Executive Summary
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Federal Government of Brazil

Secretariat of Strategic Affairs of the Presidency of the Republic
Minister Marcelo Côrtes Neri

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Institute for Applied Economic Research

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Executive Summary
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The Social Perception System of Indicators’ (SIPS) main objective is to present a panel of social indicators to promote monitoring actions of the State and society. The research verifies how the population perceives the quality of different public services put at their disposal by the State, including motivations for use, difficulty to access and the degree of importance attributed to each. In this approach, the SIPS aids the State to better comprehend and act in a more effective manner to citizens’ demands, as well as provide instruments for society to demand actions more in line with their needs and wants from their governing body.

Brazilian research institutions have little tradition in studies on social perceptions. The Institute for Applied Economic Research (IPEA) - who in 2014 celebrates fifty years as an important player in the debate over development in the country - has been proficuous in the elaboration of studies that promote the formulation, implementation and evaluation of public policies. However, only recently has it been involved in the generation of primary data. The SIPS surveys taken place in a continuous manner since 2010, as well as participate in partnerships with national and international agents position the IPEA in the frontier of research of social perceptions.

This text consolidates some of the main results obtained by the SIPS. It presents social perceptions collected in the field between 2011 and 2013 and deals with impressions of Brazilians regarding themes that are fundamental to the development of the country such as education, work, poverty reduction, urban mobility, public safety, national defense, communications, democracy and happiness.

It is hoped that merging objective data analyses with subjective perceptions of the population, revealed by the SIPS, can be an important instrument to aid the formulation of public policies in Brazil.

The text presents the main results of 9 thematic surveys within the SIPS and of 3 cross sectional studies that deal with cross sectional themes that can be applied in a similar manner to an ample set of public policies using results of the SIPS research and theoretical elements of the ‘economics of happiness’.

* The authors want to acknowledge the suggestions of Marina Nery, Raisa Rabelo, Tiago Bonomo and Rodrigo Ramiro.
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Part 1

Sectoral Public Policies
PERCEPTION OF WORKERS OVER INTENSITY AND DEMANDS IN THE WORKPLACE

Sandro Pereira Silva*
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The Brazilian labor market is going through important transformations in terms of decreasing unemployment rate, currently the lowest in Brazilian history, and of growing formalization of labor. Parallel to this transformation process is the intensification and increase in demands in the workplace that are often not clearly perceived. The intensity of labor and the main demands in the workplace are the focus of chapter 1.

The results indicate that, if on the one hand, formal workers possess greater schooling and choose their activity for professional interest, on the other hand, they are the ones who most convey criticisms in demands in the workplace. According to the perception of workers, the intensity of labor has been manifested, overall, by the increase in demands and pressure for results. With regard to the capacities required, “high demand” is the main answer, be it in one’s ability to accomplish tasks swiftly, on average 47.2% and among formal workers 49.8%, or in one’s ability to communicate well, both written and orally, on average 58.8% and among formal workers 62.6%.

Results also indicate that the role of new forms of communication and computer equipment is perceived as positive (32%), however, more than half of the interviewees declared not using such equipment in their workplace, in greater degree autonomous workers (64.1%) and informal workers (59%), which indicates the existence of low productivity in these two groups.

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In chapter 2, still concerning the work environment, the process of increasing intensity and its impacts are analyzed under the guise of the relation between work time and free time, the perception of workers and the influence in their day-to-day lives. There is clear evidence that there has been a decrease in the excess of work hours in the country (number of work hours above 44 weekly). However, a shorter work day does not necessarily imply a smaller influence of work hours in the daily lives of the population. The results presented indicate that the general view of workers is that paid time affects available free time in an increasing and negative manner.

The trend of the reduction of boundaries between work and free time is evident by 45.4% of interviewees who declared they do not shut off completely from work after their work day is over; by 37.7% who declared they feel that free time has been decreasing due to work; and by 39.5% who believe the time dedicated to work compromises their quality of life.

This occurs due to the necessity of remaining available or on standby, telecommuting (through a computer, cellular phone or other means) or preparing work for the following day. Another aspect to analyze is that, while the common perception is that time dedicated to work negatively affects one’s quality of life, only one fifth of the SIPS interviewees declared really contemplating changing their occupation because of this. It seems that even with a verified improvement in the market, changing occupations still seems to be disorganizing and impacting to the daily lives of the population, even when the current occupation, with its excessive work hours, harms a large portion of their day to day lives.
Equally structuring and with a few links to the working world, chapter 3 is dedicated to the perceptions of public education in the country. In a general manner, these perceptions point to a clear demand for improvements. While the regular evaluation predominate (44.1%), illustrated that there are more Brazilians who consider education terrible or bad (35.2%) than good or great (20.7%). In the same sense, the majority does not believe that public education in Brazil has improved in the last five years, with 39.9% stating that it remains the same and to 31.1% it has deteriorated.

People with higher income and schooling provided a more pessimistic evaluation than those with low income, which can mean on the one hand that there is a higher level of demands and wants in relation to education policies in the first group and, on the other hand, that education policies are directing more of their attention to the latter group. As with perceptions on overcoming poverty, which was dealt with in chapter 4, the main problems and actions of the government perceived in the area of education are linked to the working world.

The main problems perceived in the public education are in reference to wages (52.7%), followed by unmotivated teachers (30.9%) and little interest by students (30.6%). There is a general perception in relation to the necessity of placing greater value on teachers to improve education in the country: 58.6% declared that wage increases for teachers and 43.2% the increase in their capacity are the main actions the government should undertake to improve the quality of education.

Another important aspect relates to financing education. There is a clear perception that more investments by the government in public education are required. The main resource sources pointed out are the wealth produced by pre-salt oil (47.3%), more taxes on the wealthiest (32.7%) and payments of interest of public debt (31.2%), indicating a demand for greater progressivity in the financing of public education.

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Still in the social area, chapter 4 reveals perceptions on the phenomenon of poverty, its evolution, causes and possible ways out; a topic that has been increasingly present and overriding in the agenda of public policies in the country.

The dominant perception is that poverty has decreased in the country in the last five years, totaling 41.4% of answers over its evolution. This percentage was higher in the Northeast (48.5%), North (46.5%) and Center-West (43.8%) regions.

The matters pertaining to work predominated in the perceptions of causes and solutions to the problem of poverty. Unemployment was identified as the main cause of poverty and the poorest people perceive matters of labor as the most important (29.4%). In contrast, job creation has been identified as the main solution to poverty according to 31.4% of the sample.

Educational aspects are also highlighted: 18.4% mentioned the lack of quality and difficulty of access as the main cause of poverty and 23.3% point out quality education as a way to overcome it. It is noted that there is a marked difference between riches and poor in this discussion, in which the first prioritize the educational aspects as cause and solution to overcome poverty and the poorest perceive labor issues as more important.

Results indicate the perception of a structural character of the phenomenon of poverty, while rejecting its understanding as a problem of choices and individual behaviors. This would entrust to the State/public sphere the essential role of combating poverty.
The working world, the public education system and poverty in general are increasingly impacted by the challenges of urban mobility, the topic of chapter 5. The quality of public transportation services, time spent commuting, air pollution and accidents, among other challenges, increasingly impact the day to day lives of Brazilians, especially in large cities. The topic of urban mobility had already been discussed by the SIPS in 2010, and the research conducted in 2011 identified advances made since 2010, with more interviews, questions, municipalities and methods adopted to attempt to address the problems of the previous version and also adopted a probabilistic sample instead of quotas. Three big groups were used: cities with less than 20 thousand inhabitants, cities with between 20 thousand and 100 thousand inhabitants and cities with more than 100 thousand inhabitants. Results from the research show that public transportation (PT) is used by the majority of interviewees, in great part concentrated in the population of lowest income (up to one minimum wage per capita), be it as their main, secondary or even previous method of commuting (when asked if they used another method of transportation in the previous question), with 65.9%, 56.8% and 64.8% respectively.

While PT has been evaluated in a slightly more positive than negative manner in small and medium sized cities, in general, and mainly in larger cities, its evaluation was negative. While 39% of the interviewees evaluated PT positively in small cities, in big cities it was 30%, while 41% evaluated it as bad or very bad. This trend repeats itself in all other queries regarding the evaluation of PT, such as: the availability of information on PT to the population, the ability for PT to service the population and the ability of PT to allow for the circulation throughout the entire city with ease. PT was the only means of transportation that received an average grade below 5 from its users and should be the most prioritized under current legislation, since among all other means of transportation, it is the one most connected to the tutelage of the State, where it is up to the governments, the definition of their directives and operation, even if indirectly. The results presented by the research, which went to the field in August of 2011, already indicated a trend of dissatisfaction that culminated in the public manifestations of 2013.
Public safety, is one of the major problems in Brazil according to several studies on social perception is the topic addressed in Chapter 6, specifically the willingness of the population to call the police, according to data on the performance reliability of police institutions.

In this chapter, the reasons whether or not people seek the police are presented. Of the 3,799 interviewees, 713, almost 20%, recalled having been victims of crime in the past ten years; and of these, 511 said they had sought the police while 202 said they had not. Among interviewees who sought the police, 56.9% had a motivation related to a positive bias: they believed that the police would be able to solve the problem (45%) or that it was their duty to inform the police about an incident (11.9%). However, 40.7% of the respondents claimed to have called the police for a circumstantial motivation such as the need for a police report (30.3%), or due to the situation being too serious (10.4%).

Among those who did not seek the police, 45.6% had not done it due to a direct distrust: they did not believe it could solve the problem (41.6%) or were afraid of the police (4%). According to the results extracted from the coefficient of logistic regression used to test the hypothesis that such predispositions are related to an image of police organizations, evidence has shown that, while a positive social perception of the police appears not to influence whether one seeks it or not (not statistically significant in the regression), a negative perception generates a propensity to avoid seeking it (an interviewee with a high degree of confidence in the police has an odds ratio of less than 60% to not seek the police when a crime occurs).
CHAPTER 7
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PERCEPTION STANDARDS ON NATIONAL DEFENSE AMONG BRAZILIANS

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Going from the safety of individuals to the country’s defense as a whole, Chapter 7 analyzes the perception patterns of Brazilians on the country’s national defense. With regard to the assessment of the Armed Forces, work, confidence and importance had positive reviews: nearly 70% rated the job as good or very good, 67% said they have a lot or reasonable confidence in the military and 83% believed in the importance of the institution both during times of war and peace. Regarding the perception of threats, there is evidence that the population believes in a possible future aggression due to conflicts of interest with the pre-salt oil and the Amazon. Although the population positively evaluates military equipment in the country (more than 50% assessed it as good or very good), they also support increased spending for the acquisition of military equipment (72% believe it should be increased). Most of them still think that fighting crime is the Armed Forces duty (58% answered positively) and that organized crime is a threat to the country (54%), unlike wars, environmental disasters, terrorism and epidemics, queries which most do not perceive as a threat.

In this chapter, an analysis was held of main components (factorial) from research data on the topic of national defense, which identified prospects or the most prominent elements of the perception concerning this topic. The results of the analysis showed that some questions about the military and national defense contribute to the formation of patterns or aspects of understanding that can be clearly distinguished from each other. However, this does not occur with all the variables studied in the research. The analysis of the main components resulted in four elements or factors that summarize the data originally reported in 22 variables. For each factor, a label was assigned that summarizes the specific type of perception it refers to, namely: the awareness of the role of the armed forces as a source of solutions, trust in the Armed Forces as an abstract institution, lack of resources for national defense, natural resources and international greed. For all these factors, there was a consistent pattern of indications, suggesting reasonably consolidated perceptions about certain aspects of national defense that merit attention from policymakers in order to enhance their development and effectiveness.

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Part 2
Cross-Cutting Themes Between Policies
Chapter 8 deals with democracy, values and social structure in Brazil, focusing on the analysis of two main elements of population’s perceptions: the ability to influence the government and the adequacy of existing instruments to influence decisions. In general, most citizens believe they have an average ability to influence the government (from 0 to 10, an average score of 4.42), their vote being the main weapon at their disposal to do so. However, the data analyzed shows that one’s belief in their ability to influence the government increases as education and income increases. In addition to these variables, youths perceive themselves as more able to influence government decisions, as well as black compared to white people, a result that goes against the traditional intuition, as white people in general have higher education and income. With regard to regions, the Center-West, North and South residents are less likely to perceive themselves as influential in government decisions when compared to residents of the Southeast and Northeast regions, which do not differ much from each other. Regarding the adequacy of existing instruments to influence decisions, voting is perceived as the most important form of political influence compared to direct influence and protest, the latter being seen as less important (56% vs. 39% and 6%, respectively). Education, age and income were not relevant to alter this order of importance, although among the more educated, the importance of direct influence surpasses that of the vote. In regional terms, the Northeast shows high adhesion to direct mechanisms of influence as the favorite route of action and the least adherence to vote among all regions.

Other queries addressed to interviewees pertain to the way Brazilian citizens relate to claims for greater equality. The results indicate that the fight for more rights for groups such as homosexuals, indigenous people, black people and members of religions such as Candomblé and Umbanda was seen as “very positive” or “positive” for most interviewees (47%), while almost a quarter of interviewees (24%) answered as “very negative” or “negative” and a third affirmed being “neutral” on the issue. In this query, income and race were not variables that influenced the results, while having higher education and being younger had a positive relation with favorable results to these groups’ plight. Similarly, the majority unconditionally defend the right to protest against governments (57%), whereas a significant fraction postulate for restrictions to this right (37%) and 6% oppose any form of protest.
Chapter 9 discusses the access of information in the country, the reliability of different means of communication, as well as other issues through social perceptions regarding media and communication in Brazil.

The results indicate an obvious predominance of TV as the primary means of access to information (74%), the most reliable media (66.2%) and the main opinion maker (46.6%), and it is present in 94.5% of the interviewees’ households.

Despite the massive use of TV, the need to control its content was mentioned - 83.9% of the interviewees stated that there should be rules, and of these, 46.7% estimate that such rules should be made by a group composed of government, society and representatives of the various means of communication.

Even with remarkable prevalence of TV as the primary means of communication in the country, the survey revealed that the Internet is now the second major source of access to information (11%), almost equal to the combination of newspapers and magazines (12.4%), even though 59.5% of the interviewees stated that they did not have access to the Internet. The increasing use of the internet as a source of information is not proportionally followed by trust in the internet, because in this regard newspapers are considered by 12% of interviewees as the most reliable means of communication while the internet is only 8.1%. Although considered as reliable, printed media is losing ground as a source of information, given that 64.1% declared they had not read magazines or newspapers in the week preceding the survey.
Chapter 10 deals with the relationship between income and happiness, measured by life satisfaction, reported by people in many countries around the world, with special attention to the Brazilian experience. From the incorporation of specific questions to the SIPS questionnaires, taken from internationally acknowledged research, it was possible to specifically address national issues and compare them to more than 132 countries. Using as a reference the empirical research of Deaton (2007)\(^1\), but with a different functional specification, a high correlation between income and life satisfaction is demonstrated. From the estimation of a “happiness function”, weights were established and assigned to each component of the Human Development Index (HDI) concerning satisfaction with current life. The results indicate that income explains about 66% of the variation in life satisfaction, against 31% of life expectancy, leaving less than 3% explained by components of education. Another result of the research was the creation of a wealth indicator to measure the relation of how happiness varies among people from different countries. The results show that there is a positive long-term correlation between present life satisfaction and material conditions, both in Brazil and throughout the world. However, Brazilian happiness is relatively indifferent to material conditions, which is exemplified by the fact that no country in the world, among the 132 surveyed, shows a lower correlation between the two variables than Brazil.

The low sensitivity of Brazilians towards material living conditions and income is shown by the fact that the Northeast region, although the poorest in the country, shows the highest level of current happiness. A good deal of the relation between income and happiness in Brazil is explained by the transition of those with no income at all to the lowest income range studied, indicating a great potential for public policies focused on the poorest. In fact, the relation controlled by several socioeconomic factors between implicit income variation in the expansion of the Bolsa Família and the variation of happiness of the same person over time shows positive results when compared to other transitions, less targeted on the poorest. Data indicates that the beneficiaries of the program earn an additional 0.41 point of happiness in relation to non-beneficiaries. This result indicates that redistributive policies, of which the Bolsa Família is the greatest Brazilian example, can lead, in aggregate terms, to greater overall happiness of the nation.

As the relation between income and well-being, measured by subjective happiness, is not direct, new perspectives are needed. Chapter 11 contributes to the discussion by developing a Perceived Human Development Index (PHDI), using the components of the Human Development Index (HDI) – that is, income, health and education – in their subjective versions. The dimension of work conditions was also added to the analysis. At first, an analysis of the priorities of the Brazilian population is made in terms of public policy vis-à-vis the global population through the questionnaire in My World, from the UN, incorporated in the SIPS. The global priorities are “quality education” and “improvement of health services”, in that order. In the Brazilian case, there is an inversion on the order of these priorities, with health appearing in 85.5% of the questionnaires and education in 81.8% of them. In any case, the three most prominent elements both in Brazil and in the world represent the three components of the HDI.

The principal component analysis (PCA) applied to more than two dozen subjective questions allowed for eliminating the redundancy among similar queries, revealing a convergence of topics in two fronts, chance indicators versus outcome indicators, as well as the existing dichotomy between internal indicators on the status of the individual and external perceptions about society and associated policies. The relation between the respective components of the HDI and PHDI is also explored and the results indicate that the perceptions of individuals with income, education, health and work are relatively adherent to their counterparts’ goals. Particularly, when we deal with internal perceptions about the status of the individual and less with external perceptions of associated policies. A ranking of the PHDI is presented for 109 countries in the full version of the book, with Singapore in the first place and Haiti in the last. Brazil was in position 62.

The weights assigned to each of the three components of the PHDI were also investigated for life satisfaction reported by individuals. The results of the regression show that the weight attributed to inner income perceptions is 64%, outer income perceptions 17.6%, inner health 8.9% and outer health 9.1% while outer education got a null weight. These results suggest that the sum of the assigned weights to each of them is not far in terms of magnitude from those estimated on a similar equation of life satisfaction in relation to objective indicators of the HDI, but different from metrics that assume equal weights used in the calculation of the standard HDI. On the other hand, the hypothesis that different age groups confer different weights to the components of the HDI is rejected. In general, the construction of the PHDI allows, by means of a summarizing indicator of subjective nature, for complementary analyses to those undertaken with the traditional HDI.

* The author acknowledges the excellent contributions of Luisa Carvalhaes, Samanta Reis, Gabriel Buchmann, Rodrigo Ramiro and Tiago Bonomo.

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Chapter 12 continues to explore the field of economics of happiness, addressing the perception of happiness of Brazilians in relation to time and the country’s collectivity, facing both the former and prospective public policies agenda. On the first point, Brazil is the five time undefeated world champion in future happiness. On a scale of 0 to 10, the Brazilian citizen awards an average score of 8.6 to their expectations for life satisfaction in 2015, the highest of all surveyed countries. The world average is 6.7. This subjective data is embodied by the expression “Brazil: the country of the future”, created 70 years ago. It also suggests reasons for why the country possesses a low savings rate and high interest rate.

The youth, as the Brazilians, also believe that the best of life is yet to come, which reflects in the decline in the future life satisfaction of a global citizen along his life cycle. More than a country of young people in its demographic composition, Brazil is a country inhabited by young at heart. The average score for future life satisfaction has been above 9 among the Brazilians between 15 and 29 years of age in the five years analyzed, feat that has never been achieved by young people from more than one hundred countries analyzed. Thus, Brazil is five times world champion of future happiness, or youthful attitude. This enables to reconcile two qualifications often attributed to Brazil: “country of the future”, by some, and “young country”, by others.

The other aspect addressed refers to a relatively low expectation of each Brazilian as to the general happiness of the nation, indicating a high dissonance of nearly 30% between the prospective vision of each Brazilian about their life and the vision of the whole country. In the interpretation proposed here, this second aspect would be consistent with greater importance in the national context of problems associated with collective action, problems which make the whole less than the sum of its parts, requiring mobilization and coordination of society. Examples such as high inflation and high inequality, which placed Brazil at the top of their respective world rankings, were recipients of major advances in Brazilian society over the past two decades. The new agenda of transformation that arises today in the country has this collective nature, such as the Brazilian urban problems, environmental and governance challenges.
The knowledge of people’s perceptions allied with objective data traditionally observed by most of the research conducted, allows IPEA to enhance and qualify its assessments on policies adopted by the Brazilian State, integrating in a more balanced manner, the elements of effectiveness, efficiency and efficacy of the results obtained.

Household surveys such as the Demographic Census and the National Household Sample Survey (PNAD) from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE), capture different aspects of Brazilian society, such as the distribution of income, education and employment. However, they do not provide a direct notion of national differences compared to other countries, nor do they cover subjective aspects of people's lives. In order to know the Brazilian aspirations vis-à-vis those of other nations, it is necessary to view people's perspectives through international lenses, as in the emerging literature of happiness economics. These approaches are not yet part of the honorable traditions of Brazilian household surveys.

A recent innovation of the SIPS, presented in this book, was to incorporate to IPEA’s field research, questions that are acknowledged internationally on social perceptions studies. The combined processing of this information allows for direct comparison of global, national and regional results.

The complex mosaic of data and analyses presented in this publication allows for a comprehensive reading of the perception of Brazilians on their lives and the impacts emanating from public policies, and, furthermore, promote international comparisons. The results were used in several cross-readings, which indicated a trend of dissatisfaction with some public services such as education, urban transportation and safety, issues that dominated the agenda of popular demonstrations in June of 2013. The results also indicated that the way to solve some of the challenges presented in popular manifestations depends on higher and not lower involvement of the State and that the sources for funding these actions are related to a more progressive tax structure. Moreover, perceptions indicate that population well-being passes through the working world and that people believe teachers hold the greatest possibility of transformation and can provide solutions to problems, such as overcoming poverty and even the low quality of education. Some perceived trends in daily life have been confirmed by the results presented, as in the case of the increasing use of new technologies, be it at work or as a source of information, but the existing inequality of access was still demonstrated, for despite the growing importance of technologies such as the internet, these are not yet accessible to the majority of the population. Other results call into question common perceptions of Brazilians, especially in regard to an alleged conservatism, since the majority of interviewees sympathize with the struggle for rights of vulnerable and traditionally excluded groups such as homosexuals, blacks and indigenous people, and the right to free expression.

In this manner, the results presented demonstrate great potential for the generation of information and analyses and opens several lines of work and partnerships, showing that the SIPS is consolidating itself in the research agenda of the IPEA and that the institute occupies a prominent role in the Brazilian state on measuring the perceptions of the population on public policies.

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1. In this aspect, IPEA was awarded in 2013 by the United Nations (UN) for giving the main contribution among countries of Latin America and the Caribbean to the “My World” research. The study identifies policy priorities of the population with a view to defining the new Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for the post-2015 period, when the term of the current goals ends. The first results of My World’s survey are in this volume.
Ipea’s mission
Enhance public policies that are essential to Brazilian development by producing and disseminating knowledge and by advising the state in its strategic decisions.