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ANÁLISE DA PERCEPÇÃO DOS COORDENADORES
DE PROJETOS DE EXTENSÃO DO IFPE**

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ABSTRACT

Higher Education Institutions and Professional, Scientific, and Technological Education Institutions produce and disseminate academic, scientific, and technological knowledge, and university outreach plays a fundamental role in the field of communicative practices between educational institutions and the local community. This study aimed to assess the contribution of university outreach in promoting local development, based on the experience of directors of outreach programs developed at the Federal Institute of Education, Science, and Technology of Pernambuco (IFPE). To that, a structured electronic questionnaire with 27 objectives (multiple choice) and discursive questions was applied. The survey results show that the directors recognize that human beings should be the main beneficiaries of local development and that their direct or indirect transformation should be part of the outreach program goals to have a real social impact. In addition, involving communities is key to achieving effective results. Based on the perception of the outreach program directors, we conclude that the actions developed by IFPE contribute to promoting local development by integrating the activities developed and recognizing the human being as the main beneficiary of the change process.

Keywords: Higher education institutions. Professional, scientific, and technological education institutions. Pernambuco. Regional development.

RESUMO

As Instituições de Ensino Superior e de Educação Profissional, Científica e Tecnológica são responsáveis pela produção e disseminação dos conhecimentos acadêmicos, científicos e tecnológicos, tendo a Extensão Universitária um papel fundamental enquanto campo de práticas comunicativas entre as instituições de ensino e a comunidade local. O objetivo deste estudo foi avaliar a contribuição da Extensão Universitária na promoção do desenvolvimento local, com base na experiência dos coordenadores de projetos de extensão desenvolvidos no Instituto Federal de Educação, Ciência e Tecnologia de Pernambuco (IFPE). Para tal, foi aplicado um questionário eletrônico estruturado com 27 questões objetivas (de múltipla escolha) e discursivas. Os resultados dessa pesquisa mostram que os coordenadores reconhecem que o ser humano deve ser o principal beneficiado do desenvolvimento local e que sua transformação direta ou indireta deve integrar os objetivos dos projetos de extensão para que se tenha, de fato, um impacto social. Além disso, o envolvimento das comunidades é fundamental para que se alcance resultados efetivos. Concluímos, a partir desta pesquisa com base na percepção dos coordenadores dos projetos de extensão, que os projetos desenvolvidos pelo IFPE contribuem para a promoção do desenvolvimento local através da integração das atividades desenvolvidas e do reconhecimento do ser humano como principal beneficiário do processo de mudança.

Palavras-chave: Instituições de ensino superior. Instituições de educação profissional, científica e tecnológica. Pernambuco. Desenvolvimento regional

INTRODUCTION

Under the foundations of the university tripod, through the development of teaching, research, and outreach activities, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and Professional, Scientific, and Technological Education (EPCT) are responsible for the production and dissemination of academic and scientific knowledge and the extension of its benefits to the communities in which they are inserted, based on meeting specific demands (Brazil, 1988, 2008).

Historically, outreach has gone through several stages, ranging from religious assistentialism to dialogical interaction (Oliveira; Goulart, 2015). In Brazil, the paths taken by outreach activities remind us of offering courses and conferences, providing services and assistance, fulfilling the university's social function, establishing a two-way communication channel between the university and society, and promoting citizen education (Ferreira; Silva; Zanatta, 2012; Paula, 2013; Oliveira; Tosta; Freitas, 2020).

Conceived as an interdisciplinary, educational, cultural, scientific, and political process that promotes transformative interaction between the University and other sectors of society (FORPROEX, 2012), it is through extension that HEIs and EPCT institutions seek to promote the praxis of academic



knowledge, through which it is possible to establish a deep, reciprocal, and transformative relationship with society (Gaviraghi; Goerck; Frantz, 2019).

Given the inequalities resulting from the institutionalization of outreach compared to research and teaching activities, given its relevance in the university context, the curricularization of outreach activities emerged as a mandatory and systematic way of overcoming the disaggregation of teaching activities in the teaching-research-extension sphere (Oliveira; Tosta; Freitas, 2020).

Despite the progress made by outreach over the years, not only as an academic role of the university, but as a participatory exercise that promotes reflection on the academic community itself in its daily life and its territory, as Ferreira, Silva, and Zanatta (2012) point out, its practice is still a challenge.

In this sense, university outreach has been characterized as a field of communicative practices between Higher Education and Professional, Scientific, and Technological Education Institutions and the socio-community context, through which a mutual and dialogical relationship is established between the various social actors, generating concrete and contextualized actions in a given social reality, and allowing the actors to engage in transformations of their social issues (Freire, 2011; Correia; Akerman, 2015).

In Brazil, the promotion of local and regional development is increasingly linked to the role of HEIs and EPCT institutions. The set of actions and activities developed by these takes on a strategic position relevant to the country's development process, contributing to local and regional socio-economic growth and, therefore, to the empowerment of its citizens (Dantas; Guenther, 2021).

For Dantas and Guenther (2021), the historical and conceptual bases of university outreach and local development are clearly and directly correlated, as they both direct efforts toward meeting social demands arising from a historical process of inequalities resulting from an unbridled process of industrial and economic development.

In a context where the conceptual bases of local development are directed towards meeting social demands because of a historical process of inequality, university outreach emerges as a possibility for the exchange of academic and popular knowledge, which results not only in the democratization of knowledge, but also in scientific, technological, and cultural production rooted in reality, and committed to national, regional and local needs (Diniz; Vieira, 2015; Gadotti, 2017).



With a multi-curricular and multi-campus structure and an educational proposal geared towards the verticalization of teaching, the institution offers 282 courses distributed across the most diverse levels of education and training modalities, as well as professional qualification courses aimed at youth and adult education (PROEJA) that serve more than 24,147 students. The institution also carries out basic and applied research, technological innovation, and outreach activities (IFPE, 2019, 2020). The geographical scope of IFPE demonstrates the reach of the training and qualification actions developed by the Institution in the state of Pernambuco and surrounding areas, having a positive impact on people's lives and the environment in which they live, with an impact on local, regional, and national socio-economic development (IFPE, 2020).

This research was based on questionnaires applied to the coordinators of the outreach projects registered with the IFPE's Institutional Program for the Granting of Outreach Scholarships (PIBEX). Therefore, the methodology used is characterized as qualitative-quantitative, descriptive, and exploratory. According to Tozoni-Reis (2009), as the quantitative approach focuses on the emphasis given to visible and concrete data and the qualitative approach concentrates on understanding and interpreting content, entering the world of meanings and human relationships, there is no reason to oppose these approaches, as it is possible to give a qualitative approach to the analysis of quantitative data.

To analyze the qualitative data, we used the content analysis proposed by Bardin (2016) in three stages: pre-analysis (through dynamic reading to identify potential research relationships), exploration of the material (identification of the units of record and contexts), and treatment of the results (categorization, analysis and interpretation of the data and meanings and inference). The categories of analysis were based on the proposals for endogenous local development by the authors Ávila (2000, 2005, 2006, 2012), Castilho, Arenhardt and Le Bourlegat (2009), Han (2009), and Sousa and Freiesleben (2018).

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the need for social isolation and remote working to contain the transmission of the virus, the questionnaires were administered remotely. We therefore used a structured electronic questionnaire as a data collection tool, using the Google Forms virtual platform.



The questionnaire consisted of 27 questions divided into three sections: 1) identification of the research participants; 2) identification of the outreach projects coordinated by the research participants; 3) identification of the coordinators' perception of (a) the importance of the participation of the communities served and the contributions of the outreach projects; (b) the relationship between university outreach and local development; and (c) the capacity of the projects to promote: human valorization and the involvement of human beings as beneficiaries of their development (subjects of their development); the valorization of internal capacities, competencies and skills; social, cultural, economic and political transformation, where the beneficiaries are the individuals of a given locality; the harnessing of the locality's inherent potentials.

The questionnaire contained both open and closed-ended questions, to assess the potential of the outreach projects developed by IFPE to promote local development in the communities they benefit, from the point of view of the project coordinators. The open questions were used as a mechanism for obtaining more subjective information, while the closed questions had a Likert scale of 1 to 5, as follows: 1) Very important/Very good/yes, totally; 2) Important/Good/yes, partially; 3) Neutral/Normal/No; 4) Not very important/Bad/Don't know; 5) Not at all important/Very bad/Doesn't apply. Multiple choice options as alternative answers were also part of the closed questions. Based on the results, descriptive statistics were used, using IBM SPSS Statistics software, version 28.0.0.0 (190), to examine the information in this study, which sought to understand the organization of the data and its frequency to summarize and analyze it.

The sample of outreach project coordinators who participated in the research was defined according to the methodology used for data collection, based on the application of the questionnaire. It was classified as non-probabilistic (intentional) since criteria were defined by the authors themselves, i.e. that the responding coordinators would be those who had outreach projects registered with IFPE's PIBEX with a time frame from 2017 to 2019 (Oliveira, 2011).

Because it does not use a random approach to sample selection, non-probability sampling is characterized by not allowing certain statistical treatments (Lakatos; Marconi, 2017). According to Oliveira (2011, p. 30-31), non-probability sampling "is a type of sampling in which there is a dependence, at least in part, on the judgment of the researcher or field interviewer to select the elements of the



population to make up the sample". Fontanella *et al.* (2011, p. 389) point out that intentional non-probability samples are those defined "based on the researcher's experience in the field of research, on an empirical approach based on reasoning instructed by theoretical knowledge of the relationship between the object of study and the corpus to be studied".

According to the files shared by IFPE's Pro-Rectorate of Outreach (PROEXT), 588 outreach project coordinators were registered between 2017 and 2019. However, when considering that coordinators could renew their projects for more than one year or submit a new project to the IFPE PIBEX call, and when comparing the names of coordinators over the period proposed for the study, excluding repetitions of names, we have a total of 373 individuals. Following the recommendations of the intentional non-probabilistic methodology for data collection, the sample obtained was 68 individuals.

After the research was presented to the interlocutors, the interviewees electronically signed the Free and Informed Consent Form, by Resolution 466 of December 12, 2012 (Brazil, 2012), approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the University of Pernambuco (CEP-HUOC/PROCAPE) under Opinion No. 4.634.229 - CAAE 42403721.0.0000.5192 (research identification record).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents and discusses the results of the analysis of the electronic questionnaire, divided into 5 parts: the characterization of the profile of the survey participants; the characterization of the outreach projects developed; the coordinators' perception of the importance of the participation of the community served and the contributions of the outreach projects developed; the coordinators' perception of the relationship between University Outreach and Local Development and the evaluation of the potential of outreach projects in promoting Local Development.

CHARACTERIZATION OF THE RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

The universe of participants in the survey was made up of 68 IFPE outreach project coordinators, including teachers and administrative technicians, who had projects registered with PIBEX between 2017 and 2019. In terms of socio-demographic data, the group analyzed was equal in terms of gender, with 50% of the interviewees identifying themselves as female and 50% as male. Most participants were teachers (85%), with the remaining 15% being technical administrative staff. As



for the age range of the coordinators, the majority (51.5%) were between 30 and 39 years old.

Regarding the length of service at the institution, 82% have worked at IFPE for more than 5 years and 13% have worked there for between 3 and 5 years. As for the area of training, the group analyzed is distributed over a wide range of areas: Nursing (13%); Administration/Management and Business (9%); Computing (9%); Biology (7%); Education/Literature (7%); Electronics/Electrical Engineering/Electronic Engineering (7%); Geography (7%); Agricultural Sciences/Agronomy (6%); Work Safety (4%); Social Sciences/Sociology/Social Work (3%), Environmental Engineering (3%); Tourism (3%); Food (1.5%); Visual Arts (1.5%); Gastronomy (1.5%); Information and Communication (1.5%); Journalism (1.5%); History (1.5%); Mathematics (1.5%); Music (1.5%); Cultural Production (1.5%); Animal Production (1.5%); Teaching (1.5%); Psychology (1.5%); Chemistry (1.5%) and Natural Resources (1.5%). Regarding the qualifications of those interviewed, most respondents have a master's degree (47%) and a doctorate (41%), while the rest have at least one specialization course (12%).

CHARACTERIZATION OF THE OUTREACH PROJECTS

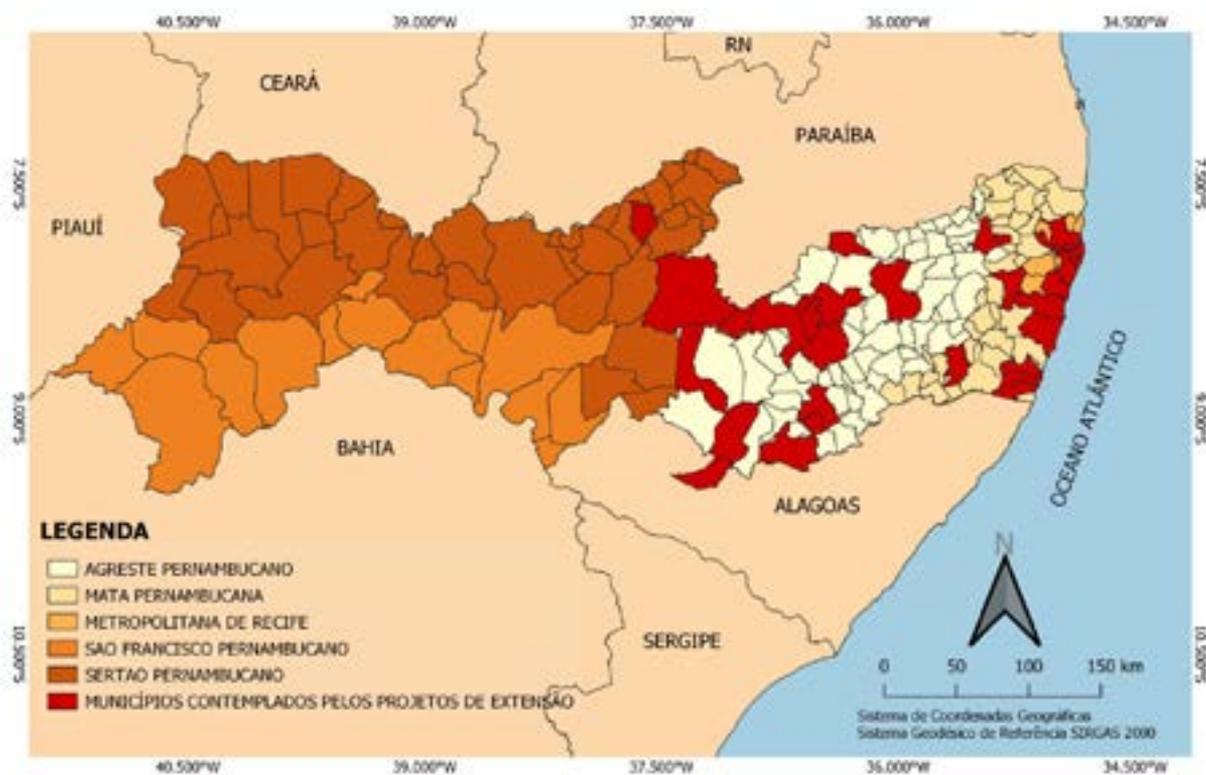
The thematic areas of the outreach projects coordinated by the interviewees were quite diverse, with 25% in Education, 18% in Health, 18% in Technology and Production, 13% in Culture, 10% in Environment, 10% in Labor, 4% in Human Rights and 2% in Communication.

Considering that IFPE has a multi-campus and multi-curricular structure, made up of 16 units, we had a significant representation of respondents by campus, with the Recife campus standing out (24%), as expected, as it is a campus with the largest number of employees and with a high level of adherence to outreach projects at the institution, and in second place the Pesqueira campus, the source of 16% of respondents.

Regarding the communities covered by the outreach projects coordinated by the research participants, a total of 30 municipalities were served, spread over four mesoregions (Metropolitan Region, *Zona da Mata*, *Agreste*, and *Sertão*) in the state of Pernambuco, extending as far as the municipality of Santana do Ipanema - AL (Figure 2).



Figure 2 | Location of the municipalities covered by the outreach projects coordinated by the research participants



Source: The authors.

THE COORDINATORS' PERCEPTION OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PARTICIPATION OF THE COMMUNITY SERVED AND THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE OUTREACH PROJECTS DEVELOPED

When asked if they had experience as an outreach project coordinator when developing their project, 60% of the interviewees already had experience with outreach projects and 40% did not.

Experience with outreach projects is an important factor to consider, as it can influence the paths adopted, the fruitful relationship with the community involved, and the search for significant impacts on the territory targeted by the outreach action (Correia; Akerman, 2015). However, it is believed that the experience and closeness to the community to be served stimulate a continuous improvement in the time allocated to the project and a recognition of its differentiations when compared to research (Diniz; Sousa; Souza, 2021).

It is known that outreach praxis consists of the process of intervention and the relationship between the local community and the agents who coordinate the outreach projects or programs. However, involvement and concern for the real impact on the communities served are essential for a successful outreach project and for the development process of those who are part of it (Gaviraghi; Goerck; Grantz, 2019).

With this in mind, we sought to understand the importance attributed by the coordinators of the outreach projects to community participation in the development of the projects. In this context, 85% of those interviewed said that it was very important for the beneficiary communities to participate in the development of outreach projects. These responses are in line with Costa, Alperstedt, and Andion (2021), who emphasize the importance of the community in building an effective outreach practice.

Certainly, as Ferreira, Silva, and Zanatta (2012) state, the participatory experiences promoted by outreach projects overcome the barriers arising from the traditional scope of education and provide an experience of real impact between the students and the communities involved in the projects.

As we consider the acceptance and interest of the community served in the development of the outreach project to be relevant, we also sought to observe the perception of the project coordinators about the participation (receptivity, support, involvement, and mobilization) of the communities benefiting from the outreach projects, as these factors can have an impact on the involvement and even the level of impact of the intervention proposals (Gaviraghi; Goerck; Frantz, 2019).

According to the survey data, 59% of respondents rated community participation as very good, 29% as good, and 10% as normal. Among the answers given by the coordinators of the outreach projects, only 2% considered it bad.

The participation of the local community in outreach projects has been questioned, since the protagonism of the individuals impacted by the outreach action needs to be explored, transforming the community as an integral part of the process of change proposed with that project (Morais; Callou, 2017).

We can see that this factor is important and should be observed in future outreach projects since recognizing the community's adherence to the project's proposal further favors the generation of effective results in a given location. After a process of listening to the community, possible adaptations should be made (Correia; Akerman, 2015).



We also wanted to find out what the coordinators thought about the contributions of the outreach projects to the benefiting community, so they could select more than one option. Among the answers, dialogue with society was mentioned by 63% of respondents, followed by sharing scientific and technological knowledge and knowledge from traditional communities (54%), responding to social demands and expectations (44%), promoting dialogic interaction in favor of freedom and emancipation of individuals (41%) and recognizing society in its diversity (37%).

The survey participants said that the greatest contribution was a dialog with society. This coincides with the concern for educational institutions to overcome the barriers and walls that separate the community from the university and the university from the community (Freire, 2011; Serra; Rolim; Bastos, 2018).

To this end, promoting outreach projects that build bridges for this dialogical process of listening, getting closer, providing feedback, and recognizing real needs helps institutions to fulfill their institutional mission, students involved in outreach projects to learn in practice how to solve social problems and, in turn, helps to solve problems that afflict the community (Correia; Akerman, 2015).

These initiatives are in line with the ideas advocated by Oliveira, Tosta, and Freitas (2020) when they point out that, nowadays, university pillars need to be based on dialog and confrontation with knowledge so that new research, training, and outreach alternatives, concerned with social responsibility and promoting the university as a public good, can be generated.

As Morais and Callou (2017) point out, it is necessary to adopt participatory methodologies that allow for a mutual relationship of trust between those involved in outreach projects and the local community so that a new level of knowledge can be built: interactive, dialogical, and contextualized knowledge.

Despite the existence of coordinators who either had difficulties or were unable to perceive the relevance of the community in the implementation of an outreach project, most of the participants in the survey are aware of the difference between community involvement and its importance for the success of outreach projects, for solving technical and technological problems and for contributing to the development of the region (Gaviraghi; Goerck; Frantz, 2019), the latter of which is discussed below.



COORDINATORS' PERCEPTION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN UNIVERSITY OUTREACH AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

To better understand the perception of outreach project coordinators on the relationship between University Outreach and Local Development, it was necessary to identify what local development was in the interviewees' conception.

When asked about local development, with the option of selecting more than one alternative from the five options presented, the most important were social, cultural, economic, and political transformation (premise 1), which was selected by 74% of those interviewed, and improving quality of life (premise 3), chosen by 70% of those interviewed. This was followed by the involvement of human beings as the main beneficiaries of change (46%), harnessing our potential (37%), and valuing internal capacities, skills, and abilities (37%).

Identifying that the participants in the survey were familiar with the premises that govern the concept of local development corroborated the search for an understanding of the coordinators' perception of the relationship between University Outreach and Local Development.

According to Costa, Alperstedt, and Andion (2021), territorial development is related to the ability to leverage local resources, capture negative aspects, and transform them into development projects. From this perspective, we sought to understand the perception of the outreach project coordinators interviewed about the relationship between University Outreach and Local Development.

In our survey, 94% of the participants said that there was a relationship between University Outreach and Local Development. The statements made by some of the participants about identifying the relationship between University Outreach and Local Development represent this perception:

"Through outreach projects, higher education institutions can engage in a dialog between theoretical and practical knowledge, seeking human emancipation and fostering local development by expanding knowledge."

"I'm talking about development from the perspective of subjects acquiring knowledge and dialoguing with academia to improve their lives [...]."

"It is through university outreach that academia can investigate real community problems and address them quickly, enabling their development through low-cost services and solutions."

"Contributing to local development is part of university social responsibility [...]."



“Intrinsic recognition of citizen action for social, human and professional evolution that drives local development.”

“[...] we empower the community to make changes to their reality [...]”

“[...] It is through outreach that technical and scientific knowledge reaches society in the form of meeting people’s real demands and concrete problems.”

It follows that outreach projects and Local Development have the strengthening of a specific community at their core since both are dependent on enriching the social fabric of territories and are associated with the identification of their potential (Dantas; Guenther, 2021). Public agendas and the institutions responsible for them must consider the territorial approach and overcome the obstacles imposed by a bureaucracy limited to the internal environment, to the detriment of valuing the vocations and resources of that specific territory (Costa; Alperstedt; Andion, 2021).

Based on studies by Ávila (2000, 2005, 2006, 2012), Castilho, Arenhardt, and Le Bourlegat (2009), Han (2009), and Sousa and Freiesleben (2018), adapting the concepts of Local Development (LD), we realized that some of the premises that define it are common or similar. Therefore, in this research, we have adopted five main premises that make LD: 1) a process of social, cultural, economic, and political transformation in which the beneficiaries are the individuals of a given locality; 2) a process involving human beings as the main beneficiaries of change (subjects of their development); 3) a process of transformation aimed at improving the quality of life of a group of people in a given locality; 4) a process of harnessing the locality’s inherent potential; 5) a process of valuing internal capacities, skills and abilities.

We can see a common factor in these dimensions that is in line with the approach of Castilho, Arenhardt, and Le Bourlegat (2009), who portray local development as a process of transformation of the individual as the main beneficiary of change, involving an improvement in their quality of life, that of the community, the people in the community, their cognitive development, the protagonism of the human being and them as the subject of their transformation and that of the environments in which they work and live.

The results of this reshaping of the human being through involvement in outreach projects is an integral and responsible part of Local Development, which requires an active protagonist who modifies, opines, dialogues, represents and recognizes themselves as co-responsible for social, political, cultural, technological, environmental, and economic problems (Dantas; Guenther, 2021).



In this way, the local community is seen as its manager, based on the needs pointed out by the community, managing its development and not limiting itself to public agendas and government policies that are sometimes imposed vertically without taking into account the particularities of the locality and the people who are part of it (Castilho; Arenhardt; Le Bourlegat, 2009).

Ferreira, Silva, and Zanatta (2012) agree with this view by recognizing that, as an academic function of the university, by increasingly moving away from the historical concept of assistance attributed to university outreach, it assumes an important participatory role in the local development process.

Outreach's recognition of the active and participatory role of the community in the construction and development of outreach activities, as well as in its development process, enables the mutual exchange of information and knowledge between the parties involved (community-university), capable of providing opportunities for reflection and action based on respect and understanding of human and local particularities (Ferreira; Silva; Zanatta, 2012).

Furthermore, given the number of outreach project coordinators who were unable to identify a link between university outreach and local development, most participants in the survey are aware of the correlation between the two themes and the importance of outreach in helping to promote local development.

This perception converges with the studies by Oliveira, Tosta, and Freitas (2020) in the sense that training in university outreach is necessary, given that the paths taken by outreach have been marked by ruptures, which brings us back to the process of curricularization of outreach.

EVALUATION OF THE POTENTIAL OF OUTREACH PROJECTS TO PROMOTE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

Observing the premises that cover Local Development, so that it would be possible to assess the potential of outreach projects in promoting the local development of the communities they benefit, the interviewees were asked about the projects' ability to: 1) promote human valorization as the subject of their development; 2) consider the human being as the beneficiary of their development; 3) promote the improvement of the quality of life of a group of people; 4) promote the valorization of local capacities, competencies and skills; 5) promote social, cultural, economic and political transformation, where the



beneficiaries are the individuals of a given locality; 6) promote the exploitation of their potential inherent in the locality.

HUMAN VALORIZATION AND THE INVOLVEMENT OF HUMAN BEINGS AS SUBJECTS/ BENEFICIARIES OF THEIR DEVELOPMENT

The majority of those interviewed, 59% and 74% respectively, said that the outreach projects developed under their coordination were able to promote human valorization and consider the human being as the subject of their development.

Recognizing the relationship between outreach projects and local development as one that allows human beings to be involved as the main subjects of their development, and impacted by change, is to emphasize the relevance of community participation in projects, whether individually or collectively (Castilho; Arenhardt; Le Bourlegat, 2009), as the participants point out in their statements below.

“With outreach projects, HEIs can act by dialoguing theoretical and practical knowledge, seeking human emancipation.”

“Personal development in the improvement that directly affects the community.”

“Intrinsic recognition of citizen action for social, human and professional evolution that drives local development.”

“[...] empowerment of people in the face of technological change in the world.”

“Outreach allows the community to appropriate the scientific knowledge produced by the academic community and convert it in favor of their development and evolution.”

It is clear from these perceptions that the outreach service is concerned with the humanization and sustainability of local traditions and the way of life of the people who live in the respective communities.

Ferreira, Silva, and Zanatta (2012) point out that the generating themes of outreach projects should be born or changed within the community itself, according to the desires and priority demands pointed out by it. The dialogic nature of this practice demonstrates that the exchange of knowledge promoted by outreach enables greater promotion of autonomy, emancipation, and appreciation of local culture.

Given this, the engagement of individuals and groups is reinforced so that, based on their development as human, social, and professional subjects, they can promote a process of self-development and collective development with training strategies for the social actors involved (Correia; Akerman, 2015). The testimonies of the participants below corroborate this view:



“University outreach in the community is very important so that academic knowledge can help develop alternatives to help solve the problems and needs of the community.”

“New knowledge and practical application as an outreach for the family”

“The realization of research and outreach projects carried out by students in the community promotes student reflection on the needs of communities, seeking the development of products, techniques and the promotion of activities to transform the community in which they are inserted.”

“[...] They have also provided greater autonomy for users, their families, their community, and the actors of the Psychosocial Care Network in confronting and playing a leading role in sociocultural issues related to the mental health-illness process. [...]”

“Application of the actions and technologies addressed in the Outreach Project in the communities served for their emancipation and defense of the environment.”

According to Vieira (2013), individuals must be trained to be responsible for transformation, rather than waiting for solutions from external actors who do not even have local experience and whose interests may differ from those of the community.

Given this, based on the understanding that outreach projects promote human development through a dialogical communicative relationship, not just the transfer of interposed and overlapping knowledge, the importance of the subjects involved is respected and recognized, and their role in the local development process is valued (Ferreira; Silva; Zanatta, 2012). This is why the relationship between outreach projects and local development is based on the ability to train people to be responsible for their development.

IMPROVING PEOPLE’S QUALITY OF LIFE

The majority of those interviewed (66%) said that the outreach projects carried out were able to fully (66%) or partially (32%) improve people’s quality of life.

Han (2009) states that local development encompasses the social and economic emancipation of local communities, transforming them into protagonists capable of seeking improvements for the good of the community. These improvements can be of low, medium, or high complexity and be related to situations of social vulnerability, poverty, unemployment, lack of access to education, technological knowledge, and difficulties in solving local problems so that the set of transformations and impacts caused can provide a better quality of life for the population (Diniz; Vieira, 2015).



We can see in the following statements how the participants corroborate this view.

“Access to information, education, and clarification of doubts pertinent to this population improves their quality of life.”

“[...] University outreach is responsible for popularizing science and the great benefit of knowledge for improving quality of life.”

“Relating scientific studies to social practices and trying to contribute to improving the lives of the community.”

“With a view to health care and quality of life.”

“Training human resources and improving quality of life.”

The fragments presented here show an alignment with what Paula (2013) says when he emphasizes that outreach commits to dialogue with society, to respond to its demands and expectations, and to recognize society in its diversity as subjects with rights and duties and as bearers of legitimate values and cultures. Furthermore, outreach has the role of building a relationship of sharing scientific and technological knowledge from the perspective of dialogic interaction in favor of the freedom and emancipation of individuals (Dantas; Guenther, 2021).

Thus, considering that this development is an endogenous emancipatory process and that direct or indirect measures can result in solutions to socio-economic imbalances and the empowerment of local people, it can be said that outreach projects can provide or be a driver for the quality of life of individuals in a given locality and community (Ávila, 2012; Diniz; Vieira, 2015).

VALUING INTERNAL CAPACITIES, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES

The majority of those interviewed said that the outreach projects developed were able to fully (53%) or partially (35%) promote the valorization of the locality's internal capacities, competencies, and skills.

To build an environment aimed at the protagonism of local people, it is essential to develop measures that consider or expand internal capacities, competencies, and skills, in other words, the search for contextualized enrichment in line with the peculiarities of those who are part of the communities and involved in the projects (Han, 2009).



The following statements reveal the participants' vision of the contributions of university outreach in promoting local development, based on valuing local capacities, competencies, and skills.

"[...] it allows interaction between the knowledge developed in academia and other knowledge (such as, for example, that belonging to specific communities, such as native/indigenous peoples, quilombolas, riverside communities, rural communities...), as well as meeting local demands."

"Through the development of the projects, we empower the community with the possibility of changing their reality and we also manage to bring what is being discussed in academia to the professionals who are working with them."

"Exchanges of knowledge and shared construction of knowledge."

"[...] We need to bring this relationship of knowledge production even closer to the people who practice it. This relationship is extremely rich for both parties because, in the same way that we bring experiences that facilitate the daily lives of these partners, they also feed us with lived experience that will guide our ideas and knowledge."

Given those discourses, education and its transformative capacity are recognized as the path to improving the subject's internal capacities, skills, and abilities, as a social being who molds himself to the scenarios according to the conditions necessary to be the differential of a specific locality, through dialogue with the educational institution (Freire, 2011; Ávila, 2012; Gadotti, 2017).

According to Serra, Rolim, and Bastos (2018, p. 21), success in the process of regional and local development is the adoption of endogenous development which is "closely interrelated with participatory planning experiences and has the collateral objective of promoting the development of citizenship and the socio-political organization of communities".

From this perspective, the emancipatory endogenous nature promoted by the search for new knowledge makes the individual capable of improving the dynamics of development in a participatory and active way, as well as creating measures to change the course of each community-locality (Ávila, 2012).

SOCIAL, CULTURAL, ECONOMIC, AND POLITICAL TRANSFORMATION

The majority of those interviewed said that the outreach projects developed under their coordination were able to fully (43%) or partially (49%) promote social, cultural, economic, and political transformation, where the beneficiaries were individuals from a given locality.

Promoting the development of a locality is intrinsically related to the multidimensionality that involves social, cultural, economic, and political issues, which integrate the social actors within it, ensuring the cohesion of practices, vocations, alliances, and identities. Thus, the transformation



promoted by actions aimed at local development has the individuals of that community as the main beneficiaries of the change, which is why it is necessary to respect their respective identity characteristics (Martins; Chagas, 2021). These aspects can be seen in the participants' statements:

"Bringing the community into important topics such as cultural diversity that go beyond their daily lives."

"Through outreach, we can share with the community what is produced within the HE at the research and teaching level."

"As our project aimed to expand access to cultural goods (cinema), we were able to use the campus facilities and staff to create a space for experiences. The "local development" to which I refer in the previous question is to enable this moment of enjoyment and reflection on cinema, and all the issues that come with cinematographic productions. [...]."

It can be seen in the speeches that outreach projects strengthen local development when they ensure a proposition of cultural diversity and valorization of cultural potential and assets and can engender an exchange of knowledge, experiences, and equipment brought from institutional relationships that expand the capacity of local social actors (Gadotti, 2017).

The concept of Local Development (as a process of cultural and socio-economic development emerging from the inside-out of the community-locality itself, on an emancipatory scale that elevates it to the status of subject and not merely object - even if - participant in this process) is only now coming to the fore in a systematically worked out way, which is why public and private bodies in Brazil and elsewhere have not yet had the opportunity or even the concern to bind the logical essence of emancipatory endogenous LD into their institutional policies and programs (Ávila, 2006, p. 138). 138).

Therefore, according to Ávila (2012), this development emerges from learning to modify an accumulated culture, made up of symbols, ideas, and material products of a social system. This results in progress for the community and locality through creative solutions and actions that encourage autonomy and the ability to follow paths in search of development (Ávila, 2012; Vieira, 2013).

The multidimensional transformation and local development brought about by strengthening the social, cultural, economic, and political factors of local communities were also listed as products arising from the implementation of outreach projects and their ability to encompass technical and scientific knowledge materialized in the resolution of real and specific local demands:

"In addition to the recognition of the actions developed in educational institutions by the local population, leading to the development of a relationship of trust in the educational practice of these institutions, the outreach seeks specific solutions to the problems seen in the locality."

"[...] It is through outreach that technical and scientific knowledge reaches society in the form of meeting people's real demands and concrete problems."



Therefore, this ability to intervene in the problems of a local community through outreach projects and, in turn, facilitating the opening of the educational institution's institutional environments for access to communities, and communities for access to educational institutions, allows for the creation of a social network to support and sustain educational praxis in everyday life (Correia; Akerman, 2015; Serra; Rolim; Bastos, 2018).

TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE LOCALITY'S POTENTIAL

The majority of those interviewed said that the outreach projects developed under their coordination were able to fully (34%) or partially (47%) promote the use of the locality's potential.

Martins, Vaz, and Caldas (2010) reveal that the meanings that encompass local development and outreach projects can be characterized by the recognition of the potential of each locality, to carry out adapted solutions capable of stimulating the potential of individuals in the community.

It was possible to see from the participants' statements below that there is no way to think globally without understanding the local, respecting its specificities, local and cultural vocations, and local productive arrangements:

"[...] fostering the development of the locality by expanding knowledge".

"We can't think globally without understanding the local. The logic is for any dimension focused on the notion of development. Outreach acts in the field of the academic-scientific-cultural universe in line with the locality, when possible."

"Enabling rural agents to make their herds more productive, becoming competitive in the market and socially engaged in the activity."

"I believe that institutions should produce knowledge that meets the needs of local arrangements, so that this dialog with the community, in addition to contributing to multiple and diverse production, also helps to guide the actions of these institutions to meet social demands."

"[...] Thinking about local demands based on their contexts. Applying and developing new academic concepts and knowledge, and allowing themselves to be affected by non-institutionalized community knowledge."

Thus, the participants agree on the potential of outreach projects to recognize, awaken, and mobilize the capacity of local communities for progress in different dimensions related to the theme or impact objectives of each project (Correia; Akerman, 2015). In addition to being identified, these potentials can also be stimulated by actions aimed at promoting the learning of new knowledge capable of broadening the cognitive capacity of the subjects (Ávila, 2000).



CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of this study, we can see that the coordinators recognize that human beings are the main beneficiaries of local development and that their direct or indirect transformation must be an integral part of outreach projects if they are to have an effective social impact. We emphasize that when there is real community involvement in both the outreach project and the construction of local development, effective results are favored for those involved, communities, the institution, students, and project coordinators.

The transformations brought about by outreach projects have important significance in stating that they provide local development when there is a concern for those involved, for training processes, for identifying real needs, and for effective local participation.

Identifying the perceptions of the coordinators of the outreach projects presented here makes us believe in the potential of the outreach activities developed to promote the local development of communities. This understanding makes us realize that outreach has been presented as an instrument of dialogical interaction through which multiple possibilities for transformation are ensured.

In this sense, we realize that, through its projects, outreach shows the potential to intervene in localities by building innovative solutions capable of alleviating problems that afflict the population.

As some coordinators still do not associate outreach projects with local development, and given that these are significant theoretical and practical approaches, we identified the need for training practices in university outreach that make it possible to list the importance and factors of local development, so that this impact can be considered with even greater assertiveness when building projects.

Given the limitation of the research in identifying only the perception of the coordinators of the outreach projects, which prevented us from identifying the contributions of university outreach from the point of view of the benefiting communities, the study needs an on-site investigation to compare the results presented from the two conceptions: coordinators and communities.

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