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Intra-organizational Social Capital, Performance and Management Mechanism of Small Companies in a Crisis Context: Propositions

ABSTRACT

Objective: The present work has the objective of discussing the relationship between social capital (SC), formal and informal controls and the performance of small companies in a context of crisis.

Method: This research aims at the existence of theoretical gaps and formulates research propositions through the theoretical essay approach.

Originality/Relevance: This research stands out for proposing the debate and offers researchers in the area propositions that can be analyzed from different theoretical and methodological perspectives.

Results: This study engendered five research propositions: (i) The effect of intra-organizational SC on the performance of SME is more significant in a crisis context; (ii) There is a difference in the effect between the dimensions of the intra-organizational SC of SME on operational performance in a crisis context; (iii) There is an effect of intra-organizational SC on the formal control of SMEs in a crisis context; (iv) There is an effect of intra-organizational SC on the informal control of SMEs in a crisis context; (v) There is a dominant control between formal and informal SMEs in a crisis context.

Theoretical/Methodological Contributions: The discussion carried out allowed the elaboration of propositions, taking a step beyond theoretical reflection. These propositions can be operationalized both in the form of qualitative studies and quantitative studies, giving a contribution to researchers on the subject.

Keywords: Intraorganizational SC. Formal and Informal Control. Crisis. Small business.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Social capital (SC) has been discussed in the organizational context for over thirty years. For Coleman (1988), SC consists of aspects of social structures that facilitate certain organizational actors' actions, whether people or corporate entities. From this perspective, organizations can benefit from SC, as they can create value for shareholders and their members and improve employee skills (Leana & Buren, 1999).

From an internal point of view, for Ben-Hador (2019), Fukuyama (1995), and Leana and Buren (1999), intra-organizational social capital forms networks that are built based on trust, norms, mutual goals, and cooperation among its members. Thus, SC is an intangible asset supported by knowledge derived from the interaction of company employees (Ben-Hador, 2016).

The benefits of intra-organizational social capital can be personal, such as increased employee satisfaction and significantly improved health, and organizational, such as reduced turnover and improved performance, as it provides the growth of intellectual capital in the company, creating a favorable scenario for the exchange and preservation of knowledge and information (Ben-Hador & Eckhaus, 2018). For example, an employee can receive structural social support related to the number of interactions in their relationship network or functional social support, which covers unique support functions such as: emotional, instrumental, and informational (Andrade & Pérez-Nebra, 2017). However, SC has its drawbacks, which are: maintenance costs, costs of socialization in terms of time and resources or investments in job security, depending on the underlying values and connections, can inhibit innovation and change, risk of thinking of group and isomorphism, which can lead to less openness to new information or collective blindness, inertia and parochialism (Ströbele & Wentges, 2018).

Intra-organizational SC creates changing habits in employees as they benefit from new knowledge through personal and business networks, trust, and common norms. They can also test the newly acquired technology with trusted colleagues and avoid the knowledge that does not add value to the operation of the company's activities (Ortiz et al., 2021).

However, to be successful, it is not enough for the company to promote its SC. The use of management mechanisms, including formal and informal controls, can also affect individual and organizational results (Jaworski, 1988). Control is a resource adjusted to influence and direct individual action, which, in turn, should influence performance (Jaworski, 1988; Ribeiro & Espejo, 2022). Cravens et al. (2004) stated that the simultaneous use of a high level of formal and informal control is aligned with the intention of a company to monitor, directing and evaluating the activities and results of employees. In the absence of control, from an individual point of view, employees can change data and present untrue information, acting in the opposite direction to the organization's objectives (Jaworski, 1988).

Goebel and Weißenberger (2016); Merchant and Van der Stede (2012); Passetti et al. (2021) classified formal controls into outcome and action controls, which focus on evaluating employee performance and behavioral constraints. Informal controls are those related to personnel and organizational culture and focus on promoting individual motivation and cultural norms or values (Goebel & Weißenberger, 2016; Merchant & Van der Stede, 2012; Passetti et al., 2021). It seems that the adoption of these controls may be related to the context in which the company operates, either from a market point of view or from a sector point of view.

The recent crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic has had several impacts on companies of all sizes and from different sectors. However, in Brazil, IBGE data in August 2020 indicate that small companies were the most affected by COVID-19. The study shows that 33.7% (up

to 49 employees) said they had a negative impact, versus 22.8% of mediums (50-499 employees) and 23.8% of large companies (500+ employees). Among those that said they had a small or non-existent effect, 37.8% were small, 43.3% were medium, and 52.6% were large (The Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics [IBGE], 2020). Also, the negative impact on small businesses caused 5.3 million small companies in Brazil (31% of the total) to change their operation (the Brazilian Micro and Small Business Support Service [SEBRAE], 2020). At the international level, the pandemic has reached about 2 million small businesses (SME) in the United States (Parilla et al., 2020). In Nigeria, the pandemic reduced revenue for small businesses (Aladejebi, 2020). Most of these Nigerian companies became insolvent, with delays in paying their employees salaries (Aladejebi, 2020). In Europe, a study carried out by the Connected Commerce Council with more than 5,016 small and medium-sized companies between November and December 2020 concluded that most SMEs were affected, with an average decrease of 20% in sales and a 16% reduction in customer base (Belitski et al., 2022). It must be considered that a crisis may have an internal origin. Nevertheless, since it is "a phenomenon with a low chance of occurrence, high ambiguity and a situation with strong repercussions at all organizational levels" (Gabrielli et al., 2019, p. 30), we chose to stick only to exogenous crises. This negative impact and economic, social, and psychological uncertainties caused by the COVID-19 pandemic led to insecurity in the work environment of individuals and consequently may lead to less effort by employees in carrying out their tasks (Frare & Beuren, 2020).

Studies show that when competition is normal, SC impacts the relationship between formal and informal control in SMEs (Ströbele & Wentges, 2018). However, what happens to SC and controls when the competitive environment suffers a crisis? Moreover, if the sector to be studied primarily depends on the free movement of people, mainly by SME, what stands out more between formal and informal control? These are gaps to which this study intends to contribute.

Recent work on SC and COVID-19 has addressed the community level, as with Bartscher et al. (2021) and Liu and Wen (2021). In addition, Borgonovi et al. (2021) addressed the effect of social capital on community health outcomes during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, as seen in Visentin et al. (2021), there are also works at the company level that provides a conceptual framework that encompasses the dimensions of SC and the path to solving problems generated by the COVID-19 pandemic crisis. Thus, it remains to assess the intra-organizational level; this is another shortcoming of our study.

The study is structured in five sections in addition to this introduction. Next, we deepen the debate on the intra-organizational SC theme. In section three, we discuss intra-organizational SC in times of crisis and also present two theoretical propositions. In section four, we make three other theoretical propositions discussing the relationship between SC and formal and informal controls. We finally made our closing remarks.

2 INTRA-ORGANIZATIONAL SOCIAL CAPITAL

There are three levels of analysis of social capital in organizations: a) personal, which deals with parameters such as the number of social relationships that the individual maintains; b) external, which is built by the interactions of top management in partnership with entities outside the organization, which may be competitors, investors, customers, suppliers, and others; and c) intra-organizational, which focuses on the performance and growth of productive and stable cooperation (Ben-Hador, 2016). Our work is based on this last level.

The intra-organizational SC deals with trust and standard views systematized and internalized by the company; this implies that the SC remains with the company even if a

specific member leaves. When discussing intra-organizational social capital, the literature refers to the scope and quality of relationships between employees and units within a given organization (Carrasco-Hernández & Jiménez-Jiménez, 2013). Thus, intra-organizational SC contributes to the growth and development of employees and organizations (Ben-Hador, 2016) and supports the organization's resilience and adaptation (Ben-Hador & Eckhaus, 2018).

Internal SC promotes knowledge flows within a team (Lee et al., 2013). It operates through its internal networks that drive organizational effectiveness, celebrated as an optimistic scenario of interpersonal friendship, sharing knowledge, and achieving, among other things, innovation (Jiang & Liu, 2015).

The structural, relational, and cognitive dimensions of the intra-organizational SC, as pointed out by Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998), facilitate the advancement of the company's resilience through three processes, which are: through social relations and regular communication (structural), they help to share information, knowledge, and better habits and customs within small businesses, thus promptly responding to the effects and creating contingency models to overcome the disruption (Lengnick-Hall et al., 2011; Ozanne et al., 2022; Polyviou et al., 2020). The second process is relationships based on trust (relational) that guarantee obligations between employees since, through commercial operations, small businesses respond quickly to problems, helping to alleviate risk and promoting the recovery process (Ozanne et al., 2022; Polyviou et al., 2020). Finally, the third process concerns the cognitive process, which is related to goals and vision, and helps employees appropriate a collective language and form a universal belief about their success (Cappiello et al., 2020; Ozanne et al., 2022;).

Intra-organizational social capital brings benefits to people and organizations in reducing turnover and increasing employee satisfaction. It also facilitates the growth of intellectual capital, building a favorable environment for the exchange and preservation of knowledge and information (Ben-Hador & Eckhaus, 2018). In addition to these benefits, intra-organizational SC can significantly impact the mental health of employees, their performance, and the success of organizations (Ben-Hador & Eckhaus, 2018). Spence et al. (2003) state that SMEs can benefit from social capital in three areas: stabilizing mutual expectations and allowing collective action (trust), forming a kind of insurance, and providing access to relevant information.

There are ten sources of intra-organizational SC informal networks. They make it possible to identify the intensity and distribution of social ties within an organization. In addition, these sources can also positively or negatively impact the performance of individuals and groups, as seen in Table 1 (Nonino, 2013).

Table 1

Ten sources of informal networks of intra-organizational social capital

Network name	Definition
Information	The work information exchange network.
Access	The knowledge accessibility network represents the availability of knowledge within the organization.
Obstacles	The web of negative working relationships within organizational boundaries.
Knowledge	The perception network of knowledge distribution within an organization.
Counseling	The network of counseling relationships allows the resolution of work problems.
Communication	The non-functional informal communication exchange network.
Feelings	Network of similarity/distance perceptions within the organization.
Friendship	The network of friends within the organization.
Trust	The network of mutual trust within the organization.
Simmelian	The organization's network of Simmel triads (trust and friendship relationships).

Note. Source: Elaborated by the authors based on the study by Nonino (2013).

For Krackhardt and Hanson (1993), informal organizational networks are the networks of relationships that employees build between activities or assignments to perform tasks quickly. Although it is a system of relationships for the benefit of employees, they are not formally created (De Toni & Nonino, 2010; Nonino, 2013). Furthermore, as time passes, an informal hierarchy is created at all company levels (Diefenbach & Sillince, 2011).

In SMEs, informal networks help members to generate social capital, create network ties, build trust, and share a common vision among actors (Saha & Banerjee, 2015). In addition, they enjoy informal network support through family networks, social networks, internal networks, and networks of buyers and suppliers (Saha & Banerjee, 2015).

Generally, helping relationships between employees in a given task are built to the extent that an employee asks a colleague for help when he cannot solve an activity on his/her own, and this information will be shared spontaneously among them for the benefit of those who need it (Agneessens & Wittek, 2012).

To solve their colleagues' work problems, the central actors in the relationship network act as informal consultants (De Toni & Nonino, 2010). Problem-solving networks tend to increase in times of uncertainty or ambiguity as people seek interaction with peers who can provide a different point of view and new interpretations of unfolding events (Srivastava, 2015).

3 INTRA-ORGANIZATIONAL SOCIAL CAPITAL IN A CRISIS CONTEXT: DISCUSSION AND PROPOSITION

The crisis leaves companies vulnerable (Ooi et al., 2017). For Brinks and Ibert (2020, p. 10), a crisis "encompasses the elements of uncertainty, urgency and threat". This vulnerability and uncertainty affect social capital, which fluctuates when exposed to moments of stress (Ooi et al., 2017; Wosiek, 2016). From the perspective of organizational theory, uncertainties caused by external events change interactions between people, as well as their organizational structures and performance (Land et al., 2012).

In times of economic crisis, people may feel discouraged from joining a new network of cooperation and joint initiatives (Wosiek, 2016), or they may change their partners (Hoffmann et al., 2017). Investment activities decrease in the period of deterioration of the economic condition, thus generating uncertainties or worsening the financial situation of the individual and the organization (Wosiek, 2016). The COVID-19 pandemic crisis has created an uncertain environment. Routines and regular interactions were disrupted, and risk had to be assessed continuously (Christianson & Barton, 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic crisis is the context of this study.

Social capital constitutes a rigid and significant element in the collaborative creation of knowledge during the crisis (Land et al., 2012). In the same vein, Sun and Lu (2020) stated that SC is a strategic resource available to reduce costs of the impacts of COVID-19, as it focuses on collective actions to protect collective interests. Sun and Lu (2020) reinforced that SC impacts on the tranquility of employees during the period of uncertainty, promoting common activities and facilitating the dissemination of information. Therefore, all three dimensions of social capital are needed (structural, cognitive, and relational) (Aldrich et al., 2021; Pitas & Ehmer, 2020) to respond to or recover from the crisis.

From an intra-organizational perspective, connections play a relevant role in emerging crises, increasing the agents' need to communicate each other in their internal networks (Cortez & Johnston, 2020). It is because in times of the pandemic, the need for reciprocal communication ties has grown (Cortez & Johnston, 2020). In a crisis, intra-organizational SC can be stronger and more beneficial for the organization and the workers.

As well as the advantages of the SC dimensions in a crisis context, informal networks of intra-organizational SC can circumvent internal systems designed to reduce the organization's fragility to face external risks (Fischbacher-Smith & Fischbacher-Smith, 2014). As a result, they can help SMEs survive disasters and crises in the short term and build a high level of resilience in the long term (Coles et al., 2021). Overall, informal networks enable crisis management team members to leverage their informal networks' knowledge and resource bases and reduce the crisis impact (Fischbacher-Smith & Fischbacher-Smith, 2014).

Environments of high uncertainty or technology demand stress increase the effect of structural SC on learning (Land et al., 2012). For Shakina and Barajas (2014), SC benefits organizations in the struggle for survival during a crisis and in challenging economic conditions. To this aim, sharing information to acquire new intellectual capital ensures an advantage for companies to grow in times of pressure (Muukkonen et al., 2020).

Thus, to live with the crisis, the intellectual capital provided by SC is necessary (Al-Omouh et al., 2020). Furthermore, to prevent future problems, it is necessary to learn how to face environmental variations through intelligent systems, to increase so the company's flexibility (Oh & Teo, 2006).

The SC perspective also involves the company's partners. To Jia et al. (2020, p. 3), "companies with high structural capital in their supply chain will likely respond and recover quickly after the disaster." The authors concluded that structural SC could predict proactive organizational resilience, and relational SC tends to predict reactive organizational resilience. "Cognitive capital can also encourage convergence of interests among network members, which is useful for predicting potential risks and managing uncertainty" (Jia et al., 2020, p. 4). Thus, if the crisis affects the company, the answer can be in the plural, that is, through the company's network of relationships or its supply chain.

Under various pressures, internal resources may not be able to meet organizational needs, such as innovating to stay in the market (Lyu et al., 2022). So then, organizations focus on acquiring social capital to access external resources (Lyu et al., 2022).

In the formal market, companies use their corporate SC to create a positive relationship environment with their workers, enabling eventual negotiation processes, direct or mediated by union members in moments of economic and social crisis (Fiordelisi et al., 2021). An example brought by Nakagawa and Shaw (2004) cited that a society that has a high level of SC can recover from a natural disaster such as an earthquake in short term, and recovers satisfactorily and sustainably over time. Similar results were observed in economic crisis scenarios (Lange, 2015, p. 286), where SC and "its key dimensions continue to constitute an important factor for the self-perception of the well-being of workers across Europe, even in times of economic crisis". Furthermore, social capital is crucial for resolving health emergencies and other situations that create risk to citizens at (Chuang et al., 2015).

Another example comes from Chowdhury et al. (2020), who indicated that restaurants that built environments for accumulating relational resources and networks of relationships of trust with their workers were able to improve their intellectual capital, providing assistance in situations of stress and creating a friendly and partnership scenario for sharing of critical information and knowledge. For Cappiello et al. (2020) and Visentin et al. (2021), SC levels influence a management's ability to create meaning to workers' actions and are necessary to deal with a crisis and, subsequently, innovate in the service offer.

Small family businesses' ability to respond effectively to different external crises can be attributed to a single resource, their family social capital (Hadjielias et al., 2022; Herrero, 2018). In times of external crisis, the SC of small family businesses can change the structure (density of relationships and resource mobilization flows) and relationship (trust and distrust) when psychological and situational mechanisms are activated. However, on the other hand,

these mechanisms' absence can result in a lost of confidence and an inability to mobilize resources (Hadjielias et al., 2022). We suggest that it is not just on the small family business but in almost all of SMEs. Because of the positions presented, we propose the following:

Proposition 1: The effect of intra-organizational SC on the performance of SME is more significant in a crisis context.

Proposition 1 relates intra-organizational SC and performance. Essentially, we are dealing with those informal relationships (De Toni & Nonino, 2010; Nonino, 2013) based on friendship (Krackhardt & Hanson, 1993) that can provoke quick responses, even when there is an exogenous crisis. In part, because the sector is affected (IBGE, 2022), it reduces the possibility of solving the individual problem through labor mobility. Moreover, partly because the knowledge shared by workers about the process (Ozanne et al., 2022) or even about other links in the value chain (Chowdhury et al., 2020) can facilitate the task of developing resilience (Ozanne et al., 2022). We also propose:

Proposition 2: There is a difference in the effect between the dimensions of the intra-organizational SC of SME on operational performance in a crisis context.

Proposition 2 seeks to identify the difference in the SC (Aldrich et al., 2021; Pitas & Ehmer, 2020) are relevant in combating the impact of a crisis. Furthermore, they can change structures in the crisis (Hadjielias et al., 2022), resulting in an increased effect of structural social capital on learning (Land et al., 2012).

4 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INTRA-ORGANIZATIONAL SC AND FORMAL AND INFORMAL CONTROLS: DISCUSSION AND PROPOSITION

Generally, organizations' controls are implemented as a model of task and process controls, such as statistical quality control and just-in-time management (Chenhall, 2003). Malmi and Brown (2008) presented five types of organizational controls: planning, cybernetics, reward and compensation, and administrative and cultural controls. Flamholtz et al. (1985) state that to have control over worker behavior, the controls of organizations transform into the combined use of controls such as personal supervision, standard operating procedures, job descriptions, performance measurement, and reward systems.

However, in SME, it is unclear what type of control is most prevalent (Johnstone, 2020). Groen et al. (2012) state that long-term controls tend to become more formal in small companies. Furthermore, Perez-Sanchez et al. (2003) argue that informal controls prevail due to the characteristics of SME in size, structure, and ownership. In family businesses, informal controls are used more because these controls are regularly mirrored in social and personal relationships and trust (Senftlechner & Hiebl, 2015).

This study focuses on formal and informal control conceptualized by Jaworski (1988). He called formal control procedures written and created by management and informal control procedures typically created by workers, not written by management. Formal controls are structured, while informal or social controls are not structured (Langfield-Smith & Smith, 2003). Structured formal controls are divided into outcome controls and behavior controls (action) (Goebel & Weißenberger, 2016; Langfield-Smith & Smith, 2003; Merchant & Van der Stede, 2012; Passetti et al., 2021). Performance controls estimate and oversees the results of operations or behaviors using techniques such as performance measurement. Behavioral

controls (action) focus on operational rules and procedures and monitor employee behavior (Langfield-Smith & Smith, 2003).

Informal controls, on the other hand, depend on social norms, shared values, and beliefs. Informal controls can be stimulated by common interactions, meetings, negotiation of disputes, and codes of conduct (Langfield-Smith & Smith, 2003). Passetti et al. (2021) divide informal controls into personal and cultural. These controls are vital in influencing a holistic understanding of the management controls an organization needs in response to the COVID-19 crisis, provide organizational adaptation and mitigate the effects of the pandemic.

To do these controls efficiently, SC can be a resource that helps in understanding how the combination of formal and informal control can have complementary or conflicting impacts on the company's results (Chenhall et al., 2010). SC provides means or paths by which formal and informal controls should be combined for better effects (Ahrens & Chapman, 2004; Chenhall et al., 2010; Chenhall & Morris, 1995).

The structure of formal social relations in companies encompasses ties built by the organization to protect economic processes. These ties come from the division of labor between workers or the division of departments either vertically or horizontally (Rank, 2008). These relationships create recurrent interdependencies of exchanges, that is, the inputs and outputs of information and resources. Although informal social bonds are created voluntarily in the relationship between employees, these bonds are built independently of a formal connection (Rank, 2008). Informal controls promote an organizational environment that motivates the organization's actors to implement corporate social responsibility activities (Hosoda, 2018).

SC impacts the level of interaction between formal and informal control. High levels of SC allow organizations to simultaneously take advantage of formal and informal control (Ströbele & Wentges, 2018). It can ensure that workers comply with rules and helps reducing monitoring costs (Pretty, 2003).

SC affects worker behavior not only at the internal levels of the organization but also at the external levels (Chenhall et al., 2010). Kirsch et al. (2010) argue that managers can foster SC assets to facilitate the use of informal control within the group. The structure dimension of SC provides ways through which informal controls can encourage members of the organization's groups to behave consistently with shared norms and values (Kirsch et al., 2010).

The high degree of SC allows organizations to use informal controls as an efficient control strategy to support problems (Ströbele & Wentges, 2018). In addition, it facilitates the execution of informal control over its members (Kirsch et al., 2010) and ensures the alignment of employee behavior with the organization's overall goals (Ströbele & Wentges, 2018).

Formal controls are used to maintain the financial perspective and develop efficient and effective work processes; informal controls are used to maintain worker focus on innovation (Chenhall et al., 2010). In addition, informal control captures social resources embedded in social relations to control the company (Ströbele & Wentges, 2018). Finally, SC influences the design of management systems and, more specifically, the correct use of informal (Ströbele & Wentges, 2018). For example, the tendency of workers to avoid disclosure errors depends not only on the management control design but also on the level of the relationship between them and their cognitive orientations (Carraro et al., 2020).

SMEs survive with limited resources. However, they need connections between workers, suppliers, customers, and partners (Malhotra & Temponi, 2010). According to the authors, these connections provide integration in other environments, facilitate the

development of the ability to integrate their business processes with other businesses, and maintain a competitive advantage (Malhotra & Temponi, 2010).

Dealing with the uncertainties that threaten companies' current strategies, it is relevant to have shared management control, in which all company employees can act proactively and take advantage of unexpected opportunities (Henri, 2006).

Controls are crucial to influencing the holistic understanding of the managerial controls that an organization needs in response to the COVID-19 crisis, providing organizational adaptation and lightening the effects of the pandemic (Passeti et al., 2021). In addition, the difficulty generated by the COVID-19 pandemic requires the use of informal control rather than its traditional one, focusing on financial and competitive aspects (Passeti et al., 2021).

On the other hand, Bedford and Malmi (2015); Rikhardsson et al. (2021) claim that a single control mechanism is insufficient to deal with the effects of the crisis; for example, in the financial crisis, formal and informal controls are used simultaneously. Moreover, the combination of different management control mechanisms generates facilitating and reinforcing effects to effectively deal with the different impacts of the pandemic (Bedford, 2020).

Management control mechanisms help overcome the COVID-19 pandemic crisis. First, action controls ensure tight operational coordination. Second, cultural controls focus on ensuring the safety of workers, customers, suppliers, and solidarity actions during the crisis. Third, outcome controls focus on monitoring goals and objectives during COVID-19. Lastly, personnel controls were less used, as most are not directly linked in response to the COVID-19 crisis (Passeti et al., 2021). That said, this research points to the third, fourth, and fifth research propositions:

Proposition 3: There is an effect of intra-organizational SC on the formal control of SMEs in a crisis context.

Proposition 4: There is an effect of intra-organizational SC on the informal control of SMEs in a crisis context.

Proposition 5: There is a dominant control between formal and informal SMEs in a crisis context.

Propositions 3 and 4 relate social capital and formal and informal control. We are dealing with operational controls (Passeti et al., 2021), focused on results, action, personal and cultural. They are keys that a company needs in response to the COVID-19 crisis (Passeti et al., 2021). They must be used in shared ways in the uncertainties that threaten the organization (Henri, 2006). For this, SC (Ströbele & Wentges, 2018), at its high levels, can help simultaneously use formal and informal control.

Proposition 5 seeks to identify what prevailed between formal and informal control because a single control mechanism (Rikhardsson et al., 2021) is insufficient to deal with the crisis. Also, in SMEs, it is unclear what type of control prevails (Johnstone, 2020). However, the COVID-19 pandemic requires informal control (Passeti et al., 2021). In SMEs (Groen et al., 2012), controls tend to become informal over the long term. Due to the characteristics of SMEs (Perez-Sanchez et al., 2003). Furthermore, they are also more informal in family businesses because they are based on social relationships (Senftlechner & Hiebl, 2015).

5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The objective of the present work was to discuss intra-organizational SC and its effects on the performance and formal and informal controls of SMEs in a crisis context. The debate demonstrates that intra-organizational SC has a positive effect on the formal and informal controls of SMEs, as well as on the performance of these companies when competition is normal. Given this, the discussion established in this study allowed the elaboration of five propositions:

- (i) Proposition 1: The effect of intra-organizational SC on the performance of SME is more significant in a crisis context;
- (ii) Proposition 2: There is a difference in the effect between the dimensions of the intra-organizational SC of SME on operational performance in a crisis context;
- (iii) Proposition 3: There is an effect of intra-organizational SC on the formal control of SMEs in a crisis context;
- (iv) Proposition 4: There is an effect of intra-organizational SC on the informal control of SMEs in a crisis context;
- (v) Proposition 5: There is a dominant control between formal and informal SMEs in a crisis context .

These five propositions reflect the possibilities this theoretical essay seeks to point out, as they enable different analyses for future research. For example, the interactions highlighted in the propositions may or may not present causality. Only in future research will it be possible to observe the conclusions.

Finally, the theoretical discussion presented provides researchers in the area with: i) theoretical study gaps, a) study justifications, and iii) study proposals. Scholars in this area are expected to use this material to guide their research and test the propositions presented. In this sense, it will be possible to analyze and promote new inferences in this area of knowledge.

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Capital Social Intraorganizacional, Desempenho e Mecanismo de Gestão das Pequenas Empresas em Contexto de Crise: Proposições

RESUMO

Objetivo: O presente trabalho tem o objetivo de discutir a relação entre capital social (CS), controles formais e informais e o desempenho nas pequenas empresas em contexto de crise.

Método: A presente pesquisa mira a existência de lacunas teóricas e formula proposições de pesquisa mediante a abordagem de ensaio teórico.

Originalidade/Relevância: A presente pesquisa se sobressai por propor o debate e oferece aos pesquisadores da área proposições que podem ser analisadas sob diferentes perspectivas teóricas e metodológicas.

Resultados: Este estudo engendrou cinco proposições de pesquisa: (i) O efeito do CS intraorganizacional no desempenho da PME é mais significativo em contexto de crise; (ii) Existe uma diferença no efeito entre as dimensões do CS intraorganizacional da PME sobre o desempenho operacional em contexto de crise; (iii) Existe um efeito do CS intraorganizacional no controle formal das PMEs em contexto de crise; (iv) Existe um efeito do CS intraorganizacional no controle informal das PMEs em contexto de crise; (v) Existe um controle dominante entre formal e informal das PMEs em contexto de crise.

Contribuições Teóricas/Metodológicas: A discussão realizada permitiu a elaboração de proposições, dando um passo além da reflexão teórica. Essas proposições podem ser operacionalizadas tanto na forma de estudos qualitativos, como de estudos quantitativos dando uma contribuição aos pesquisadores (as) do tema.

Palavras-chave: CS Intraorganizacional. Controle Formal e Informal. Crise. Pequenas Empresas.

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