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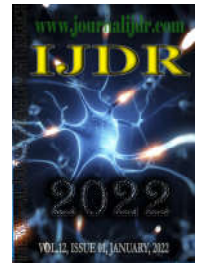
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SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP: ENGAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP IN COOPERATIVE PRACTICES

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ABSTRACT

In a society considered global, sustainable actions in the world of work are the result of a diversity of economic, political, social, cultural and environmental factors. However, reflections on the meaning of work, engagement and leadership behavior in experiences related to Social Entrepreneurship assume a certain role in the thinking and daily practice of organizational researchers in the search for sustainable action. Thus, this theoretical essay aims to reflect on the practice of social entrepreneurship, trying to understand the forgotten elements in the meaning of cooperative work and how leadership focused on spirituality could regain the cooperative members' engagement. Although recognizing the different views in the researched material, it is noted that the presence in cooperative experiences of a leadership behavior focused on spirituality seems to be of great importance, seeking to promote the essence of cooperativism, the identification of individuals with work and guided leadership in autonomy and voluntarism.

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INTRODUCTION

The deep crisis in world economies that began in 2008 has pressured the world to seek solutions to complex social problems such as hunger and unemployment. In this context, social entrepreneurship has been presented as a unique alternative to alleviate these social concerns. The performance of cooperative organizations in recent decades has been a strong example. In line with this purpose, cooperatives emerged in the first half of the 19th century, in a context very similar to the current one, marked by unemployment, hunger and social conventions (LIMA, 2009; NAMORADO, 2009). The central ideas of cooperativism were consolidated from the experiences of Robert Owen and Charles Fourier and legitimized through the pioneering experience of workers in Rochedale, England (LIMA, 2009). Despite having its emergence strictly linked to the labor movement of the first half of the 19th century and to a logic contrary to the idea of profit (NAMORADO, 2009), the traditional philosophy has been changing and increasingly fitting into the limits of the market. From the 2000s onwards, it is considered by some authors only as a response to unemployment, thus losing all criticism and loyalty to the working class (LIMA, 2009; LIMA, 2010). During nearly two centuries of experiences, cooperativism has faced several challenges, as pointed out by Oliveira (2009), one of them being the low involvement of members in cooperative deliberation spaces,

which affects the strengthening of this type of organization. Thus, this research seeks to understand what was lost in the meaning of cooperative work and how a leadership focused on spirituality could regain the cooperative members' engagement. These concerns are in line with the current importance of cooperatives, defined by the UN (United Nations) as one of the tools for implementing the SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals). Therefore, a discussion about the history and development of cooperativism as an integral initiative of social entrepreneurship will be presented below, followed by a discussion about the meaning of work, engagement and leadership. The third topic highlights how concerns with leadership focused on the meaning of work and spirituality can contribute to strengthening cooperative practices. Finally, some conclusions are presented.

Social entrepreneurship and cooperativism: an alternative for sustainable development: Recently, concerns related to sustainability have occupied a large space in the social imagination around the world. In May 2019, for example, *Veja Magazine* reported that Australia's prime minister election had sustainability as one of its key posts, with candidates Scott Morrison and Bill Shorten scrambling to put forward proposals on immigration, climate change and wage stagnation (VEJA, 2019). Fires in the Brazilian Amazon also gained prominence in the world news in the last days of August 2019 (UOL, 2019; EXAME, 2019; FOLHA DE SÃO PAULO,

2019). The G7 meeting (a group that brings together some of the most industrialized countries in the world: Germany, Canada, France, United States, Italy, Japan and Reunido Unidos) had as one of the central points of discussion the “international crisis” of burning in the Amazon, as classified by the president of France (G1, 2019; FOLHA DE SÃO PAULO, 2019; EXAME, 2019; UOL, 2019). As you can see, the sustainability issue is a priority on the world agenda. However, as pointed out by Nossa, Rodrigues and Nossa (2017), this is a dynamic concept that has undergone several transformations over time, adding values such as human rights, democracy and freedom. Such transformations were stimulated by successive Conferences, Commissions and Global Agreements in favor of Sustainable Development, from the UN Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm in 1972, to the UN Rio +20 Conference (NOSSA; RODRIGUES; NOSSA, 2017). It is noteworthy that in September 2015, world leaders met at the UN headquarters, in New York, at the United Nations General Assembly, to decide on the new global Sustainable Development Goals. As a result of this meeting, the Resolution Transforming our world was elaborated: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which systematizes the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 goals to be achieved by the year 2030 (UN, 2015). The strategic objectives extracted from this new Agenda are:

[...] end poverty and hunger everywhere; fight inequalities within and between countries; build peaceful, just and inclusive societies; protect human rights and promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls; and ensure the lasting protection of the planet and its natural resources (UN, 2015, p.03).

The UN resolution also recognizes the breadth and complexity presented by the new agenda, pointing out the need for a global partnership to ensure its implementation and thus affirming: “We recognize the role of the diverse private sector, from micro-enterprises and cooperatives to multinationals, as well as the role of civil society organizations and philanthropic organizations in implementing the new Agenda” (UN, 2015, p.12.). As can be seen, cooperatives are one of the central means of promoting sustainable development, as outlined in the 2030 Agenda defined by the United Nations Summit in 2015. This means that cooperative ventures break with the exploratory and predatory logic of traditional business organizations based on profit; and are based on collective and equitable ownership of financial results through democratic and transparent decisions implemented in the General Assembly (SCHNEIDER, 2015; MELO, 2014; CANÇADO, 2004). Therefore, despite their limitations, cooperatives are still a key element in promoting sustainability. The fact that cooperatives conceptually approach what is defined as a substantive rationality, prioritizing the essential and human aspects of organizations, as opposed to the prevailing logic, allows for good conditions in the medium and long term for the development of life and the existence of natural resources necessary for the next generations (SCHNEIDER, 2015).

According to Lima (2004), cooperativism has its roots in the 19th century labor and union movement. The emergence of the industrial production system in the wake of the industrial revolution brought with it a way of organizing work that was different from how it occurred in previous systems (MOTTA; VASCONCELOS, 2009). The employer began to take ownership of the means of production and the workers became salaried and dispossessed of the tools of work, so that artisans gradually became employees of the owners of the means of production, receiving only compensation for their strength of work, not appropriating more of the totality of what was produced (MOTTA; VASCONCELOS, 2009; RAMOS, 2008). These transformations brought with them new social phenomena. The increase in the demand for raw materials and the devaluation of land income in relation to the profit of the industry triggered a disorderly urban population growth in Europe between the years 1800 and 1900 due to fences (MOTTA; VASCONCELOS, 2009; RAMOS, 2009). In the cities, a situation of widespread marginalization and poverty prevailed, a situation of social chaos,

with epidemics, garbage, excessive working hours and social upheavals (MOTTA; VASCONCELOS, 2009; RAMOS, 2009). It is in this scenario that the first cooperative experiences emerge. Although some authors point to cooperative experiences prior to the Rochdale workers' consumption cooperative, the Rochdale Pioneers' initiative is mostly recognized as the seminal experience of cooperativism. The fact is that, regardless of the existence of previous experiences, this was the first to insert in the cooperative organization model distinct forms of collective management systematized in seven cooperative principles: 1-free membership, 2-democratic control by the partners, 3-economic participation of the partners, 4- Autonomy and independence, 5- Education, training and information, 6- Cooperation between cooperatives, and 7- concern for the community (BAIOTO, 2018; SCHNEIDER, 2015; MARCONI; SANTOS, 2016; CANÇADO, 2004).

In this same period, the social ills resulting from the factory production system with the advent of the industrial revolution, associative experiences and social struggles and convulsions characteristic of the 19th century, instigated intellectuals such as Saint-Simon (1760-1825), Charles Fourier (1772) -1837) and Robert Owen (1771-1858) to develop alternatives for the organization of work that would break with the destructive predatory logic of large industry. This movement became known as utopian socialism and constituted one of the most important theoretical foundations of modern cooperativism (BAIOTO, 2018; MARCONI; SANTOS, 2016; MOTTA; VASCONCELOS, 2009). Cooperativism, therefore, arises from the criticism of the capitalist perspective of organizing the process of production and distribution of wealth. It represents the search for a sustainable alternative for work organization, prioritizing the human and social aspects of the organization over the pursuit of profit. According to Melo (2014), cooperatives appear as a counterpoint to the heterogenization and fragmentation of the world of work characteristic of traditional management enterprises. Only through the search for overcoming the economic and political logic of capitalist appropriation is it possible to move towards a self-managed model of organization, characteristic of the cooperative idea (MELO, 2014). However, even having its original concept clearly defined as a perspective based on self-management, democratic management of organizations, collective ownership of the means of production, solidarity and equality among workers, the cooperative experience has a significant conceptual variety.

In addition to the transformations that the concept underwent over time, there is a significant typological variety of experiences. The difficult conceptual definition of the theme is such that Baioto (2018) feels the need to allocate a few pages of her doctoral thesis to define and differentiate cooperation, cooperativism and cooperatives. There is also a theoretical and conceptual difference in the definition of the idea of cooperativism in its emergence, as a subversive practice, and in the current moment, but related to a legitimization mechanism. (LIMA, 2004; LIMA 2010). According to Medeiros et al (2017), cooperativism is conceptually found between the solidarity economy (closer to the search for new production relations) and social entrepreneurship (predominantly presenting concerns related to a more equitable distribution of results and the self-organization of results. poorer, but based on current market dynamics). His studies point out that the contradictions inherent to the perspective of the solidarity economy constituted a limit for its development, as typical practices of the capitalist economy are inserted in its bases. Thus, in the field of organizational analysis, the logic of Social Entrepreneurship has predominated when investigating cooperatives, including organizations that seek profit and social impact at the same time. Initially composed only of civil society and governmental organizations, these initiatives are currently classified as follows: leveraged non-profit organizations; non-profit, philanthropic, but government-backed hybrid; and social business, which obtains income from poorly explored markets (ROMANI-DIAS et al, 2017). According to Rios (1989), in addition to the wide variation in the concept, many organizations formally registered as cooperatives do not substantially present themselves as such, and many organizations

that actually function in accordance with the theory and principles of cooperativism are not registered as such. It is possible to find cases in northeastern Brazil where large rural producers went bankrupt and formally resumed production as a cooperative resulting from recovered enterprises, but which in practice continued to function as a private enterprise (RIOS, 1989). The author points out a diversity of types of cooperatives: consumer, agricultural, production, credit, among others. Not to mention the regional differences between cooperative experiences. Given the great task that cooperatives are facing, as one of the main means of implementing the 17 SDGs that define the 2030 Agenda, this conceptual and empirical variety characteristic of cooperativism imposes on them great challenges, as they present themselves as one of the main tools of promotion and strengthening of sustainability to achieve the 169 goals by the year 2030.

Given this situation, Baioto (2018) points out as one of the main challenges of cooperativism to develop strategies for cooperative knowledge management based on cooperative education and the strengthening of circumstances that lead to the development of cooperative identity. In the same line of discussion, Oliveira (2009) points out that one of the biggest obstacles to cooperativism is the involvement of people in deliberation spaces. In this perspective, Baioto (2018, p. 66) highlights that "For the pioneers, without a proper understanding on the part of the cooperative member of the rules that guide the sense of being of the cooperative, they are unable to voluntarily adhere to the proposal". Cooperative education presents itself as a golden rule, a differential, a rock clause of the cooperative proposal (BAIOTO, 2018). This concern is expressed in the 5th principle of cooperativism approved by the International Cooperative Alliance (ACI) in 1995, expressing a bridge between the cooperative proposal, principles and values and the formation of the cooperative identity (BAIOTO, 2018; FERREIRA; SOUSA, 2018). Ferreira and Sousa (2018) consider cooperative training to be a fundamental pillar in the development of cooperativism. The authors emphasize that Rochdale's pioneers perceived cooperative education as a privileged tool to achieve a better understanding of a cooperative organization in light of its principles and values based on a different logic from traditional capitalist organizations. The author also recalls that the secondaryization of educational activities can place them at the risk of not living, of being absorbed by the current socioeconomic system. Melo (2014), rescuing Proudhon, highlights that education has a fundamental role in implementing self-management.

Cooperative education, therefore, presents itself as a central element in the strengthening of cooperative organizations by enhancing two factors: 1- By allowing the differentiation between a cooperative enterprise and another that expresses the continuity of a merely instrumental rationality; and 2- Enables the identification of the cooperative member with the cooperative principles and values (BAIOTO, 2018). Therefore, ensuring the implementation of the 2030 Agenda permeates concerns about the engagement of workers in cooperatives and the strengthening of these organizations. So, only through an organizational dynamic focused on the technical-administrative-political training of the cooperative members is it possible to strengthen the cooperatives towards the implementation of the 17 SDGs.

Meaning of work, engagement and leadership: The nature and forms of organization of work activities undergo radical changes, demanding, above all, a new dynamic in the work context. As a result, a variety of occupations are no longer important and others emerge as a result of innovations in the field of knowledge and technologies. However, work continues to be a fundamental source of support for society, showing that, - even having the traditional side of negative conceptions as a source of suffering and alienation; demands, pressures and uncomfortable environmental singulars -, every human being active to give meaning to his life, wants to carry out a productive activity that brings him emancipation and satisfaction (MORIN, 2001; BACKES, 2012; NEVES et al, 2018). Once work is considered an essential factor to give meaning to people's lives, it is necessary to understand the characteristics of work

that motivate and give satisfaction. In an attempt to create a pioneering model that contemplated the characteristics of employment, the authors Hackman and Oldhan (1976) synthesized their ideas into three psychological states describing the reasons, according to them, that impact on employee motivation and satisfaction, namely: 1. The importance of work (the meaning a person finds in the activity they perform); 2. The usefulness of the work (the feeling of responsibility for the results it achieves) and 3. The legitimacy of the work (the employee's knowledge of his performance). Thus, characteristics such as the variety of tasks, the employee's identity with the work he develops and the meaning of the work for the employee define these authors' approach. Another important interpretation is the Sociotechnical Systems proposed by Ktchum and Trist (1992), which argue that the intrinsic and extrinsic motivations of employees have a direct relationship to the way work is organized. Based on this model, it is understood that environmental and structural conditions influence employee performance. Corroborating this line of reasoning, Merighi et al (2013) point out that the figure of the leader occupies an important place to effectively achieve harmony between organizational interests and the individual and collective needs of people. It is understood, therefore, that the cooperative nature inherent in any business creates a sense of community and unites individuals to carry out productive activities. It is inferred, therefore, that leadership in Sociotechnical Systems assumes a responsibility to maintain a collective and cooperative sense in people, in addition to making them motivated and stimulated in the work environment. The arguments of Emery (1976) and Trist (1978) supported what was proposed by Ktchum and Trist (1992), who, in turn, claim that the employee arouses an effective interest in committing to the tasks performed in the environment of work based on the fulfillment of six conditions considered essential, namely: 1. The variety and challenge of tasks; 2. Possibilities for continuous learning; 3. Maneuver and autonomy margin; 4. Recognition and support; 5. Social contribution and construction of social identity; 6. Professional improvement and guidance for a desirable future.

It is understood, therefore, that for the employee, the format in which the organizations configure the work is very important and when it corresponds to something that makes sense, develops skills, can be performed with freedom and makes him evolve, it says a lot about the degree of his work. commitment to work. It is, so to speak, a strong element in influencing employee engagement at work, because they are likely to focus their efforts on what stimulates them and provides satisfaction. In the assumptions underlying this perspective of analyzing the meaning of work, engagement and leadership, the studies by Gupta and Shukla (2018) and Gupta (2018) are useful to demonstrate that personal involvement and engagement at work has been discussed by social scientists a from the understanding of Kahn (1990), who, through ethnographic investigations, seized evidence that work environments are places of incentives for people to develop their individual self (involvement) and the social self (engagement).

For Kanh (1990), work engagement contains three dimensions: cognitive, emotional and physical. These dimensions are part of the nature of people and when they are hired by organizations, they hope to find the appropriate conditions in the environment to make them committed to the work they will perform, in addition to achieving their psychological well-being. Thus, since Kahn (1990), the importance of psychological well-being already stands out as an influential dimension in the performance of individuals. The expansion of investigations about this state of well-being has advanced in recent decades and in the survey carried out by Saks (2011) some contents are recurrent in deducing how employee involvement is considered the key to the success and competitiveness of organizations; as well as for productivity, retention, financial performance of the organization and shareholder return Macey et al (2009); Harter et al (2002); Bates (2004); Baumruk (2004); Richman (2006). In analyzing this term employee engagement, an important feature is that it was expanded by other researchers after Kahn (1990), who, according to Kim; Park; Kwon (2017), created other perspectives for studies such as work engagement (Schaufeli, et al, 2002), organizational engagement (Guest, 2015; Saks, 2006), work

engagement (Rico, Lepine and Crawford, 2010). According to these authors, the assumptions of Schaufeli et al (2002) about engagement is the most used to recognize and measure engagement at work. For Schaufeli et al (2002), engagement at work is a positive state of mind of the employee characterized by Vigor (VI), Dedication (DE) and Absorption (AB) with which he delivers in the performance of the task. In a practical way, the VI (Vigor) can be observed by the manifestation of mental energy and strong will to exercise and complete the work, especially when faced with challenges and obstacles. DE (Dedication) is perceived by the care and significance that the tasks have for the employee. AB (Absorption) is recognized for the attention and commitment to the work, demonstrated in the time spent on the task. They are highlighted in a survey carried out by Kim; Park; Kwon (2017) that in Guest studies (2015) work engagement presents a relationship of influence with positive attitudes, satisfaction and organizational commitment of employees; that according to Christian et al (2011), engagement contributes to organizational citizenship and employee proactivity; that for Halbesleben (2010), engagement has a positive relationship with maintaining the employee's health and a negative face related to turnover demands.

The basis of the premises of Bakker and Leiter (2010) about the analysis of behaviors and the state of mind that define engagement at work, contributed to the creation and use of various tools to measure the level of engagement. However, the most practiced in empirical research is the Utrecht Work Involvement Scale (UWES) developed by Schaufeli et al (2003) from the standardization of work situations categorized into three dimensions that uniquely define what work engagement is, being them: Stamina (VI), Dedication (DE) and Absorption (AB). It is observed in the literature that theoretical and empirical investigations about engaged behavior in the workplace have advanced in recent decades from this measurement scale (MACEY et al, 2009; HARTER et al, 2002; BATES, 2004; BAUMRUK; 2004; RICHMAN, 2006). Regarding this expansion of interest in recognizing employee engagement, it is worth highlighting the importance of creating a favorable environment for relationships imbued with empathy, mutual help, solidarity, collectivism. And from this perspective, explore the understanding of how a leadership (free and voluntary) can influence the generation of cooperative values that result in individual and collective well-being in the workplace; considering, further, that it is necessary in human and social groups, regardless of the individual's personality, to mediate between differences. Being the mediating leadership among cooperative members to engage in work, a dimension can be explored when it comes to cooperative organizations. On the other hand, with the purpose of expanding the evident finding that engaged behavior is related to the way of work organization, psychological well-being and collective sense, Saks (2011) and Pfeffer (2010) identified organizations that have already awakened in the interest of stimulating engagement and psychological well-being by organizing spiritual moments that integrate the hearts and minds of employees. Based on this evidence, it can be considered that the subjective (psychological dimension; well-being) and objective (financial; productive performance) dimensions are inherent to the behavioral nature of human beings, therefore, they determine their process of engagement at work.

From this perspective of developing subjective dimensions in employees (psychological well-being) in order to ensure that the objective dimensions (work) are maximized, the discussion on workplace spirituality is raised, recognized and highlighted by Saks (2011), when the author gives spirituality the mobilizing power and psychological well-being, capable of raising and producing high levels of employee engagement. This author argues that engaged employees have characteristics of enthusiasm and willingness to work in a balanced way and skills to deal with the complexities of work. Saks (2011) mentions other scholars who expand the dimensions of understanding about spirituality, such as: Sense of community (ASHMOS; DUCHON, 2000); Experience of transcendence, inner life, feelings of fullness and joy (JURKIEWICZ; GIACALONE, 2004; DUCHON; PLWMAN; 2005); Experience of employees

passionate and energized by their work, putting meaning and purpose (KINJERSKI; SKRYPNER, 2004); feeling of completeness and joy linked to a non-physical energy (GIACALONE; JURKIEWICZ, 2010). In addition to the dimensions above, it is observed that the discussions related to the themes meaning of work, engagement and leadership are not exhausted. It is believed that the meaning of work, positive attitudes and the proactive and resilient way of dealing with stressful factors translate into an experience of positive engagement (FREITAS and CHARÃO-BRITO, 2016).

Leadership and spirituality in cooperatives: Studies in Administration, since Taylor and Fayol, have been dedicated to developing a theory that seeks to understand the different aspects related to the management of organizations. Although initially focused on aspects of production and productivity in private companies, currently this field has significantly expanded, dedicating itself to managerial aspects of governmental and non-governmental, which are not for profit (GIL, 2016). Despite the restrictions pointed out by Gil (2016) to the scientific nature of the principles and practices of Administration widely spread in the academy, there is a diversity of researches, studies and theories that propose to understand the functioning of organizations and administrative practices. In 1979, Burrell and Morgan systematized the various theories of organizational studies in their work "Sociological paradigms and organizational analysis" (CALDAS, 2007; MORGAN, 2007; BURRELL, 1998). They classified existing studies based on four paradigms that range from objectivity to subjectivity, and from the perspective of change to regulation (MORGAN, 2007). In their studies, they realized that a group of studies shares the idea that reality is socially constructed and that, therefore, the functioning of organizations largely depends on the behavior and interpretation of the people who are part of it. It is from this point of view that theories dedicated to themes related to motivation, leadership, engagement and the meaning of work gain importance to explain the dynamics of organizations. For Saks (2011), engagement, therefore, as demonstrated in this study, is a key aspect for organizational success. The leadership relationship between leaders and subordinates is of substantial importance in the search for harmony between organizational interests and the individual and collective needs of people.

When dealing with cooperative organizations, theories in this regard demonstrate that concerns related to the development of a leadership relationship that promotes engagement are of great relevance due to their peculiarities. First, leadership must be perceived as a relationship between leaders and subordinates, and not just a unilateral action by the superior. Second, there is conceptually in these organizations the need for constant search for legitimacy and acceptance of leaders, which allows those led to have great influence on the behavior of leaders. And finally, the ideological and contradictory characteristics to the current economic logic demand from its components a degree of engagement and identification with the constituent elements of this organizational type, since they are based on self-organization and cooperative voluntarism, the non-identification with its constituent principles can detract from the experience. Unlike traditional managerial organizations, cooperative activities do not require their members to merely repeat movements, but rather to understand the task in its entirety and their political performance within the organization, as pointed out by Baioto (2018). The difference between traditional organizations and cooperative organizations is expressed in the way they work and in everyday decision-making, but in addition it is presented through a set of principles and values intrinsic to the behavior of people who make up organizations and differentiate themselves in each case. Therefore, Kahn's (1990) concerns are fundamental for the survival of cooperatives, understood here not as an organization, but as a set of principles and values that, if not internalized, will end up being transformed into a mere traditional organization, as much as its statute says that it is a cooperative, in practice it will not go beyond an organization based on instrumental logic (FERREIRA; SOUSA, 2018). According to Rios (1989) it is common to find cases like these in Brazil. It is necessary that cooperative work makes sense to people

so that they engage in its realization (MORIN, 2001). As Hackman and Oldhan (1976) point out, without the cooperative members understanding the importance (the meaning that a person finds in the activity they perform); usefulness (the feeling of responsibility for the results it achieves); and the legitimacy of the work (the employee's knowledge of their performance) will never be able to get involved and assume for themselves the principles that characterize cooperativism. Without the cooperative members understanding the meaning of being the cooperative, it is not possible to voluntarily adhere to the proposal (BAIOTO, 2018). In this perspective, authors such as Ferreira and Sousa (2018) consider education as a fundamental pillar in the development of cooperativism, as, as Baioto (2018) highlights, in addition to allowing the differentiation between a cooperative and a traditional organization, it also enables the cooperative identify with the values of cooperativism. However, engagement theories point out that the environment is also an extremely important factor for work engagement. Emery (1976) and Trist (1978) allow us to conclude that the format in which the work is configured significantly influences behavior. They also point out that people engage when they execute something that makes sense, that allows them to evolve and that can be executed with freedom. Therefore, the existence of self-management practices in cooperatives, where the cooperative members have the freedom and legitimacy to decide in the assemblies and in their workplace, as pointed out by Melo (2014), in addition to being a delimiting element of cooperativism, it is also a catalyst for member engagement. One of the existing difficulties until recently was measuring engagement to guide research and practices. However, when discussing engagement from the concept of work engagement, Schaufeli et al (2002) contribute to the identification of indicators that allow verifying the degree of engagement existing in organizations. They define work engagement using the constructs vigor (VI), dedication (DE) and absorption (AB), from which they developed a scale that allows them to identify the degree of engagement. The contribution of Schaufeli et al (2002) is fundamental to identify cooperatives with a tendency to succumb to the market logic, as pointed out by Ferreira and Sousa (2018). Finally, Saks (2011) and Pfeffer (2010), working on the concept of spirituality, develop a theory that relates engaged behavior with work organization, psychological well-being and collective sense. These ideas are fundamental in the search for strengthening cooperativism, as they synthesize essential dimensions of cooperativism: work organization; cooperative values and the political project. Therefore, the association between the subjective (psychological dimension; well-being) and objective (financial; productive) dimensions should be a central concern for the strengthening and survival of cooperatives.

Conclusion

Therefore, addressing and answering the question that guided this essay, leadership in a cooperative organization presupposes the recognition that a sense of work and engagement are inherent to the volunteerism of associates. However, it is possible to see that there are cooperative organizations devoid of values and spiritual dimensions adhering to cooperative principles. By recognizing this specificity, the leadership starts to focus not only on the traditional unilateral aspect of collections, attribution of goals and management of associates, but on negotiation and participation of everyone in the decisions and management of the business. It is observed, therefore, that the theoretical approaches that analyze work engagement systematize a set of concepts and constructs that help to understand and strengthen the involvement of associated members in cooperatives. In this way, as it is a different type of organization from the others, due to its characteristics directly related to cooperative values and principles, the survival of these organizations and the maintenance of their unique practices necessarily involves an introspection on the part of the cooperative members of the meaning of the work of cooperatives. Thus, cooperative organizations demand, beforehand, a body of members endowed with the meaning of work, which results in an engagement prior to leadership. In this context, leadership can take on a more relational character between leader and subordinates, with exchanges of meaning, trust and symbolism. Those

led (cooperated) are not passive and inert in the leadership process, but they also exert influence concurrently with the leader. This is because cooperatives are not constituted as traditional hierarchies that legitimize the leader, but as an environment in which the legitimacy of managers demands negotiation and participation in discussions, votes and deliberations. Despite their nearly 200 years of experience, cooperatives are still a fundamental tool in promoting sustainability, as pointed out by Agenda 2030. In this sense, concerns about work organization, psychological well-being and collective sense in cooperatives are so that they can fulfill their role as means of implementing the SDGs. Therefore, a greater research effort is needed to theoretically relate the aspects of cooperativism with the construct referring to engagement, leadership and spirituality at work. Empirical research is also needed to verify the relationship between the engagement and strengthening of cooperatives, the influence of leadership in this process, the characteristics of leadership in these situations and the elements that lead to engagement in cooperatives.

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