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**STRATEGIC PLANNING
AND ORGANIZATIONAL
CULTURE – PRACTICES
AND LESSONS LEARNED
– CASE STUDY IN
PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES**

*Adriana Rochas de Carvalho Fruguli
Moreira*

Graduate Program in University
Administration - PPGAU – Universidade
Federal de Santa Catarina (UFSC)
Florianópolis – Brasil

Cleverson Tabajara Vianna

Graduate Program in Knowledge
Engineering – PPEGC – Universidade
Federal de Santa Catarina (UFSC)
Florianópolis – Brasil

Elpídio Ribeiro das Neves

Graduate Program in Knowledge
Engineering – PPEGC – Universidade
Federal de Santa Catarina (UFSC)
Florianópolis – Brasil

Pedro Antônio de Melo

Graduate Program in University
Administration - PPGAU – Universidade
Federal de Santa Catarina (UFSC)
Florianópolis – Brazil

Fernando Ostuni Guathier

Graduate Program in Knowledge
Engineering – PPEGC – Universidade
Federal de Santa Catarina (UFSC)
Florianópolis – Brazil

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Abstract: This article seeks to verify whether in the implementation of Strategic Planning (SP) the Organizational Culture (OC) in Universities is a relevant factor, by investigating scientific productions in the last decade (Google Scholar, Web Science and EBSCO) and interviewing managers of Public Universities of the State from Mato Grosso do Sul. This is a basic research, with descriptive and explanatory objectives, a qualitative approach with bibliographic, documentary and interview procedures characterizing a case study. Despite the scarcity of articles, there is a growing relevance of the theme in the scenario of changes that managers face at Universities. After the interviews with three former deans, it is observed that the adoption of the NP requires adaptations in symbiosis with the Organizational Culture. Strategic Planning adherent to the Organizational Culture must meet internal and external expectations and the mesodeterministic perspective.

Keywords: Strategic planning; Organizational culture; Universities; Knowledge management.

INTRODUCTION

In any organization, Strategic Planning is influenced by Organizational Culture and, in organizations dedicated to higher education, this aspect has a strong influence, as shown in this case study. University management finds it difficult to meet the objectives and goals proposed in its Institutional Development Plan, despite the high qualification of its governing and executive bodies.

Modern university management seeks an innovative context that provides Organizational Knowledge. This current knowledge still does not respond quickly to conjunctural changes. Hasty action, without planning, will make universities not achieve success like so many other social, economic or political institutions (Nóvoa, 2019, p. 68).

In selected and reviewed articles, the word “change” is present at least once, as both planning and organizational culture are involved with the challenge of technical-sociological-scientific changes. Like innovation, “change” is easier to talk about than to actually achieve: “Various research on how companies innovate reveals a broad consensus on the need for innovation, but there is also widespread discontent with how innovation is carried out” (Trías De Bes, & Kotler, 2011, p.15).

One of the discourses of the moment concerns cultural, process and technology changes, in the search for a more fluid, flexible and agile organization. However, organizations are not always ready for the changes they need to make, since they are trapped in organizational cultures derived from the conceptions of old structures.

Current studies are focused on finding universities that meet the demands of the market in continuous development and a government plan that may be outdated. Therefore, for university management to be efficient, it must have a development plan that meets these issues (market and government) and, in this confrontation, it needs an agile organizational culture. For the identification of the organizational culture, its structure of power and organization, a study of the subject’s symbologies is crucial, which attributes to the leaders a proactive action to modify behaviors and values (Schadeck et al., 2016)

As approached by Hinton (2012), the internal environment of universities is partially defined by the mission and historical institutional development, which in some institutions is stronger than any established mission. Thus, knowing, identifying and classifying this culture is an initial step towards changes.

According to Kezar (2011), the rite for the performance of universities will depend

on the prevailing culture. This theory is based on the studies presented by Bergquist and Pawlak (2007), who identified six predominant academic cultures in Higher Education Institutions, which are the cultures: collegiate, developmental, negotiating, bureaucratic, virtual and tangible. The last two are more recent classifications of academic organizational culture, since they present the relationship between institutional culture and change processes.

Development and bureaucracy are aspects that are also ingrained in university institutions. Given this approach, Kezar (2011, p. 107) states that in an institution where the culture of development is prominent, training and development will probably be the main change strategies, while in a bureaucratic culture, planning and evaluation will be important.

The approach that considers organizational culture as a support for the establishment of the intelligence process in public bodies is little explored (Melati, & Janissek-Muniz, 2017), which was found in this work, when researching this theme related to Strategic Planning and the Organizational Culture of Higher Education Institutions.

In this movement of approaches on the institutional culture and directive processes that constitute an organization dedicated to the development of Higher Education, the evolution of this research topic in the last decade, from 2010 to 2020, is presented.

For this purpose, this article is subdivided as follows: this introduction; a brief history of Strategic Planning and Organizational Culture in Universities; the study methodology; analysis and summary of findings in research published on Strategic Planning and Organizational Culture in Universities in the last decade; and the necessary final considerations.

UNIVERSITIES - BRIEF HISTORY OF STRATEGIC PLANNING AND ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

The quest to guarantee innovative management in the face of contemporary challenges requires university managers to adopt processes and administrative tools that advance without underestimating the institution's identity. It is necessary to add new habits and new routines to the administrative processes, in order to face the challenges with the new forms of space and time, experienced with the technological development of the planet. It is these tools that considerably change human behavior, but at the same time ensure facilities, such as real-time communication over any distance, demanding more from the ability to teach. As discussed by Colombo (2013), there is a need for deep knowledge of specific technical aspects (technical capacity) throughout the institution.

As a management tool, the Strategic Planning (SP) provides a vision of the steps that will be taken to fulfill the institutional mission, as well as what is expected of it in the future, always supported by objectives and goals that lead to consistent possibilities in achieving the institutional excellence. In the Practical Guide for Strategic Planning in Higher Education, Hinton (2013) asserts that Strategic Planning in Higher Education was initially conceived as a tool to articulate mission and institutional vision, helping to prioritize resources and promote organizational focus. Many of the first efforts produced documents that described the institution, but few made a plan that motivated the process. They ended up becoming just another document on the shelf, generating discontent within the institution, as participants saw relatively little or no implementation and with little engagement from top management.

Strategic Planning began to gain acceptance in higher education when state and/or federal accreditation commissions used the plan in response to external demands when developing their institutional assessment standards. Therefore, there is pressure for Higher Education Institutions to present a document with planning and another with evaluation of the teaching and learning process. In addition to institutional accreditation commissions, local, state, and federal governments have begun to link funding and regulatory oversight to accountability measures, carrying out a movement of political discourse. Hinton (2013, p. 07) justifies that, to face the reduction of student population and funding, Higher Education Institutions created Strategic Planning offices in their administrative staff, in an attempt to guarantee themselves and compete for extremely limited resources.

Then the focus shifted from Strategic Planning to Institutional Leadership, as there would be a combined appeal of increased responsibilities and assessment. In addition, the belief developed that Strategic Planning was ignored for solutions to immediate problems, generating reactive, incremented problem solving. However, the requirement of a Strategic Plan for evaluation and institutional accreditation led many universities to mistakenly build such a plan, sometimes establishing an Information Technology (IT) Plan, sometimes an Academic Plan (including a comprehensive evaluation), or even a Facilities Master Plan. It turns out that the question continued: produced a document called the Strategic Plan, what did it do and how was it implemented? (Hinton, 2013).

Addressing this evolution, Hinton (2013) considers that what was lost was the institutional understanding of the role of a Strategic Plan and which key elements are necessary for the Plan to function.

Currently, to face the worldwide problem of COVID-19, social distancing has been one of the practices adopted by many universities. For this confrontation, many reformulated the processes and the *modus operandi* of teaching, using the technological resources available for the continuity of its activities remotely and at a distance. In some experiences, it became clear that the process was costly and costly, as a drastic change like the one implemented was not planned. Culturally, the academic community is adapted to various activities through the remote means available, however, the public and democratic sense of teaching for Public Higher Education Institutions must consider access for all. It is necessary to reflect that developing countries like Brazil, with students in social vulnerability, found it difficult to access remote activity platforms. Therefore, in addition to the technological infrastructure, institutions were suddenly required to guarantee the quality of data transmission, support and technical support, in order to promote full accessibility. Once again, there is a collision between Strategic Planning and Organizational Culture. Is there something planned for the unusual and the unexpected? How to promote and support a culture that expects accessibility and availability to all in a comprehensive way?

Thus, the analysis of the NP process in HEIs translates into the evolutionary process, with the phases presented in Table 1.

Phase	Characteristic
I.	PE materialized only as a descriptive aspect of the Institution.
II.	PE involving the Regulation, the evaluation and accreditation processes in the search for resources.
III.	PE as an instrument of leadership and reactive actions to problems.
IV.	PE characterized by the reformulation of processes, modus operandi and infrastructure, especially the technological one.
V.	PE starts to establish strategies for incorporating planning into the organizational culture.

Table 1 – Characterization of the evolutionary phases of the NP approach in HEIs.

Source: Elaborated by the authors (2020).

METHODOLOGY

To achieve the objective, the first activity was a review of publications from 2010 to 2020, on the implications of Strategic Planning and Organizational Culture in the management of Higher Education Institutions, a search was made in secondary data sources in the following databases: *Scholar Google*, *Web Science* and *EBSCO HOST*. Literary review is a way of knowing the state of the art on the subject, as well as the deepening on this subject and the gaps that need to be explored.

In terms of methodological classification, this study is of a basic nature, supporting other research. Its objectives are descriptive and explanatory, with a qualitative approach and based on bibliographic, documentary and interview procedures (Vianna, 2013) and characterizing a case study (public universities).

The interviews are still being carried out (in the period of July/August/September 2020) they have already been carried out with three former deans, one of which is from a State Public University and the other two from two Federal Public Higher Education

Institutions; Also, an interview has already been carried out with a dean of the current management of one of these Federal Public Institutions. Interviews are being scheduled with three deans of the current management. All former rectors completed their term in 2019. Therefore, they have been in charge of the Institution for the last 4 years, one of which was re-elected and completed eight years in office. In the interviews, it was possible to observe important statements that corroborate the theories and guide us in the conclusions.

In its methodological path for the analysis of the selected articles, a narrative and integrative review was adopted, within the range of their publication dates. The objective is to know the *status* of each research and summarize the Strategic Planning and Organizational Culture in Universities over time. The interviews are still being transcribed and present a rich content, as will be presented below.

27 articles were compiled with the approach under study. Of these, 18 articles were selected, as they met the research proposition of observing the state of the art of Strategic Planning and Organizational Culture in Higher Education Institutions. Only peer-reviewed articles within the specified period were selected.

ANALYSIS AND SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The selected articles are presented in Table 4, with the authors' names and the approach, in order of publication in the period under analysis, with the purpose of verifying the approaches that inspired the researchers and their evolution through the scenario in which the research was carried out.

Below, the main approaches were extracted from all articles and categorized and represented (Table 2) according to the

following symbology:

1. Analysis of funding sources and organizational changes
2. Meeting external, political, public and/or private demands as an influence on Organizational Culture
3. Advances in emerging technologies that impacted university planning and culture
4. Emerging trend in university-industry-government collaborative innovation strategy to ensure competitive advantages
5. Concern with institutional change as a path of development – becoming entrepreneurial, competitive, innovative,

proactive and efficient and potential for improvement in their performance

6. Organizational cultural pattern for teaching-learning and understanding the relevance of the university system in building the image, identity, reputation, power, flexibility, intangibility, change, values and skills
7. Barrier in the implementation of management tools such as process management
8. Situation of the university in responding to external pressures and demands

Authors	Focus	Central approach
Roxå, Mårtensson & Alveteg (2011)	36	Analyze the pattern of Organizational culture with focus on teaching-learning , through the lens of network theory.
Arlauskienė, Galdikienė, & Klizaitė (2012)	6	It emphasizes that, in order to understand the activities of the university system , it is essential to know its main values , as an organization in terms of Organizational culture , efficiency in performance, strategy and building the image of the organization.
Steiner, Sundströ, & Sammalisto (2013)	6	Proposes a multidimensional model , as an analytical tool for academics and administrators university students in strategic work , to define the identity, image and reputation from the university.
Stensaker, & Benner (2013)	5	The article approaches a critical vision of the factors that condition universities to the ambitions of becoming more enterprising – particularly those younger in age and less academic <i>status</i> .
Albano, & Garcia (2013)	6	Reports the process of Strategic planning at a federal university and identifies possible difficulties and facilitating factors in its elaboration and implementation.
Garner (2013)	36	The Strategic planning in the Age of Disruption will require leaders who can cultivate a culture of organizational flexibility, having a vision of the future to recognize emerging trends and technologies and judge what to embrace and what to discard.
Silva <i>et al</i> (2013)	5	It analyzes the contributions of the Institutional Development Plan and Strategic Planning in the management of Brazilian federal universities.
Silva <i>et al</i> (2014)	5	It verifies whether the Strategic Plans of Brazilian federal universities present characteristics of project management .

Sharif, & Tang (2014)	24 5	Esse artigo avalia a atividade de inovação colaborativa universidade-indústria-governo realizada por universidades em Hong Kong e Shenzhen, China.
Stensaker (2015)	56	Propõe que a identidade organizacional é um conceito promissor para pesquisar tanto a continuidade quanto a mudança nas Instituições de Ensino Superior.
Thoenig, & Paradeise (2016)	25	It seeks to identify how much universities are capable of operate strategically in the social, cultural and cognitive approach. this perspective mesodeterministic suggests that universities can position themselves as actors or directors proactive and not just as agents of national reforms and political demands.
Morphew, Fumasoli, & Stensaker (2018)	25 8	The authors use the Strategic Plans of universities in northern Europe and North America to assess the influence on research that universities suffer due to external pressures and demands .
Krusea, Rakhaa, & Calderoneb (2018)	6	This article seeks to outline an agenda of diversity and cultural competence in university environments, highlighting the results of the cultural skills learning and the role of campus leadership in developing supportive traits.
Howes (2018)	5	This article analyzes the effectiveness of the practices of Strategic Planning at Australian universities, guided by the rhetorical question: 'how good are we and how do we know?'
Ferlie, & Trenholm (2019)	16	It analyzes how the new organizational forms of financing non-public are appearing in English Higher Education. It seeks to understand the degree of powers attributed to non-public bodies that encourage organizational changes .
Driskill, Chatham-Carpenter, & McIntyre (2019)	5	Analyze the transformation of a departmental culture , through a process of implementing a new mission statement.
Mezhouda (2019)	5	It highlights the potential value that Strategic Planning can offer to help Algerian research institutions improve their performance and achieve their goals .
Freitas, & Cordeiro (2019)	7	Analyze the influence of Organizational Culture on process management in the institution , based on data collection through questionnaire and interview.

Table 2 – Strategic Planning Approaches and Organizational Culture at Universities – 2010-2020.

Source: Prepared by the authors (2020).

Dimension	Featured in the article	Authors
Strategic plan	Higher education organizations are made up of people, but these institutions often neglect to include human capital as most important when facing internal and external forces.	Garner (2013, p.8)
	The Strategic Plan reveals a lot about the leadership of universities, however, it does not always reveal how the process to develop it was conducted, whether in an authoritarian, collaborative, consultative manner	(HOWES, 2018, p. 452).
	Thus, large foundations can complement the reduction in public funding.	Ferlie and Trenholm (2019)
Organizational culture	The main barrier that compromises process management is the Organizational Culture of the institution, extending this analysis to other public institutions, organizations and private companies	Freitas and Cordeiro (2019)
	It is a preponderant factor in positive communication and in the co-creation of better social worlds where the importance of a collaborative approach, ethics and trust are central.	Driskill <i>et al</i> (2019)
	It constitutes one of the barriers to good performance	Freitas and Cordeiro (2019),

Table 3– Strategic Planning and Organizational Culture in aspects of leadership and finance and performance.

Source: Prepared by the authors (2020).

When referring to the role of organizational image and identity, Steiner *et al* (2013) present a multidimensional model which included: organizational identity (historically defined concept); attitudes of staff and students; symbolic identity; influence of buildings, artifacts and reputation; and external evaluations.

Another aspect is the entrepreneurial and innovative university. This entrepreneurial and innovative strategic model can lead to institutional inertia at the University, characterized by an institutionalized *lock-in*, with few alternative forms of development (Stensaker, & Benner, 2013, p. 414).

In a study in Brazil, factors were identified that made it difficult or impossible to effectively formulate and implement Strategic Planning: power and Organizational Culture, in addition to the fact that it does not require the presence of a leader or formal authority in the process (Albano, & Garcia, 2013, p. 170-171). This is a feature, they point out,

1. It is characterized by being innovative, modern and even radical.

inherent to public organizations, in this case, public universities.

With regard to the process and implementation of Strategic Planning, Garner (2013) presented a study on the success of colleges and universities in the Disruptive Era¹. This success, according to the author, will depend on the leadership's ability to strategically respond to internal and external challenges and opportunities in constant change.

Addressing Strategic Planning on the one hand and Organizational Culture on the other, each author presents several aspects of leadership, finance and performance (Chart 3).

In the various readings, it was possible to identify that the Strategic Planning and the Institutional Development Plan provided opportunities for the self-knowledge of the researched universities, as well as the vision of their managers. This planning provides managers at different levels with a clear

perception of the institution's objectives, goals and strategic actions, within a larger horizon – the construction of a new institution.

A safer performance emerges, both in administrative and academic aspects in order to propose modifications to day-to-day structures and actions, allowing effectiveness and efficiency.

Universities must act and be proactive directors of national reforms and political demands and not just agents of these pressures (internationalization, globalization, competition, economic policies based on the knowledge society, the fiscal crisis, the increase in expenses with research and education).

QUESTIONNAIRES & INTERVIEWS

There is a contrast between the concepts of strategy and strategic capacity, and strategic plans reveal the organizational identity, showing its central, distinctive and lasting characteristics. since the plans involve the entire university community, with explicit objectives. Individualism, competitiveness, bureaucracy. Lack of resources, diversity and plurality of the academic environment can become barriers.

In the interviews, aspects cited with respect to barriers to NP are highlighted. One of the managers at the State University states: "It is the question of the individual, it is individualism. I think this can have different meanings, in different ways. But **the culture of individualism is the main barrier**" (Interviewee 1 - 04 Aug. 2020) (an emphasis was added in this stretch).

In another Federal Public Institution, the manager expresses about management competences by postulating that: "Lack of qualified competence, for the management of Strategic Planning. (...) So, I impute it this way, you know, if I can speak in **barrier is the lack of qualified competence to manage this work**" (Interviewed 3 - 18 Aug. 2020)

(highlight our).

Another manager, also from a Federal University, refers to the barriers provided by the bureaucracy and lack of resources she encountered during her tenure:

(...) "One of the biggest barriers is certainly financial instability (...) So the **financial instability, civil service bureaucracy**, it's a big problem for us. I don't know if it's in general society, that the person enters a competition, in a bidding process by a public body, as in our case, at a University, already wanting to take advantage, you know? Ever. So the money you had foreseen is no longer enough" (Interviewee 2 - 17 Aug. 2020) (an emphasis was added in this stretch).

During the research, authors point out in their articles that in UK universities the pluralization of funding marked major changes in the previously institutionalized pattern and present a critical view of radical innovation that can weaken institutional stability and resilience. Aspects of "reinventing, rethinking" the University are presented and effective and affective communication is a point of importance among the interviewees.

What is society missing? If society is not missing the Brazilian university with the exception of the actions of COVID 19.

The **Brazilian university needs to reinvent itself. She needs to rethink herself, because society doesn't miss her.** If society does not miss it, it is not fulfilling its role. (...) I say that those who want to do the vocational question, then go to work.

We are all professionals, we have to be competent and receive feedback for what we do. But the Brazilian University (I won't, I really don't have the knowledge and much less power to speak about the University in the world) ... But, the Brazilian university needs to be rethought. **We don't see any movement of people missing the University.** So, on the issue of training professionals... cool! Now in search and extension, **considering the university's**

teaching-research and extension tripod and with innovation and all that, no one is complaining for now. I don't know how long it will go. Needs to improve, not only for society to miss us, but to fulfill our role. Which is to bring knowledge to society. Because the knowledge generated by the agent has to lead the population, they have to feel the difference, they have to know that what is being done here is important to them, etc (Former Dean, Universidade Estadual de MS, Aug. 4, 2020), (an emphasis was added in this stretch).

In addition to reinventing, rethinking, the search for continuous improvement and effective communication are relevant in the words of the former dean of a Federal Institute:

So, I think so, **have to rethink a whole restructuring of the Labor Market, Education** of a world of thing! So, I don't know if at some political moment, we're going to have that, right? We're going to take a little longer to start rethinking, questioning, having people think about it, you know? The way it is today it is very difficult to think that the earth is flat! As I'm saying, 2020 will be a milestone, but I don't know if we, as Brazilians, have people who think about it, we have a lot of very good thinkers. But I don't know if they will be in the spotlight to discuss this because the political moment won't allow it" (Former Dean of the Federal University -18 Aug. 2020) (an emphasis was added in this stretch).

"Then an element enters, which is perhaps a paradox. Having those that you often have is a line of resistance, often an aspect of ignorance. **It's an aspect of fear, right, of the new.** And obviously the concept that settles for some is the concept of "more work". And on the contrary, this is where I say that communication is extremely important (...) **Effective communication is not affective**, then everyone thinks for themselves. Effective on the aspect of that result you expect to have better conditions in your work. You mirror the institutional results so that there is a **process of continuous improvement** of what is being

done. And more and more today we need to **present to society.** (...) part now. But much more of an education work, in our professional and technological case of an institutional delivery. What delivery does the teacher make? Enter a class of 30 and 40 students and hand in 2, 3, 4. Wait a minute, **we have to do a rethink?** I believe that this result has to be reflected even in the NP actions of didactic-pedagogical improvement, in the evaluation process, in the 360-degree evaluation. Where you have the evaluation of the internal community, the external community, and it's more or less in that sense, move there server. Because you are part of this process" (Former Dean of the Federal Institute – 18 Aug. 2020) (an emphasis was added in this stretch).

It is necessary to consider the need for continuous improvement, to become proactive, enterprising, innovative, competitive and with unquestionable values in society. In the voice of the interviewees, the university will have to "rethink" and deal with balance in the face of changes, safeguarding the knowledge already acquired and developed, but adapting them to a new era, without losing them in innovations.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The search to explain the knowledge that associates the dimension of Strategic Planning and Organizational Culture in Universities was carried out through publications of the last decade (2010-2020). Aspects that guarantee the implementation of the Strategic Plan and the Culture of Organizations were explained in order to secure the identity, image and reputation of the Universities in face of the changes of this century.

The survey results indicated that strategic planning has many characteristics of non-convergent project management due to culture. Neither in PE nor in Cultura, an explicit pattern of collaboration between

university-industry-government was not found. Competitive advantages associated with the PE that boosted its collaboration and innovation (internal and external) were observed.

The two approaches, Strategic Planning and Organizational Culture, were not found jointly or in research in the articles under review, however, the perception emerges that the adoption of Strategic Planning is associated with Organizational Culture and requires fundamental adaptations:

- Adjustments of *modus operandi*
- Construction of Knowledge and Organizational Culture supported by the collaboration of the academic community and the results of the institution
- Establish a clear performance in the triple helix: university-industry-government
- Establish leaderships that adhere to the university's strategic role in the social, cultural and cognitive perspective.

What is observed is that Planning adapts to Culture and modifies it in a symbiosis mechanism. Research by different authors shows that organizational knowledge, built on Strategic Planning adherent to the Organization's Culture, builds and has the potential to:

- Help institutions deal with new challenges and achieve their goals
- Mobilize research by improving research performance and researchers.
- Facilitate the monitoring of research, publications and results of academic activities.
- Allow a continuous analysis of your values, your identity and your image.
- Strengthen the Institution's image,

identity and reputation.

- Mitigate the scarcity of public resources to place it in a competitive position vis-à-vis funding sources.
- Respond satisfactorily to the demands of society and the government.
- Enable the institution to become proactive, enterprising, innovative and providing unquestionable values in society.
- A safer way for managers to conduct the institution.

In the interviews with Rectors and Former Rectors of Brazilian Universities, the need to reinvent and rethink academia was highlighted. In terms of Organizational Culture, the search for qualified skills, bureaucracy review, lack of resources and communication were highlighted items that influence and at the same time make Strategic Planning decisive for the organizational future.

There is a conservative view in opposition to entrepreneurial, innovative and disruptive institutional development; It is interesting to note that both (conservative and disruptive) seek an autonomous, free and dynamic university.

The profile of leaders to act in internal and external organizational demands stands out, which requires a mesodeterministic view in dealing with the diversity and plurality of the academic environment. This aspect of taking the lead in actions was also addressed by the interviewees.

The surveys selected and analyzed here also lead to another consideration, which is the *status quo* national and international analysis. Brazilian research seeks an internal focus on the process of elaboration and implementation of Strategic Planning and Organizational Culture, while international

researchers seek, more emphatically, the analysis of external interferences in relation to the strategically and culturally developed plan.

It is suggested that further research must be developed with the aim of identifying the enabling environment, and the Organizational Culture factors that can guarantee Strategic Planning and Management. It would be to establish guidelines in a current scenario abruptly affected by changes such as the one that is occurring with the pandemic caused by COVID 19, university managers needed to adapt their *modus operandi* to streamline remote teaching-learning processes as well as administrative activities.

The changes prove the importance of Organizational Knowledge that allows Strategic planning, not only with a risk management vision, but that of an Organizational Culture that can quickly adapt to the new.

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