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Perceptions about turnover in the internal audit activity: an overview of the Brazilian context

Percepciones sobre cambio de personal en la actividad de auditoría interna: una visión general del contexto brasileño

Percepções sobre o *turnover* na atividade da auditoria interna: um panorama do contexto brasileiro

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Abstract

Purpose: This paper aims to present and discuss a general overview about the level of turnover through the perception of internal audit professionals in the Brazilian context.

Methodology: The research was carried out through an applied survey with 140 internal audit professionals, whose counts were collected through LinkedIn. The professionals evaluated

mainly work in large organizations, 61.4% are former external auditors who made the career change mainly because their previous career did not have a balance between personal and professional life, and 94% understood that the exchange generated better quality of life.

Results: A low turnover rate was observed among the participating professionals. Among the main factors related to turnover are the receipt of proposals of work in other organizations for the audit experience, as well as others within the own organization that act. On a scale of 1 to 10 participants define their quality of life as 6.7 and if they say they value the function.

Contributions of the Study: This paper contributes with the literature advancing the discussion about turnover and quality of life to the branch of internal audit and brings the discussion to the Brazilian context. The work also contributes to the discussion about the change of career from external auditor to internal auditor, with previous work focusing on the turnover of internal audit activity, and those who study turnover in external audit do not assess the fate of professionals, presenting a gap to be fulfilled in theory.

Keywords: Internal Audit. Turnover. Perception. Quality Of Life At Work.

Resumen

Objetivo: El trabajo tiene el objetivo de presentar y discutir un retrato general sobre el nivel del volumen de negocios por medio de la percepción de la auditoría interna no Profesionales contexto brasileño

Metodología: Una encuesta fue realizada por un equipo de investigación aplicado con 140 profesionales de auditoría interna, contados como capturados por LinkedIn. En el caso de los ex auditores externos, los ex auditores externos realizaron la Carrera principalmente en Intercambio. Función de un tener carrera no anterior un equilibrio entre la vida y el personal profesional y entienden el 94% que generó el intercambio la mejor calidad de vida

Resultados: Se observa un índice de rotatividad entre los participantes profesionales. Entre los principales factores ligados al volumen de negocios o recepción de propuestas de trabajo, existen otros recursos de la auditoría en auditoría, además de otras informaciones sobre el área de trabajo. En una escala de 1 a 10, los participantes definen su calidad de vida en 6,7 y se valoran en una función.

Contribuciones del Estudio: El presente trabajo contribuyó a que la literatura avanzara para discutir sobre rotatividad y calidad de vida para la rama de auditoría interna y discutir para el contexto brasileño. El trabajo ha contribuido a la discusión sobre el cambio de carrera auditor interno de auditor externo, mientras que los trabajos anteriores se centran en el volumen de negocios de auditoría interna de la actividad, y los que estudian el volumen de negocios en la externa evalúan la auditoría o no destino dos profesionales, presentando laguna ser una teoría de la llenada.

Palabras clave: Auditoría Interna. Rotación. Percepción. Calidad de Vida En El Trabajo.

Resumo

Objetivo: o presente trabalho tem o objetivo de apresentar e discutir um panorama geral acerca do nível de *turnover* por meio da percepção de profissionais de auditoria interna no contexto brasileiro.

Metodologia: A pesquisa foi realizada por meio de um levantamento aplicado com 140 profissionais de auditoria interna, cujos contatos foram captados através do *Linkedin*. Os profissionais avaliados atuam principalmente em grandes organizações, 61,4% são ex-auditores externos que fizeram a troca de carreira principalmente em função de a carreira anterior não ter equilíbrio entre a vida pessoal e profissional, e 94% entendem que a troca gerou melhor qualidade de vida.

Resultados: Observa-se ainda um baixo índice de *turnover*, entre os profissionais participantes. Dentre os principais fatores ligados ao *turnover* estão o recebimento de propostas de trabalhos em outras organizações pela experiência em auditoria, além de outras dentro da própria organização que atuam. Em uma escala de 1 a 10 os participantes definem sua qualidade de vida como 6,7 e se dizem valorizados na função.

Contribuições do Estudo: O presente trabalho contribui com a literatura avançando a discussão sobre *turnover* e qualidade de vida ao ramo de auditoria interna e traz a discussão para o contexto brasileiro. O trabalho contribui ainda na discussão sobre a mudança de carreira de auditor externo a auditor interno, sendo que trabalhos anteriores se concentraram no turnover da atividade de auditoria interna, e os que estudam turnover na auditoria externa não avaliam o destino dos profissionais, apresentando uma lacuna a ser preenchida na teoria.

Palavras-chave: Auditoria Interna. Turnover. Percepção. Qualidade de Vida.

1 Introduction

Employee retention is one of the main concerns that organizations generally have in their activities and is even more critical in the service sector (Lupu & Empson, 2015). In the audit firms this is a concern that has been heavily treated in the literature, especially because *turnover* generates loss of technical knowledge in organizations (Lupu & Empson, 2015). Besides the loss of human capital, *turnover* is also onerous in terms of administrative costs, additional training and recruitment costs of new employees, thus, it may result in a negative effect on the economic-financial aspect, as well as affect the quality of the audit services, whether external or internal (Hammes, Santos & Melin, 2016; Ferreira & Almeida, 2016).

Among the factors factors associated with the employee's turnover decision are the commitment to the activity that develops and the satisfaction that that activity provides (Tnay, Othman, Siong & Lim, 2013), demographic factors (Emiroglu, Akova & Tanriverdi, 2015), the relationship with the peers and with higher hierarchical levels (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014), organizational justice (Bernd & Beuren, 2017) and the balance between professional and personal life as well as the life quality (Deery, 2008). The analysis of these issues is widely observed in the literature that involves the external audit professional, both nationally and internationally, however, it is little observed in the analysis of internal audit professionals.

Considering such scenario, this paper has the purpose of presenting and discussing a general scenario about the turnover level through the perception of internal audit professionals in the Brazilian context. For that, we have conducted a survey which was answered by 140

internal audit professionals working in several companies in Brazil, whose contacts were obtained through LinkedIn. The research instrument applied was a questionnaire developed based on the evaluation of previous works on the subject, especially those developed with audit professionals. It should be emphasized that the study did not focus on evaluating the intention of turnover.

This work is justified by the importance that activities related to internal auditing have gained in the face of the various corporate scandals (Chambers, 2016). In this way, professionals in this area have gained more importance in the companies in which they operate, mainly because longevity of the internal auditor is usually used as a proxy for audit quality (Mubako & Mazza, 2017). It is also important to develop research that evaluates turnover issues among internal audit professionals in different countries due to possible cultural differences, the existence of flexible working arrangements, among others (Steenackers & Breesch, 2014). Finally, the focus on internal audit professionals still shows a theoretical gap for the area, especially regarding the migration of former external auditors to the internal audit area.

Given this scenario, the present paper contributes with the literature advancing the discussion about turnover and quality of life to the branch of internal audit and brings the discussion to the Brazilian context. The work also contributes to the discussion about the change of career from external auditor to internal auditor, with previous work focusing on the turnover of internal audit activity, and those who study turnover in external audit do not assess the fate of professionals, presenting a gap to be fulfilled in theory.

The present work is structured in five sections, beginning with this introduction. In the literature review we discuss the concepts about internal audit, turnover and studies that relate the first two themes. In the third and fourth section are presented the methodological procedures and the results of the research, respectively. Finally, the final considerations of the research are presented.

2 Theoretical background

2.1 Defining Internal Audit

The audit activity can be defined as an analytical examination of an operation, with the purpose of attesting its validity. It is important to note that the audit, in the accounting area, is divided mainly into two: external audit and internal audit. The external audit, in general, analyzes the financial statements of a company in order to verify if accounting principles and norms have been adopted in an appropriate way, thus acting as an actor that reduces the informational asymmetry between the agents of the market (Braunbeck, 2010).

Internal auditing is a process that can be applied in many different situations, including evaluating the efficiency and effectiveness of a process or department, the financial reports of a public body, or compliance with a company's operating standards or government regulation, among other activities. According to the Institute of Internal Audit (2014) internal auditing is designed to add value and improve an organization's operations. It assists the organization in achieving its objectives through a systematic and disciplined approach to assessing and improving the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes.

The internal audit activity has undergone a series of challenges, in which two of these challenges should be highlighted: (i) corporate scandals related to the existence of internal auditing and (ii) the emergence of new and increasingly complex risks (Chambers, 2016). The first risk refers to the fact that internal audit activity is usually near at the epicenter of corporate

scandals, and in some cases is even cited as a cause and concern. Considering such risk, the author warns that internal auditors should be in harmony with the corporate culture and evaluate the role they can play as a root cause in corporate failures or scandals.

The second critical point, according to Chambers (2016), is the emergence of new and complex risks, which continue to challenge the profession's ability to face the challenges faced by its organizations. Technological risks are the most obvious, but other operational risks are overloading the ability of internal auditors to meet the growing expectations of key stakeholders.

Internal audit is also seen as a key component of corporate governance of large companies, and such activity has expanded in recent decades due to the evolution of anti-fraud legislation, requiring more and more skilled and competent professionals (Mubaka & Mazza, 2017). In the US scenario, the president of the Institute of Internal Audit expressed concern about the lack of qualified professionals to work in this area, with a 50% increase in job vacancies and a 42% drop in job vacancies for this activity (Institute of Internal Audit, 2015). Faced with such a scenario it is necessary to think of two points: recruitment and retention of talent, the second point being related to personnel turnover.

2.2 Turnover

Turnover can be defined as the measurement of the exchange rate of a given population of professionals – old exit and new entry in its replacement – of an organization in a certain space of time (Lachac1995). One important feature of this topic is important to differentiate between voluntary and involuntary turnover (Oliveira, 2009). Voluntary turnover reflects an employee's decision to stay or leave the employer, usually defined as the function between the ease/comfort of cutting back on the company and the desire to change jobs (Donnelly, & Quirin, 2006), while involuntary turnover represents the decision of the company of firing a professional. Another important feature to note is that literature depicts in several works the intention of turnover that mirrors the desire to break the link with the company (but not necessarily), while turnover is the fulfillment of this link (Fang, 2001) .

When looking at any career, in general, there are three phases in the life cycle of an employee in organizations: attraction to the organization, development of the talents for the tasks to be developed and retention (Jankowski, 2016). Retention is related to the organization's success in keeping employees who have the best capabilities and produce the highest value, while keeping the overall turnover level down.

The main impacts of turnover on organizations are the costs of dismissal, admission and training; the drop in productivity; and the possible lack of commitment of the employees who remain in the company (Hammes, Santos & Melin, 2016), and can be economically detrimental to the organization (Ferreira & Almeida, 2016). It is also possible to approach turnover from the financial point of view, as did Boushey and Glynn (2012) by demonstrating that in the United States of America the cost of rehiring for employees earning up to US \$ 30,000 per year is 16% of their salary , for those earning up to \$ 50,000 this cost is 20%, and for senior executives, this cost can reach 213%.

In general, in Brazil, data from the Inter-union Department of Statistics and Socioeconomic Studies (DIEESE) (2016) indicate that in 2014 the rate of dismissal of employees in Brazil was 62.8%, which includes dismissals made by the organization and by the employee. It should be noted that 24.3% of the dismissals were voluntary, that is, requested by the employee, and this rate has been increasing since 2002 when it was 15.6%.

Regarding the determinants of turnover several papers presents some of their causes.

Authors	Purpose	Findings
Amundsen e Martinsen (2014)	To analyze the effect of leaders' effectiveness, job satisfaction and turnover intention	The results indicate that the lower the satisfaction with work, the greater the intention of turnover.
Tnay et al. (2013)	To analyze the relationship between satisfaction and organizational commitment and turnover intention.	The results show that the variable "satisfaction with work" had a negative relation with the intention of turnover.
Emiroğlu, Akova e Tanrıverdi (2014)	To analyze the relationship between demographic data and turnover intention.	The variables age, gender, marital status, training, salary, position occupied in the company and the actuation department were shown to be significantly associated to the intention of turnover.
Bernd e Beure (2017)	To analyze the perception of organizational justice and its reflexes in the satisfaction and intention of turnover of internal auditors	The results indicate that organizational justice acts positively and significantly on job satisfaction and negatively on turnover intentions.

Figure 1 *Previous studies about turnover and turnover intention*

Fonte: The authors

According to Hermanson et al. (2016) the accounting profession, especially the audit profession, has been perceived as a demanding profession with frequent stress concerns. Several studies have analyzed the turnover phenomenon in audit firms, with an emphasis on external audit firms, leaving the internal audit activity as a research opportunity.

2.3 Previous literature on turnover in the audit activity

The subject of turnover among audit professionals has been analyzed in several studies, but mainly focused on external audit professionals. These studies present, in addition to their causes, the impact on the intellectual capital of audit firms, and consequently on the work performed by the auditor. One of the themes related to the turnover phenomenon is the quality of life of professionals.

In the external audit context, one of the earliest papers on the subject was developed by Pitman, Gaertner and Hemmerter (1989) and shows that since the 1980s there has been a concern with turnover of audit staff. The work carried out by Pitman, Gaertner and Hemmerter (1989) demonstrates the concern with factors that would be the most preponderant for women to leave the audit activity, so, in a survey conducted with 161 professionals who left audit firms between 1982 and 1985, they have assessed the reasons, from a list of 32 factors, for the participants to leave audit firms. In ten factors there was a significant difference between men and women, and in nine of them the woman's agreement was higher. Among the factors that had the highest agreement among women were the amount of travel required, long working hours, quality of activities developed and physical fatigue.

Martinow and Moroney (2016) point out that although a certain level of turnover is unavoidable, the failure to keep experienced auditors poses a threat to the company's resources, damaging not only the economic and financial outcome but also the reputation of the company and the profession and , ultimately impeding high-quality audits. In this respect, the auditor's turnover was cited as one of the most important issues in the profession, as audit techniques

and auditing standards are as effective as the professionals who apply them, and the costs associated with auditor replacement and training can be significant.

More recently, the generational difference among professionals has been included as a possible cause of the high level of turnover. Steenackers and Breesch (2014) in a survey carried out with auditors and ex-auditors from Belgium show that the average duration of auditors in their companies is higher among those born in the generations of Baby Boomers and those of Generation X than those of the generation Y. No difference in permanence in activity between men and women was observed. In this line of turnover from generations. Hermanson et al (2016) indicate concern about the profession's ability to sustain the quality of its human capital, especially as there are no signs of a radically improved work environment in the audit that might attract Millennials.

Marcos, Vogt and Cunha (2017), in a research developed with 166 auditors in Brazil, used the Rotational Intentionality Scale (RIL) and observed that there is a higher index of turnover intentions among women, especially in the lower hierarchical levels. The intentions of turnover were lower among the professionals who were in the position of partner, both male and female, indicating a possible relationship between hierarchy and turnover.

Hermanson et al. (2016) also point out the concern with Burnout syndrome, which is a state of physical and mental exhaustion whose cause is closely linked to professional life, and consequently the high level of turnover. It is also worth noting the point made by Jankowski (2016) that the busy season, especially between the months of November and April, is a time when professionals usually work at least 60 hours, 6 days weeks and is probably the stretch most challenging of the year. Because of this Hermanson et al (2016) point out the growth of studies to try to mitigate these problems.

Contrary to what is observed in the external audit, whose amount of discussions on the subject is high both in international and national scenario, in the internal audit were observed few international works on the subject, and no national. Tiarniyu & Disner (2009) carried out a survey whose sample was composed of 132 internal auditors from the United States of America and aimed to identify the main causes of turnover. The results found by the authors show that the main ones are related to job satisfaction and the availability of job opportunities in the market.

Despite the dissatisfaction with the work, it should be noted that according to McCafferty (2017) in the United States between 2015 and 2017 there was an average increase of 6% per year in the salary of the internal auditor, an average well above the market average of 2, 8% per year as reported by the Society for Human Resource Management.

McCafferty (2017) stresses that retention policy is important primarily from the provision of small benefits to create a more conducive work environment, as well as r promotions charge from within wherever possible. Kirschenbaun and Mano-Negrin (1999) already pointed out that perceived domestic opportunities reduce the volume of voluntary external turnover.

A global survey conducted by the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA) in 2015 with 5,184 auditors, and which had its data analyzed by Mubako & Mazza (2017), indicates that 13.1% of the participants had intended to leave the organization they were. The profile of those who had intention to turnover was associated with less hours of training and higher level of internal conflict when compared to the profile of respondents who did not indicate intention to turnover. Research also shows that those who are at higher hierarchical levels also have greater turnover intent, which may be explained by the difficulty of further career growth.

Quarles (1994) also points out that the unfairness in the evaluation criteria or the dissatisfaction with the opportunities for promotion by an internal auditor could lead to a

decrease in organizational commitment, reduction of job satisfaction and intention to leave the organization.

3 Methodological Procedures

Based on the discussions presented so far this study has the purpose of presenting and discussing a general panorama about the turnover level through the perception of internal audit professionals in the Brazilian context. Based on the purpose, this research is characterized as descriptive, based on the design proposed by Beuren (2006), since it will seek to demonstrate the behavior of the researched population. As for the procedures, the research was a survey and in relation to the approach of the problem was done through a quantitative research, because it will make use of statistical instruments for data analysis.

Regarding the research procedure, this was based on a survey the same also known is known as Survey. According to Vannette (2015) fundamentally, a survey is a method of collecting information from a sample of people, traditionally with the intention of generalizing the results to a larger population. Surveys provide a critical source of data and ideas for almost everyone involved in the information economy, business, and the media to government and academia.

Because it is carried out electronically this survey is characterized as a Websurvey (Umbach, 2004). According to Callegaro et. al. (2015) websurveys are basically surveys with certain specificities, generally using the same methodological principles of surveys. It is worth mentioning that the development of websurveys has some negative points, according to Dilmann (2000), one of them is the possibility that the respondent cannot get the e-mail address of the target population.

To mitigate this risk, in the case of this research, the contacts of the professionals who participated in the survey, were captured through LinkedIn which is a professional social network. The recruitment of contacts of professionals from a certain area through LinkedIn for academic research can already be observed in the literature, as in studies by Marcos, Vogt and Cunha (2017), Haveroth & Cunha (2018) and Waaijer et al (2014)).

The questions of the questionnaire were developed based on the previous researches contained in the literature review, as well as others that were developed for the analysis of company turnover, not evaluated in previous researches, indicating the contribution and originality of the work.

It should be noted that although the work had a quantitative approach, the questionnaire presented an open field for placements that respondents wished to voluntarily report. Some of these statements will be used in the description of the results, only to represent some findings. The work did not have the objective of analyzing these contents in a qualitative way.

4 Results and Discussion

The sample is made up of 140 internal audit (85.7%) and compliance and risk management (14.3%) professionals drawn from a database of 509 professionals surveyed at LinkedIn, representing a return of 27, 5%. In terms of sex, 65% are men and 35% are women. In terms of age, it can be seen from table 1 that the great majority of respondents are in the range of 31 to 40 years.

Table 1
Participant's age

Age	%
de 21 a 30 years	29,3%
de 31 a 40 years	50,0%
de 41 a 50 years	17,1%
de 51 a 60 years	3,6%

Font: research data.

In terms of location, a response was obtained from professionals from 12 Brazilian states. Table 2 shows that there was a large concentration in the Southeast region, mainly in São Paulo (55.7%).

Table 2
Distribution by Region

Region	%
Southeast	73,6%
South	13,6%
Northeast	7,1%
Midwest and North	5,7%

Font: research data.

Regarding training, it can be seen from table 3 that the vast majority are accountants and administrators, and training in information technology areas is quite prominent as well. It is also observed that 92.1% of respondents had some specialization / MBA, mainly concentrated in accounting and auditing (37.9%) and controlling (23.6%). Only 5.0% had a full or ongoing master's degree, and none has a PhD.

Table 3
Undergraduate Course

Undergraduate Course	%
Accounting	50,0%
Administration	29,3%
Information Technology	6,4%
economy	4,3%
Engineering	4,3%
Others	5,7%

Font: research data.

In terms of professional experience, Table 4 shows that the highest concentration of the sample is between more than 3 years and up to 10 years of experience. However, professionals with long experience also participate in the sample.

Table 4
Professional experience on audit

Professional experience	%
Up to 2 years	14,3%
More than 3 years up to 5 years	27,1%
More than 6 years up to 10 years	27,1%
More than 11 years up to 15 years	17,1%
More than 16 years old up to 20 years	8,6%
More than 20 years	5,8%

Fonte: research data.

While researching in LinkedIn, we've attempted to find professionals working in companies with different sizes and sectors of activity so that the sample could more accurately represent the population and thus allow greater generalization power. In terms of size and sector of activity, it can be seen from Table 5 that most respondents work in companies in the service sector and in industry and work in companies with more than 5 thousand employees. But it can be observed that the sample covered professionals from all sectors, except the public sector that was not surveyed, and that work in organizations of different sizes. It is observed, however, that the greatest concentration occurred in large organizations, mainly from 1,000 employees.

Table 5
Sector and size of the companies

Sector/Employees		Number of employees				Total
		Up to 250	251 to 1000	1001 to 5000	Over 5000	
Sector	Services	61,5%	61,9%	44,4%	32,9%	42,9%
	Industry	15,4%	9,5%	36,1%	42,8%	33,6%
	Retail	7,7%	14,3%	16,7%	14,3%	14,3%
	Agribusiness	0,0%	4,8%	2,8%	8,6%	5,7%
	Non-profit	15,4%	9,5%	0,0%	1,4%	3,5%
Total		9,3%	15,0%	25,7%	50,0%	100,0%

Fonte: research data.

Participants were asked to indicate the position in the company hierarchy. As each company has, very often, a unique structure the participant should answer about one's position in relation to the main manager of the internal audit / internal control / compliance area. Table 6 shows that there is a greater concentration of professionals working directly below or two positions below the main executive in the area. Despite the low representation in the sample, there are professionals at the top of the decision chain in the area.

Table 6
Hierarchical position in the area

<i>Hierarchical position</i>	%
0, or same level	17,1%
1, he is your immediate superior	37,1%
2 levels below main top	37,1%
3 or more	8,7%

Fonte: research data.

We have observed significant differences in this hierarchy in terms of sex and by the group of acting companies, and these results were not presented in this study because they were not the focus of the discussion. Among women, there is a greater participation in the lower hierarchical levels, only 8.2% of them were at the top of the hierarchy, against 22.0% of the men.

The size of the structure of the internal audit / internal control / compliance area was also evaluated according to the number of employees who work in the area. As shown in table 7, the highest concentration was observed for sectors with up to 5 employees (35.7%), which is present even in larger companies with more than 5 thousand employees. Larger structures are observed only in companies with more than 1000 employees.

Table 7
Number of employees in the audit sector x Company size

Internal Audit Staff	Company Employees				Total
	Up to 250	251 to 1000	1001 to 5.000	Over 5.000	
Up to 5	61,5%	76,2%	36,2%	18,6%	35,7%
6 to 10	23,1%	14,3%	44,4%	17,1%	24,3%
11 to 20	15,4%	9,5%	11,1%	32,9%	22,1%
Over 20	0,0%	0,0%	8,3%	31,4%	17,9%

Fonte: research data.

As noted in the literature review, turnover is large in the external auditing firms, and as a result, there's this belief that external auditors are migrating to the internal audit area, mainly due to their experience. When questioned about their professional origin, 61.4% of the participants indicated that they came from the external audit. Table 8 shows that the main origin of these former external auditors is the Big Four audit firms.

Tabela 8
Previous audit firms

Firms	%
<i>Big Four</i> (PWC, KPMG, EY, Deloitte)	83,7%
Smaller firms (BDO, Grant Thornton, RSM, Baker Tilly, Mazars, Moore Stephens)	5,8%
Other	10,5%

Fonte: research data.

Based on the literature review on turnover in the audit area, 13 possible reasons for this turnover were raised, which led to the departure of the external audit, which the professional

should indicate the reasons that best fit his condition and may indicate more of one. Table 9 shows that the main reason is related to factors of quality of life, such as the non-equilibrium between work and personal life, besides the non-recognition of their work, and problems related to salary reasons.

This concern for the balance between personal and professional life to exit the external audit is clearly exposed in the study of Miranda and Lima (2018) that evaluated reasons for turnover of external auditors, and factors such as high work hours and a better quality of life are presented as the main causes of turnover by auditors.

Tabela 9

Reasons to Exchange audit firms

Reasons for leaving the external audit	%
I had no balance between personal and professional life	68,6%
Salary did not correspond to the market	45,3%
Did not feel any recognition for the developed activity	32,6%
Previous salary did not match the needs	24,4%
Looking for new challenges	23,3%
Problems with work environment	20,9%
No flexibility of schedules	18,6%
Wanted to change sector or area of activity	12,8%
Wanted to receive more benefits	11,6%
Lack of opportunity in external audit	7,0%
Wanted to work for a larger company.	7,0%
I wanted to work in a company that works in another area.	4,7%
Wanted to work in a smaller company	0,0%

Fonte: research data.

Significant differences of indications are observed in some questions, mainly differences inherent in the sex of the participants. The lack of balance between professional and personal life is cited more by women (80%) than by men (60.8%), an equal situation observed in the issue of flexibility of schedules that is indicated among 28.6% of women, against 11.8% of men. Among men, there is a greater indication of the desire for new challenges (31.4%) than among women (11.4%). The statement of a former external auditor of Big Four reflects a bit of this reality:

"The work-life balance is a challenge in all careers, but I really felt it when I worked as an external auditor."

It is worth highlighting the research carried out by Hay Group (2011) with professionals from 99 Brazilian companies, which demonstrates that the need to balance work and personal life is the second most important point for professionals to stay in the organization.

Asked if the quality of life had improved after the exit of the external audit, it is observed in table 10 that the change in the area of performance resulted in an improvement in the quality of life, which was the main reason for its exit from the previous performance. No significant differences in evaluation were observed in terms of gender, region and time of performance.

Tabela 10*Has your quality of life improved after you left the external audit?*

Agreement level	%
Strongly Disagree	1,2%
Partially Disagree	2,3%
I do not agree or disagree	2,3%
I agree partially	23,3%
I fully agree	70,9%

Fonte: research data.

Considering the level of turnover in the internal audit, it was asked to indicate the participants' perception of their occurrence, and to indicate it from a scale of 1 (low) to 10 (high). The mean score indicated was 3.8 and median 4, with a higher concentration of responses in note 1, this note reflects the higher concentration also in the range of 1 to 5, as shown in table 11. No significant differences of evaluation were found in terms of sex, company size, whether it was external auditor, time of operation, age and region of residence.

Tabela 11*Turnover level perception*

Grade	Todos
1 to 5	77,9%
6 to 8	17,9%
9 to 10	4,2%
Mean	3,82

Fonte: research data.

Based on the literature review of audit turnover, eight factors were indicated that could influence its occurrence, and professionals should indicate their degree of agreement with the exposed factors. Table 12 shows that the main concordances for the existence of turnover are related to work proposals that professionals receive to work in other organizations, or within other sectors within the organization itself.

Tabela 12*Turnover reasons*

Turnover reasons	Strongly Disagree	Partially Disagree	I do not agree or disagree	I agree partially	I fully agree
Proposals for work that have arisen in other organizations through experience in the audit work	5,0%	2,9%	7,9%	41,4%	42,9%
Exit to other areas of the organization itself such as finance / controller etc.	7,9%	8,6%	20,0%	41,4%	22,1%
Remuneration not compatible with the effort developed	5,0%	24,3%	14,3%	35,7%	20,7%
Travel Excess	15,0%	18,6%	15,0%	31,4%	20,0%
Desire better quality of life	12,1%	21,4%	25,0%	24,3%	17,1%
Difficulty of reconciling family factors	17,9%	17,9%	23,6%	25,7%	15,0%

High working hours	15,0%	23,6%	20,7%	26,4%	14,3%
Difficulty in reconciling work and study	12,1%	30,7%	21,4%	25,0%	10,7%

Fonte: research data.

Factors that are usually related to poor quality of life in external audit, such as excessive travel, difficulty in reconciling work and family, and excessive working hours, have low indication of reasons for the existence of turnover among internal audit professionals. However, it should be noted that these factors are also present in the category as can be observed in the statement of an auditor with two years of experience working in the northeast of the country:

"Quality of life is mainly affected by the difficulties of reconciling or developing normal exercise in family and social activities. Traveling to work constantly hinders family management and sometimes makes it impossible to develop links / roots "

For each of the questions presented in table 12, the existence of significant differences of evaluation was evaluated from the following groups: Sex, time of action, hierarchy, region, if already external auditor and size of the company. There were few significant differences, among them:

- Proposed work in other organizations due to experience in the audit work: Greater level of agreement in the Northeast and Southeast regions; and the greater the experience in the larger area was the agreement;
- Exit to other areas of the organization such as finance / controllers etc .: Regarding the size of the company, the level of agreement was higher in the smaller companies (up to 250 employees) and in the larger ones (over 5 thousand employees).
- Remuneration not compatible with the effort developed: a higher level of partial and full agreement among men (65.9%) than among women (38.8%);
- Desire for a better quality of life: Again in relation to the size of the company, the level of agreement was higher in the smaller companies (up to 250 employees) and in the larger ones (over 5 thousand employees).

The professionals were also asked to indicate how they perceived their quality of life at work, again from a scale of 1 (low) to 10 (high) and indicated on the same scale how they thought their colleagues perceived their quality of life. According to data from table 13, a mean grade of 6.71 self-assessment was observed, with a higher concentration of grades from 6 to 8 (60.7%), and the note of how colleagues perceived their quality of life was very close (6.62), which reflects a correlation of 0.712, with 99% confidence between the two questions. A significant difference of evaluation was observed only in the variable region of the country, in which the professionals in the Southeast region had a lower score with a mean score of 6.4 against grades 7.8 in the Northeast region, 7.6 in the South region and 7.3 in the North and Central-West regions.

Tabela 13*Perception of the quality of life at work*

Grade	Self-evaluation	How others evaluate each other
1 to 5	25,7%	27,1%
6 to 8	60,7%	60,0%
9 to 10	13,6%	12,9%
Mean	6,71	6,62

Fonte: research data.

Complementing the analysis of turnover and quality of life at work were three questions involving factors of valorization at work and career growth. The data in table 14 show that there is reasonable agreement with the feeling of valorization of the position, and that the goal of reaching the top of the career, and achieving it, is viable. No significant differences of evaluation were found in the control variables used, which may indicate that this is a standard evaluation in the activity.

Tabela 14*Career Assessments of Internal Auditor and Risk Manager*

	Strongly Disagree	Partially Disagree	I do not agree or disagree	I agree partially	I fully agree
I feel valued in the position I hold	5,7%	15,0%	9,3%	46,4%	23,6%
I intend to follow the career plan until becoming the main position of my sector	9,3%	10,7%	14,3%	27,1%	38,6%
I think I can follow my career plan in my planning	3,6%	9,3%	20,0%	37,9%	29,2%

Fonte: research data.

Recalling Quarles's (1994) research that shows that among the main causes of turnover in internal auditing would be related to dissatisfaction with the opportunities for promotion, it is observed by the findings of this research that this factor does not appear as a critical point in terms of perspectives of internal audit professionals in Brazil.

The statement of an auditor with 10 years of experience reflects the importance of the themes treated in this work, for the activity of the audit professional:

"I found it relevant to deal with facts such as quality of life and recognition, because they are sensitive factors for the development of the career we carry."

5 Final Considerations

The purpose of this work was to present and discuss a general scenario about the level of turnover through the perception of internal audit professionals in the Brazilian context. The literature shows that high levels of turnover are detrimental to organizations, especially regarding the loss of intellectual capital, as well as affecting the quality of the activities carried out by the audit area. Specifically, about life quality, the literature points out that this is one of the main factors that influence the turnover levels of companies. In accounting, national and international literature has focused its efforts on analyzing turnover levels and their

determinants in external auditing firms, but there is a theoretical and empirical gap regarding this phenomenon in the internal audit field.

The results obtained in this study indicate a low perception of turnover among internal audit professionals, mainly related to job opportunities arising inside and outside the organization. But it is important to note that similar problems are also observed in external audits related to excessive travel and the difficulty of reconciling personal life and work, but with less intensity.

It is also worth noting that most of the research participants are former external auditors, a fact that can be explained by the perceived difference in the quality of life obtained between the two activities. This low quality of life can be reinforced by the findings of Miranda and Lima (2018) that when analyzing external auditors in Brazil point to a high perception of turnover and low perception of quality of life among external auditors.

In terms of quality of life evaluation at work, a weighted score of 6.7 was observed, which can be evaluated as being median. However, it is observed that there is a reasonable satisfaction with the valorization of the work and the perception that there are possibilities of growth in the career, factors that are against the possibility of turnover, as observed in the international literature.

Regarding the limitations of the research, it is possible to emphasize the fact that the research developed is a survey and may have problems understanding the questions, absence or excessive motivation of the respondents. As a suggestion of later studies, points not treated in this study, but evidenced in the international literature, and not observed in Brazil, are the question of the existence of Burnout syndrome, as well as the impact of quality of life and turnover problems on the quality of auditor's work. This research can also be applied with external auditors to assess whether there are differences between the two functions.

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