



**THE SOCIAL CONTROL IN THE THIRD PARTY
SMALLHOLDER GROUP CERTIFICATION PROCESS:
THE APROVE CASE BY THE AAOCERT**

A case study from an experience in São Paulo State

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BACKGROUND

Organic Agriculture is of family farmer basis in Brazil.

North American and European Organic Markets – tendency to expand the cultivated organic area, while the market expands.

Paulista Organic Market – the lack of suited statistics prevents the evaluation of what is occurring in the State, but there are signs of among the Paulista traditional organic family farmers, it has also been occurring (data from the average certified area evolution).

The certification is excludent.

Alternatives to reduce the certification impact: participatory certification, smallholder group certification and direct sale.

São Paulo – predominance of third party certification – the challenge is to research possibilities of building participatory and social control processes in the smallholder group certification improving the perspectives for the Paulista organic family farmer agriculture.



WHAT IS THE QUESTION?

Is it possible to a certification system recognized internationally, as the third party smallholder group certification, to build a more effective participation from the producer, without losing the quality demanded by its processes?

OBJECTIVES

Main Goal: to contribute to a better understanding about the potential of the alternative organic certification processes. To assess so far as the certification can be associated to a pedagogical process for the Paulista family farmers in which the possibility of strengthening the social control can lead to a bureaucratic process reduction in the Internal Control System – ICS.

Specific Goal: is to verify if the APROVE's small holder group certification proposed by the certifier AAOCert based on the IFOAM Basic Standards opens possibilities of building more participatory processes for the producers.

HYPHOTHESIS

The IFOAM Basic Standards, for the Internal Control System – ICS's building of the smallholder group certification, allows to consider participatory processes, with social control developed as a pedagogical process from the Risk Assessment System – RAS.

Working with family farmer groups from the Risks assessment they are subject to give to them a better understanding of what is the internal control they need to develop.

THEORETICAL LITERATURE

It was based on:

North (1990) – Institutional change

Sen (1999) - Empowerment

Sen (1999); Campino et alli (2004), Cordioli (2001) e Rover (2001) - Participation

Campino et alli (2004) - Accountability

Campino et alli (2004); North (1990); Knight (1998); Ostrom (1990) - Enforcement

Sen (1999); Putnam (1993/95/96); Coleman (1988/90), Granovetter (1995), Abramovay (2003) – Social Capital

Campino et alli (2004) - Horizontal and Vertical Integration

Campino et alli (2004); Stoker (1997); Schneider (1999); Park (2004); Picciotto (1995) - Governance

THEORETICAL LITERATURE

The indicators were based on:

Cognitive Social Capital – Monteiro (2004).

Accountability – Campino et alli (2004).

Enforcement – North (1990); Knight (1998); Ostrom (1990).

Structural Social Capital – Monteiro (2004).

Horizontal Integration– Anderson & Krister (2003).

Governance – Picciotto (1995).

Empowerment – Oakley e Clayton (2003).

Participation – Campino et alli (2004).

Vertical Integration - Anderson & Krister (2003).

THEORETICAL LITERATURE - CONCEPTS

Cognitive Social Capital – capital that promote the cooperation through the sharing of norms, values, etc.

Empowerment – promote the agent condition of Sen (1999).

Participation – to share, to influence and have voice in group's decision making.

Accountability – to account for responsibilities in 2 levels.

Enforcement – building of corrective and preventive measures.

Structural Social Capital – capital that promote a cooperation through the stablishment of social roles and networks, supported by rules and proceedings.

Horizontal Integration – horizontal decentralization.

Governance – system developed by all the social actors to enlarge their participation, accountability, enforcement, etc empowering the own group of social actors - 2 levels.

Vertical Integration – vertical decentralization.

METHODOLOGY

The research was done in 3 moments to test the hypothesis:

Moment 1 – when introduced in the group certification.

Moment 2 – after a year with the new norms.

Moment 3 – the intervention to build a joint proposal with the group introducing the Risk Assessment System.

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METHODOLOGY

Methodology of the Intervention:

Building through the Risk Assessment System the Group Internal Control System.

Researcher's role – neutrality, playing an external auditor's role, using an orientation matrix with the diagnosis of causes and problems, solutions, proceedings, responsibilities and indicators (ZOPP Method).

Summary Board of the ICS building intervention through the RAS.

THE APROVE CASE – RESULTS RELATED TO THE HYPOTHESIS

I- Individual Commitment Indicators

(Cognitive Social Capital)

Table 1 – Individual Commitment to the Organic Agriculture

Organic Agriculture	Moment 1	Moment 2	Moment 3
Technological Issues – if they care about the life soil.	Lack of care	Poor care	Not applied

THE APROVE CASE – RESULTS RELATED TO THE HYPOTHESIS

I- Individual Commitment Indicators

(Cognitive Social Capital)

Table 2 – Individual Commitment to the Organic Agriculture

Certification Norms - understanding	Little understanding	Better understanding	Better understanding of the ICS and a solution to some doubts.
registers	Lack of registers	Lack of registers	Serch of consensus for register problems.

THE APROVE CASE – RESULTS RELATED TO THE HYPOTHESIS

I- Individual Commitment Indicators (Cognitive Social Capital)

Table 3 – Individual Commitment – Solidarity relations

Solidarity Relations	Moment 1	Moment 2	Moment 3
Certification norms and registers	Little help	Little help	Understanding of the importance to help each other to fill up the registers.
Collective work	Few activities in group	Group activities: commercialisation, goods delivery; raw-material purchase.	Increase of the understanding for co-responsability.

THE APROVE CASE – RESULTS RELATED TO THE HYPOTHESIS

II- Social Control Indicators from the group

Table 4 – Social Control – Accountability

Accountability	Moment 1	Moment 2	Moment 3
registers	No accountability – meetings without minutes.	constant	Procediments building for accountability with deadlines and accountable people.

THE APROVE CASE – RESULTS RELATED TO THE HYPOTHESIS

II- Social Control Indicators from the group

Table 5 – Social Control – Enforcement

Enforcement	Moment 1	Moment 2	Moment 3
monitoring	Internal inspection every 3 months with an internal inspector - 100% internal visits.	Internal inspection every 4 months with 2 internal inspectors (because of time and neutrality) – no 100% internal visits.	Reflection on the internal inspector's role.
Implantation of the rule decisions: punishment rules.	No punishment rules and/or incentive rules – external visit of 100%.	Building of the rules. External visit of 50%. No application of the punishment rules. External visit of 100%.	The people recognised the importance of applying the punishment rules. Co-responsability with the internal inspector and the group to the non-compliances.

THE APROVE CASE – RESULTS RELATED TO THE HYPOTHESIS

II- Social Control Indicators from the group

Table 6 – Social Control – Horizontal Integration

Horizontal Integration	Moment 1	Moment 2	Moment 3
descentralization	Frequent relationship with personal, social, production, commercial and economical issues.	The building of the warehouse led to a diary relationship.	Availability for a reflection day about the Internal Control System – ICS (to improve it).

THE APROVE CASE – RESULTS RELATED TO THE HYPOTHESIS

II- Social Control Indicators from the group

Table 7 – Social Control – Structural Social Capital

Structural Social Capital	Moment 1	Moment 2	Moment 3
ICS management	Time available for meetings and to solve certification problems.	constant	1 among 9 members has not participated in the RAS meeting.
Internal/external communication	Help through telephone calls.	constant	Importance given to the final result of the meeting kept visible in the warehouse for the one who was absent.

THE APROVE CASE – RESULTS RELATED TO THE HYPOTHESIS

II- Social Control Indicators from the group

Table 8 – Social Control – Governance

Governance	Moment 1	Moment 2	Moment 3
	No ICS.	neither internal assessment system nor continuous improvement.	Building of indicators for assessment by the group through the RAS.

THE APROVE CASE – RESULTS RELATED TO THE HYPOTHESIS

III- Pedagogical Process Indicators

Table 9 – pedagogical process – Empowerment: actions initiated by the group

Empowerment	Moment 1	Moment 2	Moment 3
Actions initiated by the group	Sheets of cultivation and crop control modified by the group.	Adition of 1 more internal inspector.	Use of a black board for field register. Reflection about the risk situations and what to do.

THE APROVE CASE – RESULTS RELATED TO THE HYPOTHESIS

III- Pedagogical Process Indicators

Table 10 – pedagogical process – Empowerment: sustainability and self-trust

Empowerment	Moment 1	Moment 2	Moment 3
sustainability and self-trust	100% of inspection.	50% of inspection - said to have increased the trust among the members.	100% of inspection – doubts about the interest in keeping the group certification. End of the meeting: increase of the trust to build a collective process.

THE APROVE CASE – RESULTS RELATED TO THE HYPOTHESIS

III- Pedagogical Process Indicators

Table 11 – pedagogical process – Empowerment: self management

Empowerment	Moment 1	Moment 2	Moment 3
Definition of clear rules	Definition of internal inspector's role.	Definition of punishment rules.	Definition of clearer rules for many proceedings.

THE APROVE CASE – RESULTS RELATED TO THE HYPOTHESIS

III- Pedagogical Process Indicators

Table 12 – pedagogical process – Empowerment: problems resolution

Empowerment	Moment 1	Moment 2	Moment 3
Identification of problems	Operating need of the group; development fo a register system.	Poor operating; lack of registers and lack of application of enforcement rules.	Definition of 2 strategies for registers; understanding of the importance to apply the enforcement rules.
Assessment and analysis of risks	Not applied	Not applied	Understanding of the ICS from the RAS.
Set out solutions	Understanding and elaboration of a poor ICS. Identification of an internal inspector and punishment rules.	Elaboration of punishment rules and identification of one more internal inspector.	Reflection on the crafting of the RAS and the complexification of the ICS.

THE APROVE CASE – RESULTS RELATED TO THE HYPOTHESIS

III- Pedagogical Process Indicators

Table 13 – pedagogical process – Empowerment: participation, democratization and involvement of the whole group in the process

Empowerment	Moment 1	Moment 2	Moment 3
Group involvement	Building and decision of rules made by 4 members.	9 members and some relatives.	Enlargement of the involvement with more members of the group families.

THE APROVE CASE – RESULTS RELATED TO THE HYPOTHESIS

III- Pedagogical Process Indicators

Table 14 – pedagogical process – Participation

Participation	Moment 1	Moment 2	Moment 3
Decision making	consensus	constant	constant

THE APROVE CASE – RESULTS RELATED TO THE HYPOTHESIS

IV- Relations to the Certifier Indicators

Table 15 – relations to the certifier –Vertical Integration

Vertical Integration	Moment 1	Moment 2	Moment 3
Relation between internal inspector and certifier	Clear and explanation with more speed to help in few problems.	More complex problems with more need of explanation but frequent late responses.	There are lots of doubts not answered yet.
Requests involved in the contacts	ICS building	ICS punishment rules building and use of raw-materials.	Support to young people to know how to punish older leaders in the group not answered by the certifier yet.

THE APROVE CASE – RESULTS RELATED TO THE HYPOTHESIS

IV- Relations to the Certifier Indicators

Table 16 – relations to the certifier – Accountability and Governance

Accountability	Moment 1	Moment 2	Moment 3
The group accountability process satisfies the certifier?	Understanding of accountability need.	Identification of failures on the accountability process.	Definition of clearer individual responsibilities. After the intervention, the certifier has not assessed the RAS result yet.
Governance			
Trainings and material availability	Not. Training with the external inspector about the norms and the way to organise the group certification.	Not. Solutions of doubts with the certifier and in the external visits.	Reflection about the group's self-management ability.

CONCLUSIONS

The intervention indicated that the introduction of the RAS in the group enlarged the participation and the understanding so that the group can build their ICS in a collective way, with solidarity, self-management, accountability, enforcement rules and governance, as a pedagogical process, or, an ICS built through the RAS allowed the group improve their process.

It was not possible to advance in the issue of simplifying the registers in order the low understanding level of the group about the ICS.