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## **Influence of Human Resources Management policies on cross cultural teams in BRAZY Portugal**

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Masters in International Management

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September, 2023

Department of Marketing, Strategy and Operations

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**Abstract:**

The main goal of this thesis is to understand how employees from different cultures from BRAZY Portugal perceive several HR policies such as remuneration and benefits, learning and development, and performance evaluation and what they consider the most important to feel satisfied with their workplace. The nationalities that are a part of this research are: Portuguese, Ukrainian, Russian, Brazilian and Bangladeshi employees.

The method that was used to collect and analyze data was open-ended interviews, therefore, a qualitative research approach was used in order to identify the cultural differences.

The research was elaborated according to the following phases: open-ended interviews with all the employees from the organization, data analysis and identification of the cultural standards. Each answer was codified into one general sentence so each employee could be grouped with others who replied similarly.

The main findings were that Brazilian and Portuguese employees often replied similarly to several questions and the same happened to Ukrainian and Russian employees. The Bangladeshi employee answers were divided between one group and another. There were analyzed cultural models like Hofstede's cultural dimensions and GLOBE model and some of the answers aligned with the theories whether others were totally the opposite.

Therefore, results indicate that BRAZY Portugal should adapt their policies according to the multicultural environment that is present in the company to create a healthier and engaging workplace that will promote happier employees.

**Keywords:**

Culture, HR policies, satisfaction, Portuguese, Ukrainian, Russian, Brazilian, Bangladeshi.

**Resumo:**

O principal objetivo desta tese é perceber como os colaboradores de diferentes culturas da BRAZY Portugal percebem as diversas políticas de RH como remuneração e benefícios, aprendizagem e desenvolvimento e avaliação de desempenho e o que consideram mais importante para se sentirem satisfeitos com o seu local de trabalho. As nacionalidades que fazem parte desta pesquisa são: funcionários portugueses, ucranianos, russos, brasileiros e do Bangladesh.

O método usado para recolher e analisar os dados foi a entrevista aberta, portanto, uma abordagem de pesquisa qualitativa foi usada para identificar as diferenças culturais.

A pesquisa foi elaborada seguindo as seguintes etapas: entrevistas abertas com todos os funcionários da organização, análise dos dados e identificação dos padrões culturais. Cada resposta foi codificada em uma frase geral para que cada funcionário pudesse ser agrupado com outros que responderam da mesma forma.

As principais conclusões foram que os funcionários brasileiros e portugueses responderam frequentemente de forma semelhante a várias perguntas e o mesmo aconteceu com os funcionários ucranianos e russos. As respostas do funcionário do Bangladesh foram divididas entre um grupo e outro. Foram analisados modelos culturais como as dimensões culturais de Hofstede e o modelo GLOBE e algumas das respostas alinharam com as teorias sendo que outras eram totalmente opostas.

Assim, os resultados indicam que a BRAZY Portugal deve adaptar as suas políticas de acordo com o ambiente multicultural que está presente na empresa para criar um local de trabalho mais saudável e envolvente que promova funcionários mais felizes.

**Palavras-chave:**

Cultura, políticas de RH, satisfação, português, ucraniano, russo, brasileiro, bangladeshiano.

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## **1.Introduction:**

Due to the last decades economic events in the world, the connections of industries are growing more and more and national borders become less and less relevant. Because of that, the organizations need to expand and be more diverse in regard to their human resources and that leads to more complex working environments since the working style and some attitudes are being culturally influenced. Consequently, the need for cross-cultural management arised (Greblikaite & Daugeliene, 2010).

Authors like Browaeys and Price (2011) pointed out that cross-cultural management is related to understanding the behavior of employees inside the organization and finding ways of working alongside the diversity and with those employees being influenced by different cultures. Moreover, it is important to understand those differences to improve the relationships between employees and managers. This means that the main role of cross-cultural management is to make easier and focus the synergistic interactions between each member and promote multicultural domains of knowledge, values, and experience implementation (Søderberg and Holden, 2002).

When a company has a diverse workforce, it is important to find a way to engage and manage workers with different cultural backgrounds to improve the company's performance (Browaeys & Price, 2011). Additionally, it is important that the company finds ways of dealing with different challenges such as: what strategies work and what does not in different cultures (House, Javidan, Hanges & Dorfman, 2002).

During these last few years, the focus on studies about the importance of employees and the human factor as the most important tool to obtain competitive advantage has been growing. Following that conclusion, it is logical to conclude that the key instrument to create a company's strategy is to involve strategic human resources management since it creates a dedicated way of management which places the employees as the main resources to achieve organizational success. That way, the successful management of the employee's skills and knowledge will lead to motivation in the organization as well as more quality in work performance (Mihanovic, 2021).

Based on Huselid (1995), the research performed on the measurement of human resources practices and policies is limited and it still seems to be accurate until today. This issue is an interesting topic of research because the growing importance of international business also influences the growth of cross-cultural teams around the world and it is important to understand how to motivate each employee through HR practices and policies. Based on



that, the investigation will rely on the “Influence of human resources practices and policies on cross cultural teams”. The main objectives of this thesis would be to understand how Human Resources policies can influence the happiness and job satisfaction of a multicultural team and analyze how culture can influence that prioritization of needs. This study will analyze the view of the employees of BRAZY Portugal and understand what the best way is to manage the team, from human resources department perspective, in a way that both parts can benefit from it, leading to employees that enjoy going to work and a company that is satisfied with the results achieved by their employees.

The main policies that will be considered in this study will be: remuneration & benefits (how important is the remuneration aspect for each employee, what type of remuneration they prefer and why); performance evaluation (if they think it's important to evaluate the results of they performance, if they think that the evaluation should be based on the team merit or based on individual merit, if promotion should be offered based on performance vs seniority); lastly, learning and development will also be considered for the study (if training programs are important for the employees, if they usually attend the training programs when they are made available by the company, what type of training do they prefer - presential, online, mixed,etc).

As a result, the following research questions will be the base of the study:

- How does each employee with a contrasting cultural background perceive different HR policies?
  - This topic is related to the different practices implemented at the company and how each employee perceives them. The policies that will be studied in this research are mentioned above. Also, this study will focus on understanding better if there is anything that they would change to feel more satisfied in the workplace or if there is any policy that could/is affecting now the level of happiness at work. To address this issue, an interview will be conducted for each employee of the company.
- What are the main differences between employees with different cultural backgrounds?
  - To understand the reason behind each point of view regarding the company policies, we need to analyze if there is any significant difference in the way they work, socially interact, their priorities, etc. To answer this research question Hofstede Cultural Dimensions Theory of the countries that represent each one of our current employees (Ukraine, Russia, Portugal, Brazil, and Bangladesh) will be analyzed and also the GLOBE framework.

- How do we adjust the management to each culture to promote job satisfaction/happiness?
  - After analyzing the answer to the previous questions, the goal of the research is to understand if it is important or not to change or to plan every policy with the current multicultural environment of the team and how it will affect their performance and satisfaction with the workplace.

Based on the issue stated before and the objectives of the study, the structure of the dissertation will be divided into 7 chapters which are the following: chapter 1 will contain the introduction to the thesis and the importance of the topic. The second chapter will discuss the literature review including the concept of culture and distinctive approaches from diverse authors and the importance of culture in the companies. It will also discuss the meaning of cross-cultural management and why it is relevant for multicultural teams at the company. Moreover, Hofstede's cultural dimensions will be analyzed as well as the GLOBE framework to have a better understanding regarding the different nationalities that will be part of this study. Lastly, human resources management and human resources practices will also be included in this study since their importance in creating a bridge between the company and the employees. Chapter 3 will include the Methodology used to perform this thesis study. The following chapter (Chapter 4) will expose the data collected. In Chapter 6, the data collected will be analyzed. Lastly, in the Seventh Chapter, there will be a comparison between the data collected in the literature review and the data collected from the participants and the main conclusions, findings and implications about the research will be discussed.

### **1.1 Contextualization of the company:**

The dissertation will be concentrated on a company that started their business recently in Portugal but is already well established across different countries within the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) named BRAZY Portugal.

This company operates in the entertainment business branch more precisely in the eSports industry. It was founded in 2018 and now, in 2022 has more than 150 employees around the world. Here in Portugal, the company started to operate in October 2021.

At the present time, BRAZY Portugal has around 11 employees from different cultures, namely: Ukraine, Portugal, Brazil, Russia and Bangladesh. The board members are mainly from Ukraine and the institution of all the current policies and procedures were done according to Ukrainian methods of working. After a few measures were announced, some of the

employees decided to express their opinion about them and positive and negative reactions were received.

The existing departments at the company in Portugal are IT, Human Resources, Administration, Finance & Accountancy, Legal and Marketing. Mostly, the company is composed of Ukrainian employees that came from Ukraine to work on a new project here in Portugal. As stated before, the board members like the founder, CEO & CTO are originary from Ukraine.

At the moment, BRAZY is divided into different cultures in the following way (excluding the board members): 3 Ukrainian employees, 3 Portuguese, 2 Brazilian, 2 Russian & 1 Bangladeshi.

Regarding to some of the HR policies that are applicable in BRAZY Portugal:

-Compensation Benefits:

- Salary above market average, Meal allowance, Bonuses.
- Health insurance, gym membership fully paid, 25 days of vacation + 1 day off on birthday.
- Flexible Schedule.
- Hybrid work model (average of 2 days per week at the office, can be flexible if needed).

-Performance management:

- Salary is reviewed every 6-12 months.
- Since the project just started there are no specific KPIs implemented yet. Employees are working based on delivery deadlines and quality of the deliverables.
- The performance is reviewed on a team basis.

-Training & Development:

- Training is done based on each employee's needs.
- The 40h of training is divided into 20h of soft skills and 20h of hard skills (specially in the IT area where having access to constant technology update is important).
- Each employee was asked about what they want to learn this year (hard and soft skills) through a questionnaire and based on that, an individual training plan was developed for everyone.

To conclude, the study and analysis of this topic is interesting not only for Human Resources Development of the BRAZY company but also for everyone that is working with multicultural teams in every part of the world.

- From a more general perspective:

We live in a globalized world and lately multicultural teams have emerged even more than before when companies started to expand to other countries. For this reason, it's crucial to have an understanding about how these new cross-cultural teams react to different HR policies, how it will affect them as individuals and their job satisfaction.

Since the Human Resources Department is the closest to those employees in terms of support and policy creation, it's important to study this issue from a Human Resources Management perspective. If the aspects that each culture values the most regarding companies HR policies are being known and analyzed, it becomes easier to identify what will make those employees more satisfied and happier at their roles and additional employees can be more easily attracted to the company but also keep satisfied the ones that are currently working within the company. Especially now, when the job market is saturated in certain areas, it's important to develop employer branding strategies and show to the job market that the company values each one of their employees.

This study aims to understand the expectations and concerns of each employee based on their culture and if, in fact, there are any significant differences between those cultures.

- From BRAZY's human resources development:

This research is important for BRAZY because there exists a mix between different cultures. Since the company is just starting here in Portugal, there are no specific HR practices implemented so far but after observing the team dynamic it was shown that there are already small disagreements in regard to certain practices. It's important to understand where exactly those disagreements are coming from, provide recommendations about how to reduce them and how to promote greater job satisfaction at the company.

## **2. Literature review:**

### **2.1 Concept of culture**

To understand more recent culture definitions, it is important to understand how it evolved. One of the main authors that studied culture is Geert Hofstede and he defined culture as *“the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one human group from another”* (Hofstede, 1980, p. 25). According to the same author, the culture process is something that each person is exposed to since birth but is also learned through the extent of the person's life. For that reason, culture is not innate but acquired. (Hofstede, 1994).

There are also other more recent definitions of culture such as *“Culture is a pattern of shared tacit assumptions that was learned by a group as it solved its problems of external*

*adaptation and internal integration, that's has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think and feel in relation to those problems.*" (Schein, 2009, The Corporate Culture Survival Guide).

The definitions stated above express that culture is not something easy to change, because of previous collected learning experiences of a group. It also demonstrates the culture learning cycle since it mentions that not only it is assumed by the group, but it also is taught to new members of a certain society.

According to Hofstede (2001) & Zolfaghari et al. (2016), usually cultural values contemplate what are the logical behaviors of all the members of the society since it creates rules regarding what is ethical or unethical, acceptable or unacceptable, good or bad when we think about a certain social context and all members of the society look up to those "rules".

Furthermore, in accordance with Zwikael, Shimizu & Globerson (2005), culture is a shared occurrence because it is practiced and shared by members of the same society. So it is manifested and interpreted in relation to other individuals and in certain social contexts so for that reason, each society has their own different culture (Zolfaghari et al., 2016).

As reported by Hofstede (2005), culture is divided into four layers: symbols, heroes, rituals, and values. The first ones (symbols) have a particular meaning and are only recognized by members who share the same culture and usually those are defined by objects, pictures, gestures and/or words; heroes are real or imaginary people, that can be dead or alive, that serves as a behavior role model for a certain culture due to their characteristics being highly valued in a certain culture; rituals contemplate activities considered indispensable within a certain society although considered superfluous (Hofstede, 1994). The remaining level of culture are values that refer to preferences for "*certain states of affairs over others*" where the emotions are usually attached. Values are usually appraised as the core of the culture (Hofstede and Hofstede 2005).

According to Hofstede (1997), culture holds a crucial role in organizations since each team member has their own way of thinking, feeling, and acting. For that reason, culture influences job performance, relationships at the workplace and the acceptance level concerning the managers (Budín & Wafa, 2015). In the next chapter we will discuss the importance of performing cross-cultural management at every international company.

## 2.2 Cross Cultural Management

In the previous chapter it was discussed the concept of culture and how it influences the way that each person behaves and functions in a society. Looking at this issue from a management perspective, it's important to understand how an organization can effectively manage cross-cultural teams.

According to Greblikaite & Daugeliene (2010), because of the rising globalization of the economy, companies around the world must deal with diverse workforces. Furthermore, during the present century the migration also contributed to this diversification of workforce (Brunow & Nijkamp, 2018) and companies understood that this situation can bring benefits and be essential to the company goal achievement (Joplin & Daus, 1997). Those benefits are related to different skills, problem solution methods, experiences, knowledge related to different cultural background that provide competitive advantage (Brunow & Nijkamp, 2018). According to Braddock and Massam (2016), having a multicultural team benefits the organization because it avoids groupthink and blindness for new ideas, since each employee has different cultural backgrounds in addition to the experience.

Following Browaeys & Price (2011), cross cultural management is related to the behavior of people in a certain organization and the strategies created to manage the diversity of employees that are influenced by different cultures. For that reason, managers need to understand each culture present on the team and adapt themselves to those cultures, which means that the managers need to choose the best way to lead (Budin & Wafa, 2015).

One of cross-cultural definitions is stated by Adler (1983, p.226) and the author describes it as *“the study of the behavior of the people in organizations located in cultures and nations around the world. It focuses on the description of organizational behavior within countries and cultures, on the comparison of organizational behavior across countries and cultures, and, perhaps most importantly, on the interaction of people from different countries working within the same organization or within the same work environment.”*

As stated by S  derberg and Holden (2002, p.113), the main purpose of cross cultural management is to smooth and aim synergistic interactions between each member and promote multicultural domains of knowledge, values and experience implementation. To implement this, it's crucial to understand their actions and behavior and mostly how the diversity in culture influences each one of the members of the company. That is the reason why the leaders of successful organizations must be aware of a culturally diverse work environment and need to

know how to work with people with different backgrounds (Society for Human Resource Management, 2008).

According to the Society for Human Resources Management, 2008, it is of great importance to understand the behavior and how the different cultures influence employees, especially the leaders of each team since they need to understand the diversification of culture in the team that affects the atmosphere, work, and values of each one of team members.

On the other hand, if those cultural differences are to be ignored, being the headquarters country culture to be dominant, it may appear as a company that does not value cultural diversity which can result in hostility and impact the trading relationships. Besides, it can influence the function of the organization (Quappe & Cantatore, 2005).

Research demonstrates that the issue with managing cross-cultural teams is bigger than just providing a compatible workplace environment. Since each society is different and has contrasting habits, companies need to contribute with new management strategies to guarantee that each culture is consolidated in the system (Ma & Kang, 2020, p.169). As specified by these authors, leading a company with different cultures brings a lot of challenges since every culture has their own customs and norms that are totally distinctive from the other cultures. Employees that are currently working in multinational companies have different cultural backgrounds, since they have their own values, attitudes, reactions, practices, etc. This means that the main challenge is to understand how to combine this uniqueness so that everyone in the team can work together. Other challenges in cross-cultural teams are, for example, communication difficulties with people from different countries and creating a good relationship between employees. This may lead to errors related to misleading information and the organization's performance might be affected. Therefore, cross-cultural management is the main tool that is used to attenuate and balance the differences and challenges that multicultural teams bring to the team. It can be implemented through awareness programs that can expand the effectiveness of communication and cooperation.

According to Cuhlova (2015), culture and economy interact in a correlative relationship and the same happens with national and organizational culture. The national culture usually influences different fields in companies such as: leadership style, decision making process, communication, organizational structure, expectation of roles in the company and the employee motivation. For that reason, companies that have the goal to expand business in other countries need to analyze and understand how much home company culture they want to apply in management practices to fit in the new reality.

According to Scullion and Collings (2006), human resources management focuses on a single nationality rather than cross-cultural management which deals with the source of labor in an international scope (international human resources management) and it involves employees from at least 3 different countries. Therefore, to better understand human behavior, it is important to understand the culture, or cultural difference as it is the main explanation for the way that society functions (Breidenback & Nyiri, 2009, p.9).

To summarize, the main objective of cross-cultural management is to create a strategy or a plan that eases the differences in culture and allows the employees to work together and achieve organizational goals (Schreiber, 1996). It directly relates to the Human Resources strategy since the main goal of the HR team is to understand how this can be avoided or reversed and use the cultural diversity as leverage and as a resource to be more productive and meet the goals of the business, according to Quappe & Cantatore (2005). This includes the ability to understand what are the cross-cultural factors that have influence on the process and promote cross-cultural intelligence and communication on the organization (Society for Human Resource Management, 2008).

To understand cross cultural management, it is important to state the difference between cross-cultural management and human resources management. For that reason, in the next chapter it will be discussed how we can measure culture and which differences can be found in contrasting cultures.

## **2.3 Cultural Dimensions**

To explain the cross-cultural discrepancies, several different studies were performed to identify general cultural dimensions.

Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory was implemented in 1980 but it is still being put into practice and constant updates until nowadays. It is premised on the fact that each person from different parts of the world is guided by different beliefs, morals, attitudes, ethics, customs, etc (Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede, 2001). The main objective of those dimensions was to compare how differences in cultural groupings affect management. The original structure of dimensions included: power distance, individualism vs collectivism, masculinity vs femininity and uncertainty avoidance (Hofstede, 1980). However later it was extended to one more category, the fifth dimension, named short vs long term orientation (Hofstede, 1991), and later the sixth dimension was introduced as indulgence vs restraint (Hofstede, 2011).



Other cross-cultural researches that focused on identification of new ways of measuring the cultural dimensions that are also worthy of mentioning are for example the seven cultural level dimensions of Schwartz (1994) such as: Affective Autonomy, Intellectual Autonomy, Conservatism, Mastery, Harmony, Hierarchy and Egalitarian Commitment; and lastly, a more recent study performed by House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman and Vipin (2005) named GLOBE (Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness) and the emerging culture dimensions were the following: Power Distance, Uncertainty Avoidance, Institutional Collectivism, In-group Collectivism, Gender Egalitarianism, Assertiveness, Future Orientation, Humane Orientation and Performance Orientation. Research shows that GLOBE study is one of the most relevant ones as well as Hofstede's cultural dimensions (Brewer, 2008; Brewer and Venaik, 2014; Javidan, House, Dorfman, Hanges and de Luque, 2006). Since most of the research points to these two theories, this project will also apply GLOBE and Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory to the study.

### **2.3.1 Hofstede Cultural Dimensions:**

The first dimension is the Power Distance index, and it measures the degree of acceptance and expectation of unequal power distribution by the society. Inequality and power are present in every society and each society can be more unbalanced than the others. This means that the inequality is being analyzed from the below (less powerful) rather than from the above (more powerful), (Hofstede, 2011, p.9). In Hofstede & Hofstede 2005 analysis, it was concluded that the population of a nation (larger equals to higher Power Distance values), the wealth (prosperous equals to lower Power Distance values) and the geographic latitude (higher latitude equals to lower Power Distance values) have an influence on the results.

The second dimension is Individualism index which quantifies the society's level of individualism considering the opposite, collectivism (Hofstede & Hofstede 2005, p.78-79). Collectivism, being the opposite, is not an individual characteristic since it's related to the extent to which individuals in a society are integrated in groups. Collectivist culture groups are often characterized as strong and united groups where each person is integrated since birth. Those groups usually offer protection in exchange for loyalty and the extended family is considered (not only the direct relatives). On the other side, the individualist one, there are found cultures where the ties between the group members are loose since everyone takes care only after themselves or the direct family (Hofstede, 2011). Low Individualism index results means that societies support high individualism and individual rights. In high individualism

cultures, there is a bigger focus on self-orientation, individual achievements, and autonomy (Hofstede, 2001). The results of Hofstede & Hofstede 2005 research demonstrated that the wealthiest nations usually possess high levels of individualism and the opposite happens with the lower individualism index value cultures.

The third dimension is Uncertainty Avoidance, and it measures the tolerance for ambiguity of a certain society, which means that it explains to what degree certain members of a society feel comfortable or uncomfortable with unknown, unstructured, and different from the usual situations. High uncertainty avoidance result cultures usually try to reduce the chance of those situations by creating laws, rules, behavioral codes, etc. (Hofstede, 2011). On the other hand, the societies with low uncertainty avoidance results indicate that they accept with less difficulty changes and risks and are not afraid of uncertainty (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005).

The fourth dimension is Masculinity versus Femininity Index, a societal characteristic and it measures how a certain society values gender role (feminine vs masculine). Cultures with lower masculinity index results represent a feminine society, where men and women are treated equally. On the other hand, high masculinity index results show a wider degree of differentiation between the genders, where the dominant roles are males (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). According to Lievre & Tang (2015), masculinity is the contemplation of a society that sees as more important competition, assertiveness and success and femininity represents the valorization of personal relationships, compromise, and quality of life.

The fifth dimension is short-term versus long-term orientation index. It quantifies if a certain society is more focused on the past and present events or future events. Hofstede viewed long-term orientation culture as a society that would rely on future benefits such as flexibility and adaptation to possible changes and determination. On the other hand, short-term oriented cultures tend to focus more on societal responsibilities and national pride (Hofstede, 2005).

The sixth and last dimension, introduced in 2010 is Indulgence and Restraint (Hofstede, 2011). According to the author, indulgence is related to a culture that allows free gratification of human desires such as having fun and enjoying life activities. On the opposite side, restraint societies usually tend to control gratification of needs and regulate it with the support of social norms and rules.

### **2.3.2 GLOBE framework:**

After Hofstede's cultural dimensions framework, more recent research has been developed. Since 1992 GLOBE (Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness)

framework has been developed until today. The researchers of this study found nine different dimensions such as: future orientation, assertiveness, gender differentiation, uncertainty avoidance, In-group collectivism, institutional collectivism, power distance, humane orientation, and performance orientation.

According to House et al, 2004, these dimensions are explained as the following:

Starting by future orientation, it is described as the level of encouragement and rewards that are given to someone based on future-oriented behaviors like working for long-term success or planning. As the opposite to high future orientation, characteristics such as spending now rather than saving or receiving gratification as soon as possible are present.

Assertiveness can be described as the level of assertiveness of certain individuals and the degree of confrontation and aggressiveness in their relationships. When a society has a high level of assertiveness, the characteristics that are valued in that society are success, progress, and competition, to have control within the environment, initiative, among others. In the opposite situation, it is expected to see characteristics such as cooperation, harmony with the environment, loyalty, and warm relationships as the most valuable ones.

Gender egalitarianism/differentiation is represented as the level of minimization of gender inequality by collectivity or the degree of the maximization of these gender role differences. The societies with high gender egalitarianism we can find present characteristics like more female leads in higher positions and homogeneous degrees of education for females and males. In the opposite scenario, the important characteristics are less women in higher level positions or unequal level of female and male in education.

Regarding the uncertainty avoidance it is defined as the length to which the society depends on rules or social norms to attenuate unpredictable or future events. When a society has a high level of uncertainty avoidance usually the prevalent characteristics are formality during interactions, formalized policies, and procedures, calculating every risk and resistance to change. In the opposite situation the society usually relies on informal roles, uses informality during interactions, doesn't calculate risks to such detail and has a moderate resistance to change.

Focusing on In-group collectivism it is represented as the range to which the individuals of a certain society will demonstrate loyalty, pride, and cohesiveness either in their families or in organizations. Societies with high scores of in-group collectivism value characteristics like the importance of duties and obligations, relatedness, slower pace of life, and love in marriage has not much importance. In contrast, the important characteristics are the value of personal

needs and attitudes, rationality, faster pace of life, and the role of love has a great impact on marriage.

On the other hand, institutional collectivism is another dimension from this framework, and it is described as the level or range to which organizational or societal institutional practices motivate, incentive and reward the collective distribution of resources and actions. When institutional collectivism is high, the characteristics that are valued are group loyalty, maximization of collective interests, the rewards are given based on seniority and within-group equity. When institutional collectivism is low the important characteristics are the pursuit of individual goals, individual interests and rewards are distributed based on contribution to the task's success.

Power distance is described as the extent to which the society accepts the unequal distribution of power. Higher levels of power distance means that the society is divided in different classes, social order related to power, the resources are not available to everyone, the information not of free consultation. On the other hand, lower power distance means that the society has a predominant middle class, the power is related to coercion and corruption. the resources are usually available for everyone, and the information shared.

Humane Orientation is another dimension, and it is represented as the extent to which a certain society or organization motivates and rewards individuals for generosity, care, friendly and altruistic behavior, and kindness. Societies with high level of humane orientation usually value more the interests of others above their own, the need of belonging and affiliation is also present as well as the promotion of well-being of others and people are aware about the sensitivity of racial discrimination. In societies with low humane orientation happens the opposite, the most important is the self-interest, the motivation comes from power and material possessions and people usually are not informed about all forms of racial discrimination.

Lastly, Performance Orientation is defined as the degree to which the community rewards performance improvement, innovation, high standards and excellence. Societies with high performance orientation value characteristics like training and development, materialism, competitiveness, feedback for performance improvement, direct communication, among others. On the other hand, societies with low performance orientation usually value more family and societal relationships, harmony within the environment, feedback considered judgmental and indirect communication.

## **2.4 Human Resources Management**

Traditionally, Human Resources Management had the task of supporting functions and acting accordingly to external regulation in the matters of recruitment and selection, administration, remuneration, termination of the contract, among others. More recently, with globalization, it started to include more strategy to provide solutions related to administrative and legal necessities, labor policies knowledge and compensation and incentive policies, possessing country-specific knowledge on that matter (Teagarden & Glinow, 1997).

According to more recent studies, the definition of Human Resources Management can be considered, according to Oliveira and Oliveira (2011) as a set of strategies, policies and practices that are integrated, planned, and intended to manage people in the organization.

Following Armstrong (2009), Human Resources management adds another perspective to employment, protecting the well-being and development of everyone working in the organization in a coherent, strategic, and integrated way.

After globalization, the HR function developed all the HR preparations related to entry to the new country and all the international assignments involved. As a result, Human Resources Management is now being considered as a source of competitive advantage because it helps to create and enhance a promising workforce (Teagarden & Glinow, 1997). These authors have also defined Human Resources Management as the link that balances the organizational global management and how local employees will receive and accept it. This new approach to human resources management created a new definition, described as International Human Resources Management. Moreover, Tiwari (2012) stated that managing human resources is more challenging when we put side by side other resources like technology or capital so that's the reason why an organization requires to have an effective HRM structure and practices.

It is important to mention that one of the important aspects of HR Management, according to AlDamoe, Yazam, & Ahmid, (2012) is the fact that the company can achieve better performance only through the people that are working in the organization. According to Chênevert & Tremblay (2009), it is important that the practices and policies are aligned with the company and business strategy, culture, and mission to fulfill business goals.

The HR process is related to rules and practices that are followed to preserve, build, and utilize relevant skills of each employee to achieve organizational goals. The HRM focuses on incrementing the employee output to create more productivity and efficiency while individual goals are being taken into consideration (Marchand et al., 2015).

Human Resources Management becomes strategic when its practices align with organizational strategy to increase efficiency. Therefore, it's crucial for HRM to create a most favorable employee training and skill development program to meet the organizational objectives (Bratton, 2007). One of definitions that can be used to describe Strategic Human Resources Management is the following: *“the process whereby all the organizational functions and resources are integrated and coordinated to implement formulated strategies in order to achieve the long-term objectives of the organization and therefore gain a competitive advantage through adding value for the stakeholder”* (Ellers and Lazenby, 2007:1).

#### **2.4.1 Introduction to HR practices:**

Focusing on HR practices, these can be defined as processes, methods, and techniques that are used to build and enhance individual and collective skills, to motivate the employee to perform well and offer opportunities to participate in the decision-making process (Wright & Kehoe, 2008). According to Oliveira and Oliveira (2011), HRM practices are the activities that are implemented by the organization and that are experienced by the members of the organization that can be measured and verified objectively. This definition translates into following activities: recruitment & selection, training and development, performance evaluation, communication, and compensation & benefits (Godard, 2010; Demo, Martins, & Roure, 2013; Werner, 2014; Zeidan, 2014).

According to Whitener (2001), the employee offers more commitment and trust when they have a support system offered by the company. The HR practices are the bridge between the employee and the company and are being used to create this system. For that reason, according to Demo (2012), human resources policies and practices need to be designed in a way that they can contribute to professional fulfillment and well-being of the employees.

- **Compensation and rewards:** One of HR practices and roles is to create the salary and remuneration system for the employees. During the formulation of the salary scheme, it is important to consider employees qualifications and skills to impact the culture positively. Moreover, employees look in a positive way to these aspects which increase the organizational skills and can promote better relationships between employees, customers and supervisors since these policies encourage loyalty and enthusiasm (AL-Khrabsheh, et. al. 2022). According to Armstrong (2002), the compensation and reward system is a set of policies, practices and processes that are created to the employees of the organization related to their skills, market worth and competence. It can include not

only the salary but also benefits and other forms of reward. It is identified as a system of standards, rules and procedures related to the distribution of benefits and remuneration to employees as a reward for their work and it can be intellectual or physical as described by Delery & Shaw (2001). It is important to have this system in all organizations in order to motivate the employees to achieve the company's strategic goals (Aksakal and Dagdeviren 2014). Employers offer remuneration packages that usually not only include cash but also benefits to recruit and retain employees, since it can be more valued and relevant to some applicants or employees (Martocchio, 2009). Besides, it not only benefits the employees, as they might choose benefits that are not available for them as a particular identity or at a certain price, the organization can be able to offer that service or product at a lower cost. Other than that, it benefits the company since offering the employees benefits instead of cash leads to spare some of the financial resources of the company since most of the benefits are not taxed (Martocchio, 2009).

- **Training and development:** When the organization offers to the employees different training programs that gives them a chance to build more skills, it creates a positive work environment (AL-Khrabsheh, et. al. 2022). Training is defined as the transmission or acquisition of certain skills, knowledge, or abilities. Usually, it is offered to improve the performance of the employees through learning (Delery & Shaw, 2001). As mentioned by Demo (2012), training and development is related to the acquisition of skills by the employees and the continuous stimulation for learning and knowledge production by the company.
- **Recruitment and Selection:** it is a process where the organization decides upon a set of issues related to hiring someone. Usually, the organization needs to recruit candidates and then one or more of them will be selected through the selection process that contemplates the skills needed to fit the organization's needs (Delery & Shaw, 2001). According to Demo (2012), recruitment and selection is related to the action of finding employees, so the first step would be to stimulate candidates to apply and select the ones that the company wants to integrate in the process. The following step would be to understand the competencies and characteristics of each person and compare with the organization demands and select the one that is the better match.
- **Performance Evaluation:** is a process that is recurrent through a certain period and has a main goal of analyzing the results of employees' work, if they are working according to the standards defined, according to the objectives established, among

others. Most of the time, bonuses or other benefits can be connected to the objectives that the employee needs to achieve during that time (Delery & Shaw, 2001).

## 4. Research Design

### 4.1 Research Model:

The main goal of this qualitative study is to describe the perceptions of BRAZY corporate-controlled employees from different nationalities about HR policies and practices that are being implemented in multicultural organizations. In this study, corporate-controlled employees include every member of the organization except for the board members, which means that it encompasses mid-level managers and operational employees. For that reason, an empirical study was applied that focused on interviews performed with the employees of BRAZY Portugal.

Topic	Research Questions	Literature Review
The importance of culture		Hofstede (1980, 1994, 1997, 2001, 2005), Schein (2009), Zolfaghari et al. (2016), Zwikael, Shimizu & Globerson (2005), Budin & Wafa (2015)
What are the different HR policies (compensation & benefits, training & development and performance management)	1- How do each employee with a contrasting cultural background perceive different HR policies?	Wright & Kehoe (2008), Oliveira and Oliveira (2011), Godard (2010), Demo, Martins, & Roure (2013), Werner (2014), Zeidan (2014), Whitener (2001), Demo (2012), AL-Khrabsheh, et. al. (2022), Armstrong (2002), Delery & Shaw (2001), Aksakal and Dagdeviren (2014), Martocchio (2009)
Understand the differences between cultures (Hofstede cultural dimensions & GLOBE Framework)	2- What are the main differences between employees with different cultural backgrounds?	Hofstede (1980, 1991, 2001, 2005, 2011), Schwarts (1994), House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman and Vipin (2005), Brewer (2008), Brewer and Venaik (2014), Javidan, House, Dorfman, Hanges and de Luque (2006), Lievre & Tang (2015), House et al (2004)
The role of HR management (what is human resources management and cross cultural management)	3- How do we adjust the management to each culture to promote job satisfaction/happiness?	Greblikaite & Daugeliene (2010), Brunow & Nijkamp (2018), Joplin & Daus (1997), Braddock and Massam (2016), Browacys & Price (2011), Budin & Wafa (2015), Adler (1983), Söderberg and Holden (2002), Quappe & Cantatore (2005), Ma & Kang (2020), Cuhlova (2015), Scullion and Collings (2006), Breidenback & Nyiri (2009), Schreiber (1996), Society for Human Resource Management (2008), Teagarden & Glinow, 1997), Oliveira and Oliveira (2011), Armstrong (2009), Teagarden & Glinow (1997), Tiwari (2012), AlDamoe, Yazam, & Ahmid, (2012), Chênevert & Tremblay (2009), Marchand et al., (2015), Bratton, (2007), Ellers and Lazenby, (2007).

**Table 1:** Foundation of the theoretical model

The table presented above has the objective of presenting the foundation of the theoretical model of this investigation. The main research questions discuss different issues that influence the employees of BRAZY Portugal.

The main issue to be considered in this research project are the preferences of each employee regarding different HR policies of the company, considering their culture. It is an important topic to be discussed, given the fact that HR policies influence how each employee perceives their workplace and their motivation to work, as well as their performance and job satisfaction (Sutherland, 2004). According to Ting (1997), human resources policies are often related to job satisfaction. As reported by Applebaum et al. (2000), if human resources policies



are clear and well written it will lead to a higher level of job satisfaction which consequently will lead to a better organizational performance. Therefore, it is important to understand these preferences because by finding certain aspects that influence their job satisfaction, the company can understand better what motivates the employees to perform better and feel satisfied in the workplace.

Other topics that will be researched on this project are related to the main cultural differences between employees from different countries. This issue will be discussed after the results of the previous topic (preferences of each employee regarding different HR policies), because the researcher wants to study if it is possible to establish a relation between the preferences of each employee and their culture according to well-known models, such as, Hofstede Cultural dimensions and GLOBE model. It is important to study the different cultures in BRAZY Portugal, since cultural differences may affect leadership because topics or aspects that are easily understood in one culture may not be understood in another. That's the reason why the organization's leadership style may be affected, since the definition of a good leader may be different for each culture that is present at a certain company (Foregard, 2021).

Lastly, following the logical sequence of events, it is also crucial to study the role of HR management in promoting job satisfaction between employees of BRAZY Portugal and emphasize organizational performance. According to Coleman III et al. (2023), HR is the main department responsible for employee experience, since it is the department that is also accountable for generating an engaging work environment which will lead to greater organizational results. This means that one of HR goals is to measure and manage each employee's expectation on the company's culture to promote happiness at the workplace. That's why it is important to research and retrieve data from employees on how BRAZY Portugal can promote job satisfaction/happiness, according to the opinion of each employee of the company.

Having that in mind, several questions for the interview were established and the guideline for the interview was created based on the objectives of the study and the literature review. Therefore, the interviews performed had the main goal of collecting the best amount of information as possible regarding the opinion of the employees of BRAZY Portugal on the topic. During the research, there were 11 face-to-face interviews, which means that all the employees of the company participated in the study, so considering that we are using the population of our study, it is representative of the behavior of employees of BRAZY that operates in Portugal.

## 4.2 Data Collection:

To collect important data for the research project, the following were used:

- a) open-ended interviews.
- b) scientific document reviews

The primary data consists mainly of words. Each interview will be recorded and take place at the workplace or video call. Later, it will be transcript into written text. Each participant will be facing the same set of questions related to their experience and opinion about the topic studied.

Qualitative data analysis can be defined as the “Qualitative data analysis is the interpretation and classification of linguistic (or visual) material with the following aims: to make statements about implicit and explicit dimensions and structures of meaning making in the material and what is represented in it. Meaning making can refer to subjective or social meanings. Often qualitative data analysis combines rough analysis of the material (overviews, condensation, summaries) with detailed analysis (development of categories and hermeneutic interpretations). Frequently, the final aim is to arrive at statements that can be generalized in one way or the other by comparing various materials or various texts or several cases” (Flick, 2018). According to Doody and Noonan (2013), qualitative research aims to gain a better understanding of each participants’ life and environment.

There are several degrees of analysis involved, such as implicit and explicit levels of meaning which means that often it is necessary to pay attention to the straightforward message during communication and to the implied meaning of it.

Regarding the other source of information, which is document review, the researcher believes it can be used to discover more balanced results. Apart from the literature review, document review will also be used as a tool on other topics of the research, mainly during the research of the second problematic (main cultural differences between employees from different countries), where it will be necessary to study cultural models such as: the five dimensions of Hofstede and GLOBE model. Documents can be an easily available source for the research, and since those are scientific, they have less limitations when compared to interviews (Saldana, 2015).

### **4.3 Interview design:**

The main intention of interviews are to deepen the understanding of the experience and opinions of BRAZY employees working in Portugal. The interviews were scheduled between 1st of February and 28th of February of 2023, being the date and time discussed with each candidate as per their availability. The data collection method that was used to collect the information was semi-structured interviews with each one of BRAZY employees that work in different departments in the organization. The interview questions were open-ended and intended to gather information about each participant's perspective on HR policies that are practiced nowadays in companies. The interview's estimated time is around 30 minutes and were recorded on Zoom meetings. The questions will be divided in three parts, each part belonging to a specific HR policy. Part A will engage questions related to compensation and benefits, Part B will be related to questions about learning and development and the third Part (C) will have to do with performance evaluation. The employees have different nationalities such as: Portuguese, Brazilian, Ukrainian, Russian & Bangladeshi, but all of them are currently located in Portugal.

### **4.4 Selection of the participants:**

Since it was an investigation based on primary sources, there were performed interviews with the elements of BRAZY Portugal that are corporate controlled employees. For the investigation, 11 employees were interviewed. All the participants had previous work experience before joining BRAZY Portugal. As all the participants are reachable in their workplace, they were reached through the organizational channels. The participants were chosen because the researcher can contact the elements of the research daily since they are from the same company, where the researcher is responsible for the application of the HR policies.

To perform the interview, all employees from BRAZY Portugal were invited to participate in the interviews except the board members. Since the size of this sample population is small (11 employees), it is possible to perform the interviews with each employee as all of them agreed to participate. Now of the interviews, each employee had been working in the company for at least 6 months.

The secondary sources that were used in this research focused on information retrieved from bibliographic research such as scientific articles, books, and websites.

## 5. Methodology

Relatively to the methodology used to investigate the information, it was used a qualitative methodology to analyze the interviews made, and understand the dynamics of the elements being them exposed to the thematic which is the main topic of the research and understand the meaning that each person subjected to this study give to the phenomenon, each one of them in the same context so that they are exposed to the same reality when interviewed. In that way, it is possible to analyze the information inductively, possible through the analysis, observation, and collection of the scientific facts (Vilelas, 2009).

The choice of a research methodology depends mostly on the nature of the research questions, and in this thesis, those are related to more explorative studies, so the qualitative methods appear to be the most suitable choice (Strauss and Corbin, 1990), since it uses open questions to explore other perspectives instead of measuring the results by numbers.

Usually, qualitative methods are more useful to answer questions about others' perspectives, experiences, and meanings of the participants. Qualitative research methods are related to “small-group discussions” to explore concepts of normative behavior, attitudes, and beliefs, while “semi-structured interviews” usually look for views on specific topics and include an institutional perspective and background information. Lastly, “in depth interviews” are mostly about understanding the condition, experience, or a certain event from a personal perspective. Consequently, the qualitative methods are focused on in-depth understanding of the experiences, opinions, and words and not on numbers which happens during the quantitative analysis (Hammarberg, Kirkman and de Lacey 2015).

Regarding the primary source of retrieving information, which is the interview, it may have an implicit degree of subjectivity related to the answers gathered, however it was considered the most suitable method since it allows the participants to provide themselves all the data regarding the topics studied (Carmo & Ferreira, 1998). The technique of the semi-structured interviews was used to develop the interview questions and some of them can be more implicit than others but always not rigid so the conversation can run in a fluid way. Furthermore, even if some questions were previously prepared, it was allowed for the interviewer and the rest of the participants to have some flexibility and deviate from the main questions to reconfirm some data for example, or to reinforce some topic whenever necessary. According to this description, it can be confirmed that it is a planned interview, however it has some spontaneous indicators which allows to gather qualitative and quantitative information

(Werr & Styhre, 2002). By interviewing different nationality members of BRAZY company who have already worked either in this organization or other it is possible to collect critical data and related information.

According to Rubin & Rubin (2012), interviews are characterized by three main features which are: rich and detailed information in contrast with agree or disagree or yes or no answers. This means that the questions are open-ended. Furthermore, the order of the questions and the questions itself aren't fixed since they can be adapted according to the interview conversation flow. The participant can answer the question based on the knowledge it has about the topic (Flick, 2018).

The advantage of choosing this type of interview is related to the flexibility and low formalization of the processes since it allows to gather more detailed and profound data to the topics related to the issue of this research but also gives access to more spontaneous information. On the other hand, performing interviews also do not require using a rigid criterion which is beneficial since that way it is easier to obtain deeper and detailed information (Vilelas, 2009). Lastly, since the company under study has a small amount of personnel working and performing, other types of data collection methods wouldn't make sense given the number of participants.

On the other side, a disadvantage of this data collection method would be a possible heterogeneity of answers that will be obtained which can create some difficulties on grouping the answers and comparison between them, and problems with data synthetization (Vilelas, 2009). Another limitation of this method according to Pole and Lampard (2002), is the fact that the interviews are mannered by a certain interview situation and are socially constructed. It means that not always it will lead to the total uncovering of the deep truth of personal experience, belief, or opinion. The major feedback related to qualitative methods are mostly related to their validity and reliability, since it might be understood as subjective since it's the researcher that interprets the data retrieved from the interview (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998). For that reason, quality researchers guide themselves based on integrity through the following criteria: credibility, applicability, consistency, and trustworthiness (Leininger, 1994).

The reason to choose this research methodology (semi-structured interviews) is related to the fact that one of the goals of this investigation is related to understanding in depth how each employee perceives HR practices based on their nationalities and allow them to express their experiences and ideas through direct communication.

Regarding the interview guide, the reviewed literature was the basis to the elaboration of the questions. The interview was divided into several different topics namely: performance

evaluation policy, learning and development policy and compensation policy. The questions were developed based on the research questions and the interview guide is the following:

- How important do you consider remuneration and benefits? Why?
- What do you consider the most important aspect of your remuneration and benefits pack? Why?
- Do you think investing in learning and training is important for you as an employee? Why?
- Do you usually participate in all learning and development programs that the company makes available for you? Why?
- What type of training programs do you prefer (presential, online (elearning, webinars, microlearning, etc)? Why?
- Do you think it's important to evaluate the results of your performance? Why and how often?
- If yes, should this evaluation be analyzed on the team level or on individual level? Why?
- When we are talking about promotion, should it happen based on performance or based on seniority of the employee?
- What other practices could the company implement for you to feel satisfied and happy in your job?
- Is there any policy/practice/procedure that could be implemented in the future that would decrease your job satisfaction?

At this point it is important to note that during the execution of the interviews the order of the questions may not be relevant, since it was a semi-structured interview. That way, it will be possible to mention all the details that each participant thinks are relevant. Therefore, the interview guide is a sort of a tool to support the interview and helps to secure that all the areas of interest are covered during the session.

After the interviews were performed, it was made a reproduction of the recordings translated into documents (written texts) and the analysis of the content was made following this order: organization of the ideas, followed by exploration of all material available and lastly, process the information obtained and interpret the results.

## 6. Data Analysis and Results:

### 6.1 Introduction:

In this chapter, the main objective is to describe the data collected. This means that it will establish a relationship between the theoretical models presented in the previous chapters and the analysis & data collected. For each topic of research, it will be presented the main similarities and differences or any other findings that could be relevant for the research. Therefore, this chapter will be the main contributor to produce the final discussion and conclusions that will be presented in the following chapter.

### 6.2 Characterization of the participants:

The participants are characterized by being predominantly formed by men (67%). Regarding the age distribution, the largest group of participants is between 20 and 30 years, being the average 31,3 years old.

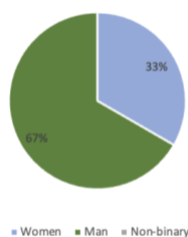


Figure 1: Gender distribution

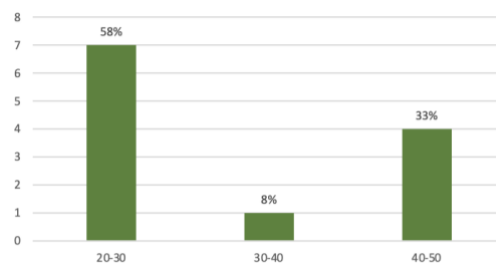


Figure 2: Age distribution

Relatively to academing background, 75% of employees pursued higher education, which includes 67% of employees who have a bachelor's degree diploma and 8% who additionally have their Master's degree concluded.

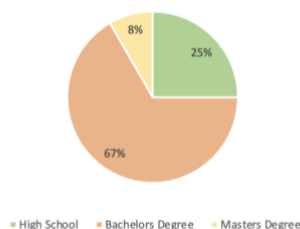


Figure 3: Academic background distribution

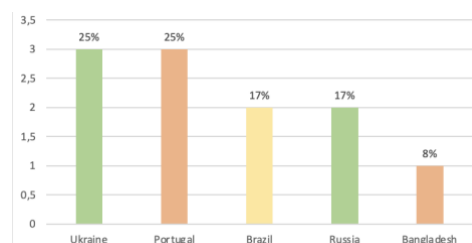


Figure 4: Cultural background distribution

Lastly, considering the main topic of this research, it is important to analyze the different cultures present at the time of the development of the research at the company. This organization has a diverse range of cultures, with Ukrainian and Portuguese employees being

the most predominant ones (25% each), followed by Brazilian and Russian employees, corresponding to 17% and Bangladeshi (8%).

### **6.3 Presentation of results:**

The information retrieved from the interviews allowed the researcher to codify the answers and evaluate the similarities and differences between the results obtained. Besides, the results were organized according to the theoretical model exposed previously and according to the order of questions that were the main tool to obtain data from the participants. The topics to be covered in the first part of the results analysis will be the questions related to remuneration & benefits policy, learning and development policy and promotion policy. After the first part of the presentation of the results is complete, the following step is to analyze the last two questions from the interview related to the role of Human Resources management in order to promote job satisfaction.

For each question, it will be presented the different options of answer (that were codified), and the frequency that a certain option was mentioned by the participant. Also, the information will be organized by each nationality so it will be clear the distinction between what was mentioned the most by the employees of BRAZY Portugal, but also, what was mentioned by each nationality. The frequency can be an important indicator since it helps to understand what can be defined as a tendency or a characteristic within a certain group. Moreover, it will be important to paraphrase certain sentences from the participant's answers to explore further certain dimensions, to support the theory developed and obtain substantial and richer information.

Lastly, the researcher will present and analyze Hofstede's cultural dimensions model and GLOBE model and see if the answers that were answered by each cultural group matches their cultural description according to those models.

#### **6.3.1 Remuneration & Benefits Policy**

The first topic that was the object of data collection is about the perception of each employee regarding remuneration and benefits policies in their experience as employees.

To the question “How important do you consider remuneration and benefits? Why?”, were identified different answers that were codified into the following dimensions:



Dimensions	Frequency
The most important	IIIIII
Not the most important but still important	IIII
Not important	-

**Table 2:** “How important do you consider remuneration and benefits? Why?” General answers distribution.

Looking at the general information and at the group, the data shows that the group finds remuneration an important factor on their jobs. No one of the participants mentioned remuneration as a non-important factor and the majority replied as it being the most important factor.

When the information is analyzed by cultural categories, the following information was retrieved:

Dimensions	Portugal	Ukraine	Brazil	Rússia	Bangladesh
The most important		III		II	I
Not the most important but still important	III		II		
Not important					

**Table 3:** “How important do you consider remuneration and benefits? Why?” Answers distribution per culture.

From the table above, the significant information that is important for the research is the fact that the employees that are from Ukraine, Russia and Bangladesh consider remuneration and benefits the most important factor at work. From Ukrainian employees, it was interesting to observe that more than one employee mentioned equality in the payment regarding the job performed: “If the job is the same, it should be paid equally(…)” and “Each employee of the company should feel valued equally for the same efforts or the same job, whether it’s a man or woman.” Moreover, something that was mentioned by the three cultures that choose this option is the fact that the salary is their main motivator to perform at work: “I won’t be able to focus, and I will lose interest.”, “The salary is a motivation to keep going(…)”, “That way I feel motivated.”.

Regarding Portuguese and Brazilian employees, they find that remuneration is important, but they consider other factors as well to determine their job satisfaction. The aspects most mentioned by the Brazilian participants are that it’s not the most important aspect of a job, however, it shows if a company values the employee or not and also, they emphasize the environment of the company for the quality of life and job. When we look at the Portuguese participants' answers, the interest in the tasks or projects were mentioned by one of the participants and other answers were related to retribution being the indicator whether an employee is or isn’t important for the company, and also to the quality of life being more important than the salary: “It’s more important for the person to feel important for the

company(...)”, “(...) the working culture was awful so the salary wasn’t enough to make up for the rest.”

Another question asked about remuneration and benefits policy was: “What do you consider the most important aspect of your remuneration and benefits pack? Why?” and the following dimensions were identified:

Dimensions	Frequency
Base salary	IIII
Health insurance	IIIIIII
Gym Membership	IIIIII
Study Allowance	I
Transportation Allowance	II
Retirement plans	I
Bonuses	II
Team building activities	I
Childcare support	I

**Table 4:** “What do you consider the most important aspect of your remuneration and benefits pack? Why?” General answers distribution.

Based on the information above, the most valued benefits are the health insurance, followed by the gym membership and the base salary. The rest of the benefits that were mentioned may not be considered that important for the team in general.

Looking at this information from another perspective, when the answers are divided by culture, the results are the following:

Dimensions	Portugal	Ukraine	Brazil	Rússia	Bangladesh
Base Salary		III		II	
Health Insurance	III	III	I	I	
Gym membership	III	I	II	I	
Study Allowance					I
Transportation allowance	I		I		
Retirement plans			I		
Bonuses	I			I	
Teambuidling activities		I			
Childcare support		I			

**Table 5:** “What do you consider the most important aspect of your remuneration and benefits pack? Why?” Answers distribution per culture.

As it can be seen on the table above, regarding the Base Salary, mostly Ukrainian and Russian employees consider it the most appealing perk on a benefit package: “The base salary is a deal breaker(...)”, “The base salary is the most important since we work to receive it so we can live our lives and pay our bills”, “The most important factor is the base salary(...), I would prefer to receive a higher base salary and no other benefits.”

The health insurance benefit was considered as one of the most important ones by almost every nationality except for the employee from Bangladesh and as we can see on the table above, the answers corresponding to health insurance represent the totality of employees

from Portugal, Ukraine and Brazil: “Also the health insurance (...) because it shows that the company cares about my health.”, “Health insurance is important because it offers the private health sector (...)”, “Health insurance (...) is useful and important for health (...)”, “the most attractive one would be the health insurance and (...)”.

Moving to the next benefit, that is related to gym membership, it is mostly valued by Portuguese employees, since all of them picked it as one of the most important benefits. This score is followed by Brazilian employees, who also believe it to be the most important perk. Regarding Ukraine and Russia, only one employee of each country has chosen this option and no one from Bangladesh has picked that choice: “(...) paid gym membership it’s good for your health but also stimulates going to the office more often.”, “(...) access to the gym (...) because it improves our work life balance and our health.”, “(...) gym membership entirely paid by the company is important to take care of our physical and mental health.”, “If looking at the benefits, the most attractive ones would be (...) the gym membership.”

Regarding the study allowance, only one employee has chosen this benefit, from Bangladesh: “I believe that the most important benefit is monetary help to finish my studies (...)”. Transportation allowance was chosen by one Brazilian and one Portuguese employee: “Help with the transportation to the office, since we are not practicing 100% remote work.” and “(...) the transportation allowance is a big help since we need to relocate to the office.” Looking at retirement plans, it shows that only one Brazilian employee has chosen this option as the most important one in the benefit package: “Retirement plans are certainly interesting (...)”. Lastly, team building activities and childcare support was only mentioned by Ukrainian employees: “Team building activities, I like to socialize with my colleagues and get to know them better.”

### **6.3.2 Learning & Development Policies**

The second topic that was the object of data collection is about the perception of each employee regarding learning and development policies in their experience as employees.

To the question “Do you think investing in learning and training is important for you as an employee? Why?” were identified different answers that were codified into the following dimensions:

Dimension	Frequency
Yes, it's very important.	IIIIIIII
It's important however...	III
It's not important.	

**Table 6:** "Do you think investing in learning and training is important for you as an employee? Why?" General answers distribution.

Looking at the general information and the group, the data shows that the group finds it important to invest in training and learning. No one of the participants mentioned learning and training as a non-important factor, and the majority replied as it being a very important aspect of their development.

When we analyze the information by cultural categories, the following information was retrieved:

Dimensions	Portugal	Ukraine	Brazil	Rússia	Bangladesh
Yes, it's very important		III	I	II	I
It's important however....	III		I		
It's not important					

**Table 7:** "Do you think investing in learning and training is important for you as an employee? Why?" Answers distribution per culture.

From the table above, it can be concluded that when it comes to BRAZY employees, mostly the Portuguese, they think that training is important, however, there are some aspects that need to be considered, such as: "Yes, but it depends on the employee (because not always employees want to take that chance to learn something new and don't go to those trainings).", "If the company doesn't really care about what employees need or want to learn, then I prefer that they don't invest the money in it at all." and "I feel that there is a lack of motivation from Portuguese companies into investing in training."

Moving to the answers of Ukrainian employees, they were also homogeneous, and all of the participants considered training an important aspect of their professional development: "Yes, of course. (...) The employee develops his skills but it's also good for the company to have capacitated employees." & "Yes, it's very important. (...) I always need to be updated." & "Yes, it's important in order to develop each employee's capacities."

Brazilian employees had slightly different opinions in terms of training, even though both consider training and learning an important factor. One of the employees answered that it's very important: "Investing in my training adds a lot to my professional value and helps me deliver a better service". The other employee also considers it important, however only if it contributes directly to his job and creates value to him and to the company: "It needs to generate value for both sides. I will always give priority to the training directly related to my job (...)".

When it comes to Russian employees, both considered training an important factor in their professional life: “Yes, it allows the employee to move forward and to complete or freshen its knowledge.” & “Yes, the company is not only investing in the employee but also in itself since employees will (...) be more capable at their jobs.”

Lastly, the employee representing Bangladesh also finds training very important in his professional life: “Yes, because that way the employees can contribute more to the task.”.

Another question asked about learning and development policy was: “Do you usually participate in all learning and development programs that the company makes available for you? Why?”. The following dimensions were identified:

Dimensions	Frequency
Yes, always.	IIII
Only when it's aligned with my interests.	IIIII
No.	

**Table 8:** “Do you usually participate in all learning and development programs that the company makes available for you? Why?” General answers distribution.

Looking at the general perspective, the most popular answer was “Only when it’s aligned with my interests”, which means that mostly, the employees of BRAZY company only attend training that is directly related to their role and if it’s something new that wasn’t lectured previously. The rest of the employees replied that they will attend any training that is proposed by the company.

When we analyze the information by cultural categories, the following information was retrieved:

Dimensions	Portugal	Ukraine	Brazil	Rússia	Bangladesh
Yes, always	I	II	I	I	
Only when it's aligned with my interests	II	I	I	I	I
No					

**Table 9:** “Do you usually participate in all learning and development programs that the company makes available for you? Why?” Answers distribution per culture.

Starting with Portuguese employees, they replied that they attend the training programs according to their interests: “If I am interested in the topic, I will attend.” and “Always as possible, unless it’s something that wouldn’t add value to my professional career”. Only one employee replied that would attend any training program: “I try to be present in each training initiative from the company (...)”.

Regarding Ukrainian employees, the dynamic changes slightly when compared to Portuguese, since two employees replied that they always attend the training: “The only reason that I might think of is when I am unavailable to attend or sick, otherwise I will be present at

everything.”. The other employee replied that there is a need to learn new things otherwise it’s not interesting: “I like to learn about new things so if the training is about something that I am aware of, I will not participate.”

When we analyze the Brazilian employees' answers, on this topic there is a divergence between the answers. One of the employees replied that attending all the trainings is important: “It’s interesting to develop in different areas.”. The other employee replied that he will participate only in the trainings that are of his interest: “Usually yes, but only in the ones that interest me so I don’t waste either my time and resources but also the company’s.”

Russian employees replied similarly to the Brazilian employees. One of the employees answered that only attend if the subject of the training is something new to its knowledge: “Usually yes, only if I can’t be there or the subject of the training is something that I already have a deep knowledge about then I will not come.”. The other employee replied that he tries to attend as often as possible: “Yes, always as possible”.

Finally, the employee from Bangladesh replied:” I try to participate in as many programs as possible but only the ones I find interesting.”

The last question that was asked to the participants in this block of questions were: “What type of training programs do you prefer (presential, online (e-learning, webinars, microlearning, etc)? Why?” and the following dimensions were established:

Dimension	Frequency
Online	IIII
Hybrid	I
In person	IIII

**Table 10:** “What type of training programs do you prefer (presential, online (e-learning, webinars, microlearning, etc)? Why?” General answers distribution.

As it is represented on the table above, the opinions of the employees of BRAZY Portugal differ significantly between Online and Presential training. 45,45% prefer the online method, other 45,45% prefer the in-person training and 9,1% chose the hybrid model.

When we analyze the information by cultural categories, the following information was retrieved:

Dimensions	Portugal	Ukraine	Brazil	Rússia	Bangladesh
Online	II		II		I
Hybrid		I			
In person	I	II		II	

**Table 11:** “What type of training programs do you prefer (presential, online (e-learning, webinars, microlearning, etc)? Why?” Answers distribution per culture.

Starting with Portuguese employees, even though one of employees answered that the preferred method is the in person one: “If I had to choose one, I would choose in person trainings because I can speak with the trainers/instructors about the content (...)”, the prevalent answer as the online method: “(...)online because it helps me to filter the information better.” & “(...) if I don’t understand something I can just pause the video and go back to the topic I didn’t understand”.

Moving on to Ukrainian employees, the answers were quite different from Portuguese ones, since the preferred method of learning is the “In Person”: “The in person ones are more efficient to learn” & “I like the in person model the best because that way it’s easier to concentrate on the course, and fix the information(...)”. Nevertheless, one of the employees replied that the hybrid model is the best of both worlds and that’s why it’s the best one: “The best option is the hybrid model.”

Brazilian employees gave preference to the online method of learning: “Every method is valid, but I prefer the online version because I can do it anytime I am free” and “I prefer the online version, it’s more interesting, I can pause the video any time and return to it as soon as I am is available.”

Similar to Ukrainian employees, Russian participants also were inclined to answer “In person” method of learning, justifying it with the easier communication factor: “(...) in-person trainings are the best ones since it’s easier to personally ask all the questions and doubts.” , “(...)if I only had to choose one, it would be in person since it is better to cover all the topics and easier to communicate.”

Lastly, the participant from Bangladesh demonstrated his preference towards the online training programs: “(...) online programs because it’s more flexible and I can do it when I have free time.”.

### **6.3.3 Performance Evaluation and Promotion Policy**

The third topic is about the perception of each employee regarding performance evaluation and promotion policies in their experience as employees.

To the question “Do you think it’s important to evaluate the results of your performance? Why and how often?”, were identified different answers that were codified into the following dimensions:

Dimension	Frequency
Yes, every 6 months to 1 year.	IIII
Yes, every 3 months.	I
Yes, once a month.	II
Yes, more than 1 time per month.	II

**Table 12:** “Do you think it’s important to evaluate the results of your performance? Why and how often?” General answers distribution.

Looking at the general information and the group as a whole, the data shows that the group prefers to evaluate their results in 6 months to 1 year timeframe. However, the second most mentioned timeframes were once a month or more than 1 time per month. Lastly, the least mentioned time frame was 3 months.

When the data is analyzed by cultural categories, the following information was retrieved:

Dimensions	Portugal	Ukraine	Brazil	Rússia	Bangladesh
Yes, every 6 months to 1 year.	I	II	II		I
Yes, every 3 months.		I			
Yes, once a month.	III				
Yes, more than 1 time per month.			I	II	

**Table 13:** “Do you think it’s important to evaluate the results of your performance? Why and how often?” Answers distribution per culture.

Starting with Portuguese employees, the prevalent preference of the frequency of the evaluation is once per month: “(...) the formal and official feedback can be given on a monthly basis.”, “It should be done on a monthly basis to review KPI’s for example(...)” and “It’s important to review those expectations on a monthly basis but also have a more complete performance evaluation where it’s discussed raises, bonuses etc. every 6 months or yearly.”. The last sentence is important because the employee mentioned two types of feedback frequency that was considered.

Moving on to Ukrainian employees, the most mentioned option was “every 6 months to 1 year”: “The feedback should be given every 6 months or yearly.”, “I think the feedback should be given every 6 months and the salary review should be done at that time as well.”

Brazilian employees mostly mentioned formal evaluation sessions in 6 months’ time frame, but the employees also added that informal feedback should be given on a day to day basis: “With his direct responsible he thinks it should be every month and a formal evaluation where the salary can be reviewed on a 6 month basis.”, “A formal evaluation should be done every 6 months but feedback should be given anytime on a day to day basis, while we are developing our tasks.”.

Regarding the Russian employees, the most mentioned time frequency was on a daily/weekly basis. The evaluation described by the participants sometimes were described



more similarly to instructions on how to proceed rather than reasoned observation on the results achieved. "It's important to have special meetings to provide direction for the specific tasks that are being developed."

Lastly, the employee from Bangladesh shared that feedback should be given every 6 months: "(...) Feedback is important to become an expert. It should be done every 6 months."

Another question asked about performance evaluation and promotion policy was: "If yes, should this evaluation be analyzed on the team level or on individual level? Why?". The following dimensions were identified:

Dimension	Frequency
On a team level.	
On an individual level.	IIIIII
Both.	III

**Table 14:** "If yes, should this evaluation be analyzed on the team level or on individual level? Why?" General answers distribution.

In a general perspective, the employees are divided between 2 different categories such as "individual level" and "both levels". The individual level takes a majority of votes, followed by both levels. Moreover, nobody has chosen the "team level" category.

When the data is analyzed by cultural categories, the following information was retrieved:

Dimensions	Portugal	Ukraine	Brazil	Rússia	Bangladesh
On a team level.					
On an individual level.	III	III			I
Both.			II	II	

**Table 15:** "If yes, should this evaluation be analyzed on the team level or on individual level? Why?" Answers distribution per culture.

Firstly, the summary of answers of the Portuguese employees showed that they believe that the evaluation of the performance should be done on an individual level, specifying the individual merit of each employee: "It's wrong to justify our performance with results from other colleagues. Doing an individual assessment helps to understand who does not meet expectations and who does.", "The individual performance will have more weight on the employee's performance, because a team can have a good performance but if only one person in that team is solving all the problems (...)".

Regarding Ukrainian employees, those are in agreement with the Portuguese ones, since they also answered that the performance should be reviewed on an individual level, mentioning aspects like responsibility for their own tasks, the difference of each other's tasks and feeling uncomfortable if a third party overhear the feedback: "(...) usually each employee knows what it is been doing so everyone will know who made the mistake.", "I think it should be individual

because each one is responsible for their tasks and it's inappropriate for others to hear about what I did wrong (...).”

Moving on to Brazilian employees, both are in agreement that the evaluation should be done on both levels, even though the individual is more important: “Both are important. On a team level it’s important to hear the compliments but also the improvements that needed to be done together.”.

Regarding the Russian employees, both believe that the performance should be analyzed on both levels and focus on teamwork: “It’s important to analyze on both levels. Furthermore, they shouldn’t be that different from each other, (...)” and “Both are equally important. Nowadays we are working in teams, no one does their job alone (...)”.

Finally, the employee from Bangladesh replied that this process should be done strictly individually, and similarly to Ukrainian employees, mentioned the possibility of feeling uncomfortable to receive feedback with others present: “Only individually. Receiving feedback as a team could be embarrassing because when an error is stated everyone will know exactly to whom that feedback is directed to, (...)”.

The last question that was asked to the participants in this block of questions were: “When we are talking about promotion, should it happen based on performance or based on seniority of the employee?” and the following dimensions were established:

Dimension	Frequency
Based on seniority.	
Based on performance.	IIIIII
Both.	IIII

**Table 16:** “When we are talking about promotion, should it happen based on performance or based on seniority of the employee?” General answers distribution.

In a general perspective, from the table above, the employees are divided between 2 different categories such as “based on performance” and “both levels”. The based-on performance level takes a majority of votes, followed by both levels. Moreover, nobody has chosen the “based on seniority” category.

When the data is analyzed by cultural categories, the following information was retrieved:

Dimensions	Portugal	Ukraine	Brazil	Rússia	Bangladesh
Based on seniority.					
Based on performance.	III	I	II		
Both.		II		II	I

**Table 17:** “When we are talking about promotion, should it happen based on performance or based on seniority of the employee?” Answers distribution per culture.

Starting with Portuguese employees, they defend that the promotions should happen based on performance only, mentioning aspects like justice, justified value of each employee and fairness: “You can have experience and be bad at what you are doing. You need to have performance proofs.”, “Based on performance. It’s all about justice.” and “(...) it’s not fair if someone who is working really hard but is only 1 year at the company and doesn’t receive a promotion just because an employee who works 50% less receives it due to his seniority.”.

Regarding Ukrainian employees, the majority answered that both levels should be valid (seniority and performance), mentioning aspects like equal payment for the same job, bonuses as rewards for performance but salary raises based on seniority: “When it’s a reward for the good performance we should receive a bonus. When it’s a reward for seniority it should be a salary raise.”, “it should be valued what each person contributes to the job. If everyone does the same, then they should receive the same(...)” and “Performance is definitely the prevalent one when we are discussing promotions, but seniority should also be considered.”

Moving on to Brazilian employees, all the answers were homogeneous which means that the participants agree on the fact that the promotion should be given based on productivity. It mentioned several aspects like efficiency, evolution and learning fast: “(...) performance. There are employees that are just starting their careers or don’t have much experience, but they learn fast and are good at what they are doing(...)” and “Mostly performance and it should be checked the evolution since the person started at their role(...)”.

Russian employees, similarly, to Ukrainian participants, also consider that both levels are important when it comes to deciding who should be promoted. Aspects like demotivation of senior employees are mentioned: “We need to analyze both indicators. If there is a new vacancy for promotion, and the person who is working at the company for 3 months is chosen, it will demotivate the other employees that are equally qualified.” and “The final choice needs to be made based on the performance and the seniority of the employee, (...) 50% of the final score should be given to the performance and 50% to the seniority.”

Lastly, the Bangladeshi employee believes that both sides should be considered, however, gives more importance to the performance and mentions rewards for the results that are being delivered: “Should be both, although performance is more important because if employees are rewarded for their hard work, they will be eager to do more.”

### 6.3.4 Job Satisfaction promotion in BRAZY Portugal

To promote job satisfaction at BRAZY Portugal, the interviewer asked questions directly related to what employees consider important to increase their job satisfaction and on the other hand, what would decrease their satisfaction in case of implementation.

To the question “What other practices could the company implement for you to feel satisfied and happy in your job?” were identified different answers that were codified into the following categories:

Dimension	Frequency
Team building activities	III
Transparency/ Clear communication	II
Innovation	I
Vacation benefits	I
Organization of the tasks/projects	I
Refer a friend project	I
Work-life balance policies	I
Nothing to declare.	II

**Table 18:** “What other practices could the company implement for you to feel satisfied and happy in your job?” General answers distribution.

From a general perspective, the researcher concluded that each employee mentioned different content when compared to other participants, however, the most mentioned topic was team building activities. The second most frequent answer was “nothing to declare”, which means that the employee didn’t remember anything now that would make them feel more satisfied with the job or that they already have everything that they are looking for in their current job and “clear communication”.

When the data is analyzed by cultural categories, the following information was retrieved:

Dimensions	Portugal	Ukraine	Brazil	Rússia	Bangladesh
Team building activities		I		I	I
Transparency/ Clear communication	I		I		
Innovation		I			
Vacation benefits		I			
Organization of the tasks/projects	I				
Refer a friend project	I				
Work-life balance policies				I	
Nothing to declare.			I		

**Table 19:** “What other practices could the company implement for you to feel satisfied and happy in your job?” Answers distribution per culture.

As it is shown on the table above, the opinions of each employee are quite diverse. For example, team building activities are the most voted category by Ukrainian, Russian, and Bangladeshi employees. Transparency and clear communication is the second most voted

category by Portuguese and Brazilian employees. The rest of the options were only voted once. Ukrainian employees focused more on innovation and vacation benefits like extra money to go on vacation/ vacation paid by the company: “Employees could offer a certain extra amount of money for vacation time. Either here in Portugal or outside, a hotel or amusement parks.”. Russian employees focused on work life balance policies: “(...) policies that are aligned with work-life balance are always welcome.”

Another question asked about performance evaluation and promotion policy was: “Is there any policy/practice/procedure that could be implemented in the future that would decrease your job satisfaction?”. The following dimensions were identified:

Dimension	Frequency
Increase of workload per employee	I
Bureaucratic systems	I
Work model 100% in person	III
Vacation period/time restriction	II
Suspension of all the benefits	I
Nothing to declare	II

**Table 20:** “Is there any policy/practice/procedure that could be implemented in the future that would decrease your job satisfaction?” General answers distribution.

From the information retrieved from the table above, what would decrease employee’s satisfaction is changing from the hybrid work model, to 100% in person work model. The other two most voted categories are vacation period/time restriction, which means that the employees wouldn’t like to have less vacation days than what they’ve asked for or not being able to choose the specific time for the vacation (being chosen by the company).

When the data is analyzed by cultural categories, the following information was retrieved:

Dimensions	Portugal	Ukraine	Brazil	Rússia	Bangladesh
Increase of workload per employee					I
Bureaucratic systems			I		
Workmodel 100% in person	III		I		
Vacation period/time restriction		I		I	
Suspension of all the benefits		I			
Nothing to declare.		I		I	

**Table 21:** “Is there any policy/practice/procedure that could be implemented in the future that would decrease your job satisfaction?” Answers distribution per culture.

Starting with Portuguese employees, unanimously they answered that going to the office daily would decrease their satisfaction. Looking at Ukrainian answers, each employee answered differently, namely vacation period restriction, suspension of all benefits and one of the employees didn’t find anything that would decrease their satisfaction. Regarding the

Brazilian employees, they also answered differently and mentioned more bureaucratic systems such as: having a complex process to ask for vacation or waiting too much time to obtain help from HR would decrease their satisfaction and working in a 100% in person model would also decrease it. Regarding the Russian employees, one of the answers was related to the decrease of vacation days and the other participant didn't have anything to declare. Lastly, the Bangladeshi employee mentioned that if the workload increases a lot, and the company does nothing to balance it by hiring other employees, or unfairly distributes the tasks, it would decrease their satisfaction.

### **6.3.5 Hofstede Culture Model**

As mentioned on literature review, the main goal of Hofstede's culture model is to compare how the differences between cultural groupings affect management, as each person from different parts of the world is guided by different beliefs, morals, attitudes, ethics, customs, etc (Hofstede,1980; Hofstede, 2001). The information was retrieved from Hofstede Insights (2023):

Starting with Brazilian employees, when it comes to Power distance (69/100), they believe that hierarchy exists and that societal discrepancies are acceptable. It is usual for power to be distributed unevenly and the members who hold more power also have more benefits. It is common to pay attention to status symbols and to evidence social position. Regarding Individualism (38/100), Brazil is defined as a collectivist society since the members of the society are integrated into cohesive groups that expect loyalty in return for protection. In a professional context, it is expected for family members to assist the younger members to get hired in a job that they work, for example. Moving on to Masculinity, Brazil scored an intermediate result (49/100) which means that this society is a balance between masculinity (competition, success, achievement...) and femininity (caring, quality of life...). In Brazil, when speaking about Uncertainty Avoidance (76/100), shows a strong need for rules and legal systems are needed to feel stability and structure in life. In Brazil, laws, rules, and bureaucracy in general are very important to create a safe society. Regarding long term orientation, Brazil scores a medium result (44/100) which means that they balance the preparation for the future but also are quite conservative, maintaining traditions and norms, while looking at changes with suspicion. Lastly, Brazil is defined as an indulgent society (59/100) which means that they usually follow their impulses and desires and allow themselves to have fun and enjoy life, giving importance to leisure time.

Moving on to Portuguese employees, the Power Distance index (63/100) shows that it is assumed that power is not distributed equally in the society, and it is accepted by the individuals within it. Regarding Individualism (27/100), Portugal scored a low result which means that it is more inclined to collectivist characteristics: Portugal values loyalty towards family or other extended relationships and the society creates strong and long-lasting relationships. Furthermore, Portugal is considered a Feminine country (31/100), since competitiveness is not valued by society and the focus is on quality of life, compromise, solidarity, equality, etc. Uncertainty Avoidance scores a huge number (99/100) and it shows that Portugal has a very low tolerance to unpredicted situations so that's why they create strict rules, policies and regulations, security is also highly valued. When it comes to long term orientation, Portugal obtained a low score on this dimension (28/100), meaning that they are a country that respects traditions, usually does not plan for a long-term future, focusing more on short term plans to achieve quicker results. Lastly, Portugal is a Restrained society (33/100), which means that they do not tend to give importance to leisure time and usually have more control over their desires and the respective gratification.

When it comes to Russian results, the Power Distance level (93/100) shows that Russian society distribute power extremely unevenly and there is a large discrepancy between the less and more powerful individuals that lead to the importance of the status symbols (status in the roles they represent, business and social life, etc). When it comes to individualism (39/100), Russia has demonstrated that they are a collectivist society by the way that they treat their friends, neighbors, and family. Having good relationships is fundamental and extremely important to Russians. These relationships also play a great part in business since Russians need to have a trustful and authentic relationship with the other part before moving on to the business tasks. Regarding Masculinity (36/100), this low score explains that the society cares more about the quality of life than for the success and competition. Uncertainty Avoidance score (95/100) represents the threat that ambiguous situations represent to Russian society. That's the reason why there are a lot of policies and bureaucracies in place and the preparation is essential in negotiations. When it comes to long term orientation, Russia scores a very high score (81/100) which means that it is a pragmatic country encouraging education to prepare for future events, and adaptation of the tradition is also very common in order to respond to different conditions and challenges. Lastly, Indulgence scores (20/100), show that Russia has a restrained nature since they do not value as much leisure time or gratification of their wishes.

According to this model, Ukrainian employees are quite similar to Russian employees in terms of Power Distance (92/100), since there is a great difference between the powerful and



less powerful individuals in the society. When it comes to Individualism, Ukraine scored 25 out of 100, which means that this country is characterized by being collectivist, also a similar score to Russia meaning that it is usual there to prioritize the group over one person, giving great importance to relationships with each member of the society (family, friends, neighbors) and loyalty towards respective groups. Regarding Masculinity dimension, Ukraine once again scored like Russia, being considered a Feminine country, valuing more quality of life rather than success or competition. Uncertainty Avoidance dimension scored 95/100, which means that this society doesn't like unpredictable situations and there is a need to be prepared and informed with background information before negotiations. Because of that, Ukraine created a lot of regulation and institutions to avoid those uncertain situations. Moving to Long Term Orientation, Ukraine obtained a high score on this dimension (86/100), meaning that it is normal to adapt certain traditions to adapt to the future and evolve according to the world's evolution. Lastly, the indulgence dimension scored an extremely low score (14/100), characterizing Ukraine as a restrained country. This means that the society doesn't value as much leisure time and normally controls the gratification of their desires.

Moving on to Bangladesh, the Power Distance (80/100), shows that in this society it is assumed that the power is distributed unevenly or unequally, and it is common to have hierarchical organizations. Regarding the Individualism dimension, Bangladesh obtained a low score (20/100), meaning that this society is considered collectivistic. Therefore, the members of this society value loyalty towards family and friends and there is a great importance given to the group. Bangladesh is considered a Masculine society (55/100), which means that being the best is important for individuals in this country, also hard work is valued more over personal life and performance is crucial in companies. Moving on to Uncertainty Avoidance, Bangladesh has a high score on this dimension (60/100), meaning that they have a certain fear of unpredictable situations and changing future. This means that there are a lot of rules and regulations to protect the society from these situations and innovation may be resisted to a certain point. In terms of long-term orientation, Bangladesh scored 47 out of 100, which means that there is a certain balance between the two opposites as the score does not indicate a strong preference. Lastly, Bangladesh is considered a restrained society with a score of 20 out of 100 for the Indulgence dimension.



### 6.3.6 GLOBE Culture Model

As described in the literature review, the countries were categorized into different clusters that have identical characteristics to outline the main data about culture from a range of countries. That way, an international manager can deal more effectively with the countries within each cluster, simplifying the management task (Bright D. & Cortes A., 2019).

In this research, not every cluster will be covered, only the ones that are part of this study according to BRAZY employees' nationalities and the information was retrieved from Globe Project (2020):

Starting with Eastern Europe, that includes our Ukrainian and Russian employees, it is referred by this model that societies within this cluster possess high levels in dimensions like in-group collectivism and power distance since they usually are quite close to their families and are loyal towards their organizations and family. Moreover, power is not distributed equally in this type of society. When discussing Assertiveness, this cluster falls into the medium level but still higher when compared to other societies, which means that the level of assertiveness and confrontation in their relationships is average. Regarding Future Orientation and Performance Orientation, those represent the lowest scores, which means that in this societies rewards for performance improvement are not encouraged or rewarded. According to low uncertainty avoidance levels, the society has a certain tolerance to unpredictable events since they do not recur to rules or policies to decrease the unpredictability. Other dimensions like Gender Egalitarianism, Humane Orientation and Institutional Collectivism also scored medium level scores, being those clusters more egalitarian than the previous ones. Also, these societies believe in encouragement and reward for collective actions or for having human qualities like being altruistic, generous, kind to others, fair, etc.

Moving on to Latin America, that includes Brazilian employees. Countries that are part of this category, usually score high in dimensions like power distance and in-group collectivism. Similarly to Ukrainian employees, Brazilian employees also do not presume that power is distributed equally in a society and its citizens and like to be close to family and are loyal towards their family and organizations. This societies have very low scores when it comes to Institutional Collectivism, Future Orientation and Uncertainty Avoidance, which means that the society has a certain tolerance to unpredictable events since they do not recur to rules or policies to decrease the unpredictability, this societies also do not expect rewards or encouragement for collective actions and distribution of resources, lastly, for this cultures it is not usual to invest in future-oriented practices like planning, future gratification, etc. Other

dimensions like Gender Egalitarianism and Humane Orientation obtained average scores. Regarding Performance Orientation obtained the lowest score, meaning that in this society, performance improvement is not usually encouraged or rewarded. While in-group collectivism is high, institutional collectivism received low scores which means that even though these societies are loyal towards their families and organizations, they do not defend the collective distribution of resources or rewards.

Regarding Latin Europe, that includes Portuguese employees, is defined by their medium scores in most dimensions, except for Power distance, which indicates that the societies within this group accept that power is distributed unequally and accepts authority and status privileges. Another dimension that differs from the others is Humane Orientation, obtaining a low result, which means that the society does not reward or encourage the individuals to be kind or generous to others. Regarding Gender Egalitarianism it also obtained a low score. Regarding in-group collectivism it scored higher than institutional collectivism which means that the society values more family and organizations that they relate to but do not encourage the collective distribution of resources. Since the rest of the dimensions fall within a middle range, it means that the society is mostly male dominated, with a disparate distribution of power and does not emphasize humane orientation.

Lastly, the Bangladeshi employee belongs to the Southern Asian cluster. This societies have high scores in dimensions like Humane Orientation, In-group collectivism and Power distance, meaning that they encourage rewards for being generous, caring and fairness, they also enjoy having close ties to their families and are loyal and regarding power distance, in this societies, the power is not distributed equally. For the Gender Egalitarianism dimension, it is characterized by low scores. The other dimensions like Future Orientation, Uncertainty Avoidance, Institutional Collectivism and Performance orientation fall into the middle score range, as well as assertiveness. Therefore, these societies are characterized by being hierarchical, family and group-oriented, being human oriented and male-dominated.

## **7. Discussion of Results and Conclusions**

During the presentation of the results, there are important topics that need to be discussed, mainly related to the Hofstede culture model and GLOBE culture model. Depending on each culture, there were answers from employees that didn't align with their correspondent culture

descriptions of each cultural model. On the other hand, there were answers that showed that some aspects of these models are still accurate.

Starting with Hofstede Cultural Dimensions Model, the following results were obtained:

Regarding Power distance and Uncertainty Avoidance, there were no indicators that would confirm or refuse what is stated in the Hofstede model.

When it comes to Collectivism and analyzing the question about the performance evaluation being done on a team or individual level, it demonstrated interesting results. Ukraine and Portugal are considered collectivist societies, however, when it came to the evaluation of results, these countries showed that they prefer to be evaluated as individuals and not as a group. According to the model, Brazil and Russia are also considered a collectivist country (38 & 39/100, respectively) and they considered both levels of performance evaluation, which can be considered as accurate to the model. Lastly, Bangladesh is considered a collectivist country, however, the Bangladeshi employee considers that the performance evaluation should be done only on the individual level, showing a more individualistic approach. Nevertheless, the research shows that Ukraine and Russia still have some collectivist tendencies since they mentioned equality in payments if the work is equivalent and to value everyone the same way, which means that the Ukrainian employees care about the well-being of their peers and the sense of justice.

Moving on to Indulgence dimension, the question about what could be improved to feel more satisfied with the workplace, it was interesting to analyze the fact that the countries that are considered more restrained, such as Ukraine, Russia, and Bangladesh, mentioned aspects like team buildings, vacation benefits and work-life balance policies that are more related to indulgent societies. On the other hand, Brazilian employees, who are considered more indulgent, replied “transparency and clear communication”, that does not show any indulgent behavior. Lastly, Portuguese employees, who are considered as being more restrained, answered aspects like communication and organization of the project, that indicate more restrained and strictly work-related aspects.

Regarding Masculinity vs Femininity, it was shown that Ukrainian employees are more inclined to the Femininity dimension because of the benefits that they have chosen as the most valuable ones (except base salary): health insurance, gym membership, childcare, which indicates that they value the quality of life. Russia, similarly, to Ukraine, indicated similar benefits showing that their focus is on quality of life. Portugal and Brazil, also as Feminine countries, have chosen gym memberships, health insurance, and other allowances that can

make their life easier and enjoyable. There was mentioned a benefit such as a retirement plan which, once more, shows that in Brazil, it is important to pay attention to the quality of life. Lastly, in Bangladesh, which is a Masculine country, what was mentioned is Study Allowance that can go both ways, it can be interpreted as inclined to a Feminine dimension because having a degree leads to a better job and to better quality of life, but also, can be a Masculine dimension since a degree allows to be more competitive at the job market and even at the company, and being the best at a certain job/role. Moreover, when it comes to evaluating the performance results, the countries that focused on more frequent performance evaluation moments and therefore, showed more Masculine country tendencies are Portugal, Russia, and Brazil (mentioned as one option from a Brazilian employee), even though according to the model, that country is mostly Feminine. When it comes to promotions, countries like Portugal and Brazil defended unanimously that it should be done only based on performance, indicating a more Masculine approach. Ukraine was divided between one of the employees mentioning only performance, and the other two, mentioning that performance and seniority are equally important. The same results correspond to Russia and Bangladesh who replied that both seniority and performance are important to decide who shall be promoted. Russia is described as a Feminine country, however, Bangladesh, as being a Masculine country, showed a certain discrepancy from the Hofstede research, by choosing seniority as an aspect to consider.

Lastly, Long Term Orientation is often associated with investing in learning and exploring new information. From the results of the interview, it can be concluded that, mostly, each one of the employees has long term orientation since no one answered that investing in training and development is not important. However, there were certain differences between the answers that allowed to understand better the fact that the countries that replied “Yes, it’s very important” such as Ukraine and Russia, also have the highest scores on the long-term orientation dimension. When it comes to Portugal, the employees replied that it’s important to invest in training but only when certain criteria are met, which can be matched with a slightly lower long-term orientation result. Regarding Brazil, the employees had slightly different opinions, one of them considered learning and training very important and the other one replied “It’s important, however...”, which can be related to the medium score on long term orientation dimension that Brazil scored. Lastly, Bangladesh also has a medium score on Long Term Orientation, however, the employee considered that learning and training very important.

On the other hand, when analyzing the GLOBE culture model, the following aspects were considered important for the research:

Firstly, the In-group collectivism and Institutional Collectivism in Eastern Europe countries were demonstrated by certain expressions about equality and concern for their peers, as mentioned previously, however, Ukraine showed some individualistic inclination when it came to performance evaluation. Latin American employees are similar to the Eastern Europe ones in terms of in-group collectivism; however, institutional collectivism is considered low. Nevertheless, according to the answers given by the participants, they unanimously agree that performance reviews should be done both at individual and team levels. Regarding the Latin Europe employees, those obtained an average score in collectivism in general but demonstrated a more individualistic approach when it comes to performance evaluation. Lastly, the Southern Asian countries obtained a high score in In-group Collectivism and an average score in Institutional Collectivism, however, this employee demonstrated a more individualistic approach to performance evaluation.

When it comes to Performance and Future Orientation, according to the GLOBE model, performance rewards are not encouraged, however, Ukrainian, and Russian employees defined as important, to develop performance feedback, evaluation and rewards. Moreover, regarding future orientation, these employees consider it important to learn to develop in their careers and also personally, demonstrating interest in their future. According to the Latin American data, Brazilian employees also do not expect to plan and future gratification, however, both participants considered learning important for future development and they also consider it important to evaluate their performance frequently, even though the scores of their societies are low. Latin European employees scored an average at this dimension; however they demonstrated a great interest in performance evaluation and also demonstrated some interest in their future gratification when talking about learning and training even though only the training met certain criteria. In Southern Asian societies, performance and future orientation fall into an average score, however, the Bangladeshi employee, through the answers, demonstrated a great focus on the future orientation, mentioning more than once the opportunities to learn and invest in his future by becoming a better employee and mentioned the importance of performance reviews, however not that frequently (once or twice per year).

Moving on to Humane Orientation, in Eastern Europe, that scored an average score on this dimension, it demonstrated more interest in the wellbeing of others as well as empathy during the retribution and benefits discussion.

Regarding Gender Egalitarianism, it is important to note that in Ukraine (categorized as Eastern Europe), there were participants that mentioned the importance of being paid and valued equally, no matter the studies degree of that person or their gender.

The other main conclusions that are not directly related to the Culture Models are related to the differences and similarities found between the defined cultures/countries:

Firstly, when discussing Remuneration and Benefits policy, there was a great difference between Ukraine/Russia/Bangladesh and Portugal/Brazil, meaning that the first group focused more on the salary as the most important thing at a certain job whether the other group mentioned it as important but not the main topic on their list. It was proven when each culture needed to specify their preferred benefits and Ukraine/Russia were the only ones mentioning the Base Salary as the most important factor, while the other groups mentioned benefits like health insurance, gym membership, among others.

Moving on to Learning and Development policies, once again, Ukraine/Russia/Bangladesh are aligned with the addition of one Brazilian participant that agreed that investing in learning and development is very important. On the other hand, there is another group composed by the Portuguese and one Brazilian employee, that mentions that investing in training is important, however certain criteria must be met. Another question that was asked that is related to learning is about their interest in participating in training programs and on this question, the answers were quite heterogeneous since even within group cultures, all the participants replied differently, so it didn't allow to cluster the groups. When asked about the preferred method of learning, the answers once more were different, however, it was possible to conclude that Portuguese/Brazilian/Bangladeshi employees mostly enjoyed online training while Ukrainian/Russian employees preferred the in-person ones.

When discussing Performance Evaluation and Promotion Policy, all cultures agreed that it is important to have performance evaluation sessions. The difference was noticed on the regularity that these evaluations should have taken place. For example, countries like Ukraine, Brazil and Bangladesh agree that the performance evaluation should be done between 6 months and 1 year time frame. Portuguese participants believe that once per month is the best option and Russian employees defended that the performance evaluation should be done on a weekly basis. Another question about the performance was asked, whether the performance should be evaluated on a team or individual level and different groups were formed: Portugal/Ukraine/Bangladesh defend that it should be done on an individual level and Russia/Brazil defend that both sides should be analyzed. Lastly, the question about whether the promotion should be done based on seniority or performance formed new groups: Portugal/Brazil defend that it should be done only based on performance and Ukraine/Russia/Bangladesh agree that it should be done based on both factors.

Lastly, it was discussed with the participants about the policies or practices that would increase or decrease their job satisfaction. Ukraine/Russia/Bangladesh picked team building activities as one of the practices and Portugal/Brazil both mentioned clear communication. The rest of the practices were only mentioned once. However, it is important to notice that Ukrainian, Russian and Bangladeshi employees picked practices less related to direct tasks and jobs such as work-life balance policies, vacation benefits and team building activities. On the other hand, Portuguese and Brazilian employees mentioned practices directly related to their tasks such as clear communication, better organization of the projects, etc. The last question was about the practices and policies that would decrease their satisfaction if implemented and mostly, Portuguese, and Brazilian employees mentioned working 100% on-site while Russian and Ukrainian employees mentioned vacation time period restriction.

After discussing the results and comparing the countries, it was possible to conclude that each country has its own particularities and differences, however, it was also possible to establish some clusters between each cultural group. For instance, in a great number of questions, Brazil and Portugal offered quite similar answers and the same happened to Russia and Ukraine. Moreover, Bangladesh deviated between the two groups, depending on the topic of discussion.

It is also important to note that some of the answers aligned with the theories of Hofstede and GLOBE while others presented themselves as being the opposites and therefore, refuting the data presented by the theories.

## **7.1 Delimitations**

Even though this study pursued different cultures to create a more complete and diverse research, there are several delimitations to this study. First, all the conclusions and findings developed in this research should be only interpreted within the parameters and context of this research and shouldn't be considered as a general study about the opinions of all the cultures mentioned before (Portugal, Ukraine, Russia, Brazil and Bangladesh). Since the number of participants in this study is quite small (11 participants in total: 3 Portuguese, 3 Ukrainian, 2 Russian, 2 Brazilian and 1 Bangladeshi), it doesn't represent each culture, so this study is unable to provide accurate conclusions for the opinions of each culture's general population.

Moreover, the answers obtained from the participants are also biased by their subjective and personal opinions meaning that each answer was given based on each participant's personal



point of view based on their experiences, beliefs, etc. which may or may not be aligned with the opinions of other people from the same culture.

Lastly, the findings of this research were strictly analyzed based on this researcher's point of view and interpretation of each interview answer, meaning that other researchers can have different opinions or interpretations of the results obtained from this research.

## **7.2 Recommendations and Future Research Suggestions**

Even though there are several limitations of this research, there are findings that are important to consider for BRAZY Portugal administration and that were important to understand the cultural differences between the employees:

Each culture presents their own peculiarities but also similarities, so it is important to embrace the diversity that exists within the organization and create policies that are flexible but mainly inclusive. Regarding the remuneration and benefits policies, the participants chose benefits that already exist in the BRAZY Portugal remuneration package, however, there are several others that were mentioned and do not exist now. The researcher's recommendation would be to add the suggestions made by the participants to the benefits package, however, to control the expenses, it would be needed to create an annual budget of benefits for each employee and each one can choose the benefits that better fits their needs and lifestyle. That way, each employee can create their own package and feel more satisfied with the benefits rather than have one that is premade by the company. When it comes to learning and development, according to the findings, it would be important, to create a system where each employee can choose what they want to learn that year, but with their managers approval, that way, the manager can suggest if that certain employee can learn something new or if a review over other skills is more urgent. The same applies to the learning method, since the size of the company is small, it is possible to give more attention to their needs and choose online or in person training based on what each person prefers. Lastly, regarding the performance evaluation processes and promotion, since the opinions are different per culture and in this type of policies, it is impossible to have different evaluation systems as per each employee's preferences because it would lead to future disagreements in terms of justice of the system, there should be implemented only one system. However, to have in mind the employees that mentioned that team evaluation should also be considered, it could be created a system that values 70% individual achievements and 30% team achievements or create a system that attributes bonuses to individual achievements (as per achievement of KPIs) and bonuses for team work as well. The same could apply to promotions, since mostly, the employees answered



that the individual performance should count more than seniority, the same structure could be applied.

To conclude, this research leads the researcher to believe that it is important to consider cultural differences when defining Human Resources policies to create a positive environment at the organization. Moreover, it would be important to consider the recommendations stated before to create more engagement and motivation as well as more job satisfaction.

As mentioned previously on the limitations of the research, it could be important to expand the sample of the study to obtain a wider range of results that could produce stronger conclusions. The suggestion of this researcher is to open the investigation to other multicultural companies to expand the number of experiences that are being considered and provide a better understanding of the cultural differences.

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## 9. Annexes- Interview answers:

- Interviewee n°1 – Bangladesh:

How important do you consider remuneration and benefits? Why?

**Answer** – “The most important. I will not enjoy my job if the remuneration is not good. I won’t be able to focus and will lose interest. “

What do you consider the most important aspect of your remuneration and benefits pack? Why?

**Answer** – “Monetary help to pay for my studies. I couldn’t finish my bachelor’s degree a couple of years ago and I believe that it is important to complete the next level of studies to be a better professional.”

Do you think investing in learning and training is important for you as an employee? Why?

**Answer** – “Yes, because that way the employees can contribute more to the task.”

Do you usually participate in all learning and development programs that the company makes available for you? Why?

**Answer** – “I try to participate in as many programs as possible, at least to the ones that I find interesting. Because the company is investing in my development.”

What type of training programs do you prefer (presential, online (elearning, webinars, microlearning, etc)? Why?

**Answer** – “I Prefer the online programs because it’s more flexible and I can do it when I have free time. A good example is Udemy, there I can watch small videos about each topic that summarizes it.”

Do you think it’s important to evaluate the results of your performance? Why and how often?

**Answer** – “Yes, it’s good to understand the skills that are lacking, whether I need help from my superior or colleagues. It’s important to become an expert. I believe it should be done every 6 months.”

If yes, should this evaluation be analyzed on the team level or on individual level? Why?

**Answer** – “Only individually. Receiving feedback as a team could be embarrassing because when a error is stated everyone will know exactly to whom that feedback is directed to, even though the manager is speaking to the whole team.”

When we are talking about promotion, should it happen based on performance or based on seniority of the employee?

**Answer** – “Should be both, although performance is more important because if employees are rewarded for their hard work they will be eager to do more. It’s kind of “eye for an eye” way of thinking, if you do a good job, you will receive a good reward.”

What other practices could the company implement for you to feel satisfied and happy in your job?

**Answer** – “For example, have an office and social gatherings from time to time so I can get to know better my colleagues and have a social time with them.”

Is there any policy/practice/procedure that could be implemented in the future that would decrease your job satisfaction?

**Answer** – “If the workload increases and the company don’t want to hire anyone to help me it would decrease my satisfaction. I don’t feel comfortable with the pressure.”

Interviewee n°2 – Brazil:

How important do you consider remuneration and benefits? Why?

**Answer** – “It’s very important but it’s not the main criteria to leave/stay at the job. Although it shows the value that a employee has to the company.”

What do you consider the most important aspect of your remuneration and benefits pack? Why?

**Answer** – “Help with the transportation to the office, since we are not practicing 100% remote work. Also the health insurance and the fully paid gym membership because it shows that the company cares about my health.”

Do you think investing in learning and training is important for you as an employee? Why?

**Answer** – “It’s very important. I only have 3 years of experience on the field so I still have a lot to learn. Investing in my training adds a lot to my professional value and helps me deliver a better service.”

Do you usually participate in all learning and development programs that the company makes available for you? Why?

**Answer** – “Yes, having a platform with different courses is very helpful. That way I can check for different courses that can be or not related to my field. It’s interesting to develop in different areas.”

What type of training programs do you prefer (presential, online (elearning, webinars, microlearning, etc)? Why?

**Answer** – “Every method is valid but I prefer the online version because I can do it anytime I am free, during my working hour or outside.”

Do you think it’s important to evaluate the results of your performance? Why and how often?

**Answer** – “Very important. I like to talk to my direct supervisor and ask for feedback. It’s good for my motivation, it’s also important to hear suggestions, what I can do better, what’s already good, and hear compliments. A formal evaluation should be done every 6 months but feedback should be given anytime on a day to day basis, while we are developing our tasks.”

If yes, should this evaluation be analyzed on the team level or on individual level? Why?

**Answer** – “Both are important. On a team level it’s important to hear the compliments but also the improvements that needed to be done together. The individual is the most important one because it is delivered specifically to you and about your work and progress. So it weighs more at the end of the day.”

When we are talking about promotion, should it happen based on performance or based on seniority of the employee?

**Answer** – “Performance. There are employees that are just starting their careers or have not much time of experience, but they learn fast and are good at what they are doing so they can manage more efficiently their job and help others. “

What other practices could the company implement for you to feel satisfied and happy in your job?

**Answer** –“Being transparent: to know the direction and the main goal of our work, to understand what they can do better. Have a good communication, which means having feedback, managers being available to talk to him...”

Is there any policy/practice/procedure that could be implemented in the future that would decrease your job satisfaction?

**Answer** – “Having too bureaucratic systems, for example to schedule the vacations need to talk to 1001 different people to ask for approval. Also, if the communication channels get worse.”

Interviewee nº3 – Brazil:

How important do you consider remuneration and benefits? Why?

**Answer** – “It’s equally important as the environment at the company. It’s important for quality of life and job satisfaction.”

“What do you consider the most important aspect of your remuneration and benefits pack? Why?”

**Answer** – “Help with the transportation to the office since we are not practicing 100% remote work. Also, the health insurance and the fully paid gym membership because it shows that the company cares about his health.”

Do you think investing in learning and training is important for you as an employee? Why?

**Answer** – “Yes it’s important but it needs to contribute in a short-medium term for the company and also for the employee. It need to generate value for de both sides. I will always

give priority to the training directly related to my job but when I have free time I also like to develop in other fields.”

Do you usually participate in all learning and development programs that the company makes available for you? Why?

**Answer** – “Usually yes, but only in the ones that interest me so I don’t waste either my time and resources but also the company’s.”

What type of training programs do you prefer (presential, online (elearning, webinars, microlearning, etc)? Why?

**Answer** – “I Prefer the online version, it’s more interesting, I can pause the video any time and return to it as soon as I am available. For example, Udemy is a good platform to do that.”

Do you think it’s important to evaluate the results of your performance? Why and how often?

**Answer** – “Yes, on 3 levels. The 1st is my direct manager, the 2nd feedback needs to be from HR and the 3rd is my feedback to the company. It’s important especially for small companies that are just starting. With my direct responsible I think it should be every month and a formal evaluation where the salary can be reviewed on a 6 month basis. It’s important to have clear expectations about what has been developed and what needs to be done next. Also, to check for the goals that were met and the ones that weren’t, check why those goals weren’t met.”

If yes, should this evaluation be analyzed on the team level or on individual level? Why?

**Answer** – “Both are important. Feedback on a team level should be done weekly. The individual is the most important one because it’s more personalized since the other one you don’t have a clear idea about who is responsible.”

When we are talking about promotion, should it happen based on performance or based on seniority of the employee?

**Answer** – “Mostly performance but it should be checked the evolution since the person started at their role until the moment they are discussing it performance.”

What other practices could the company implement for you to feel satisfied and happy in your job?

**Answer** – “Nothing to declare.”

Is there any policy/practice/procedure that could be implemented in the future that would decrease your job satisfaction?

**Answer** – “If the working model became 100% in person. Otherwise, everything that is discussed before the final decision is made, I am ok with that.”

Interviewee n°4 – Ukraine:

How important do you consider remuneration and benefits? Why?

**Answer** – “It depends on the job that I am doing but I will never settle for the minimum wage. Everything that it’s average or above average for the market I will accept. The salary is a motivation to keep going. “

What do you consider the most important aspect of your remuneration and benefits pack? Why?

**Answer** – “The base salary is a deal breaker but I consider also important health insurance and the team building activities. I like to socialize with my colleagues and get to know them better. Health insurance is important because it offers the private health sector, where we can schedule appointments faster, and choose the professionals that we will explain our issues.”

Do you think investing in learning and training is important for you as an employee? Why?

**Answer** – “Yes, of course. Its good to learn new languages for example. The employee develops it skills but it’s also good for the company to have capacitated employees.”

Do you usually participate in all learning and development programs that the company makes available for you? Why?

**Answer** – “I like to learn about new things so if the training is about something that I am aware of, I will not participate.”

What type of training programs do you prefer (presential, online (elearning, webinars, microlearning, etc)? Why?

**Answer** – “The in person ones are more efficient to learn, I feel more comfortable to ask questions.”

Do you think it's important to evaluate the results of your performance? Why and how often?

**Answer** – “Yes, the feedback should be given so I know what I am doing good or not and so I can improve, the managers usually help with that. The feedback should be given every 3 months.”

If yes, should this evaluation be analyzed on the team level or on individual level? Why?

**Answer** – “Only individually. I have different tasks when compared to my colleagues so it should be a feedback only directed to me so I can know what I can improve.”

When we are talking about promotion, should it happen based on performance or based on seniority of the employee?

**Answer** – “Both. When it's a reward for the good performance we should receive a bonus. When it's a reward for seniority it should be an salary raise.”

What other practices could the company implement for you to feel satisfied and happy in your job?

**Answer** – “Employees could offer a certain extra amount of money for vacation time. Either is here in Portugal or outside, a hotel or amusement parks. It could be in groups, with the respective families or even as a team building activity. It's important to travel and get to know new places.”

Is there any policy/practice/procedure that could be implemented in the future that would decrease your job satisfaction?

**Answer** – “Nothing that I can remember.”

Interview nº5 – Ukraine:

How important do you consider remuneration and benefits? Why?

**Answer** – “It’s very important, it’s a way to feel valued by the company. The important thing is within the department being equally valued, therefore, have equal salaries, without discrimination. If the job is the same, it should be paid equally, and the qualification level doesn’t matter for the job. Regarding the benefits, it’s always welcome but if there is none that’s ok, the important thing is the base salary.”

What do you consider the most important aspect of your remuneration and benefits pack? Why?

**Answer** – “The base salary is the most important since we work to receive it so we can live our lives and pay our bills. The benefits that I like the most are health insurance, access to the gym and childcare support because it improves our work life balance and our health.”

Do you think investing in learning and training is important for you as an employee? Why?

**Answer** – “Yes, it’s very important. In the accounting field it is mandatory even if once a year to have a training on updates on the law (the profession demands, not the law), I always need to be updated.”

Do you usually participate in all learning and development programs that the company makes available for you? Why?

**Answer** – “Yes. The only reason that I might think of is when I am unavailable to attend, otherwise I will be present at everything.”

What type of training programs do you prefer (presential, online (e-learning, webinars, microlearning, etc)? Why?

**Answer** – “The best option is the hybrid model. During the covid I studied everything online and it feel like something was missing. Even though that on a online model you can organize your time, be more flexible and don’t spend time on commuting, the in person model is also highly valued due to the contact with the teachers and colleagues.”

Do you think it’s important to evaluate the results of your performance? Why and how often?



**Answer** – “It’s important but in my case, any accountancy mistakes will show up when we receive fines to pay or some declarations that the department didn’t send on time. Otherwise, is good to receive feedback to know what we can do better, the superiors always know a way to help you improve. Check if we are meeting the expectations or not. The feedback should be given every 6 months or yearly.”

If yes, should this evaluation be analyzed on the team level or on individual level? Why?

**Answer** – “It depends on the department but usually each employee knows what it is been doing so everyone will know who made the mistake. My job is more individual so I believe that an individual feedback would be more suitable. Either way, I think that both feedback systems are valid.”

When we are talking about promotion, should it happen based on performance or based on seniority of the employee?

**Answer** – “Only performance, it should be valued what each person contributes to the job. If everyone does the same then they should receive the same, if there is anyone doing more, then they should receive more.”

What other practices could the company implement for you to feel satisfied and happy in your job?

**Answer** – “Employers could offer a certain extra amount of money for vacation time. Either is here in Portugal or outside, a hotel or amusement parks. It could be in groups, with the respective families or even as a team building activity. It's important to travel and get to know new places.”

Is there any policy/practice/procedure that could be implemented in the future that would decrease your job satisfaction?

**Answer** – “I don’t see anything...Only if the company didn’t let me choose when she wants to take her vacation (for example only in December or only in august).”

Interview n°6- Ukraine:

How important do you consider remuneration and benefits? Why?

**Answer** – “It's important to feel valued by the company and a good remuneration is one way of showing that. Each employee of the company should feel valued equally for the same efforts or the same job, whether it's a man or woman.”

What do you consider the most important aspect of your remuneration and benefits pack? Why?

**Answer** – “Apart from the base salary, benefits like health insurance are important since it's an opportunity to receive better health care.”

Do you think investing in learning and training is important for you as an employee? Why?

**Answer** – “Yes, it's important in order to develop each employee's capacities. Even when its not directly related to the job itself, its also important as long as the employee wants to enlarge his abilities.”

What type of training programs do you prefer (presential, online (elearning, webinars, microlearning, etc)? Why?

**Answer** – “I like the in person model the best because that way it's easier to concentrate on the course, and fix the information and I can directly ask questions at any time.”

Do you think it's important to evaluate the results of your performance? Why and how often?

**Answer** – “Yes, it's important to understand if my performance is good enough and according to expectations. I think the feedback should be given every 6 months and the salary review should be done at that time as well.”

If yes, should this evaluation be analyzed on the team level or on individual level? Why?

**Answer** – “I think it should be individual because each one is responsible for their tasks and it's inappropriate for others to hear about what I did wrong or right. Feedback on team level only if we had a task that required us to work together.”

When we are talking about promotion, should it happen based on performance or based on seniority of the employee?

**Answer** – “We need to look at both sides. Performance is definitely the prevalent one when we are discussing promotions but seniority should also be considered.”

What other practices could the company implement for you to feel satisfied and happy in your job?

**Answer** – “Have more team building activities either during work hours or outside.”

Is there any policy/practice/procedure that could be implemented in the future that would decrease your job satisfaction?

**Answer** – “If the company decided to suspend all the benefits in place.”

Interview nº7 – Portugal:

How important do you consider remuneration and benefits? Why?

**Answer** – “In terms of changing jobs, he will only change if it’s the same or superior than he is receiving now. But what makes him decide is the interest he has in a certain project/task.”

What do you consider the most important aspect of your remuneration and benefits pack? Why?

**Answer** – “Health insurance and gym membership are useful and important for health. Also, the transportation allowance is a big help since we need to relocate to office.”

Do you think investing in learning and training is important for you as an employee? Why?

**Answer** – “It’s important to have training available inside of the company. Feels that there is a lack of motivation from Portuguese companies into investing in training. Usually, I invest in myself outside of work.”

Do you usually participate in all learning and development programs that the company makes available for you? Why?

**Answer** – “Only if I am interested in the topic. I will attend only the ones that contribute to my professional environment and development.”

What type of training programs do you prefer (presential, online (e-learning, webinars, microlearning, etc.)? Why?

**Answer** – “Online. Everything that I can watch or listen to online because it helps me to filter better the information.”

Do you think it's important to evaluate the results of your performance? Why and how often?

**Answer** – “It depends on the company size. Right now feels like the feedback is delivered on a daily basis and it's a two way street, which means that I receive feedback often but also can give it anytime. I believe that it's important to have continuous evaluation and that the formal and official feedback can be given on a monthly basis.”

If yes, should this evaluation be analyzed on the team level or on individual level? Why?

**Answer** – “ Only individually. It's wrong to justify our performance with results from other colleagues. Doing an individual assessment helps to understand who does not meet expectations and who does.”

When we are talking about promotion, should it happen based on performance or based on seniority of the employee?

**Answer** – “100% performance. 0% seniority. It's hard to justify the value of the employee just because it doesn't have much experience. You can have experience and be bad at what you are doing. You need to have performance proofs.”

What other practices could the company implement for you to feel satisfied and happy in your job?

**Answer** – “Organization inside the company (time to perform tasks, invested time in each task) - this point is crucial as it makes everything else healthier. In bigger companies I believe that visibility is also important since there needs to be a way of showing your progress and your tasks and justify your value (there is a lot of bureaucracy involved in bigger companies). Also, during the recruitment process, the company let me know about the salary range from the beginning, the process was fast and clear and as a candidate he felt accompanied from the beginning. So, he advises to continue with that type of recruitment process.”

Is there any policy/practice/procedure that could be implemented in the future that would decrease your job satisfaction?

**Answer** – “If I had to work 100% in person.”

Interview n°8:

How important do you consider remuneration and benefits? Why?

**Answer** – “It’s not the most important thing but it needs to be fair and aligned with the market. It’s more important for the person to feel important for the company otherwise it will lead to demotivation. Remuneration is important to accomplish goals.”

What do you consider the most important aspect of your remuneration and benefits pack? Why?

**Answer** – “Health insurance and gym membership are the most important ones because when we work hard many times our health is degrading slowly and having the chance to take care of it is a good thing that a company provides.”

Do you think investing in learning and training is important for you as an employee? Why?

**Answer** – “Yes, but it depends on the employee ( because not always employees want to take that chance to learn something new and don’t go to those trainings). The employee needs to show interest in what it wants to study and develop. Self-management of the career its important.”

Do you usually participate in all learning and development programs that the company makes available for you? Why?

**Answer** – “Always as possible, unless it’s something that wouldn’t add value to my professional career.”

What type of training programs do you prefer (presential, online (elearning, webinars, microlearning, etc)? Why?

**Answer** – “All methods are valid and interesting. But if I had to choose one, I would choose in person trainings because I can speak with the trainers/instructors about the content and leave my feedback.”

Do you think it’s important to evaluate the results of your performance? Why and how often?

**Answer** – “It’s important. The experience tells me to be more proactive. It's important to have a formal and an informal evaluation and the type of model of performance evaluation should be 360° evaluation. It's important to align the expectations. It’s important to review those expectations on a monthly basis but also have a more complete performance evaluation where it's discussed raises, bonuses etc. every 6 months or yearly.”

If yes, should this evaluation be analyzed on the team level or on individual level? Why?

**Answer** – “The individual performance will have more weight on the employee’s performance. Because a team can have a good performance but only one person in that team is solving all the problems and dealing with every issue that comes up and overdoing the work instead of the colleagues who do not have a good performance. Who goes the extra mile deserves to be rewarded.”

When we are talking about promotion, should it happen based on performance or based on seniority of the employee?

**Answer** – “Based on performance. It’s all about justice. The only thing that seniority is useful is to understand the consistency of performance. We should analyze case by case.”

What other practices could the company implement for you to feel satisfied and happy in your job?

**Answer** – “I would like to have the possibility to invite my colleagues to work with the company when its more established at the market. Also, having colleagues with more experience to help me would be nice.”

Is there any policy/practice/procedure that could be implemented in the future that would decrease your job satisfaction?

**Answer** – “If the company decided to have an 100% in person work model or if for any reason there would be salary reduction.”

Interview nº9 – Portugal:

How important do you consider remuneration and benefits? Why?

**Answer** – “It’s important but not the most important thing. I have worked in places where I had a higher salary but the stress levels and the working culture were awful, so the salary wasn’t enough to make up for the rest. Then I decided to look for something else and even though I agreed for less remuneration, now I feel better with my job and have a much better performance which allowed me to have a pay raise and receive even more than what I was receiving in my last company.”

What do you consider the most important aspect of your remuneration and benefits pack? Why?

**Answer** – “I think the bonuses are important to give extra motivation but in terms of benefits health insurance and gym membership entirely paid by the company is important to take care of our physical and mental health.”

Do you think investing in learning and training is important for you as an employee? Why?

**Answer** – “Most of the times, the training that is made available by the company doesn’t match with what I want to learn, or sometimes it happens that the same topic is lectured every year. If the company doesn’t really care about what employees need or want to learn, then I prefer

that they don't invest the money in it at all. However, I think it's important to invest in training, specialized for each team or employee in order to match the company needs."

Do you usually participate in all learning and development programs that the company makes available for you? Why?

**Answer** – "Usually yes. I try to be present in each training initiatives from the company even if only to support the person that had all that trouble to organize it."

What type of training programs do you prefer (presential, online (elearning, webinars, microlearning, etc)? Why?

**Answer** – "Online training is better because I can do it anywhere, and anytime, also if I don't understand something I can just pause the video and go back to the topic I didn't understand."

Do you think it's important to evaluate the results of your performance? Why and how often?

**Answer** – "Yes, for me it's one of the most important aspects of my job. I always like to know if my performance is up to the expectations or not and what needs to be improved if that's the case. Performance reviews are the best indicators to understand if my job is done as agreed or not, so I like to receive it either is positive or negative feedback. It should be done on a monthly basis (review KPI's for example) or at least every 3 months, if monthly is not possible."

If yes, should this evaluation be analyzed on the team level or on individual level? Why?

**Answer** – "It can be both, but we need to give more importance to the individual level, since it's more accurate to our real performance. Each person in the team can have different performances and that way we don't know for sure if some topics discussed are related to our performance or not."

When we are talking about promotion, should it happen based on performance or based on seniority of the employee?

**Answer** – "Based on performance, it's not fair if someone who is working really hard but its only 1 year at the company doesn't receive a promotion just because an employee who works 50% less receive it due to his seniority."



What other practices could the company implement for you to feel satisfied and happy in your job?

**Answer** – “Have clear communication and set clear goals.”

Is there any policy/practice/procedure that could be implemented in the future that would decrease your job satisfaction?

**Answer** – “I wouldn’t like to have to work 5 days at the office. Since the pandemic it was shown the benefits of working from home and I don’t want to go back to the 100% in person model.”

Interview n°10– Russia:

How important do you consider remuneration and benefits? Why?

**Answer** – “It’s very important since it motivates the employee to work harder, and it shows that the employees efforts were noticed and they are being rewarded for the effort. Also, it avoids quiet quitting.”

What do you consider the most important aspect of your remuneration and benefits pack? Why?

**Answer** – “The base salary and bonuses are quite important, the most important factor in the participants opinion. If looking at the benefits, the most attractive ones would be the health insurance and the gym membership. From his experience in other companies, he never had the chance to have those benefits until now.”

Do you think investing in learning and training is important for you as an employee? Why?

**Answer** – “Yes, it allows the employee to move forward and to complete or freshen its knowledge. It would be easier to complete the tasks.”

Do you usually participate in all learning and development programs that the company makes available for you? Why?

**Answer** – “Yes, when its possible for me to attend.”

What type of training programs do you prefer (presential, online (elearning, webinars, microlearning, etc)? Why?

**Answer** – “Webinars and in-person training are the best ones since it’s easier to personally ask all the questions and doubts, by talking to the person directly.”

Do you think it’s important to evaluate the results of your performance? Why and how often?

**Answer** – “Yes, it’s important to have weekly meetings to discuss the expectations, the results from the previous week, and the direction of the project and what it takes to complete the tasks.”

If yes, should this evaluation be analyzed on the team level or on individual level? Why?

**Answer** – “It’s important to analyze on both levels. Furthermore, they shouldn’t be that different from each other, meaning that it’s not normal to have a good team performance but individually only bad reviews and vice versa.”

When we are talking about promotion, should it happen based on performance or based on seniority of the employee?

**Answer** – “We need to analyze both indicators. If there is a new vacancy for promotion, and the person who is working at the company for 3 months is chosen, it will demotivate the other employees that are equally qualified. I believe that a promotion to a senior employee shouldn’t be offered in case of a bad performance.”

What other practices could the company implement for you to feel satisfied and happy in your job?

**Answer** – “At the moment I don’t think about anything specific but policies that are aligned with work-life balance are always welcome.”

Is there any policy/practice/procedure that could be implemented in the future that would decrease your job satisfaction?

**Answer** – “Nothing I could think about.”

Interview n°10 – Russia:

How important do you consider remuneration and benefits? Why?

**Answer** – “It’s the main factor of motivation, we work to receive the remuneration, so I think it is fair to think that the remuneration is one of the most important factors at work.”

What do you consider the most important aspect of your remuneration and benefits pack? Why?

**Answer** – “ The base salary and bonuses are quite important, the most important factor in my opinion. If looking at the benefits, the most attractive ones would be the health insurance and the gym membership. From my experience in other companies, I never had the chance to have those benefits until now.”

Do you think investing in learning and training is important for you as an employee? Why?

**Answer** – “Yes, the company is not only investing in the employee but also in itself since employees will be expanding their capabilities and therefore, to be more capable at their jobs.”

Do you usually participate in all learning and development programs that the company makes available for you? Why?

**Answer** – “Usually yes, only if I can’t be there or the subject of the training is something that I already have a deep knowledge about then I will not come.”

What type of training programs do you prefer (presential, online (elearning, webinars, microlearning, etc)? Why?

**Answer** – “Both in person and online are good choices, it depends on the topic to study. However, if I only had to choose one, it would be in person since is better to cover all the topics and easier to communicate.”

Do you think it’s important to evaluate the results of your performance? Why and how often?

**Answer** – “It’s important to have special meetings to provide direction for the specific tasks that are being developed but also to know if the task is performed properly or not. Daily meetings or at least 2 times per week is the best option.”

If yes, should this evaluation be analyzed on the team level or on individual level? Why?

**Answer** – “Both are equally important. Nowadays we are working in teams, no one does their job alone and only by themselves. It’s important to check for any irregularities either as a team or individually, that way it will be found what needs to be improved.”

When we are talking about promotion, should it happen based on performance or based on seniority of the employee?

**Answer** – “Both are important. The final choice needs to be done based on the performance and the seniority of the employee, which means that 50% of the final score should be given to the performance and 50% to the seniority. At the end, the employee with the highest score should be chosen.”

What other practices could the company implement for you to feel satisfied and happy in your job?

**Answer** – “It would be interesting to have thematic days at the company and we could bring our families to the gatherings.”

Is there any policy/practice/procedure that could be implemented in the future that would decrease your job satisfaction?

**Answer** – “Maybe less vacation time.”