ARTICULATION BETWEEN COLLECTIVE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION: AN ANALYSIS IN NON-PROFIT CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS IN THE JEQUITIHNONHA AND MUCURI VALLEYS, STATE OF MINAS GERAIS, BRAZIL

Naldeir dos Santos Vieira¹  
Agnaldo Keiti Higuchi²  
Edimilson Eduardo da Silva³  
Marcio Coutinho de Souza⁴  
Isadora Camilo Costa⁵

ABSTRACT

Objective: This study aims to analyze the relationship between the development of collective skills and social innovation in Non-Profit Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) located in the Middle and Lower Jequitinhonha and the Mucuri Valley, Minas Gerais state, Brazil.

Theoretical Benchmark: Theoretical approaches to CSOs, social innovation and collective skills were carried out.

Method: To do so, the application of online survey and in-depth case studies in OSC of the said field was carried out. The data from the first stage were analyzed using descriptive statistics, exploratory factor analysis and multiple linear regression, and those from the qualitative stage were analyzed via content analysis.

Results and Conclusion: The results indicated that some of the CSOs studied carry out actions considered as socially innovative and that the collective competences related to cooperation are those that have a significant influence on social innovation. In addition, it was observed that the CSOs studied, by engaging in socially innovative actions, created spaces and conditions conducive to the development of collective skills, enabling social interactions, which are fundamental for cooperation, knowledge sharing and social learning of those involved. Thus, there is a dialectical relationship between the collective skills constructs and social innovation, the development of some of them may reflect in a virtuous cycle in which the practice impacts on collective capacity development and this development in the improvement of new practices, or vice versa.

Research Implications: The findings emphasize the need for university extension practices and interventions that facilitate cooperation practices, as well as the sharing of knowledge and commitment in the context of CSOs, which can contribute more effectively in the search for the development of socially innovative actions.

Originality/value: This study presents an original and valuable approach when analyzing the relationships between collective skills development and social innovations in CSOs, revealing significant insights on good practices in this field.

Keywords: Social Innovation, Collective Skills, Civil Society Organizations, Social Organizations.

¹ Universidade Federal dos Vales do Jequitinhonha e Mucuri (UFVJM), Teófilo Otoni, Minas Gerais, Brazil.  
E-mail: naldeir_vieira@ufvjm.edu.br Orcid: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5624-8345  
² Universidade Federal dos Vales do Jequitinhonha e Mucuri (UFVJM), Teófilo Otoni, Minas Gerais, Brazil.  
E-mail: agnaldo.higuchi@ufvjm.edu.br Orcid: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8719-6154  
³ Universidade Federal dos Vales do Jequitinhonha e Mucuri (UFVJM), Teófilo Otoni, Minas Gerais, Brazil.  
E-mail: edimilson.eduardo@ufvjm.edu.br Orcid: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6104-7625  
⁴ Universidade Federal dos Vales do Jequitinhonha e Mucuri (UFVJM), Teófilo Otoni, Minas Gerais, Brazil.  
E-mail: marcio.souza@ufvjm.edu.br Orcid: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4238-1572  
⁵ Universidade Federal dos Vales do Jequitinhonha e Mucuri (UFVJM), Teófilo Otoni, Minas Gerais, Brazil.  
E-mail: isadora.camilo@ufvjm.edu.br Orcid: https://orcid.org/0009-0000-2792-421X
ARTICULACIÓN ENTRE DESENVOLVIMENTO DE COMPETÊNCIAS COLETIVAS E DE INOVAÇÃO SOCIAL: UN ANÁLISIS EN ORGANIZACIONES DE LA SOCIEDAD CIVIL SIN FINES LUCRATIVOS EN LOS VALES DE JEQUITINHONHA Y MUCURI, ESTADO DE MINAS GERAIS, BRASIL

RESUMO

Objetivo: Este estudo visa analisar a relação entre o desenvolvimento de competências coletivas e de inovação social em Organizações da Sociedade Civil Sem Fins Lucrativos (OSC) localizadas no Médio e Baixo Jequitinhonha e no Vale do Mucuri, estado de Minas Gerais, Brasil.

Referencial Teórico: Foi realizada abordagens de natureza teórica sobre OSC, inovação social e competências coletivas.

Método: Para tanto, realizou-se a aplicação de survey online e estudos de casos em profundidade em OSC do referido campo. Os dados da primeira etapa foram analisados por meio de estatísticas descritivas, análise fatorial exploratória e regressão linear múltipla e os da etapa qualitativa, foram analisados via análise de conteúdo.

Resultados y Conclusión: Os resultados apontaram que parte das OSC estudadas realizam ações consideradas como socialmente inovadoras e que as competências coletivas relacionadas à cooperação são as que possuem influência significativa na inovação social. Além disso, observou-se que as OSC estudadas, ao praticar ações socialmente inovadoras, criaram espaços e condições propícias ao desenvolvimento de competências coletivas, possibilitando interações sociais, sendo estas fundamentais para a cooperação, o compartilhamento de saberes e a aprendizagem social dos envolvidos. Assim, há uma relação dialética entre os construtos competências coletivas e inovação social, podendo o desenvolvimento de algum deles refletir em um ciclo virtuoso em que a prática repercute em desenvolvimento de capacidades coletivas e este desenvolvimento no aperfeiçoamento de novas práticas, ou vice-versa.

Implicaciones da pesquisa: Os achados dão ênfase à necessidade de práticas de extensão universitária e intervenções que facilitem as práticas de cooperação, assim como o compartilhamento de saberes e comprometimento no contexto das OSC, podendo estas contribuir de forma mais efetiva na busca por desenvolvimento de ações socialmente inovadoras.

Originalidade/valor: Este estudo apresenta uma abordagem original e valiosa ao analisar as relações entre desenvolvimento de competências coletivas e de inovações sociais em OSC, revelando percepções significativas sobre boas práticas neste âmbito.

Palavras-chave: Inovação Social, Competências Coletivas, Organizações da Sociedade Civil, Organizações Sociais.

ARTICULACIÓN ENTRE DESENVOLVIMENTO DE COMPETÊNCIAS COLETIVAS E DE INOVAÇÃO SOCIAL: UMA ANÁLISE EM ORGANIZAÇÕES DA SOCIEDADE CIVIL SEM FINS LUCRATIVOS DOS VALES DO JEQUITINHONHA E DO MUCURI, ESTADO DE MINAS GERAIS, BRASIL

RESUMEN

Objetivo: Analizar la relación entre el desarrollo de habilidades colectivas y la innovación social en organizaciones de la sociedad civil sin fines de lucro (OSC) ubicadas en el Jequitinhonha Medio y Bajo y el Valle de Mucuri, estado de Minas Gerais, Brasil.

Análisis teórico: Se realizaron enfoques teóricos de las OSC, innovación social y habilidades colectivas.

Método: Para ello, se realizó la aplicación de encuestas en línea y estudios de caso en profundidad en OSC de dicho campo. Los datos de la primera etapa se analizaron mediante estadística descriptiva, análisis factorial exploratorio y regresión lineal múltiple, y los de la etapa cualitativa se analizaron mediante análisis de contenido.

Resultados y Conclusión: Los resultados indicaron que algunas de las OSC estudiadas realizan acciones consideradas como socialmente innovadoras y que las competencias colectivas relacionadas con la cooperación...
1 INTRODUCTION

Non-Profit Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) are considered an important 'laboratory' for the development of skills and social innovations, the latter being understood here as all new practices, approaches or interventions, or even all new products and services developed to improve a situation or solve a social problem that has been established at the level of institutions, organizations and communities (Conseil de la Science et de la Technologie – CST, 2000).

However, although some studies indicate that CSOs are, by nature, articulators and/or promoters of social innovations, others indicate that the practices of these organizations in some countries are restricted by barriers to innovation. This situation means that the percentage of organizations considered truly socially innovative is reduced, both in terms of the intervention, its structuring, and the products and services provided. With this low percentage, these experiences become cases, often considered as references for studies of good practices in this field (Meneses, 2010).

In addition to social innovation, another relevant aspect for CSOs is the development of collective skills, characterized by the participation and interaction of individuals in work groups and represents all their know-how to deal with different work situations. These competencies
are formed when people mobilize for desired results and take action to achieve them. Therefore, collective competencies are perceived as the abilities of groups to act towards a common objective (Silva et al., 2021).

From the perspective of Silva et al. (2022), the identification of collective competencies allows organizations to better understand the collective activities of their teams. However, for Tello-Gamarra and Verschoore (2015), there is a lack of research regarding collective competencies in organizations in the so-called third sector or volunteering, this being an important field for the development of competencies aimed at social benefit. This framework makes it difficult to adequately understand the scope of the phenomenon of a social nature, since, in addition to mapping good practices, aspects that clarify the trajectories, the needs met, and the main requirements and drivers for the development of collective skills and social innovations deserve further clarification.

Despite the relevance of social innovation and collective competencies in CSO for the whole of Brazil, to specify the focus of analysis, in this study, only the territories of Middle and Lower Jequitinhonha and Vale do Mucuri, Brazilian State of Minas Gerais, are delimited as fields. characterized by the worst human development indicators when compared to others in the state of Minas Gerais (Minas Gerais, 2017).

In this context, where the promotion of CSOs can be used as a strategy for local development, this study sought to answer the following research question: what is the relationship between the development of collective skills and the development of social innovations? in OSC? Thus, this study aims to analyze, based on the perception of CSO representatives from Médio and Baixo Jequitinhonha and Vale do Mucuri, the relationship between the development of collective skills and the development of socially innovative activities by the organizations they represent.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Despite not being a new phenomenon, CSOs, in recent decades, have started to arouse greater interest, given their potential, with a view to local and sustainable development (Possas et al., 2013). Because they are located in a multifaceted field, these organizations are analyzed from different perspectives, each of which sheds light on different domains. Among these different perspectives or approaches, the third sector, the social economy and the solidarity economy stand out.
The third sector approach, originating in the North American context and based on Anglo-Saxon volunteering, seeks to understand the practice of organizations that, in addition to not distributing profits and being formal, are private, independent of the state and involve a certain type of voluntary participation (Salamon & Anheier, 1992). From this perspective, the third sector, in the form of voluntary associations of social interests, contrasts with the first, referring to the set of State power structures, and with the second, which encompasses private organizations that aim at profit as their main objective (Anastacio et al., 2018).

The social economy approach, with its origins in the European reality, focuses on forms of productive and associative organizations, including cooperatives and social enterprises. Among the criteria for classifying organizations integrated in the social economy are: autonomy in relation to the State, institutional property and not subject to distribution among participants; non-maximization of profit; democratic and participatory management; predominance of the labor factor over capital; diverse organizational forms; and, seeks well-being or social balance (Caeiro, 2014).

In turn, the solidarity economy approach, also of European origin, gaining ground in the Latin American reality, is concerned with organizations that emerge as an alternative to capitalism, proposing new ways of creating an economy based on solidarity (Monzón, 2006). Among its principles are: self-management; cooperation between workers; non-profit centralization; valuing diversity; social justice in production, development in order to contribute to the reduction of social inequalities; and, care for the environment (Webering, 2019). Among its plurality of organizations are: associations, cooperatives, recovered companies, informal productive groups, exchange clubs, marketing centers, popular banks and solidarity funds (Vieira, 2021).

As pointed out by Webering (2019, p. 79), in common, the field of the aforementioned approaches “encompasses organizations that differ from traditional and public companies, filling spaces that those forms of organization are not capable of supplying”, these being, in this case, study, approached as CSO. From the perspective of Vieira, Parente and Barbosa (2017), as social impact is objectified by the actions that make up all the aforementioned constructs, the search for innovative actions to meet collective needs places social innovation as the horizon of organizations in the fields they addressed.

When relating CSOs with social innovation practices, Sandri et al. (2020) identified that these constructs are complementary, as they constitute an implementation of new forms of local development aimed at social impact in a territory. Likewise, Monteiro (2019) states that the
concepts of Social and Solidarity Economy, due to their different organizational models, come together as drivers of social innovation. Following this perspective, the characteristics analyzed regarding the Social and Solidarity Economy (the search for self-management, democratic processes and primacy of people over capital) result in impacts on individual and collective well-being that, consequently, generate social innovations in their entities.

Given this vision, Lévesque (2006) proposed an analysis of whether social innovation is more efficient in the non-profit sector than in the State. The author explains, in a timeline from 1968 to 2000, that the crisis of the welfare state, given the time of economic crisis, was responsible for the emergence of social innovations in establishments such as clinics, daycare centers, churches and health funds. solidarity.

Mulgan et al. (2007) argue that CSOs play a fundamental role in the evolution of social innovation studies, given that this construct has become an alternative for social development in communities. Thus, Correia et al. (2022) analyze that CSOs are responsible for observing the initiatives that will be developed by social innovations, that is, they have social participation in all stages disseminated in a respective location, from the strategies that will be developed and implemented to the monitoring of these actions.

In addition to marketing objectives, Bignetti (2011) differentiates social innovation from technological innovation. For this author, technological innovation is driven by the acquisition of new methods and improvements of technological processes or products in order to provide customers with new services, and these activities interconnect organization, science, commerce, finance and, mainly, technology (Salgado & Franchi, 2023). Social innovation, in the first phase, stood out in the employment and educational spheres, but currently it assumes a non-market nature and collective character, based on cooperation aiming to meet basic needs such as health, education, security and leisure.

It is worth mentioning that the two constructs, despite being distinct, can be complementary, as many technological innovations can assume social attributes and vice versa, although there is no conformity of judgments about the relationship between the two (Da Silva & Pacheco, 2018).

Grando (2018) highlights the importance of characterizing social innovations due to their particularities as a collective phenomenon. Given this, social innovations have two main approaches: one focusing on the process and the other on the result. The process-focused perspective is based on alternatives that arise from the economic conditions of a respective
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territory, that is, they aim to generate social transformations through social relations. The result-focused perspective seeks to solve a specific need in order to achieve a social purpose.

Regarding the relationship between organizational arrangements and social innovation, Rey-Garcia et al. (2019) and Bizarria et al. (2024) emphasize that these arrangements facilitate the acquisition, deployment and creation of resources (capabilities) by multiple actors and strategies with the aim of driving social change. Thus, Oija et al. (2019) point out that the main barriers, such as limited access to financing, difficulties in scaling, insufficient skills and personal training, and the lack of networks and intermediaries, can be overcome. In addition to these barriers, social innovations sometimes lack organizational and leadership capabilities and infrastructure integration.

The organizational capabilities highlighted by Oija et al. (2019) can be analyzed from the perspective of skills which, according to Silva and Ruas (2016) are based on two main approaches: individual skills and collective skills. The first constitute the set of a person's capabilities in the organizational context or in specific functions of their professional career. Collective competencies, one of the focus themes of this study, result in the combination of attitudes characterized by three emphases: a) groups, areas and work functions; b) organization; and, c) set of organizations or network of companies.

As it results from a synergistic process, collective competence goes beyond the simple unification of individual skills practices. The combination of each individual's skills leads to the sharing, transformation and creation of a new skill, linked to the community. Thus, it arises from a process of social learning. (Lima & Silva, 2015).

For Macke and Crespi (2016), collective competence can be understood from two perspectives: functional and social. From a functional perspective, the focus is on the deployment of organizational competencies in different sectors, levels and processes through a set of knowledge, skills and specific activities. The social perspective emphasizes the construction of collective sensemaking, through the establishment of knowledge and development of team spirit among a group of individuals in an organization. In this way, the notion of collective competence is based on the cognitive and emotional connection of team members, considering aspects such as social harmony, solidarity, complicity and homogeneity of profiles (Macke & Crespi, 2016).

Silva and Ruas (2016) state that collective competencies have the role of not only developing individual competencies, but also standardizing a team's procedures in favor of its tasks, influencing the group dynamics and even individual services. Thus, collective
competence has important social and functional points to be highlighted. Regarding social issues, we have: relationship rules; innovation-oriented learning; sharing information and experiences, and; cooperation and communication. At the functional level, collective competencies complement the specific tasks of a group or a given organizational process.

In this process of developing collective skills, there is great importance in the interaction of each member of the group, who can share their individual trajectories (different knowledge, points of view or beliefs to be judged by the collective), enabling synergies (Tello-Gamarra & Verschoore, 2015).

3 METHODOLOGY

This study was carried out together with the CSO of Médio and Baixo Jequitinhonha and Vale do Mucuri, in the Brazilian state of Minas Gerais. To begin the field survey, firstly, CSOs were mapped by extracting data from the Institute for Applied Economic Research (IPEA) – Mapa das Organizações da Sociedade Civil platform. Subsequently, data from the National Information System on Enterprises and Solidarity Economy (SIES) and the Organization of Cooperatives of the State of Minas Gerais (OCE – MG) were used.

The universe studied was made up of CSOs whose nature is non-profit, in their varied statutory objectives, cooperatives and foundations. In total, of the 56 municipalities in the study field, 1,358 active organizations were identified. However, valid email and/or telephone contact details were obtained from only 550 CSOs. Therefore, a questionnaire with four blocks containing open (dissertation) and closed (objective) questions was sent digitally (by email or, when requested, via the WhatsApp application). The Google Forms platform was used, through which the questionnaires were administered to a representative of each organization. During the collection period (February 6 to April 25, 2023), 58 responses were obtained, all considered valid after data purification.

The questionnaire used to collect data in the survey, in addition to the Free and Informed Consent Form (TCLE), addressed the following aspects: block 1: general data on the respondent's profile; block 2: characterization of the organizations where the representative works; block 3: level of development of social innovation – where a scale based on the instrument validated in the work of Grando (2018) was used, consisting of eight variables; and block 4: level of development of collective skills present within its scope, using a scale based on the instrument validated in the work of Macke and Crespi (2016), composed of twenty-eight
variables. The objective questions in blocks 3 and 4 that measured the level of development of social innovations and collective competencies had a 10-point Likert scale as an alternative answer, anchored in the statements: 1= totally disagree; 10= completely agree.

Data from the first stage were analyzed using descriptive statistics, exploratory factor analysis and multiple linear regression, with calculations carried out using the Jamovi statistical software. The choice of the multivariate Exploratory Factor Analysis technique was motivated by its suitability for the study of factors that reproduce the pattern of relationships between variables, as in the work of Macke and Crespi (2016). In the factor analysis technique, the main components extraction method was used (with varimax rotation) with the twenty-eight variables that measured collective competencies.

Finally, multiple linear regression made it possible to identify, among the dimensions of collective competencies raised in the exploratory factor analysis, which ones had a significant coefficient in the tested model. The model made it possible to determine which dimensions could be considered antecedents of the development of social innovations by CSOs.

To prove the validity and reliability of the scales used, in the case of social innovation, unidimensionality was tested through exploratory factor analysis (acceptance criterion: a factor with an eigenvalue above 1), Bartlett’s sphericity test (acceptance criterion: \( p < 0.001 \)) and KMO adequacy measure (acceptance criteria: >0.6), and internal consistency using the Cronbach’s Alpha test (acceptance criteria: \( \alpha > 0.6 \)). In the case of collective competencies, the exploratory factor analysis had validity and reliability tested using Bartlett’s sphericity test (acceptance criterion: \( p < 0.001 \)) and KMO adequacy measure (acceptance criterion: >0.6). To test the significance of multiple linear regression coefficients, the criterion used was \( p \)-value < 0.05. These values were based on Hair Jr. et al. (2005), who consider them appropriate for studies in applied social sciences.

The analysis of the questionnaires allowed the identification and selection of organizations that obtained the highest averages in questions about the development of socially innovative practices. Thus, in addition to this requirement, and the availability to participate in the second stage, three organizations from different cities in the study field (Jequitinhonha, Malacacheta and Serra dos Aimorés) were selected for the qualitative stage.

In the case studies, carried out between October and November 2023, in addition to documentary research (statutes and reports) and direct observation, semi-structured interviews were carried out with key informants. The selection of informants was for convenience, by selecting informants considered to be of great relevance to the development of the organization.
In the interviews, carried out in the months of October and November 2023, aspects related to the present collective competencies were questioned, about the process of building these competencies, about the perception of the activities developed as socially innovative, as well as the driving and neutralizing factors for innovation, social, among others. In relation to social innovation, aspects related to innovation in products, processes, services and organizational innovation were considered. New knowledge, methods and techniques, organizational policies and practices were also analyzed.

In this second stage, in addition to the ICF, a script for the semi-structured interviews was prepared. The interviews were carried out with each member individually. However, the focus of the investigation and the units of analysis were centered on collective and organizational functioning.

Content analysis was used as the basis for the interview analysis method. Using this method, the recorded dialogues were recovered and transcribed, emphasizing some special moments that were recorded in memory or noted down for the moment of final analysis. Subsequently, the data collected, at least those from the analysis of the nuclear meanings of the responses, were transcribed into a double-entry matrix – in one the interviewees' statements, approximated by stratification characteristics, in the other, the categories of analysis. Finally, an analysis of the set was carried out, visualizing the facts of evidence relating to each interviewee, in the set of their responses, when 'delayed' or 'early' responses were identified, as well as those relating to each of the questions; reflecting on the entire set of interviews (Mattos, 2006).

This method allowed the capture of unique perceptions to identify collective competencies and their construction process in the organizations studied, socially innovative practices, as well as driving factors and/or limitations to their effectiveness. After systematizing the data, they were analyzed in light of the theoretical framework.
4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 STAGE 1 – EXPLORATORY STUDY

4.1.1 General data on the respondent's profile and characterization of the CSOs in which he works

Regarding the profile characteristics of CSO representatives, it appears that the questionnaire was answered mostly by male representatives (56.9%), aged between 41 and 50 years (27.6%), who work in the CSO that they have represented for more than 5 years (77.5%), hold the role of Statutory Director (43.1%) or administrative position (24.1%), for between 1 and 5 years (48.2%) and who have a postgraduate degree (41.4%) or higher education (25.9%) as their highest level of education.

Among the characteristics of the CSOs participating in the research, it is worth highlighting that only 5.2% declared to have Cooperative status and only one declared to be a Foundation. The remainder (93.1%) were classified as associations of different natures.

Regarding the territorial space of intervention, the majority of CSOs operate at the local (56.9%) or regional (37.9%) level. Regarding the types of products worked, among those with productive activity, the majority work in the non-processed food sector (19%) or handicrafts (6.9%). It is clear that the majority of organizations (60.3%) only have service provision activities. The target audience for the activities of the CSOs surveyed are mainly associated members (60.3%), women (58.6%), young people (56.9%), adolescents (51.7%), and children (46.6%). However, the variety of the target audience is very wide.

It is observed that the absolute majority of responding CSOs were founded after the 1990s (82.7%). 27.6% were founded between 2011 and 2020, and none recently (after 2020). The ranges of organizations that had the highest number of members were 21 to 40 (29.3%) and 61 to 100 (17.2%). Few have more than 200 members (13.8%). A significant percentage does not count on the collaboration of volunteers (19%), with the most frequent range being between 1 and 10 average volunteers/month in 2022 (37.6%). In December 2022, the majority did not have employees (55.2%), with the most frequent range of those that did, being 1 to 5 employees (13.8%).
4.1.2 Level of Development of Social Innovation

As already mentioned, the level of development of socially innovative actions was measured with variables suggested in the work of Grando (2018), whose scale is composed of eight variables. The exploratory factor analysis confirmed the unidimensionality of the scale, with \( p < 0.001 \) in Bartlett’s sphericity test, demonstrating the correlations between the variables are significantly different from zero and KMO of 0.881 (>0.6), highlighting the suitability of the sample, which can Therefore, the scale is considered valid. Internal consistency was tested using the Cronbach’s \( \alpha \) test, whose result of \( \alpha = 0.916 \) proves the reliability of the scale.

The general average, considering all items on the scale, was 7.18, with a standard deviation of 2.58 and a coefficient of variation of 35.95%. These results show that, on a scale of 1 to 10, the average of 7.18 represents that, in the perception of the representatives, there is development of social innovation on the part of the CSOs surveyed. However, the high value of the coefficient of variation indicates high dispersion in the results, that is, there are CSOs that may be developing socially innovative activities with greater intensity than others. The causes of this dispersion may be an object of study to be analyzed later.

4.1.3 Level of Development of Collective Skills

Regarding the competencies currently developed in a substantive way in the last 5 years in CSOs, according to the representatives' perception, the most frequent are cooperation from members (69.0%); shared vision (58.6%), interaction (58.6%) and commitment (56.9%) of the team. However, when asked about the most important collective competence for carrying out socially innovative actions, The following were mentioned: ability to share knowledge and shared vision, reinforcing the importance of team sensemaking (Rosa & Bitencourt, 2010; Klein & Bitencourt, 2012).

After analyzing the item means, exploratory factor analysis was carried out to verify the number of factors raised by the representatives' responses. In the work of Macke and Crespi (2016), four factors were identified (proactivity, communication, cooperation and interpersonal relationships). However, in the case of this study, five factors presented an eigenvalue greater than 1. One more factor was detected, formed by the items '48 - We often compare our team with other teams to evaluate our performance' and '43 – In our team, We usually rotate tasks between us'. The analysis presented \( p<0.001 \) in Bartlett’s test of sphericity and KMO of 0.864.
(>0.6) indicating the adequacy of the data, the validity and reliability of the analysis.

The result of the exploratory factor analysis demonstrated that the factors that reproduce the pattern of relationships between the variables of collective competences in promoting socially innovative activities in CSOs in the field of this study can be named as follows: Factor 1: Interpersonal relationships (9 items); Factor 2: teamwork (6 items); Factor 3: Cooperation (3 items); Factor 4: Communication (2 items); Factor 5: Assessment (2 items).

4.1.4 Relationship Between Collective Skills and Social Innovation in CSOs

In view of the objective of identifying significant coefficients between the variables that make up, based on the perception of CSO managers, the collective competencies that explain the variance in the level of development of social innovations, a multivariate linear regression was carried out. The average of the scores obtained in the eight items that measured the level of development of social innovation (Average innovation) was the dependent variable of the model, while the averages of the items that make up the five factors obtained in the exploratory factor analysis of collective competencies (Relations interpersonal, Teamwork, Cooperation, Communication and Assessment) represented the independent predictor variables.

The model test statistics show that it is significant, and the coefficient of determination $R^2$ of 0.305 shows that the model explains 30.5% of the variance in the level of development of social innovation. It was also found that the only predictor to present $p<0.05$ was Cooperation ($p=0.045$), thus being significant at the 0.05 level. Thus, this study revealed that the Cooperation dimension, which incorporates skills such as sharing and commitment, has a greater influence on the teams' ability to carry out socially innovative actions.

4.2 STAGE 2 – IN-DEPTH CASE STUDIES

4.2.1 Characterization of cases

Below is a description of the three case studies carried out in the Minas Gerais cities of Serra dos Aimorés (Organization A), Jequitinhonha (Organization B) and Malacacheta (Organization C).
Figure 1

Characterization of CSOs studied in depth

<table>
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<th>Organization: A</th>
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<td><strong>Interviewees</strong> – Seven interviews carried out between November 13th and 14th, 2023: <strong>cook; secretary assistant/mother of student ; teacher/monitor; executive secretary/director of the Escola Família Agrícola (EFA); teacher/monitor/ former student; CEO; mayor/partner</strong></td>
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| **Brief description of the OSC**: headquartered in the city of Serra dos Aimorés, Organization ‘A’ is an Association that maintains an Agricultural Family School (EFA). Among its members are parents of students and small landowners. EFA offers technological education on a full-time basis and in alternating periods from the first year of high school onwards. The Association also serves students from neighboring municipalities and the State of Bahia. As a teaching methodology, students participate in an immersion process, spending 15 days at school full time and 15 days at home. To support the face-to-face stage, the School has an infrastructure that includes space for raising sheep, pigs and an aviary, dormitories and cafeterias. Furthermore, students are monitored by monitors, including at night. Association members are volunteers, while EFA employees are hired and paid. The EFA is part of the Minas Gerais Association of Agricultural Family Schools (AMEFA), which is similar to a teaching superintendency and brings together the other 22 EFAs in Minas Gerais. Although each EFA is independent, this integration facilitates the sharing of knowledge and guidelines, representation within the state of Minas, in addition to training and dissemination of the alternation pedagogy. According to Interviewee F, EFA currently has 147 students enrolled. EFA has an internal regulation whose rules are approved in assemblies held with representatives of the families of enrolled students who are up to date with their monthly financial contributions. The staff team is made up of teachers, monitors, field workers, secretarial assistants, cooks and two coordinators (one pedagogical and one from the agricultural sector). As the financial contribution made by families is not sufficient to develop its activities, the Organization relies on partnerships. The Municipality of Serra dos Aimorés, the main partner, through a grant, contributes with the transfer of the space occupied by the school for a period of 20 years, with resources to cover kitchen activities and student meals, in addition to the transfer of two servers. The State of Minas Gerais, through a specific agreement, contributes resources to pay the salaries of most EFA employees. The Carlos Chagas city hall contributes to the transportation of students in its municipality, and to the cost of student meals. AMEFA was fundamental for the creation of EFA, evaluating the feasibility of implementation and helping to build planning for the school's operation. Furthermore, she represents the EFAs in the Legislative Assembly of Minas Gerais, is an important interlocutor with the State Department of Education, organizes congresses on the topic and provides advice and ongoing training on the pedagogy of alternation. In addition to the partnerships mentioned, the Association has some anonymous partners, mainly to raise funds for some non-routine expenses, such as internet improvements and maintenance of the space and infrastructure used. As a result of these articulations, of the tangible results, in addition to the two classes already formed, agricultural production associated with the learning processes and aimed at students’ internal consumption were highlighted. The intangible results obtained are directly linked to the learning outcomes of students enrolled at EFA. Thus, the change in the students’ behavior was highlighted, as they began to be encouraged to self-organize, to do domestic tasks, with the discipline to live in groups. In addition to completing high school, students also obtain technological training, which enriches the region's human capital. The existence of the School also prevents the rural exodus of young people who could seek to qualify in other cities. As decisions are made collegiately, it was highlighted that the management style tends to be more democratic. The presence of different profiles in the organization was reported. Thus, there are some who are more and others less participatory. Parents were considered the least participative, especially in assemblies. The participation of employees, especially in the administrative team, teachers and monitors, was considered positive. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, EFA has undergone many changes, with a high turnover of employees, meaning that there are currently several world views at the institution. Thus, while some are more engaged, others are more accommodating. However, the pedagogy adopted by the School encourages team participation. The learning process in the Organization is also related to the Alternation Pedagogy methodology. This process involves, from the first year of technical education, the elaboration of a project by each student, who is accompanied by a teacher. Each subject is worked on within the training planned by EFA. And the contents, the themes of the training plan, in each session, how they will be worked on, are linked to the themes of the study plan. This plan is part of the Young Professional Project (PPJ). To avoid dropouts, at the beginning of each year there is a so-called adaptation week for a period of three days, when young people enter their first year. The interviewees considered that the Organization is managing to achieve its objectives, given the quality of teaching and its professionals. Interviewee B stated that the institution reached the number of students in 2023 planned for 2024.
On the development of social innovations: regarding the development of socially innovative actions, the nature of an integrated professional study was emphasized, based on local reality and with a different pedagogy not practiced in the region. This makes it possible to include professionals who are also differentiated and suited to local demands. Another difference mentioned was the adoption of PPJ as a pedagogical practice. For Interviewee B, this further strengthens the community, the city, the territory where the students live. The alternation was also considered a differentiator as it made it possible, at the same time, to maintain the student's interaction with his family and moments of immersion and group coexistence during the days spent at EFA. The school also acts as a space for experimenting with crops (cassava, yams, sugar cane) suited to the local context. Furthermore, from the PPJ, the interviewees reported some activities that were undertaken by the students, with emphasis on the following: leather craft activity, by a student from the first class who today opened a commercial point in the city and sells it; drone company with the participation of two former students, a student who implemented yam cultivation techniques learned at EFA into culture in his city of origin, significantly increasing the production volume; chicken farming by a former student, who went on to improve the quality of the egg yolk, with an increase in animal protein. Among the barriers cited as limiting the development of activities cited by interviewees, the lack of interest of some students and employees in developing their activities was highlighted. Another limiting factor is the lack of financial resources for the development of planned activities. Furthermore, the bureaucracy involved in the processes for releasing public resources was also considered a major limitation. On the other hand, some aspects facilitate the development of activities, such as the engagement of some employees and the creation of partnerships.

Regarding the development of collective skills: the Organization A team was considered engaged and proactive. However, at different levels between different members. In the perception of Interviewee C, when some problems arise, the team talks and seeks the best possible way to resolve them. He also highlighted the presence of empathy and companionship among team members. Interviewee E, in turn, highlighted cooperation, communication and team proactivity as the main collective competencies present. Corroborating the above, Interviewee F considers that the association has a very cohesive management group. They are farmers and some mothers committed to the school's methodology and results. People, who, in addition to the work they do at school, volunteer for some cause, at church, in some association within their municipalities. Furthermore, he considers the team to be very capable. However, he considered the existence of an opportunity to improve the team's rapport and sense of belonging. In the perception of Interviewee G, this sense of belonging is related to the profile of each member, who, in addition to individual skills, identifies with what they do. Thus, they associate their knowledge with proactivity in searching for solutions and new possibilities for understanding and solving problems. For this reason, people are normally selected based on the knowledge and experience they have and their predisposition to adapt to the institution's pedagogy. However, staff turnover has a negative effect on team skills. For Interviewee A, the most motivated group that has the greatest understanding of the institution's purpose are the founders. The development of collective skills occurs mainly in the interaction that the organization establishes with different partner organizations. In this context, even the construction of the first pedagogical political project, the first regulations and the first statute was mediated by AMEFA. Furthermore, the team went through a training process carried out by that institution three days before the school started its activities. Another aspect that facilitates the development of team skills is ongoing training. In Interviewee C's view, the COVID-19 pandemic greatly hindered the development of the institution and the team's skills. In addition to paralyzing face-to-face activities, many returned discouraged, both staff and students, and now it is necessary to reestablish alignment with the institution's mission and pedagogy. In the perception of Interviewee C, not all professionals in the Organization understand the pedagogy of alternation. Thus, one of the main bottlenecks for the development of collective skills in the institution is the alignment of the team with the EFA training process. An alternative cited by him would be the training of professionals themselves within the school, as they have experienced the method in their training.

Organization: B

Interviewees – 7 interviews between October 22nd and 25th, 2023: secretary; coordinator; member of the supervisory board/apprentice; and four monitors.

Brief description of the OSC: established on November 17, 1963, it is a civil, non-profit entity with headquarters and jurisdiction in the city of Jequitinhonha. Its purpose is to provide basic and professional classes, such as: cooking, cutting, sewing, embroidery, crochet, knitting, tapestry, manicure and hairdressing, as well as moral and social guidance for young people in the local community. Its administration is the responsibility of the General Assembly, Board of Directors and Fiscal Council. The board is made up of a president, a vice-president, first and second secretary, first and second treasurer, with a two-year term of office. (Bylaws, 2003). In the view of those interviewed, Organization B's proposal is to enable apprentices, especially those of school age, not to be idle during school hours. Thus, in addition to being a social space, it is a professional learning space. After an initial period of learning, the apprentices begin production, which is later
sold. Some tutors accompany the apprentices in the initial stages of learning and another, in addition to being responsible for accounting, accompanies them in reinforcing and preparing school tasks given at home. However, all monitors are able to develop the different activities carried out by the institution, if necessary. The group also has a seamstress and an accountant, who is a volunteer. This contribution is fundamental for the adaptation of some processes related to the remuneration and employment relationship of the monitors, who are remunerated by the Municipality of Jequitinhonha as an Individual Microentrepreneur (MEI). In addition to learning and craft production activities, recreational activities are carried out in some recreational moments. As an example, bingo is held on alternate days when the institution is open (Monday, Wednesday or Friday), with the delivery of some gifts to the randomly selected apprentices. As a policy for selecting monitors, all of them previously participated in the institution as apprentices. This facilitates the progress of activities, making the process of socializing them unnecessary. Organization B’s activities would not be carried out if it were not for the collaboration of some strategic partners. Jequitinhonha City Hall has an agreement signed with the Organization, through which it pays for the work carried out by the monitors and the lunch lady; as well as payment for lunch for apprentices and monitors. The Guardianship Council also acts as a partner, guiding some apprentices with family problems or directing some teenagers to participate in Organization B activities. In addition to the previous ones, partnerships were reported with some doctors who give lectures on topics relevant to the apprentices’ health, such as breast cancer. Other social organizations were mentioned as partners, with emphasis on the Rotary Club, which organizes parties (feijoada) passing part of the amounts earned to Organization B, to Cáritas Diocesana, which provided the initial space for the Institution’s operation, to churches and to the Neighborhood Residents Association, which also provided a house for the institution to operate. It was observed that locally there is constant movement between participants from one social institution to another and vice versa. As a result of these partnerships, among the tangible results obtained by Organization B, the production of various crafts was highlighted. However, in the interviewees’ perception, the main results achieved by the Institution are intangible. In this context, it is worth highlighting the Organization as a space for learning, guidance and professional development. The participation and involvement of Organization B members was considered positive by the interviewees. However, difficulties were reported in obtaining new volunteers, especially to take on management positions. The organizational culture was considered collaborative and cooperative. Learning is fostered by practice, and, normally, classes are not purely theoretical. However, the institution has already promoted some courses on painting, manicure, embroidery and biscuits, when resources were available. Some courses are also offered by some partner institutions. When asked about achieving the objectives, the interviewees consider that the institution fulfills its role in providing apprentices with enhanced learning, with many currently using this learning as a source of income. However, a decrease in the total number of interested parties was reported, given the offer of the same activities by a second institution in the municipality and the implementation of full secondary education, meaning that apprentices no longer have idle time during the weekdays.

- Regarding the development of social innovations: the actions developed by Organization B were considered traditional in terms of the products developed. However, as an organization differentiated locally in the development and social insertion of apprentices, it was considered socially innovative. The way in which activities are developed by the Institution was also considered innovative, adopting playful practices through games to involve apprentices and facilitate learning. Among the barriers to the development of these activities, the following were highlighted: the reduced number of volunteers available to work at the institution and the need for greater qualification of monitors. Of the facilitating factors, interviewees emphasized institutional partnerships, mainly with public institutions.

- On the development of collective skills: from the reports obtained, an interaction of those involved in favor of learning is visible. In addition to facilitating the exchange of knowledge and the planning and preparation of activities, this interaction facilitates the raising of resources, whether financial or material. Furthermore, a collective competence highlighted for team members is commitment. This makes it easier to meet deadlines, maintain product quality and deliver in the agreed manner. Another characteristic that stands out was the proactivity of team members. These collective skills were developed in the history of relationships between the board, tutors and apprentices. The fact that the monitors start as tutors also facilitates this process. It has also been reported that member autonomy facilitates the development of more creative activities and the solution of unexpected problems. In addition to interaction, participation in courses, sometimes promoted by partner institutions, also facilitated the development of individual and collective skills.

<table>
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<th>Organization: C</th>
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<td>Interviewees – 6 interviews between November 13th and 14th, 2023: treasurer; vice president, two secretaries; tax advisor; and deputy supervisory board</td>
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Brief description of the OSC: It is a community rural development council, registered as a private non-profit association. Its objective is to develop one of the rural communities in the city of Malacacheta, with a main
focus on the development of agriculture, especially family farming. As an association, it has an administrative board and a supervisory board, all of which are volunteers. According to Interviewee E, the institution has around 20 frequent members. Among the main activities carried out by the Organization, interviewees highlighted dialogue with public bodies to guarantee the infrastructure of roads and bridges, cleaning, promotion of courses in different areas, and promotion of collective health. Among the courses promoted are those on grain cultivation, vegetables, livestock, clay, candy production, business administration, among others. One of the aspects considered relevant by the interviewees is the availability of a tractor from Organization C to carry out the land preparation service for its members at a reduced hourly cost. There is also a trailer and some stalls owned by the Council. In addition to the benefits mentioned, the interviewees also emphasized the relevance of the Organization's participation in proving the activity of rural workers for retirement purposes or receiving other social benefits. Through a partnership with Emater, assistance actions are also carried out in the agricultural area. In relation to the partnerships developed, those carried out with the Rural Producers Union, EMATER and SENAI were highlighted. Among the tangible results obtained, some achievements were highlighted, such as the tractor, bean churn, market stalls and bodywork. Regarding intangible results, the contribution to facilitating the obtaining of retirement and other social benefits, such as maternity pay, was highlighted. Furthermore, Organization C is a space for access to information that comes from outside the community. The Organization's management style was considered democratic. However, one of the main problems identified in this case is related to the low participation of members. According to Interviewee E, sometimes the president tries to talk and involve the association's members, but many do not pay due attention. Despite this, the Organization can be considered an important learning space for its members, mainly due to the availability of courses in different areas. In addition to the courses, historically, field days were organized, with the aim of improving planting and livestock techniques. For Interviewee C, in addition to the learning made possible by the field days for the participant, he later becomes a multiplier by passing on the knowledge learned to other members of the community. When asked whether the Organization is achieving its objectives, interviewees reported some current inactivity, given the reduced interest and engagement of those involved. This expanded considerably after the COVID-19 pandemic period.

- **On the development of social innovations**: in this context, it is worth highlighting the importance of this community council in disseminating good practices for local agriculture and livestock farming. However, such practices, in order to be successful, face some barriers. Thus, as reported in the first case, the institution considers the bureaucracy for accessing public agency resources to be a major barrier. Another barrier is the lack of financial resources to develop its activities. In addition to these, the participation of those involved was also considered a major limitation. Although, once again, the low interest of those involved was emphasized as a final barrier, the efforts of some local leaders have been the main driver of the activities developed.

- **On the development of collective skills**: among the collective skills identified in this case, knowledge sharing and cooperation were highlighted, despite these characteristics being more present in the members who make up the institution's board of directors. To develop collective skills, associates rely mainly on courses taken and contact with members of partner organizations.

With the data obtained in the first and second stages of this study, it was possible to identify relevant factors regarding the development of collective competencies and social innovation in the organizations studied, and from there develop modeling on the development of collective competencies and social innovation in these organizations. The focus of the study is on Non-Profit Civil Society Organizations in the Jequitinhonha and Mucuri Valleys, State of Minas Gerais, Brazil.

4.3 THE DEVELOPMENT OF COLLECTIVE SKILLS AND SOCIAL INNOVATION IN THE CSOs STUDIED

As collective competence refers to the participation and interaction of individuals in work groups and represents all the knowledge and know-how they have to deal with different work situations and such competences are perceived as abilities of groups to act towards a
common objective (Silva et al., 2021), it is observed that they are at the essence of the CSOs in the Jequitinhonha and Mucuri valleys studied, as these organizations are characterized as spaces conducive to triggering synergistic social learning processes (Lima & Silva, 2015).

The results corroborate the perspective of Silva and Ruas (2016) that collective competence also in the field of CSOs has important social and functional points to be highlighted, such as relationship rules; innovation-oriented learning; sharing of information and experiences, cooperation; communication and the articulation of specific tasks of a group or a given organizational process.

Considering that the concept of social innovation presented by Sandri et al. (2020), in the exploratory stage of the research, a significant percentage of CSOs from the Jequitinhonha and Mucuri valleys were observed to carry out practices with such characteristics, mainly in the modes of intervention, structuring and services provided.

Despite this, in the quantitative stage it also identified a significant percentage of CSOs in the field that did not declare themselves to be socially innovative, corroborating Meneses' (2010) perception about the multifaceted nature of this field.

In the case studies, some social innovation practices highlighted by Sandri et al. (2020) which resulted in the implementation of new forms of local development, aiming for social impact in the territory. Monteiro's (2019) view was also reinforced that the different organizational models of CSOs become drivers of social innovation, given the search for democratic processes and the primacy of people over capital, resulting in impacts on individual and collective well-being.

Considering the development of collective competencies in the studies analyzed, it is worth highlighting the need to interconnect the actions of team participants through communication, aiming for commitment to dealing with everyday situations. It is this process that introduces the shared understanding that it is the process of socialization, collective spirit and shared vision of ideas based on individual learning to obtain a reference for group actions. Given this, the scope of CSOs allows time and space for practical and functional experience and the field of action for developing collective skills (Klein & Bitencourt, 2012).

In this context, some fundamental individual and collective factors were identified for the development of collective skills (Lima & Silva, 2015). Among them, the set of individual skills stands out; social interactions, which enable individuals to be more willing to perform teamwork; cooperation, which allows reciprocity, solid agreements, identity of objectives and meaning of actions; the composition of teams, allowing for a more harmonious combination
and diversity of talents; formal interactions, through formal work units or structures that facilitate the presence of the previously mentioned factors; leadership, with a more democratic style that encourages the contribution of groups internal or external to the organization; and, factors related to human resources management, such as recruiting talent and developing training or capacity-building actions.

The development of social innovations, on the other hand, could be observed depending on the collective competencies identified in CSOs and because they, in particular, are characterized as a collective phenomenon (Grando, 2018). In this case, it is worth highlighting the focus on the process, reinforcing André and Abreu (2006), as they aim to generate social transformations through social relations.

This transdisciplinarity requires the transposition of organizational boundaries through contact and interaction with subjects from partner organizations, with emphasis on those from government organizations at different levels.

Institutional arrangements were considered as the main drivers for the development of collective skills and social innovation of CSOs in the Jequitinhonha and Mucuri valleys. These new arrangements facilitate the acquisition, deployment and creation of resources by multiple actors and strategies with the aim of driving social change (Rey-Garcia et al., 2019).

As illustrated in Figure 1, the case analyzes allowed us to understand that the processes, the definition of a common objective and the interactions defined in this process, were crucial for changing the collective behavior of those involved, with such changes in the teams being necessary for the development of socially innovative practices. In cases where collective competencies were considered inadequate for the execution of activities, external support was sought (Organization A, B, C) and there was a concentration of protagonism for the development of activities in the main leaders (Organizations A, B and C).
Both the development of collective skills and social innovations, however, were dependent on the engagement of those involved and the meaning they gave to the experiences they encountered. In addition to identifying with the actions carried out, cooperation became necessary to achieve results, aware of the organization's mission and oriented towards organizational or territorial problems and resources. The absence of the aforementioned conditions was considered the main limitation for the development of social innovation to trigger the development of collective competence and vice versa. As a result, the constructs are related in a dialectical, however, non-linear way.
5 CONCLUSION

The results of the exploratory and quantitative stage with CSOs from Minas Gerais in Médio and Baixo Jequitinhonha and Vale do Mucuri showed that the organizations in the sample are diverse, when considering their statutory objectives and target audience for their activities. Thus, while some focus on long-term developmental actions, others carry out emergency actions, with a view to immediate social assistance. Most of them are organizations focused on providing services, with a small percentage of those working in the preparation or processing of a product. These characteristics are reflected in the development of activities that can be considered social innovations, which are most frequently identified in the type of service provided, in the form of intervention and, with a lower incidence, but with some relevance, in internal processes.

Among the developed competencies mentioned, the following were considered the most valued by the organization, in order of frequency: “shared vision”, “team commitment”, “ability to share knowledge”, and “cooperation of team members”. However, this order was changed when asked about the most important competence for carrying out socially innovative actions, but the most mentioned previously remained the same, including “ability to share knowledge”, “team commitment” and “shared vision.”

The results obtained with the exploratory factor analysis showed that the factors that reproduce the pattern of relationship between the variables of collective competences in the promotion of socially innovative activities in the CSOs studied are summarized in five, such as good interpersonal relationships, teamwork, cooperation, communication and evaluation. Through multivariate linear regression analysis, it was observed that, among the factors that make up collective competencies, the Cooperation dimension, which incorporates competencies such as sharing and commitment, has the greatest influence on the teams’ ability to carry out socially innovative actions.

In the case studies, it was observed that, despite the leading role of the main leaders in the articulation of the CSOs studied and in the development of their activities, the sustainability of their actions became dependent on the cooperation and engagement of a larger group of stakeholders, this being framework the main driver or barrier faced by organizations, depending on the level of capital of these collective skills.

It was observed that the CSOs studied, when practicing socially innovative actions, created spaces and conditions conducive to the development of collective skills, enabling social
interactions, which are fundamental for cooperation, knowledge sharing and social learning for those involved. Thus, the answer to the main question of this study points to a dialectical relationship between the constructs collective competencies and social innovation, with the development of any of them being able to reflect on a virtuous cycle in which the practice has repercussions on the development of capabilities and this development on the improvement of new practices, or vice versa.

As a limitation of this study, it is observed that the data obtained in the quantitative and qualitative stages do not allow generalizations of their results, considering the type of sampling adopted (non-probabilistic) and the very nature of qualitative studies. However, the study paves the way for new analyzes on the topic and specifies some opportunities for interventions in the field.

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