

College Education as a Generating Fact of Social Innovation: A Study of the Role of Educational Institutions

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Abstract

The aim of this article is to analyze how the actions and practices of Social Innovation carried out by university education institutions in western Paraná, Brazil, contribute to the promote Social Innovation in their locations. The applied method used documental research, semi-structured interviews carried out with managers, from which a Content Analysis of a total of 75 pages of transcription and 2,534 pages of documents was carried out. Social Innovation is the result of transforming ideas translated into actions, practices, projects and policies such as: changes in school curricula, use of technologies and active methodologies in University, carrying out innovative research and extension projects. In this strategic perspective, it is concluded that the directors present an integrated vision, resulting from the collective experience, from a culture that is based on the experience of institutional managers and on the potential of innovation as sedimenters of Social Innovation. This article contributes to the theory by identifying practices that can effectively be considered a Social Innovation - innovative actions with social benefit- contributing to a better understanding of the concept. As a practical contribution, the actions and practices carried out by the Universities aimed at teaching, research and extension that represented changes in the locality are highlighted.

Keywords: college education, social innovation, improved living conditions, strategy. management of universities

1. Introduction

Social Innovation has become an alternative and complementary vision to profit-oriented economic development. Its focus is on a governance that assumes that the needs of the population are met, of a collective nature, empowerment of the less favored classes, generating innovations to the community that, therefore, offer social improvement and generation of value to society (André & Abreu, 2006; Moulaert, Martinelli, Swyngedouw & González, 2007; Bignetti, 2011).

The results of Systematic Literature Reviews (RSL) carried out by Silva, Del Corso and Bach (2020) demonstrate the existence of a large amount of theoretical and conceptual discussions on Social Innovation (Adams & Hess, 2010; Agostini & Tondolo, 2016; Baptista, Pereira, Moreira & Matos, 2019), of studies that address the practices and role of private companies, financial institutions that generate Social Innovation (Casini, Bensliman, Fossati, Degavre & Mahieu, 2018; Cheema & Mehmood, 2019), articles that discuss education as a promoter of Social Innovation (Traube, Begun, Okpych, Choy-Brown, 2017), studies that introduce Social Innovation in agriculture and rural properties, valuing less favored rural communities (Bock, 2016; Baek, Kim & Harimoto, 2019), among a number of other relevant topics.

The investigated themes highlighted Education as a promoting factor of Social Innovation, however, there were few studies that addressed in more detail the existing relationship between them. In this regard, it becomes a useful research topic, especially when addressing the role of Universities, how they carry out social innovation (Sanazaro, 1967; Lee & Waites, 2006; Cavalcante et al., 2016; Buys & Somerall, 2018) and whether the results presented are characteristic of Social Innovation, a situation that has not been addressed in studies on the subject.

The aim of this article is to analyze how the actions and practices of Social Innovation carried out by university education institutions in western Paraná, Brazil, contribute to the promotion of Social Innovation in the locality in which they are located. This article is the result of a Doctoral Thesis that, from a qualitative approach, carried out a multiple case study in four Universities. This article is important because it presents the results of several practices that can effectively be considered a Social Innovation, innovative and with social benefit, which in the literature is still poorly identified. In addition, the article presents insights into how institutions can act in social innovations aimed at the reuse of glass waste, organic fairs, production of biodegradable films, among others that offer opportunities and create alternative income for people in a state of vulnerability.

2. Theoretical Reference

The concept of innovation over the years has been associated with the profit or economic gain of organizations and a country, which refers to the ideal created and defended by Joseph Alois Schumpeter when he launched his classic study entitled “*Theorie der wirtschaftlichen Entwicklung*”, in 1912. The author's view highlighted innovation as being the driving activity of a nation's economic development, being the result of entrepreneurial activities carried out

by managers from different sectors, aiming at profit in their activities (Schumpeter, 1912).

The first initiatives related to Social Innovation, which date back to the 1960s according to Caulier-Grice et al. (2012), when this term was used to refer to experimental research carried out by the social and human sciences. The literature on Social Innovation emerged mainly from 2000 onwards, its concept being associated with other terms such as the social entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurship, social technological innovations, corporate social responsibility and open innovation.

The literature began its development, addressing the existing dissatisfaction among the academic community with the emphasis on the economic approach to Innovation. It is explained by Moulaert et al. (2005) that the traditional approach, oriented to the technological focus of innovation policies and the functional management model of city administration, become conditions to stimulate Social Innovation as a means of human and local development.

Such growth was due to the need to approach innovation from the point of view of other aspects that were not only aimed at the financial, economic and innovative policy aspects, but those whose focus was aimed at developing knowledge. There was a need to approach innovation in a differentiated way, in response to social growth and environmental and demographic challenges, such as the lack of resources, climate change, high health costs, high urbanization and other impacts of globalization in general (Caulier-Grice et al., 2012).

The discussion permeated arguing that the European policy of technology generated by scientific knowledge was not a solution, therefore its scope was lacking in relevant issues such as: i) harnessing the power of networks and Social Innovation (everage the power of networks and social innovation); ii) implementation of actions in the community aimed at overcoming major social challenges; iii) invest in strategies for the future; iv) create an environment for sharing ideas; v) anticipate institutions and processes associated with future innovation (Social Innovation Community [SIC], 2011).

Social Innovation adopts a concept that represses the vision of profit and economic value and assumes a position to generate innovations that provide social improvement, of a collective nature, in addition to providing value in social relationships and aspects of society's life (André & Abreu, 2006; Bignetti, 2011). This definition exposed by Phills, Deiglemeier and Miller (2008) and shared in the literature (Caulier-Grice et al., 2012; Taylor, Torusga & Arundel, 2019), emphasizes Social Innovation from the point of view of sustaining solutions that promote social innovation. improvement of living conditions and existing problems in the community. According to Mulgan, Tucker, Rushanara and Sanders (2007) Social Innovation is the result of ideas that are transformed into actions, whose objective is to contribute to improving people's lives, meeting unmet needs or problems. Thus, Social Innovation seeks to create an innovative activity or service motivated to solve some unmet need, which is of a social nature (Mulgan et al., 2007).

The concepts listed by Caulier-Grice et al. (2012) highlight the role of different actors to create mechanisms that promote actions in order to transform the social context. Social

Innovation is also widely discussed by the French institute *Center de Recherche sur les Innovations Sociales* (CRISES). Researchers linked to CRISES present Social Innovation as the result of three main research axes, which address issues focused on the creation of social policies and practices; to territorial development and the local community, collective institutions and guarantee of availability of work and employment (Crises, 2018). By approaching the involvement of different actors as promoters of Social Innovation, it is possible to discuss Social Innovation, as a reflection aimed at improving society.

Education is considered a determinant that has a relevant impact on the lives of individuals. The experiences lived in Education, whether Basic, related to Early Childhood, Elementary and Middle Education, or University, represented by academic training, constitute a strong element in the fight against social inequality (Who, 2008; Brazil, 2018). There is a need to consider Early Childhood Education combined with the generation of programs, actions and social innovations that contribute to the social and cognitive development of children. In turn, University is given the need to develop scientific and reflective thinking and seek continuous training in professional sectors, on the verge of developing science and technology and the way human beings live in society (Brazil, 1996).

There is a wide discussion in the literature that highlights the relationship between University and Social Innovation directed to undergraduate courses in the Health Area, such as the medicine and Nursing. These studies highlight the closer involvement that students show when carrying out practical activities. There is a consensus that the development of activities, mainly focused on patient care and inclusion of alternative medicine, are promoters of Social Innovation. There is also a concern exposed so that these students have knowledge about the context of experience of these people, when trying to understand the reality experienced by them. In view of this, there is an aspect of awareness among students so that they can be aware that health problems are also a result of people's life situation, as exposed by DSSP (Sanazaro, 1967; Buys & Somerall, 2018; Kreitzer & Sierpina, 2006).

Another line of studies also shows that the relationship between University and Social Innovation is consolidated when Undergraduate Courses in Social Work incorporate support and assistance programs for needy families. This means that in these courses there is a need to discuss solutions through cases created in the classroom, exposure of transversal themes and also through the development of scientific research in the area promoted in *Stricto Sensu* Graduate Courses. Therefore, studies also point out that the State plays its role as an agent promoting this Social Innovation, promoting incentives so that research can be carried out (Pitt-Catsoupes & Cosner-Berzin, 2015; Waites, 2007; Ngui, Voon & Lee, 2017; Lo, 2015). In Undergraduate Courses in general, other studies point out that it is necessary to develop entrepreneurial skills in University and adapted to the needs of society. These studies advocate the creation of collaborative networks with different entities (Nunes, 2017; Easterday et al., 2018; Lytras et al., 2014).

3. Methodology

This article, from a qualitative approach, presents a multiple case study in four Universities in western Paraná, Brazil, with two public and two private institutions, which present teaching quality indicators from different administrative structures. The study was carried out following the recommendations of Stake (2000) that evaluates the particularities of each case analyzed. The collection of documentary data was carried out in a detailed and exhaustive way, having lasted approximately five months of research, reading and daily search for documents from the four institutions that are part of the present study, resulting in a total of 391 documents in this period.

In a more in-depth way, seven semi-structured interviews were also carried out with individuals who held management positions focused on the areas of research and extension, and also with the directors of the highest hierarchical level of each educational institution. Thus, at the end of the interviews and transcription, 75 pages were generated with detailed information on the procedures adopted in each educational institution. From then on, the analysis of all the material collected in the documents and also in the interviews was carried out, all analyzed in the Atlas.ti Software, which strictly followed the protocol of content analysis of Strauss and Corbin (2008), this being represented by open coding, axial coding and selective coding, seeking to extract elements present in reality that would contribute to a better understanding of the phenomenon from the analysis categories Social Innovation and Local Development.

After analyzing more than 2,500 pages of documents, which took place in approximately six months of daily work by the researchers, other categories of analysis emerged from the analysis of the interviews, discovered from the daily practice of the analyzed institutions, which were incorporated in the analysis of this search. Among the important categories of analysis found, the following stand out: as the Concept of Social Innovation, Disciplines Focused on Social Innovation, Social Innovation Actions and Strategies for the Promotion of Social Innovation.

4 Analysis and Results

4.1 Description of the Profile of Cases Analyzed

The institutions analyzed refer to the state public university, federal technological university, for-profit private university center and for-profit private university. Such universities emerged, mostly between the 1970s and 1980s, with the exception of the university center that was founded in 1996. Although the federal technological university was founded in 1978, the unit present in the institution: Universidade do Oeste do Paraná, Brazil started to operate in 2005. Educational institutions are located in the Western Region of Paraná, with a representative number of Undergraduate Courses.

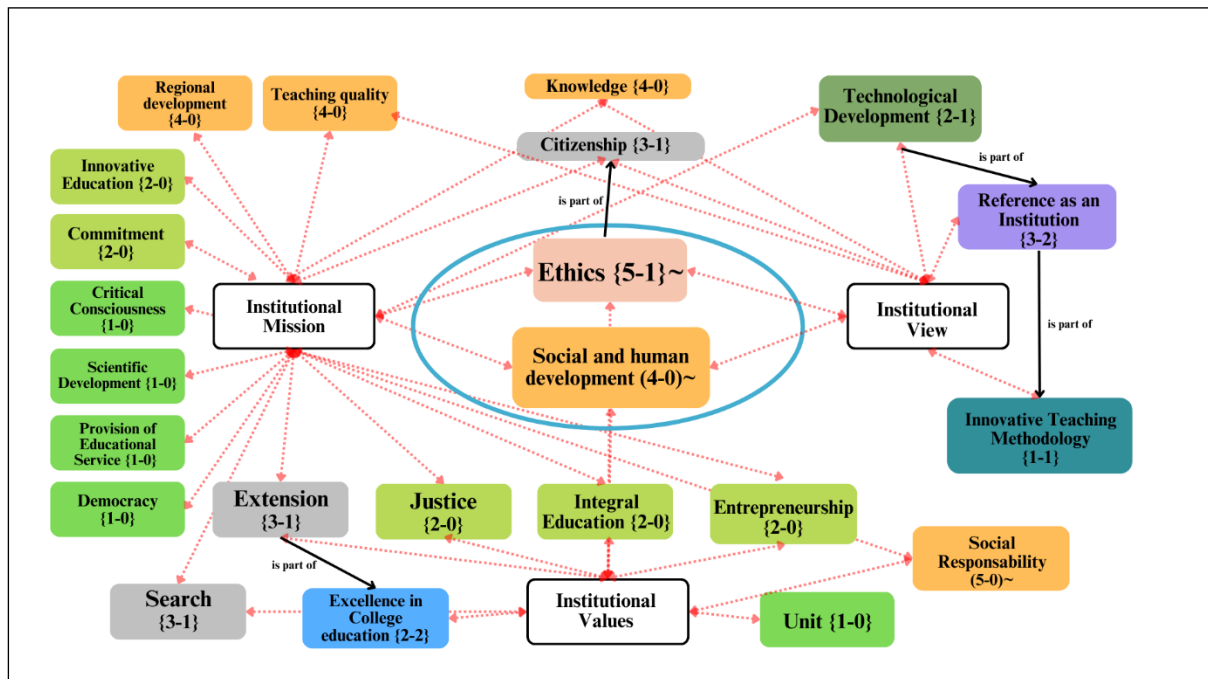


Figure 1. Content Analysis of the Mission, Vision and Values Categories of the Investigated Universities

Prepared using Altas.ti software version 7.0

Source: The Authors (2024).

A profile analysis, regarding the institutional mission, made it possible to identify that Education and Society are two important pillars disseminated in the missions of the analyzed institutions. It was clear that they seek to convey their role as educational institutions that serve the community. When analyzing the institutional vision and values, the meanings permeated themes such as human development, the availability of a space for creation and appreciation of the being, to form a citizen capable of acting above all as responsible and integrated with the regional context, that is, with what society really needs. In this regard, the Mission, Vision and Values statement, in general, made it clear that university recognize the need to work on innovation for the benefit of the community. Figure 1 represents the result of the content analysis, having as analysis categories Mission, Vision and Organizational Values.

Figure 1 represents a connectivity between different concepts that are stated in the Mission, Vision and Institutional Values, whose essence is also disseminated from elements that are connected and that are common to the three categories of analysis. There is a clear relationship between what is analyzed during the content present in the documents that Human Development, Social Development and Ethics are important pillars that universities seek to consolidate in society. In this context, the meanings are oriented towards human development, towards the creation of an environment of valorization of the being, of forming a citizen capable of acting above all as responsible and integrated with the regional context.

Another characteristic highlighted in the documents refers to Ethics, the guiding assumption of the Mission, Vision and Values of the investigated universities. The essence is

interconnected with the ethical, sustainable interaction that promotes the production of knowledge for society, which seeks to maintain the institution's credibility before society, being committed to the training of professionals with ethical conduct and principles, which are in line with legality, impersonality and morality.

Teaching Quality and Knowledge are also important perceptible pillars in the Mission and Vision. This is evident when it aims to be a center of excellence in University and in the promotion of technological education, in recognition of its quality of teaching, in seeking an innovative education. In turn, knowledge is oriented towards production, systematization and socialization, in the wake of the training of responsible and knowledgeable professionals, who work for the advancement of society.

The way in which the Mission, Vision and Values are disseminated and declared indicate that there is a space that can foster the creation of innovative elements for society, in order to improve the life of the community. Therefore, the analysis of the categories made it possible to identify that there may be a favorable environment to develop Social Innovation, as a way of representing the purpose of the institutions' existence, which define the individual and grouped characteristics of the analyzed educational institutions.

4.2 Actions to Promote Social Innovation

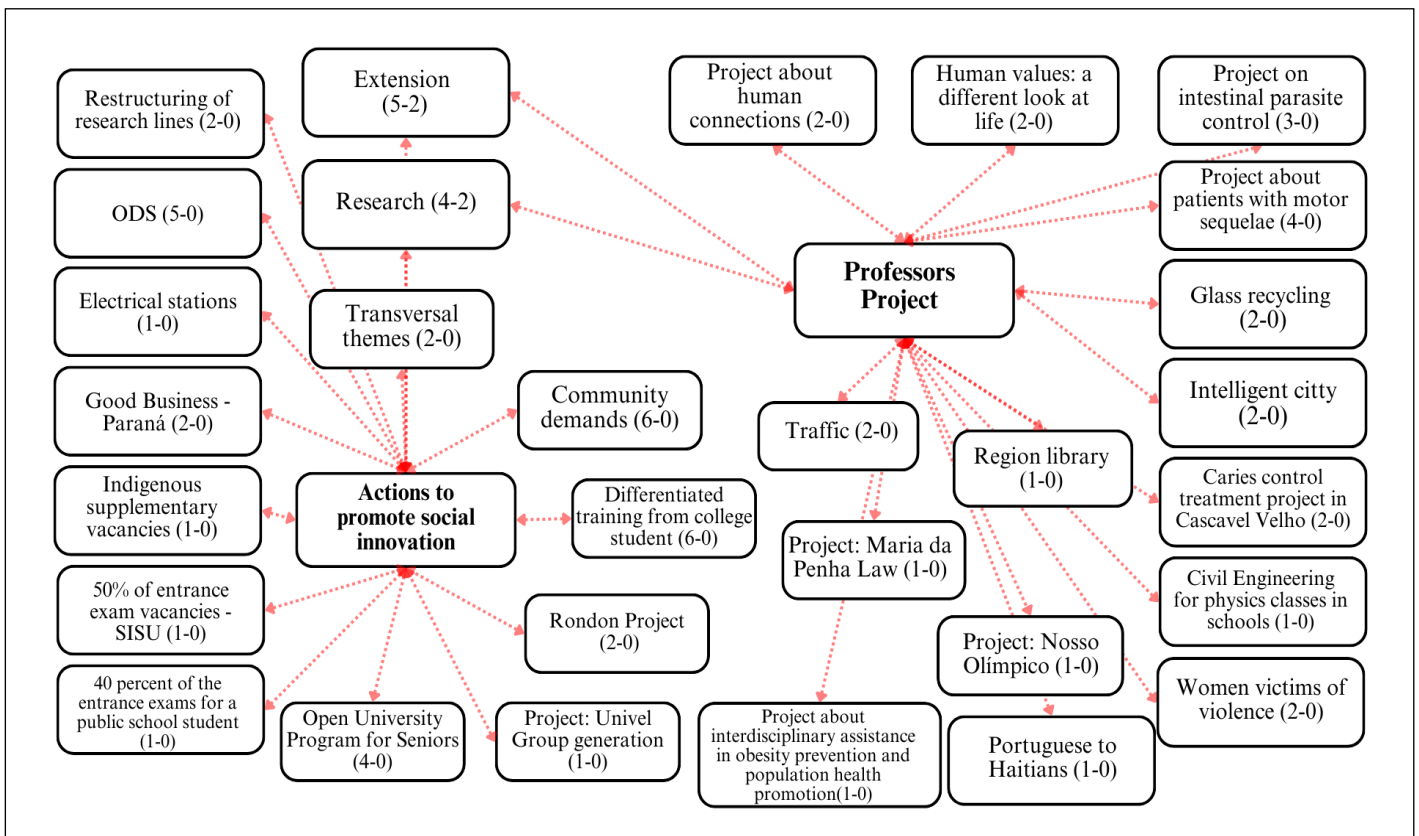


Figure 2. Actions to Promote Social Innovation

Prepared using Altas.ti software version 7.0

Source: The Authors (2024).

Figure 2 presents the results of the content analysis of Social Innovation Promotion Actions. It is important to mention that actions aimed at Social Innovation can be considered minor activities and practices, which have an impact or can foster the development of Social Innovation.

There are several Social Innovation Promotion Actions identified in the universities, as shown in figure 2. Through data triangulation, it is possible to analyze that these actions occur mainly through Research and Extension, developed in the institutions' projects. The actions have highlighted, with regard to Research, the orientation in Transversal Themes evident, especially in the private university center, which has also restructured its Research Lines seeking to articulate scientific knowledge with the needs of the community.

Another action of equal relevance and oriented towards Social Innovation refers to the work developed by the institutions regarding the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a fact that stands out both at the Federal Technological University and at the private University Center. In this context, Interviewee 4, who works as a campus director, highlights the way in which

Social Innovation for the university is closely linked to the Sustainable Development Goals, the SDGs. So nowadays, the university in general is concerned that every Research or Extension Project developed here, the professor looks at those objectives, I don't remember now how many there are, and identifies which ones my project can fit into.

This vision of the university manager highlights the concern to work on the 17 SDGs and encourage their implementation in Research and Extension Projects, precisely because there is an understanding that these goals, created in September 2015 by the United Nations Summit for Sustainable Development (SDG, 2020), can be addressed more clearly by universities. The fact that there is a space in the form of research and extension projects in which the professor must indicate the ODS worked on highlights the university's encouraging role in the search for solutions to society's problems.

Regarding the SDGs, Interviewee 5 highlights that “SDGs have been discussing issues associated with different aspects of society since 2012, that is, we are already in 2020, it has been eight years discussing seventeen indicators to improve the living conditions of the world population”. In these terms, it is clear that the SDGs become an important guiding pillar of the population's needs.

The Eletropostos, which are intended for recharging electric vehicles, started to be produced by the state university in partnership with FUNDETEC and are installed in the municipality of Cascavel. This action is oriented towards a benefit that the city obtained through the implementation of the partnership between the two entities, as highlighted by Interviewee 1 “... we had two companies in Brazil that produced electric stations, today the IES produces electric stations, so it is something very recent”.

Another important aspect refers to the allocation of additional vacancies to indigenous people, the Unified Selection System (SISU) program and the offer of 40% of vacancies to public school students. This work is aimed at expanding opportunities for access to University for a

portion of the population that would hardly have access via entrance examination. Therefore, through this action, it is perceived that there is equity in the expansion of access to University.

The Open University Program for the Third Age seeks to integrate the public university with seniors from 55 years of age, offering courses and permission to participate in some subjects of the Courses. There is an evident concern to integrate this community, with the aim of contributing to their mental health, in addition to generating an exchange of experience between academics, teachers and the elderly. This is evidenced in the excerpt P34:01 “aims to contribute to the improvement of the levels of physical, mental and social health of the elderly, generating knowledge and sharing experiences between the university and the community, being an action of Social responsibility”.

The Grupo Geração Project has been established for over thirteen years in the private university center and seeks to value people over 60 years of age. The project aims to generate knowledge, in the most varied areas, to develop activities that value well-being, body and mind health: “Univel is concerned with valuing the elderly, and this project is a way of contributing to society, to value and thank these people” (P125:1).

The actions emphasized are oriented towards meeting Community Demands, which drive the actions of the federal technological institution and the private university center. The demands are received from people in the community, who seek assistance from institutions and, considering the competences of the specific areas, the requests are passed on to professors who can effectively contribute to meeting what the community needs and what the university has to offer.

On this issue, Interviewee 3 explains: “When the demand arrives, we try to see who can meet that and then go over the demand, see if it works, if it doesn’t, if it doesn’t, who could help, and there’s a half-time between them”. In the private university center, some demands come through the Rector, but also from individuals in the community who seek the institution. In this regard, the institution has the support of the highest hierarchical level. However, it became clear that this is also sought after by the community, such as the local leaders, presidents of residents' associations, family ministry, the parish priest, coordinator of the cooperative of recycled collectors, among others.

Córdoba-Pachón, Mapelli, Taji and Donovan (2020) emphasize that Social Innovation becomes the result of interaction and creative work between teachers who exchange ideas on how to create content in their subjects that is creative and focused on social innovation. Another important aspect highlights the actions aimed at the elderly, as exposed by Lee and Waites (2006) and Waites and Cheryl (2007) who express the need to create content and practices aimed at valuing the elderly, when they work collaboratively to implement programs on aging, care and respect for this part of the population.

Social Innovation actions carried out by Universities become means that can be associated with the promotion of social innovation, this occurs when there is an engagement between multiple institutional actors, involved in actions that develop and overcome the most urgent

problems. Figure 3 presents the results of the analysis of what is considered a Social Innovation carried out by the Universities.

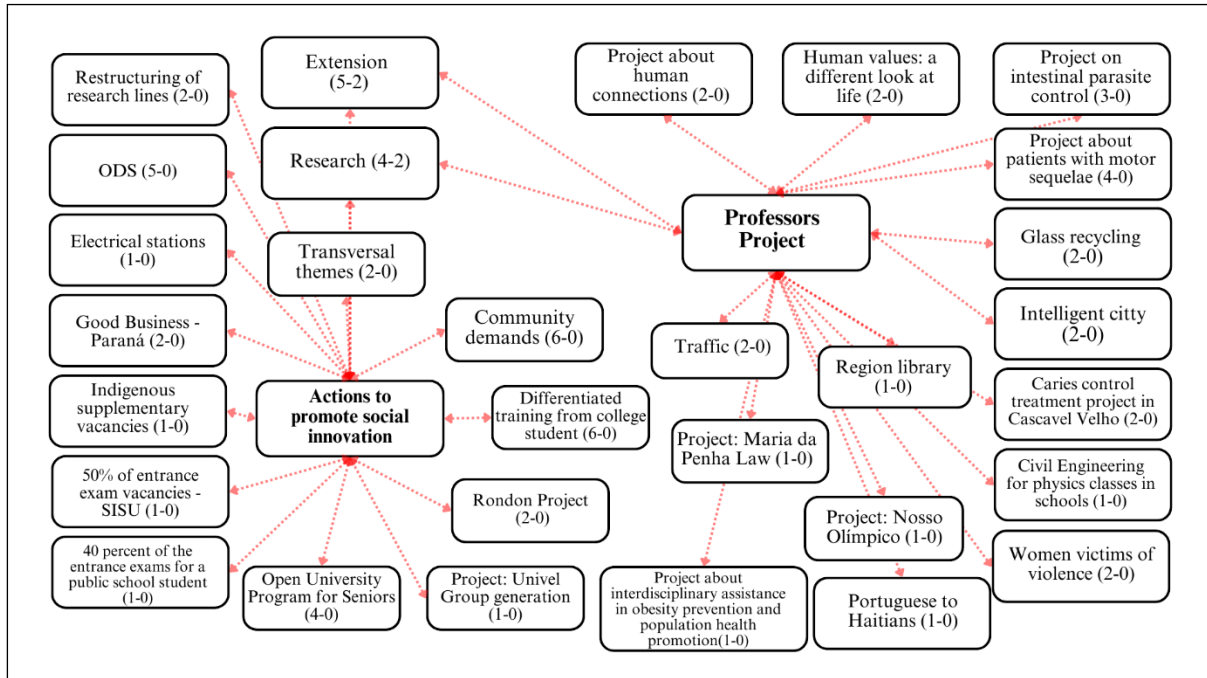


Figure 3. Social Innovation Developed by the Analyzed Universities

Prepared using Altas.ti software version 7.0

Source: The Authors (2021).

The content analysis of documents and interviews allowed identifying categories that explain the role of Universities, in the State of Paraná, as promoters of Social Innovation, as seen in figure 3. The project Reuse of Glass Waste from Sanitary Landfills can be considered effectively a Social Innovation, developed by a professor linked to the federal technological university. This project solves an existing problem in the community, related to the destination of glass materials. The collection of glass was not carried out by recycled collectors due to the low value paid for it, as well as it was disposed of incorrectly. “Recyclers sold glass at a very cheap price, so they didn't even collect the glass because it wasn't worth it, it stayed there” (Interviewee 4).

Other representative projects refer to Agroecology Fairs or Organic Fairs sold at the state university, the federal technological university and the private university center. Projects of this nature allow producers, farmers, families from settlements to sell vegetables, fruits, jams, jellies and other organic products in institutions and this way, present alternative sources of income. Another Social Innovation linked to the University institution is related to a project developed since 2012 by the private university center, called EDUC. He was also a finalist in the ODS Award, he develops activities with young people at the Centro da Juventude [Youth Center], a public space located in a neighborhood with a high level of crime, which required

urgent action. About this project, Interviewee 6, who works as pedagogical coordinator, adds:

Youth Center, located in the Interlagos neighborhood, here in Cascavel. The Interlagos neighborhood, just to give you an idea, is one of the most dangerous in Cascavel and many young people, it is a forgotten neighborhood, because they have no other life option, they end up in crime, drugs, prostitution, so it is a community that lacks a different look, they need opportunities (Interviewee 6).

In this regard, it is clear that the project sought to offer opportunities for needy young people, and that through this participation the project became a propeller to change the lives of those young people, being therefore a Social Innovation. Along the same lines, the Human Rights project: a Practice with Puppet Theater also develops guidelines and discusses topics such as dignity, looking at others, the construction of human beings and respect for people and animals, and works with children from Cascavel schools with stories told through puppet theater.

The Periodic Table in Braille project was developed by academics of the Undergraduate Chemistry Course at the state university and becomes an important way for blind or low vision students to learn chemistry with the periodic table. In this context, This project is aimed at social inclusion, providing access to groups that would not be able to study. It is analyzed in this case that there is a great social appeal, it contributes to education and becomes a Social Innovation.

Social Innovation can also be associated in the private university center with projects that used waste from the avian and fishing industry to produce biodegradable film. Teachers and students developed a Biodegradable Chicken Feather Film, resulting from the shredding of chicken feathers, a residue whose fate is a problem for the industry. In a similar way, the Biodegradable Film of Tilapia scales used as raw material the scales from this industry to produce the film. Both projects resulted in the production of a plastic that can be used as a sustainable material and become a solution that still needs improvement, but that solves one of the great problems of society is the time of plastic decomposition.

Another important project that also effectively refers to Social Innovation is the Vigia Project, developed at the private university. This was carried out by professors and students of the Technology Course in Systems Analysis and Development, and developed a technology aimed at the monitoring system that controls crime indicators. As the Western Region borders Paraguay, illicit activities such as smuggling, robberies, arms and drug trafficking are higher, the project seeks to provide technology that assists the police in this monitoring.

Another important point that is evident and belongs to the area of Social Innovation, also aligned with a better academic training for the student, is the use of Innovative Methodologies in College teaching, evident in the private university center. The presence of a culture oriented to methodological differences, generating innovations in the classroom through new teaching methodologies, innovative professional practices are tools that enhance student learning and make the classroom a space for interaction, innovation, investigation and respect for cultural, religious, socioeconomic diversity, among others.

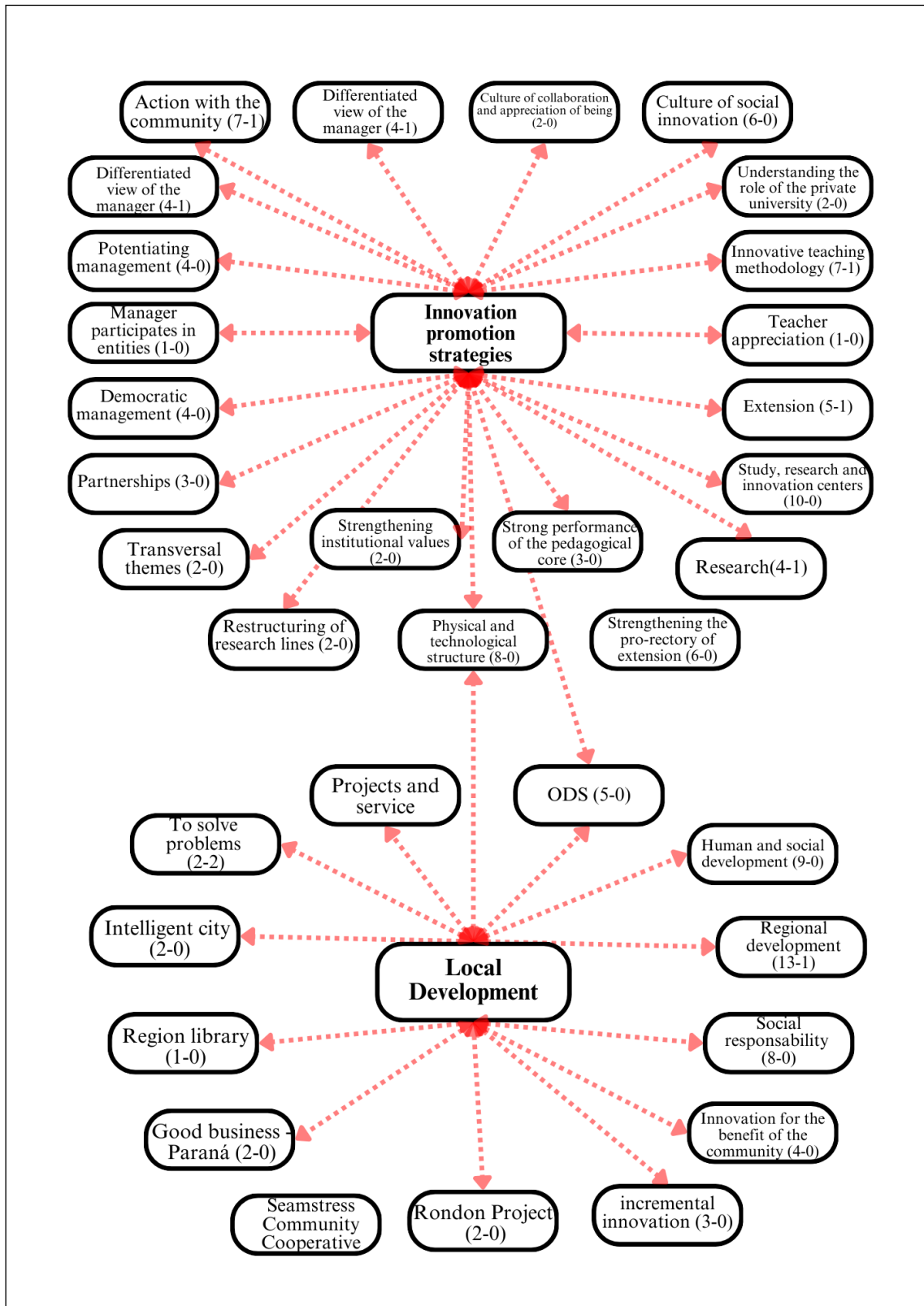


Figure 4. Strategies to Promote Social Innovation and Local Development

Prepared using Altas.ti software version 7.0

Source: The Authors (2021).

Social Innovation, according to Cavalcante, Riberas & Rosa (2016) becomes a consequence of education oriented to the use of new technologies, which is also aimed at solving problems and stimulating creative thinking among students. The approximation between students, teachers and the community in need generates learning in terms of values, beliefs, respect for diversity, as highlighted by Ngui, Voon and Lee (2017). Figure 4 presents the Strategies for the Promotion of Social Innovation and Local Development as a result of the work carried out by the analyzed institutions.

The content analysis made it possible to identify several strategies carried out by the Universities that guide the execution of activities and reinforce the importance of the role played as promoters of local development and Social Innovation. This is evident in figure 4 and reflects what is produced and transferred in society through knowledge and services.

In view of this, it appears that there are defined Strategic Objectives, guided by the mission, vision and institutional values, but also by daily decisions that seek to strengthen the extension. The Strengthening of the Dean of Extension itself is seen as present in all the educational institutions analyzed. The strategies are oriented towards a culture that increasingly recognizes the potential of people for their best development. Consequently, this becomes a reflection of how the manager presents a Differentiated Vision, a Empowering Management, a Democratic Management, oriented to the expansion of Partnerships, which highlights the work on topics of high social value such as Transversal Themes, in the creation of Lines of Research oriented to the needs of the community. This is evident in line remodeling actions, adequate to the demands of the need, to the themes of high social value highlighted by the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation, as directed by the private university center.

The very Structuring of Study, Research and Innovation Centers reinforce innovation as a background for practices and activities carried out for society. Research and Extension act as the main means to disseminate strategies that effectively bring a contribution to the community. More and more institutions seek to consolidate, grow, create new activities and expand their services. For this, it is valid the investments made in the availability of Physical and Technological Structure, for this purpose.

The work carried out in line with the SDGs, Sustainable Development Goals, also becomes a guiding strategy for the activities of the analyzed institutions. Thus, the actions, projects and services are also aimed at this line and contribute to the development of the locality, as such activities serve more people in the community. The appreciation of the teacher is linked to the strategy of creating Innovative Methodologies in Teaching, in the awakening of the academic's interest in seeking to do different, in being engaging.

Regarding Social Innovation Promotion Strategies, Schröder and Krüger (2019) argue the need to create new governance structures, so that Universities have a more active role aimed at promoting research and Social Innovation actions. This is in line with what is idealized by the *Social Innovation Community* (2011) when they argue the need to implement effective actions that overcome social challenges, the creation of shared environments of ideas and the future of the generation of Social Innovation. In this regard, Caulier-Grice et al. (2012)

complement by highlighting that Social Innovation and the development of new products can be associated with public or private institutions, which seek, in their strategies, to promote the social well-being of a given community. Thus, as Johnson, Scholes and Whittington (2007) emphasize, strategic positioning seeks to generate value in society through differentiation. Therefore, the organizational structure is based, providing the formation of a base that enables the development of activities and actions through teachers and academics.

It can thus be considered, according to the analysis, that from the strategic lens of experience this organizational structure is based when important sectors are strengthened, such as the Dean of Extension, Pedagogical Nucleus, Study Nuclei, Research and Innovation, in addition to partnerships, dissemination of Strategic Objectives, Restructuring of Research Lines, creation of a culture of Social Innovation and strengthening of institutional values.

It is in these terms that Local Development becomes the result of a management oriented towards socio-environmental issues and valuing the human being, which advocates important pillars such as human and social development, regional development, social responsibility and the generation of innovation for the benefit of the community.

Local development is also represented by the social work carried out, by the assistance and by the improvement of the social indicators generated by having an integrated work between the Universities, a fact that was evident and consistent with the joint action, oriented to the purpose of improving the living conditions. of the population. In this conception, there is a mutual understanding and a work aimed at development as a reflection of this action, and that the installation of the educational institution in a certain place also contributes to the development of that place.

4.3 Discussion

It was found that Social Innovation is the result of transforming ideas translated into actions and practices, such as: changes in school curricula, use of active technologies and methodologies in University, carrying out innovative research and extension projects such as reuse of glass waste , organic fairs, production of biodegradable films that provide the opportunity to generate income for needy families when alternatives are created for people in a state of vulnerability, when programs are instituted that seek to value the elderly and provide access to University, in the professional training of vulnerable youth.

In this regard, Social Innovation, focused on the role of social transformation, means discussing that the actions carried out by the different actors for its promotion, make them transforming agents of reality and the social economy (Caulier-Grice, et al., 2012), so that Local Development becomes the result of all actions carried out to improve people's lives, meeting unmet needs or existing social problems. Social Innovation transits under the concept exposed by Mulgan, Tucker, Rushanara and Sanders (2007), that it is the result of transformed ideas translated into actions, whose objective is to contribute to improving people's lives, meeting unmet needs or social existent problems.

University has proved to be an important means for the development of the locality and the country as a whole. This occurs initially through the promotion of educational services,

which seek the professional training of the academic. However, the discussions also permeate the differentiated, human, citizen and responsible formation for their community, for their means of action. University is oriented towards Social Innovation when it presupposes, in its policies, practices, projects, research and extension, the orientation of professional training in line with the needs that society demands, in the light of improving people's living conditions, in order to promote spaces for educational practices with an emphasis on respect for the individual, on the improvement of socio-cultural conditions, in addition to making students and institutions important actors for the transformation of the community where they work.

Social Innovation presents a diversity of applications, which occurs as a result of this approach having emerged from practice, through the observation of reality in different situations, which is also related to the concept itself and its application that seeks more information about its essence. (Caulier-Grice, et al., 2012).

In this article, Social Innovation was the result of actions and strategies based on Universities, which promote innovation for the benefit of the community, based on those identified demands. Some issues analyzed point out that a first step is aimed at changes in school curricula, including subjects that seek to value the human being, respect, cultural issues of society, such as the role of valuing minorities, human rights and minority rights, on gender discrimination, indigenous peoples, African descendants, xenophobia, religious racism and highlights the importance of valuing human beings and their rights.

Innovation as a management model suggests that organizations also have a certain role for their promotion associated with the management of their human resources. Therefore, Social Innovation happens when business strategies are created that promote changes in human, institutional and social capital, in such a way that organizations also act by transforming social reality (Caulier-Grice, et al. 2012). It is from the strategic point of view that the actions, practices, projects, policies, among others, that are developed by the Universities are oriented towards the environment. There is a question that guides the generation of value for the academic and for society. This is materialized in the provision of educational services that value the quality of teaching, the differentiated training of students in their profession, the appreciation of the look towards the role as a citizen, among others. This becomes a result of the contribution of the organizational structure and its organizational processes oriented towards the promotion of Social Innovation.

The stimuli and incentives carried out with teachers and students also become means to strengthen the performance of Universities in the community. The structure is oriented to the organization of sectors, departments, creation of policies, holding discussions with topics relevant to the present time (cross-cutting themes, valuing the human being) that support the processes, in this case, the Social Innovation actions, either through of projects, actions, practices that result in social well-being and local development. That is why, in the long term, the vision of university managers is oriented towards Social Innovation, with an emphasis on the market as well. This fact is related to the increase in the number of students, seeking their greater engagement, as well as their performance in front of their community. When there is a balance between organizational structure and processes, oriented to the vision of the

experience and design lens, it is understood that Social Innovation is facilitated.

From a strategic point of view, institutions that seek to guide and promote the development of communities, in an organizational form consistent with the needs of their population, are promoting local development (Sachs, 1995). The presence of a strategic management oriented towards social well-being is explained by Sachs (1994) as being an effective and positive result for society, as it creates mechanisms through actions, practices, activities and projects that propose the reduction of poverty, job creation, social inclusion.

The emphasis on innovation as a management model suggests that organizations also have a certain role for its promotion associated with the management of their human resources. In this regard, Social Innovation happens when business strategies are created that promote changes in human, institutional and social capital, in such a way that such organizations become more competitive and, consequently, promote improvements to the human resources that constitute organizations.

5. Theoretical and Practical Contributions

The objective of this article was to analyze how the Social Innovation actions carried out by the institution: Universidade do Oeste do Paraná, contribute to the promotion of Social Innovation, in the locality in which they are inserted. Social Innovation was understood by institutional managers as a means to improve people's lives, promote regional development, human and social development, in addition to social inclusion. Due to these facts, Universities recognize the need for a differentiated formation of the academic so that he/she acts as a social problem solver.

Social Innovation actions take place in the work in lines of research oriented to transversal themes, to solutions to society's problems, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and with disciplines oriented to the valorization of the less favored, either due to a social class or ethnicity. It was found that there is a strong performance of institutions in these terms, with several activities configured as actions aimed at promoting Social Innovation. Due to Social Innovation, the actions are configured by works aimed at local entrepreneurs, the appreciation of family farming, the participation and interaction of the elderly in educational institutions and also, materialize in the proposal of a differentiated and human formation with the academic focused on the creation of elements, which highlights the role of the student as a transforming potential of their reality.

The role of institutions is recognized by institutional managers of all investigated Universities, being kept institutionalized in documents, actions, activities and practices carried out by them. The role of institutions makes it possible to promote a series of activities that are put into practice by professors and academics, actors who also share a different perspective and who seek in their daily work a way to change the lives of those who need it most. All this presents a support of strategies developed in educational institutions when this is stated in strategic objectives, such as being active in the community, increasingly strengthening the involvement of the Extension, the presence of Centers for Studies and Research, for

Technological Innovation who work directly with the community.

It is concluded in this article that the Social Innovation developed by the institution: Universidade do Oeste do Paraná is the result of transforming ideas translated into actions and practices, such as: changes in school curricula; use of technologies and active methodologies in University; carrying out innovative research and extension projects such as the reuse of glass waste, organic fairs, production of biodegradable films that provide income generation for needy families; when training alternatives are created for people in a state of vulnerability; when programs are instituted that seek to value the elderly and provide access to University, among others.

Social Innovation occurs in the long term through a market-oriented internal view of universities managers, understanding the impacts of the external environment, since they are playing roles aimed at differentiation, in programs that value innovative issues and generate value in society. In this context, Social Innovation is also the result of the adaptation of the Organizational Structure of the university. The universities managers present an integrated vision, oriented to the lens of experience and the lens of ideas, when it is the result of collective experience, of a culture that is based on the experience of institutional managers and on the potential of innovation as sedimentators of Social Innovation.

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