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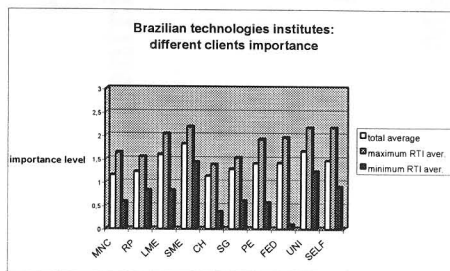
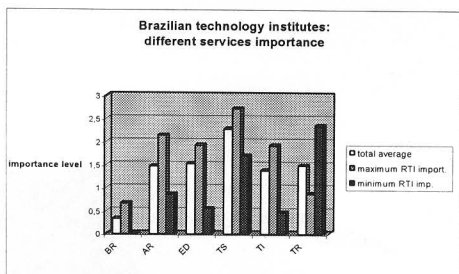
**Technology Institutes in Brazil:
their contributions to the national innovation system in the globalization era**

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ABSTRACT

Until the end the eighties, most Latin American countries adopted the importation substitution model to achieve the local industry development. In order to support this development, many research and technology institutes (RTIs) were created and supported by the government of these countries. At that time, RTI should support the “endogenouzation” of S&T activities by copying and adapting technologies and therefore helping the creation and development of a local industry. With the recent globalization phenomena, in most Latin American countries, trade barriers were reduced opening opportunities to the entrance of cheaper products in the market of these countries. Due to this significant environmental change a new role should be reserved for the technologies institutes. A study was carried out to find out what S&T services and clients/partners should be aimed by Brazilian TI for the incoming years. In order to carry out the study, 39 managers of eight multidisciplinary governmental technology institutes located in different Brazilian states were interviewed. They were asked to assign the importance level of six types of services (basic research - BR, applied research - AR, experimental development - ED, technology information services - TI, specialized technological services - TS and training - TR) for ten different clients/partners (multinational companies-MNC, recent-privatized companies - RP, large and medium national enterprises - LME, small and medium enterprises - SME, city hall - CH, state government - SG, public enterprises - PE, federal science foundations - FED, university - UNI and self-initiated projects – SELF). The main results are shown in the two following figures.



According to these figures specialized technology services (TS) and small and medium enterprises (SME) are considered the most important services and clients/partners for all RTIs studied. These figures shows also that universities and the federal science foundations, self-initiated project, the public enterprises and the large and medium enterprises “clients/partners” received a lower level of importance; a similar stituation was attributed to the following services: applied research, experimental development, training and technology information services. It should be noted that differences on these strategies were also found among the RTIs. Based on our findings, in a general sense, we can expect that: a) most Brazilian RTIs will still largely depend on financial governmental resources; b) although specialized technical services could be used as “foot-in-the-door” of the industry for more sophisticated activities, these more sophisticated activities cannot be developed due to RTIs lack of specialized personal c) most RTIs seem have been reduced information exchange with the international peers and related technological organizations. We have doubts if the appointed strategies are appropriate for the development of a more competitive Brazilian industry. According to some of the best practices around the world RTIs need to monitor the environment in order to identify, acquire and master technologies for their clients. More emphasis should be given, for instance, for multinationals companies in order to keep with world levels of technology. Unfortunately few Brazilian RTIs are able to practice it. Unless the RTIs suffer a great revitalization process, their contribution to the national innovation system will be each time less and less.

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