limited to information about safety. It was also perceived that, once again, there is a gap in the institutionalized action of the organizations, which, as reported before in connection with indications about the new city, occurs in informally and from work colleagues:

● "No, unfortunately there isn't. This is something that happens more in practice. I also had difficulties with this" (E10).

Therefore, the proposal of allocating a tutor to accompany the new employees emerged as a suggestion from E11:

● "If I owned the company, [I'd deal with] this issue of the tutor, which I think is really important. I don't know if I'd take a person from the local Bahia team or if I'd choose a leader, a supervisor to conduct and help the guy interact and integrate in the environment. [...] You'd have the help of the perception of a person who was born here, a local, and the perception of a person who has already undergone precisely what you're going through. As owner of the company I'd encourage the action of these two agents in welcoming the person who's coming from away".

According to Homem and Tolfo (2008), the tutorship idea aims at guiding the employee in the sense of accompa-nying him and giving him support to achieve his proposed objectives. In one of the companies surveyed by the authors, when talking about expatriation, every six months the person responsible for the Human Resources sector has to contact the tutor and the expatriate with the idea of evaluating the performance and development of the employee and the ad-aptation of the family. For the authors the figure of the tutor provides assistance in the relocation and continuous support, besides helping with adaptation, which might also facilitate intranational moves.

The objective was also to find out from the interviewees how they adapted to the customs of the region, the daily life and if the organization intervened in any way in this aspect. The statements of various interviewees showed that there was a lack of support from the organizations and from these discourses, it is possible to analyze the strategies that companies can adopt in their intranational hiring.

Many of the interviewees recommended actions to be car-ried out by the organizations to help professionals from other regions. The various suggestions include greater responsibility to be assumed by the people management area, from initial help to even naming of person from the area to be responsible for accompanying new employees in their first few days in the company and also outside it, in connection with the aspects of the daily life in the city. The importance of cultural train-ing on arriving in Bahia was also mentioned in order to try to minimize issues of unfamiliarity with the local culture, as mentioned by E7:

● "Because I understand that if I leave São Paulo and come to Salvador, Salvador then becomes my home. I have to know why there are *orixás* [divinities of the *candomblé* religion] in the Dique do Tororó, what value this has for this population, even though it doesn't have any for me; so I can respect it and all that".

Moreover, the interviewees pointed out that it would be interesting if more time were available for the professional to look for somewhere to live.

The suggestion made by E9 is bold, but at the same time interesting and feasible, given that it is known that some organ-izations act in this way with their intranational hiring. For this person it is important for the new employee to visit the new workplace beforehand in order to decide if he can accept the job and the life he would lead in the city, or not. This would be safer for the company, because the professional would be more knowledgeable when making his decision. However, E4 and E6 believe that when a company decides to hire a person from another state it has no responsibility for this person because the decision to move was strictly the latter's.

Having listed the suggestions of the interviewees with regard to what the organizations could and/or should do for people that move from different parts of the country to work in Camaçari, it is important to indicate that, of the 13 people interviewed, only E5 and E7 believe that the companies where they work have strategies they reckon to be positive in the pro-cess of helping recently-arrived employees from other regions in Brazil to adapt.

5.3. Consequences of intranational interculturality in work

Finally, we wanted to find out what the interaction of the interviewees with people from other regional cultures was like or is like. To do so a question was asked about what aspects, according to them, might approximate or distance people from different regional cultures within the organizational context.

With regard to factors that bring people together, the in-terviewees believe that because other work colleagues are in a similar situation, they tend to become a positive point for a mutual welcome. Furthermore, the fact that the language is the same was mentioned by E4 as a facilitator, because despite

accent nuances, the language unites people, which does not happen, according to the interviewee, with people from other countries. However, it is important to point out, as Drummond--Guitel (2008) warns, that many people fall into the trap of believing that cultural misunderstandings are only the result of problems linked to the spoken language, forgetting that there are other dimensions, such as paradigmatic, value and parameter differences that cannot be ignored. Therefore, it is valid to highlight that the sharing of traditions and customs may more easily unite people who are from a specific Brazilian region, as described by E6. However, for this interviewee this is not an exclusion factor, but rather favors the union of professionals and their families. Because of this position, one should recall that culture serves to guarantee belonging to a group, having therefore an identity function. Through culture, people become an integral part of a community; they look for protection in the heart of the group and fix the limits of who they are and about who the **others** are (DRUMMOND-GUITEL, 2008). However, E3 thinks that whether people become closer to others or not is due neither to such factors, nor to the culture from which they come, but only to the life experiences of the individual himself. This professional points out that the fact that a person has already lived or not in other places prior to moving to Bahia may be a determinant when it comes to integrating more easily in the adaptation process.

On the other hand, among the aspects cited that tend to distance individuals coming from different places in Brazil, the cultural issue was the one mentioned the most by the interviewees. Acceptance of the **culture of the other**, the different values, customs, ways of expressing themselves and ways **looking at the world** often block relationships between people and, consequently, their performance in the work environment, as mentioned by E1:

● "Perhaps what makes things difficult is the difference in values and customs, which are extremely deep-rooted in one region and less so in another".

E6 recalled that disrespect for different cultures, as well as the creation and dissemination of negative stereotypes, must be avoided for a good relationship to be established in the work environment and in local daily life. However, one should keep in mind the warnings of Brislin and Yoshida (1994), i.e., that intercultural encounters naturally bring countless prejudices to the surface and that in encounters between people who think differently it is far easier to discredit them, by saying they are wrong or have a primitive way of thinking, than to stop and think about what they are really thinking. This is ethnocentrism, which according to Laraia (1997), makes people see the world through their own culture and, consequently, to be inclined to consider their way of life as the best and most natural, as if the very society in which they live were the only one or the main one.

Finally, we were concerned to find out from the interviews what the advantages and disadvantages for the organization are if it admits people from different regional cultures. In this sense five interviewees (E4, E5, E6, E8 and E13) pointed out that they only saw advantages in this type of hiring. However, others reported different disadvantages when professionals are hired from different places in the country. E2, for example, believes that a problem that emerges is the demotivation of local professionals when they perceive that people from **away** are being hired for leadership positions. Another interviewee (E11) also mentioned this, but for him the difficulty lies in the fact that for some specific areas of knowledge, there are as yet insufficient professionals from Bahia to meet the demand of organizations in the Camaçari industrial complex:

● "[...] the best teaching institutions are not in Bahia. You want a person with a given level of technical specification, so you have to look for them elsewhere. Unfortunately, there's a lack of them in Bahia. When you find a talented person here, you hire them right away. And it's easier for the company. They're not going to have this adaptation issue and the logistics cost. When the company hires someone from outside it does not hire someone from Bahia. It's one less Bahia job" (E11).

The risk of the process was also mentioned E7, because the chance of the person hired not adapting to the culture, the weather and other aspects is major. An interesting point highlighted by two professionals (E6 and E9) refers to the loss of reference with aspects from your place of origin, which arises from the heterogeneity of regional cultures within the organizational environment. Furthermore, the lack of identification with local daily aspects, such as the cuisine, may converge negatively upon the work environment, because of the dissatisfaction generated in the individual's personal environment. The conflict of values and perceptions due to grouping together people with different upbringings was also brought up. Agreement in this case becomes a very difficult process, as E1 pointed out. It was stressed that this has to do with one of the essential tasks of the people management area: preparing and developing training courses designed to encourage tolerance of this type of diversity in the work environment, according to the statement by E3:

● "Perhaps HR can help by giving training [...] perhaps there's a lack of training, a way for a person to really see himself in contact with this diversity, with these different cultures and feel firsthand what this can add that's good and bad and try and apply this in their day-to-day situation".

The organization may be harmed if it disregards this factor, by not paying attention to it or giving it little importance, allowing

● "prejudice and resistance to become consolidated and infest relationships" (E10).

Therefore, when establishing a strategy that involves hiring people from different states, who have high expectations with

regard to the new workplace, especially because they have been hired with higher salaries than their previous ones, the organization undertakes part of the responsibility for the initial adaptation of the professionals, to ensure that management is negatively affected.

● "The disadvantage arises when it brings in a load of people from loads of different places in a disorganized way and doesn't give them suitable support [...] it generates a mass of people with high salaries who are dissatisfied and don't produce half of what they could" (E12).

On the advantages for the organization of hiring people from different parts of the country, most of the interviewees believe that when there are people with different views of the world and different life experiences, the organization tends to gain because of the plurality of opinions, concepts and positions concerning organizational actions or the development of new products. This is partly because each state is unique and has people who work in special ways. When brought together in a new context, these experiences help the managers and professionals adapt their way of working to the local culture and the other regional cultures, thereby providing the organization with opportunities for gain.

This cultural heterogeneity also helps make the climate of the work environment "lighter, more relaxed and less full of prejudice", as E9 reported. Concerning tolerating cultural differences, E1 and E10 stated that the organization benefits with this type of diversity, because its professionals come into contact with different cultures and learn to respect them, leading to better relations among its employees. Consequently, it prepares them to live alongside different and even international cultures, which is positive for the organization itself, besides benefiting the company's image in terms of issues of diversity and inclusion.

Finally, it is interesting to note that because E6 has already worked for six years in the Camaçari industrial complex, he perceives that along with the advantages that arise for the organizations when they hire people from different localities in Brazil, the region itself benefits from the arrival of these professionals. Studies such as those by Matos (2002), Fischer (2004) and Neuvirth (2005), have already indicated the positive impact of the arrival of foreigners in the development of Bahia. Now, in this work, resignifications in the local culture and reconstructions in terms of improvements in infrastructure, education and service provision are named as examples of additional gains that are due to the arrival of people from different regional cultures and who are now integrated with the local population of Camaçari and of Salvador.

6. FINAL THOUGHTS

The objective of this exploratory and qualitative article was to analyze how professionals who undertook to experience intramobility for the good of their careers and who were hired by organizations from the Camaçari industrial complex in Bahia, perceive the development of people management strategies in these organizations directed at intranational interculturality. To meet this purpose, besides a review and theoretical analysis of the concepts of mobility, intercultural management and people management in organizations, 13 professionals who had relocated from various states in Brazil to work in companies in this industrial complex were interviewed.

The results indicate that from early on most of the professionals sought to be included in the labor market, since they were keen to put into practice what they had learned at university. This tended to make them more aware and prepared for the world of work and to seek opportunities that are more challenging. Given this, intranational relocation, the result of looking for employment in another state, appears as a way of evolving professionally, which is corroborated by the reasons given by most of the interviewees for leaving their states and working in Bahia.

However, prior ignorance about the new place emerges as a delicate factor, because in not being in the least prepared for what they will find, the professionals will find the new cultural issues strange, i.e., the cultural shock may be even stronger. This is an essential aspect to be taken into consideration by organizations that bet on hiring professionals from different Brazilian regions. A lack of initial support causes certain problems for these individuals, who arrive with great expectations in their new workplace. The discomfort created ends up interfering with their professional development and generates resistance that could lessened or avoided. Therefore, what we have seen is that the financial help offered is insufficient and means that the management of people in terms of intercultural aspects within the intranational environment remains at a very superficial level.

Perhaps this is the initial step for thinking about an intercultural management of people directed at the intranational, i.e., paying more attention to the subjective aspects surrounding the relocation and the ensuing intranational interculturality within the organizational context. This is because interaction between different cultures, as explained by the interviewees in this research, may benefit organizations due to the heterogeneity of views, but can become fairly harmful to the business if there is no concern with supporting these professionals. Drummond-Guitel (2008) warns that most of the time problems and misunderstandings of a cultural order are extremely serious and have no immediate consequences, but when the intercultural relationship extends over time a greater effort is required to understand them. Given these issues this corroborates the importance of reflecting on aspects linked to intranational interculturality, by relating them to people management, because the study of how to manage a multicultural environment and how interculturality is promoted in organizations may lead to improvements in current stances and the formulation of new, more efficient strategies that are of benefit to organizational practices (BUENO, DOMINGUES and DEL CORSO, 2004), especially to the people management area.

It is believed that by expanding the focus of studies about intercultural management in the field of business administration, especially in regard to areas of organizational studies and people management, while also looking at the intranational aspect, it becomes possible, from the phenomenon observed and its understanding, to create an opportunity for learning theoretical and practical lessons, especially from the experiences of the actors who underwent this process. It is known that this is a great challenge, because it is impossible to rationalize or simplify intercultural issues as they are related to the human factor of management (DRUMMOND-GUITEL, 2008). There is no **simple recipe** with ready-made responses for dealing with intercultural management, because each situation will require its own response. However, there are clues, such as those found in this article, from which one can find some gaps and opportunities for future studies, because intercultural management leads to organizations functioning well. However, as has been shown, many of them prefer to ignore such opportunities, when they admit that this issue is not so important that it needs to be treated with any great care.◆

NOTES

(1) Camaçari: a city approximately 41 kilometres from Salvador, Capital of the state of Bahia, with the fifth largest GDP in the Northeast region. Its industrial complex, which started operating in 1978, has some 60 companies and is the biggest integrated industrial complex in the Southern Hemisphere. At: <www.camacari.ba.gov.br/>. Retrieved on: Sept. 30, 2009.

(2) Source: <michaelis.uol.com.br>. Retrieved on: Oct. 22, 2009.

(3) The survey was based on work presented and/or published between 2000 and 2010 in the Annals of *Encontro da Associação Nacional de Pós-Graduação e Pesquisa em Administração* (EnANPAD), *Encontro Nacional de Estudos Organizacionais* (EnEO) and *Encontro Nacional de Gestão de Pessoas e Relações de Trabalho* (EnGPR). With regard to periodicals, the articles published in *Revista de Administração de Empresas* (RAE), *GV-Executivo*, *Revista de Administração de Empresas Eletrônica* (RAE Eletrônica), *Revista de Administração da Universidade de São Paulo* (RAUSP), *Revista Eletrônica de Administração* (REAd), *Revista de Administração Contemporânea* (RAC) and *Organizações e Sociedade* (O&S) were researched. Concerning dissertations and theses defended in different Brazilian graduate programs in management, the research was carried out in the *Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior* (CAPES) database.

(4) The term **company** is used when the interviewee mentions the name of the organization.

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ABSTRACT

"I came from there (but no one warned me!)": reflections on people management policies that target intranational interculturality

The purpose of this article is to analyze how professionals who decided to risk intramobility in their careers and who were hired by organizations from the industrial complex of Camaçari (Bahia) perceive the development of people management strategies that target intranational interculturality within these organizations. To achieve this, besides a review and theoretical analysis of the concepts of mobility, intercultural management and people management in organizations, 13 professionals were interviewed who had moved from different Brazilian states to work in companies in this particular complex. The results indicate that generally organizations ignore intercultural aspects, which is reflected in a gap in people management strategies. One indication of this refers to the lack of initial support, which generates problems for the individuals who arrive with great expectations in their new workplace. Furthermore, there is evidence that the financial help provided is insufficient and it becomes necessary to pay attention also to subjective aspects that involve relocation and the consequent international interculturality. Finally, it is believed that expansion of the focus of studies on intercultural management, with a look at intranational aspects, makes it possible to learn theoretical and practical lessons because of the experiences of the players who underwent the process, since intercultural management and people management can generate comparative advantages for organizations.

Keywords: interculturality, people management, mobility.

RESUMEN

"Yo vine de allá (pero nadie lo advirtió)": reflexiones sobre las estrategias de gestión de personas dirigidas a la interculturalidad intranacional

El objetivo en este artículo es analizar cómo profesionales que adoptaron la movilidad interna en sus carreras y que fueron contratados por organizaciones de la zona industrial de Camaçari, estado de Bahia, Brasil, perciben, en estas organizaciones, el desarrollo de estrategias de gestión de personas dirigidas a la interculturalidad intranacional. Para alcanzar dicho objetivo, además de la revisión y del análisis teórico sobre los conceptos de movilidad y gestión intercultural y de gestión de personas en las organizaciones, se entrevistaron a 13 profesionales que se trasladaron de diferentes estados brasileños para trabajar en compañías de la zona industrial referida. Los resultados demuestran, en una visión general, que las organizaciones no tienen en cuenta los aspectos interculturales. Una de las evidencias se refiere a la falta de apoyo inicial, que genera problemas a las personas que llegan, con buenas expectativas, al lugar en que trabajarán. Además, se comprobó que la ayuda financiera no es suficiente y que se debe ofrecer asimismo atención a los aspectos subjetivos que se relacionan con el desplazamiento y la consecuente interculturalidad intranacional. Finalmente, se cree que ampliar el enfoque de los estudios sobre gestión intercultural, con una mirada hacia lo intranacional, permite un aprendizaje teórico y práctico, oriundo de las experiencias vividas por los actores del proceso. La gestión intercultural y la gestión de personas pueden crear ventajas competitivas para las organizaciones.

Palabras clave: interculturalidad, gestión de personas, movilidad.