



RESEARCH ARTICLE



SOLIDARY ECONOMY AND SDG 8: PERSPECTIVES AND INTERRELATIONS

ECONOMIA SOLIDÁRIA E ODS 8: PERSPECTIVAS E INTER-RELAÇÕES

¹ **Julliermy Luan de Almeida Souza**
Universidade Federal de Campina Grande (UFCG), Paraíba (Brazil)
Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0009-0005-6844-4470>

² **Ana Cecília Feitosa de Vasconcelos**
Universidade Federal de Campina Grande (UFCG), Paraíba (Brazil)
Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7848-4602>

³ **Mariangela Vasconcelos Ernesto Lopes**
Universidade Federal de Campina Grande (UFCG), Paraíba (Brazil)
Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0009-0002-1435-9383>

Corresponding Author:
Julliermy Luan de Almeida Souza
E-mail: julliermyluan@gmail.com

Editora chefe
Dra. Eliana A. Severo
Universidade Federal de Pernambuco (UFPE), Brazil.

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study aims to analyze how the Solidary Economy Fair, organized by a public Higher Education Institution located in Campina Grande, Paraíba, contributes to achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 8, which seeks to promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all.

Methodology/Approach: A qualitative, exploratory research. Data collection was carried out through semi-structured interviews with participants of the fair, and the data were analyzed based on the content analysis technique of the interviewees' responses.

Originality/Relevance: This study is original in empirically investigating the relationship between solidary economy and sustainable development from the perspective of the solidarity fair, demonstrating its contributions to achieving SDG 8.

Principal Results: The results reveal that the Solidary Economy Fair contributes positively to achieving SDG 8. The actions promoted include creating strong and supportive networks, job and income generation, and providing decent and productive work. These results offer valuable insights for new public policies and sustainable development strategies at regional and national levels.

Theoretical/Methodological Contributions: The study contributes by expanding scientific discussions on the impact of the solidary economy on sustainable development. It also offers a robust methodological approach that can be applied in other contexts to evaluate local initiatives aligned with the SDGs. Furthermore, it emphasizes the importance of initiatives such as the Solidary Economy Fair for strengthening public policies and regional strategies for sustainable development.

Keywords: Solidary Economy. Sustainable Development. Sustainable Development Goals. SDG 8. Social Inclusion. Decent Work.

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RESUMO

Propósito: Analisar como a Feira de Economia Solidária promovida em uma Instituição de Ensino Superior pública, localizada em Campina Grande, Paraíba, contribui para o alcance do Objetivo de Desenvolvimento Sustentável (ODS) 8, que busca promover o crescimento econômico sustentado, inclusivo e sustentável, emprego pleno e produtivo, e trabalho decente para todos.

Metodologia/abordagem: Pesquisa qualitativa, de caráter exploratório. Com coleta de dados realizada por meio de entrevistas semiestruturadas com participantes da feira; e dados coletados analisados com base na técnica de análise de conteúdo das respostas dos entrevistados.

Originalidade/Relevância: Este estudo é original ao investigar empiricamente a relação entre economia solidária e desenvolvimento sustentável, na perspectiva da feira solidária, demonstrando suas contribuições para o alcance do ODS 8.

Principais resultados: Os achados revelam que a Feira de Economia Solidária contribui positivamente para o alcance do ODS 8. As ações promovidas incluem a criação de redes fortes e solidárias, a geração de empregos e renda, além de proporcionar trabalho digno e produtivo. Esses resultados oferecem insights valiosos para novas políticas públicas e estratégias de desenvolvimento sustentável em níveis regional e nacional.

Contribuições teóricas/metodológicas: O estudo contribui ao ampliar as discussões científicas sobre o impacto da economia solidária no desenvolvimento sustentável. Além de oferecer uma abordagem metodológica robusta que pode ser utilizada em outros contextos para avaliar iniciativas locais alinhadas aos ODS. Também ressalta a importância de iniciativas como a Feira de Economia Solidária para fortalecimento de políticas públicas e estratégias regionais para o desenvolvimento sustentável.

1. INTRODUCTION

In light of the current state of environmental degradation, which threatens humanity's very existence on the planet, the discussion on the consequences and means to mitigate these impacts has become imperative. According to Souza (2021), treating environmental resources as unlimited cannot continue, as the environment has limitations, and the common good is finite and in need of better preservation.

In this context, according to the United Nations Development Programme PNUD (2022), one of the main strategies adopted to promote this preservation was the establishment of a set of objectives and goals known as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a multi-organizational initiative that structures 17 goals with 169 targets, all aimed at improving the quality of life for both people and the planet.

For this study, SDG 8 is presented. According to the PNUD (2022), this goal seeks to "Promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all," encompassing targets and guidelines for decent work and a safe, prosperous, and equitable life.

From this perspective, understanding that several fronts and strategies must be undertaken to achieve this SDG, the present study aims to: Analyze how the Solidary Economy Fair promoted by a public higher education institution (HEI) located in Campina Grande, in the state of Paraíba, Brazil, contributes to the achievement of SDG 8.

This study is justified by the importance of Solidary Economy Fairs for promoting decent work, sustainable development, and better direction/implementation of public policies and academic studies aimed at strengthening collaborative and solidarity-based work, as stated by Fundacentro (2024).

Furthermore, the study aims to contribute to creating strategies that maximize these spaces' potential, boost local economic development, promote social inclusion, and reduce inequalities. This could also serve as a reference for other settings and generate future studies with related approaches and themes.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Discussions on SDG with Emphasis on Goal 8

When starting discussions on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), it is crucial to highlight that, according to the ONU (2023), a multi-organizational effort led to the creation of 17 goals to be pursued by different nations based on sustainability guidelines. Additionally, 169 complementary targets were established, all aimed at improving the quality of life for both people and the planet. These goals are known as the SDGs.

According to Macena (2024), ensuring the effective implementation of these goals requires international cooperation that integrates and recognizes the urgency of coordinated actions at the global level. In this context, the ONU (2023) counts 193 countries as members of the 2030 Agenda Action Plan, with all UN member states being signatories of this Sustainable Development Agenda.

Another important aspect to highlight is that among the existing SDGs, this study focuses on SDG 8, which, according to the PNUD (2022), aims to "promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all." This goal was developed jointly by the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLAC), the United Nations (UN), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

The emphasis of this study on SDG 8 aligns with what the International Labour Organization advocates, underscoring the importance of this goal for integrating complex areas such as economic, political, social, and environmental dimensions, seeking a normative commitment that links economic growth with job generation, professional dignity, income, and environmental preservation (OIT, 2023).

The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) further emphasizes that SDG 8 is fundamental to the 2030 Agenda and is inextricably linked to many other goals. A lack of progress in achieving SDG 8 would impede progress in areas such as poverty eradication (SDG 1), reduction of inequalities (SDG 10), promotion of peace, justice, and effective institutions (SDG 16), ensuring healthy lives and well-being (SDG 3), and gender equality (SDG 5), among others (CEPAL, 2023). Thus, to provide a more detailed understanding of SDG 8, its respective goals, and contributions, the following Table 1 is presented:

Table 1 – Goals of SDG 8

Goal	Definition
8.1	Sustain per capita economic growth according to national circumstances, mainly aiming for an annual growth rate of at least 7% of gross domestic product (GDP) in the least developed countries.
8.2	Achieve higher productivity levels in economies through diversification, technological modernization, and innovation, focusing on high-value-added and labor-intensive sectors.
8.3	Promote policies aimed at development that support productive activities, decent job generation, entrepreneurship, creativity, and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services.
8.4	Improve progressively, by 2030, the global resource efficiency in consumption and production, and commit to decoupling economic growth from environmental degradation, in accordance with the Ten-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production, with developed countries taking the lead.
8.5	Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men by 2030, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and ensure equal pay for equal work.
8.6	By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education, or training.
8.7	Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labor, end child slavery, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025, end child labor in all its forms.
8.8	Protect labor rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, mainly female migrants, and people in precarious employment.
8.9	By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and product
8.10	Strengthen the capacity of national financial institutions to encourage the expansion of access to banking, insurance, and financial services for all.
8 a.	Increase support for the Aid for Trade initiative for developing countries, particularly least developed countries, including through the Enhanced Integrated Framework for Trade-Related Technical Assistance to Least Developed Countries.
8.b	Develop and operationalize a global strategy for youth employment and implement the International Labour Organization's Global Employment Pact.

Source: IPEA (2022).

In a summary analysis, it becomes evident that some indicators aim to portray a macro approach to employment and income, while others take a more specific perspective—ranging from GDP growth, sustainable consumption, wage increases, youth inclusion in the workforce, the elimination of child labor and workplace accidents, to tourism, among others. This reaffirms that SDG 8 represents a global commitment to building fairer, more inclusive, and sustainable economies, where economic growth is accompanied by opportunities for decent employment, dignified work, and social protection for all.

2.2 Solidarity Economy and Solidarity Fairs

Within the framework of the capitalist economic model - characterized by social exclusion and income inequality - a solidarity economy emerges as a fundamental strategy for promoting social inclusion and the equitable distribution of economic resources. By strengthening initiatives based on cooperation and self-management, this economic model fosters income generation more equitably, prioritizing collective labor's value and democratizing production. Additionally, a solidarity economy contributes to the empowerment of communities, reinforcing social bonds and encouraging practices that enhance local autonomy. In this way, it presents itself as a viable alternative to addressing socioeconomic inequalities and fostering more just and sustainable development (MAGNO et al., 2022).

Furthermore, Ribeiro, Pereira, and Santos (2022) argue that a solidarity economy proposes constructing a new economic model from a biocentric perspective, seeking inclusion, humanization, interaction among people, and environmental respect. This approach establishes a cyclical process that upholds self-management, democracy, cooperation, and solidarity as fundamental principles worldwide.

According to Krebs and Fischer (2024), a solidarity economy has effectively responded to structural and social inequalities in the Brazilian context. It has emerged as a strategy for integrating marginalized populations into the market while fostering economic autonomy and citizenship. This strengthens the capacity for social transformation and offers viable alternatives to exclusion and inequality. This impact is reflected in solidarity economy enterprises' growth and the expansion of their activities. According to the latest survey by the National Registry of Solidarity Economy (CADSOL) in 2023, there were 20,670 registered solidarity economy enterprises involving 1,425,158 workers. These figures represent a 3.5% increase in enterprise registrations compared to the previous three years and a 1.80% increase in the number of workers engaged in solidarity economy initiatives during the same period (BRASIL, 2023).

However, despite this growth, solidarity economy enterprises in Brazil still face a range of challenges and obstacles. Silva and Ferreira (2024) noted that key barriers include limited access to resources, lack of institutional recognition, and insufficient cooperation among stakeholders. These factors significantly hinder the sustainability and expansion of solidarity enterprises.

Alternatives such as solidarity economy fairs have emerged in response to these obstacles. These fairs serve as market alternatives that aim to establish direct sales channels between producers and consumers. Organized by solidarity enterprises from diverse sectors—including artisanal, agroecological, and responsible consumption-oriented services—these fairs create alternative sources of income. They provide small entrepreneurs and self-employed workers opportunities to sell their products without relying on large distributors. Furthermore, by fostering local production and consumption and enabling network-based cooperation, these fairs enhance the dignity of participating workers, valuing collective labor through fair trade practices that reduce social vulnerability. Many of these fairs also include historically marginalized groups, such as women, quilombolas, Indigenous peoples, and informal workers, offering them tangible opportunities for productive inclusion (MOURA et al., 2023).

3. METHODOLOGY

To analyze how the Solidarity Economy Fair promoted by a public Higher Education Institution in Campina Grande, Paraíba contributes to the achievement of SDG 8, a qualitative exploratory study was chosen. According to Flick (2020), this investigative approach seeks to understand social reality from the perspective of participants, emphasizing meanings, experiences, and contexts. The exploratory nature of this study is justified because, as Flick (2020) also points out, it addresses questions with limited empirical evidence, aiming at theoretical construction or deepening.

Regarding the data collection instrument, semi-structured interviews were used. Fraser and Gondim

(2020) describe this method as a form of social interaction that values words, symbols, and signs as key elements of human relationships. Through interviews, social actors construct and interpret the reality that surrounds them.

To develop the research questions, each SDG 8 target was analyzed and converted into a specific, correlated question applicable to the studied context, ensuring alignment with the research objective. In this process, targets that were deemed too broad, restricted to other realities, or redundant were excluded from the study, such as Goals 8.7, 8.10, 8.a, and 8.b. Therefore, no research questions were formulated for these goals.

To better illustrate the selected SDG 8 goals and their corresponding research questions, which will serve as the basis for data analysis, Table 2 is presented below:

Table 2 – SDG 8 Goals and Their Respective Research Questions

SDG 8 GOALS	RESEARCH QUESTIONS
8.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you believe the fair contributes to the region's economic growth? • How has your participation in the fair improved your income??
8.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What strategies do you use to make your products more attractive and differentiated, thus promoting greater productivity in your business? • Has your participation in the workshops offered by the fair helped you acquire better skills and increase your earnings? • Do the workshops contribute to your ability to diversify your products?
8.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the fair contributed to developing your creativity and innovation skills? • How does participating in the fair and its training sessions, workshops, and courses enhance your job satisfaction?
8.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the fair encourage you to adopt more environmentally responsible practices?
8.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the fair promote gender equality by ensuring that the work of men and women is valued equally? • How does the fair create opportunities for people with disabilities to be included and have their work recognized as equally valuable?
8.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the fair contribute to reducing youth unemployment? • How does the fair facilitate young people's access to education and training?
8.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not applicable
8.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you feel safe and protected when selling your products and offering services at the fair?
8.9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does participation in the fair help people recognize local products as cultural promoters?
8.10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not applicable
8.a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not applicable
8.b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not applicable

Source – Research Data (2024)

This study applied content analysis as the method of analysis, which, according to Bardin (2016), represents a form of content study in texts, interviews, media, or other forms of communication. The aim is to identify patterns, themes, and meanings present in the collected data, enabling a deeper and more contextualized understanding of the results.

In this sense, the first phase of content analysis, according to Bardin (2016), referred to as the pre-analysis stage, involved data extraction and organization. Since the interviews were recorded using a smartphone recording tool, the interviewees provided the necessary authorizations, and their statements were transcribed using the Transkriptor application, which is available for free on Google PlayStore. A preliminary reading was then conducted, allowing for an overview of the collected material and better organization of the extracted data.

In the next phase, data exploration, the information was identified through units of meaning, such as words, phrases, or paragraphs that held representative significance for the study. Finally, the results processing and interpretation stage involved an in-depth analysis of the identified themes, seeking to understand how content elements interrelate and the meaning of these patterns within the research context. This ensured that the data were interpreted comprehensively and contextually, allowing researchers to explore relationships between various pieces of information from the sources and ultimately interpret the social phenomena under investigation.

Additionally, the "*ipsis litteris*" resource was employed, meaning the exact transcription of relevant

excerpts from interviews and other documents, ensuring the fidelity and accuracy of the data during the analytical process. This resource complemented the analysis by allowing the underlying meanings of the participants' discourses to be better understood within the study context.

It is also noted that the total number of interviewees consisted of six (6) participants - solidarity entrepreneurs from a Solidarity Economy Fair linked to the Center for Social Technologies and Solidary Economy at a higher education institution in Paraíba. This initiative was founded in 2019 and comprises a group of solidarity enterprises predominantly formed by women between the ages of 18 and 58.

By applying this method of analysis to the aforementioned research object, the main perceptions, values, and symbols that emerged from the interviews could be identified. These findings allowed for identifying and comparing respondents' perspectives regarding the Fair's contributions to achieving the goals of SDG 8.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

For the analysis procedures, the grouping of questions was performed according to each goal of SDG 8, using tables. The respective responses provided by each of the six interviewees were also included, utilizing the representation "Q (number)" to illustrate the relevant question and "Interviewee (number)" to refer to the interviewee's response to the given question. Each response was analyzed discursively, considering the existence of consensus among the answers, the structure of these responses—including the organization of ideas, use of arguments, and the coherence of the analyzed content—language usage, and the potential cultural and social influences involved in shaping the meanings, perceptions, and values expressed by the interviewees. In this context, the following presents the tables' structuring and respective analyses.

Table 3 – Questions Related to Goal 8.1

• Q(1) - Do you believe that the fair contributes to the region's economic growth?	
Interviewee (1)	"Yes, a lot. Just look at how many people from Campina are part of the fair. We have been growing a lot, more people are coming, and it has generated growth because it has given many people in the region the opportunity to sell their products, earn money, and have an income, right?"
Interviewee (2)	"It contributes a lot. I believe in it strongly. We who participate in this fair know that it is very productive. And we only grow; there are trips, I go, I promote it in other places, and soon enough, I sell. People come to visit here, I sell here, I promote it, and all of this helps."
Interviewee (3)	"I believe so, because it's something that has existed since 2019 but has been growing. It's like a mutual exchange, everyone wins, and it really moves the economy."
Interviewee (4)	"Yes, I believe so! I don't speak much, but the fair is very important, right? It does help to grow the economy, I think it does."
Interviewee (5)	"I see the fair today as a bridge to this growth because, look, it generates money, an income. People buy, we buy from each other, we go outside Campina, we have been to other fairs to sell too, all of this is growth for us here."
Interviewee (6)	"Yes, and a lot. We have a strong goal to grow this fair and bring more vendors from our city so that it generates more money and more jobs. This way, we can achieve higher profits for the community. This is definitely important."
• Q(2) - How did your participation in the fair improve your income?	
Interviewee (1)	"I started selling at the fair, so before I didn't have an income, I didn't have money, I already depended on my husband. When I learned about the fair, I saw the opportunity to sell and earn my money. The fair gave me that opportunity, right? I knew how to make crochet; I used to make it for the house and for gifts, then I saw that I could make it to sell, and then the fair came, and today I have already achieved a lot; I mean, with my money, from the sales, right?"
Interviewee (2)	"Yes, I have a monthly income here. This fair is very productive. I was even commenting on it. This fair should operate every day because there are always people looking to buy. I have a lot to thank the fair for."
Interviewee (3)	"Well, it improved a hundred percent because I used to depend on my mother's income, and she passed away. And, like, I don't qualify for any aid, maybe because I'm the guardian of my brother, and he receives benefits, so I don't get anything. I don't have any other income except from the fair."
Interviewee (4)	"My son, I used to sell in an old cart that my husband has. I'd load it up and go out selling, but having the fair, this spot here improved a lot. I sell more, I earn more, and this way I can also buy, pay bills, and move forward, to grow."
Interviewee (5)	"I'm very grateful for the fair because when I learned about it and went after it to try to participate, I didn't

	know it would be so good. I'm thankful, I sell to these students, there are people from outside too, there are the teachers, the staff, it's become a routine, and this is what I have today, because I came to the fair and sell here."
Interviewee (6)	"This is a very interesting question because what happens is that the fair brought me not only income but a better quality of life, because, well, of the unity. And the fair has brought me a lot of peace in terms of money and friendship as well, you know? It's not just about money, right? So it brings me a lot of peace, a lot of resources because we are there, we are working. And it brings me peace, resources, and satisfaction."

Source – Research Data (2024)

After analyzing Table 3 – Questions Related to Goal 8.1, it is initially possible to observe consistency regarding the perception of the impact of the Solidarity Economy Fair on the region's economic growth. All the interviewees believed that the fair significantly contributes to the increase in local income and economic activity, highlighting the opportunity to expand sales as a direct consequence of their participation in the fair. This reaffirms what Magno et al. (2022) presented regarding the importance of fairs in addressing socioeconomic inequalities and fostering more just and equitable development.

When evaluating the use of language and vocabulary by the interviewees, it is noticeable that there is a variety of expressions and terms specific to the context of the solidarity economy fair. They adopt an accessible language with frequent expressions emphasizing the positive aspects of participating in the fair, such as "growth," "productive," and "improving income," highlighting an optimistic view of the benefits provided by the fair.

Furthermore, the interviewees emphasized the importance of the fair as a space for social interaction, solidarity, and building friendships, which not only shows a financial gain but also a positive impact on their personal and social lives. This aligns with the argument presented by Ribeiro, Pereira, and Santos (2022), who assert that fairs propose the creation of a new form of economy from a biocentric perspective that values inclusion, humanization, and interaction among people.

In this sense, considering the study's goal of analyzing how the Solidarity Economy Fair contributes to the achievement of SDG 8, it can be stated that the interviewees' responses provided consistent evidence that the fair is promoting local economic growth and offering decent and inclusive job opportunities for participants, which is also reflected in the studies and investigations of the aforementioned authors. Thus, through income generation, encouraging entrepreneurship, and strengthening the local economy, the fair plays a significant role in promoting sustainable economic development and achieving the objectives of SDG 8.1, as presented by PNUD (2022) when discussing the specific targets of this SDG.

Table 4 – Questions Related to Goal 8.2

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Q(3) - What methods do you use to make your products more attractive and differentiated, thus promoting greater productivity in your business? 	
Interviewee (1)	"My product's differentiation is that it's more personalized. Personalization attracts a lot because I make handcrafted items for each customer, whether it's crochet, amigurumi, or a bag."
Interviewee (2)	"I use social media a lot for promotion. I also share with acquaintances, post photos of my work; some customers comment; I offer samples of the sweets; and all of this helps."
Interviewee (3)	"I create arts to promote, I used to do it on PowerPoint, but after a course from Qualifica Mais, I learned how to use Canva. So, I take photos of every dish I make, create the artwork, and post it on Instagram. Most people eat with their eyes, right? Yes, I also do live videos where I explain how to make the dishes. Everyone has their own cooking secrets, right? But I try to share as much as I can, people like it."
Interviewee (4)	"By getting qualified, through our preparation workshops for the fair, we are able to improve more and more, improving both the product and the business itself, and that's what, as they say, attracts customers, right?"
Interviewee (5)	"We always try to focus a lot on media, promoting online, here on campus. Since we have a lot of handmade products and such, we post lots of photos and variety to motivate customers to buy. Then they talk about it, look for more information, and sometimes they come here, or they ask, and we send it to their homes. I've sent a lot to customers here in Campina."
Interviewee (6)	"I like to focus on the presentation, I think it needs to look good, catch attention. When customers see it, they like it and I can attract them to buy."
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Q(4) - Does participating in the workshops promoted by the fair allow you to train yourself better and improve your income? 	
Interviewee (1)	"The workshops are very intensive. We had one on marketing, where we learned how to improve the image

	of our business, as well as our own. There was another one on sustainability, which was really valuable. This has brought a lot of information to us. And we've applied this knowledge to improve the business and attract more customers."
Interviewee (2)	"Definitely, because I've already worked in retail, and we always need to keep updating ourselves. Before the fair, I wasn't participating much, but when I saw the opportunity here, I jumped at it, and I've learned a lot. I always use what I learn to improve my business, and as a result, I sell more, always looking for something new."
Interviewee (3)	"Yes, I didn't know how to price before, but with the training, you learn how to manage your business, how to price, and how to manage people and customers, right? I think this part of extension courses is very interesting. It enhances knowledge and updates what you might already know. These workshop courses have also helped me a lot. After the pricing course, we had one on marketing, and we learned many tools that we can use to schedule posts automatically, without needing to do anything. Sometimes you forget to post, but with scheduled tools, it does the posting for you at the time and day you set. I learned that too."
Interviewee (4)	"Look, Guilherme, right? It's necessary for us to change our perspective, look for something new. Give a fresh look to what's already stale, and seek what's current, learn, and the fair has been doing this with us, with the classes. I learn a lot, my daughter comes and watches with me, and she learns a lot too. So, whatever is new, we learn and get hands-on, as they say."
Interviewee (5)	"Both in preparing for the workshop, which is already a huge learning experience, and in the workshop itself, the knowledge exchange is very rich. We have speakers, but many times we learn a lot from the other vendors. So it's really an exchange of experiences and knowledge we have here at the fair, and we keep improving more and more. I personally learned a lot, things I never thought I'd be able to learn."
Interviewee (6)	"Yes, definitely. In the meetings, we talk a lot about learning more. And they really want to teach us. So this is very important because what happens is that in the workshops, we're focused on learning, and they bring speakers, give mini-courses, so that's really important to us, you know? About economics, about growing in Brazil. This is very important."
<p>• Q(5) - Do the workshops help you learn how to diversify your products?</p>	
Interviewee (1)	"Always. As I said, we've already had several workshops on sustainable energy, marketing, and rotating funds, which is very interesting for the solidarity economy, right? So, this has brought a lot of information that we can use in our business, understand how everything works, these trends, what customers want, and we apply that in our business and products."
Interviewee (2)	"Yes, as I told you, everything I learn, I try to apply to the products. I work with sweets, right? So, new flavors, combinations, innovation, let's say, comes from what I learn there."
Interviewee (3)	"Definitely. An example of this is that before, I worked with products that didn't have much sales potential, not much demand. After being invited to the fair and starting the courses, I began to understand what the customer wants and started making what they want, what they buy."
Interviewee (4)	"Yes, we haven't had one specifically for this yet, but in the others, we always hear something here and there, and we also communicate among ourselves, you know? And also research to have more variety, because that's what customers look for."
Interviewee (5)	"Yes, and I heard this from the customers themselves. They praised the variety I have, saying they were impressed and didn't know what to choose. I'm grateful to the fair for this, because I've learned a lot here."
Interviewee (6)	"Yes, yes. We talk a lot about attracting more attention from the customers. That's really important. There was one workshop where they emphasized trying to please the customer, you know? Giving your best, offering a good product, that can attract them and at the same time sell your work, you know?"

Source – Research Data (2024)

Analyzing Table 4 - Questions Related to Goal 8.2, it is evident that the interviewees' responses are consistent regarding the means used to make their products more attractive and differentiated. These include personalizing products, using social media for promotion, participating in workshops, and paying attention to product presentations. These strategies are common practices adopted to promote greater productivity in their businesses, and they are knowledge and practices experienced and promoted within the Fair they participate in.

In addition to clearly presenting their differentiation and product promotion strategies, the interviewees repeatedly emphasize the importance of workshops in business training and improvement. They also show an evident appreciation for the exchange of experiences and collective learning, reflecting positions that align with the solidarity economy principles.

In this context, it is clear that the Fair plays a crucial role in achieving SDG 8.2 by promoting strategies that stimulate the training and qualification of participants, product diversification, value addition, and innovation. This, in turn, directly contributes to higher productivity and the promotion of decent employment, as outlined by the aforementioned SDG, as indicated by the PNUD (2022). Furthermore, this also aligns with

the findings of Fundacentro (2024), which highlights the fair's opportunities for the qualification and dignified work of the participants.

Table 5 - Questions Related to Goal 8.3

<p>• Q (6) - Has the fair contributed to developing your creative and innovative capacity?</p>	
Interviewee (1)	"Yes, it has contributed a lot to truly understanding my product and bringing more creativity. I've really been able to innovate and try to understand what the customer is looking for at the moment. For example, if a customer wants an amigurumi, I look at the details, ask for a picture, and create it. This is creativity, and the customer likes it."
Interviewee (2)	"Yes, yes. I believe that every collective participation can contribute because it involves exchanging values and knowledge, which enriches everyone. You learn from each other. One person mirrors the other, applies something new they've learned, and passes it on."
Interviewee (3)	"Without a doubt, as I just mentioned, the fair was the turning point. I started to understand better, gain knowledge, make contacts, and all of that sparked this creativity."
Interviewee (4)	"I was never very creative, but I've been trying because, you know, this is what sustains us, right? If you're not creative, you won't sell. So, I've been working harder on it. I always tell the girls, my colleagues here at the fair, to learn well so they can teach me, and I keep seeking to learn."
Interviewee (5)	"Definitely, it contributed a lot. Our unity, these exchanges, the workshops as well, such as the marketing one, made me leave there feeling more creative. It sparked something in me. Let's say it was that motivation."
Interviewee (6)	"Yes, at the fair, we have a very collaborative environment within the organization. For instance, if you have a knack for organizing, decorating, or being creative, they help you develop that. They say, 'You're good at this, you're good at that, let's improve. Do this, help with the decoration, help with that.' So I believe this really activates our creative side, you know? It's very, very interesting."
<p>• Q (7) - How does participating in the fair and its capacity-building activities, workshops, and training sessions contribute to your greater satisfaction with your profession?</p>	
Interviewee (1)	"I believe I found myself in collective work. I truly found my place. This is what I want to do; this is how I want to live—working for and with others. Although working in a community is difficult, right? I've realized that I'm now a more dynamic person, thanks to this involvement, starting with the fair, the relationships built, the workshops, and the unity we have. This makes me very happy because I wasn't like this before."
Interviewee (2)	"First, I notice I'm getting better results. What happens is that I've worked in retail and other places, but I never had the opportunities to learn like I do here. Before, I didn't know how to price, and I had no idea about digital marketing. Now, I can set prices, I use my phone to promote sweets, and I feel confident talking to customers. I like the people at the fair. We have unity, and that makes me happy with what I've chosen."
Interviewee (3)	"I'm very fulfilled being here. Everyone knows that. The knowledge and unity we have, I'm very happy and grateful. I've made a family here, and I'm very satisfied with it. I always say that"
Interviewee (4)	"Look, for me, participating in the fair goes beyond just selling my products. It's like having a little piece of the world to showcase my work, you know? And the best part is that the fair offers me many opportunities to learn and grow. This makes me incredibly happy because I haven't had that opportunity elsewhere."
Interviewee (5)	"The fair is the space where new things are taught. They help me with sales. I feel really good; I talk to other vendors, we exchange ideas and experiences, and that excites me and makes me proud of my work. The fair makes me better, and it makes me love what I do more."
Interviewee (6)	"Well... after I joined the fair, I became much more victorious, much better. I saw that I have a great capacity to grow, you know? For example, when I was on my own, I didn't have that ability; I didn't think I was good enough. But when I joined the fair, it became a big union that supports you and tells you, 'Girl, you have courage, and you're good at what you do, you're going to succeed in life.' So, I believe the fair gave me that courage, that desire to grow, you know?"

Source – Research Data (2024)

Understanding that SDG 8.3 primarily seeks to promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity, and innovation, when analyzing the responses in "Table 5 – Questions related to Target 8.3," a positive contribution of the fair to the development of the participants' creative and innovative capacities is evident, primarily achieved through workshops, encouragement of inter-relational collaboration, and the collaborative environment of the fair itself. This aspect is also highlighted by Fundacentro (2024), which, as previously mentioned, points out the fair's opportunities for qualification, particularly on competencies related to entrepreneurship, creativity, and innovation, to promote more significant opportunities for development and decent work.

Upon reviewing the structure of the responses in the referenced Table, consistent arguments are also identified, emphasizing the relationship between participation in the fair and the development of these competencies. Expressions such as "exchange of values," "collective learning," and "innovative thinking" reflect how the fair's collaborative and participatory dynamics, in conjunction with the other strategies developed, reaffirm the interviewees' perception of the personal and professional development being fostered. Magno et al. (2022) also reflect this in their study, associating fairs with strengthening social bonds that drive participants' cooperation, innovation, critical thinking, and resoluteness.

The interviewees further attribute strong significance to their participation in the fair as a transformative factor in their lives and businesses, emphasizing the personal and professional satisfaction derived from this experience, assigning meaning to their trajectory by linking it to the opportunity to learn, grow, and develop in a collaborative and stimulating environment.

In this sense, it can be inferred that the Solidarity Economy Fair of the analyzed Higher Education Institution significantly contributes to the achievement of SDG 8.3. The collaborative environment, knowledge exchange, and mutual support provided by the fair stimulate participants' personal and professional growth, strengthening the pillars of a solidarity economy and contributing to the sustainable, creative, and innovative development of local businesses and the community.

Table 6 - Questions Related to Goal 8.4

• Q (8) - How does the fair contribute to more environmentally correct practices?	
Interviewee (1)	"I've always thought about sustainability, even before the fairs, right? I try to work with the minimum waste; since I'm a seamstress, nothing is lost, everything is renewed; and this mindset is also present here at the fair, we all receive instructions about the environment. Acting for the good, right?"
Interviewee (2)	"I believe I've learned a lot about food waste and leftovers, right? I tell my mother-in-law, who works with me, it's not just a matter of cost, we need to better utilize everything for environmental reasons, discard as little as possible, avoid throwing things around everywhere; I even talked the other day about the colored bins at the fair, I mentioned buying some for home, it's good, we have to think about it."
Interviewee (3)	"I believe in environmental education. For example, packaging, napkins, and plastic cups, today I know exactly which bin to throw them in because I learned that in a course that the teachers here at the fair offered, and there's much more, it's always being talked about—about the environment, preservation, recycling."
Interviewee (4)	"At the fair, I learn to care for the environment without spending much, without wasting, right? In the workshops too, they teach me a lot about this, there was even one just about that, explaining how we can contribute to nature."
Interviewee (5)	"At the fair, I learn a lot about the environment, both from the people around us and in the workshops, they teach me to use water carefully, separate trash, and recycling. The other day, I was talking about it with my son, he had a school project about it, and I went there to discuss it with him, and there was even some material that was handed out that was very useful to him."
Interviewee (6)	"Great question. Because, you know, one thing I also started noticing in crafts is that it reuses a lot of things that would go to waste, you know? We take something that was trash and turn it into a craft, transform it into a work of art, it's very interesting. At the fair, I saw a lot of trash turning into luxury, you know? And it became something like a rare gem, really, really beautiful."

Source – Research Data (2024)

Regarding "Table 6 – Questions Related to Goal 8.4," after analyzing the responses from the interviewees, it is evident that there is a perception that the fair promotes the adoption of environmentally correct practices. The interviewees emphasized the importance of educational activities, such as workshops and courses offered during the fair and the exchanges within the community, for raising awareness and implementing practical actions in favor of the environment. This is highlighted by Macena (2024), who views it as essential for ensuring the effective implementation of SDG 8 and promoting local cooperation, integrating coordinated actions to achieve global goals.

The responses' structure clearly organizes ideas, with consistent arguments linking participation in the fair to environmental awareness and the implementation of sustainable practices. The interviewees provided concrete examples of how they learned to reduce waste, recycle, and reuse materials, demonstrating coherence in their positions.

In terms of language and vocabulary, the interviewees use terms related to sustainability and environmental preservation in an accessible and contextualized manner. Expressions such as "environmental education," "caring for the environment," and "recycling" reflect their commitment and strong engagement in protecting the environment and promoting sustainability. These values, which emphasize the preservation of

natural resources, are disseminated through the fair and align with the assertion of Macena (2024) about the effort these spaces must make to raise awareness and stimulate conscious actions toward the environment.

Based on the analyzed responses, it is understood that the fair effectively contributes to achieving SDG 8.4, which aims to promote sustainable production and consumption practices. The educational activities organized are effective means of empowering and raising awareness among participants, encouraging them to adopt environmentally responsible measures in their businesses, thereby demonstrating the potential of the fair and its participants to drive a more solidary, sustainable, and inclusive economy.

Table 7 - Questions Related to Goal 8.5

• Q (9) - How does the fair promote gender equality, ensuring that the work of men and women is equally valued?	
Interviewee (1)	"I think it's not very equal at the moment, there are men who have a lot of prejudice, and they don't seek to work with crafts and things like that; I believe that's the case. Men don't like it much, you know? But today, if a man wanted to join the fair, he would be welcomed. At the last fair, I believe there were two men, but not in the craft area itself, I think they were in the sweets section. Men have a bit of prejudice; they don't come."
Interviewee (2)	"I believe that, for example, the work of men and women has equal value, and deserves the same respect, you know? The fact is that everyone is helping each other, because that's how it is at the fair, everyone respects and helps each other, when someone arrives, we already give them guidance: Welcome, embrace them, and help as much as you can."
Interviewee (3)	"Here at the fair, it's an open space, whoever wants to participate is welcome, whether male or female. I've participated in other places that only accepted women, but here it's not like that; since it's a solidarity economy, there's an open space for everyone, right? So, both men and women, regardless of gender, have the opportunity to participate."
Interviewee (4)	"At the fair, everyone is equal! Men and women work side by side, selling their things with the same effort and dedication. Everyone respects each other and also helps, I've never seen anyone saying anything to diminish a woman, or anything like that; there's plenty of that elsewhere, right?"
Interviewee (5)	"It doesn't matter if you're a man or a woman, what matters is your will to work and make a difference. The fair taught me a lot about this unity, that regardless of anything, we all deserve respect and recognition."
Interviewee (6)	"At the fair, we make space for both men and women, you know? But what we see the most, what we notice, are the women, though men are also very welcome. And it's very interesting to have men at the fair because that's equality, right? We're all the same. There's no discrimination, no separation."
• Q (10) - How does the fair provide opportunities for people with disabilities to be included and have their work equally valued?	
Interviewee (1)	"We've had some ventures with people with visual and hearing impairments. They need to be included in society, right? That's part of it, so the fair is a great opportunity. If they seek us out, they're welcomed right away, and we help them."
Interviewee (2)	"Look, there's space for everyone here, it's a culture of embracing and bringing people in. The other day, one of our colleagues' husbands came to visit the fair, and he was in a wheelchair. We treated him just like anyone else, helping him and everything, in the end, he loved it, it was very positive, and that's what we've learned and do here."
Interviewee (3)	"We treat everyone the same, whether among ourselves or with customers, it's the same thing. We always find a way to include people, whether they are disabled or not, so they feel good. Another time, I helped a deaf person who knew how to read, and I wrote down on paper for them to read and understand, and it worked out."
Interviewee (4)	"At the fair, everyone has their place! Here, people with disabilities also have the opportunity to work and showcase their talents. The fair provides a welcoming environment, you know? So, everyone is treated with great respect."
Interviewee (5)	"The fair also embraces people. It's that thing, if you want to join, strengthen the fair with us so we can grow, come in. There's even the husband of one of the girls who is wheelchair-bound, and he's been to the fair and was treated really well, he felt great. That's what I love about the fair, everyone is welcome."
Interviewee (6)	"Everyone is welcome, as I said, we want people there, it doesn't matter if they have a disability. We find a little spot and help, and the person just gets to work and sell their things, just like anyone else. No problem at all."

Source – Research Data (2024)

After analysis of "Table 7 - Questions Related to Goal 8.5," it is evident that there is a consensus among the interviewees that the fair in question contributes to gender equality, recognizing and valuing the work of both men and women. Although some interviewees acknowledge that participation is predominantly female, all emphasize that the fair provides both sexes space and opportunities, promoting respect and inclusion.

The responses further illustrate a structured argument emphasizing the fair's role as an inclusive and respectful space, highlighting how it fosters gender equality, mutual collaboration, and the absence of discrimination.

Regarding language use and vocabulary, the interviewees employ terms that reflect an awareness of gender equity issues, such as "equality" and "inclusion." Phrases like "the fair welcomes everyone" demonstrate the commitment of the fair and its participants to promoting this equity, as also defended by Ribeiro, Pereira, and Santos (2022).

Although there is consensus on promoting gender equality at the fair, some interviewees point out ongoing challenges and prejudices, even among the participants themselves, such as the belief that men do not engage in crafts due to a stereotype that this vocation is exclusively for women.

The interviewees also strongly stance and engage regarding the inclusion of people with disabilities, reflecting values of respect, collaboration, and solidarity, which are inherent to the principles of the solidarity economy, as also presented by Ribeiro, Pereira, and Santos (2022) from the perspective of egalitarian spaces.

These statements and perceptions build significant meaning for achieving the goal in question, especially by attributing to the fair a transformative role in promoting gender equality and the inclusion of people with disabilities.

In this context, the analyzed Solidarity Economy Fair contributes positively to the achievement of Goal 8.5, providing a welcoming and inclusive environment where men and women are equally valued, and people with disabilities have the opportunity to actively participate and have their work recognized, thus promoting a more just and equitable society.

Table 8 - Questions Related to Goal 8.6

• Q (11) - How does the fair help reduce unemployment levels among young people?	
Interviewee (1)	"Today, we have a small group of young people at the fair; it's not large. I think the moment we are living in is one of many novelties. And young people have this vision, right? Of the new, the modern. There's someone here who makes very good sweets, selling truffles, another young woman does hair braiding, and my daughter works with me too, she's been here for three years. So, it's the fair that provides this opportunity for young people."
Interviewee (2)	"I see the fair as a means that can reduce unemployment by giving young people the opportunity to have a business, because what happens nowadays is that many young people are idle, with immense creativity, and all they need is an opportunity. And the fair gives them that; they earn money and buy the things they want, some save, and so on."
Interviewee (3)	"The fair supports a hundred percent; teachers, extension students, it provides significant support. But I believe that if there were a way, let's say, to secure a fixed space for us to hold the fair every day, a permanent place, this unemployment would still decrease, because this issue of generating jobs and income for young people who haven't entered the job market, having something more fixed, would be an opportunity that would attract even more people. But I do see that it contributes."
Interviewee (4)	"Here, whether you're an adult, elderly, or young, everyone learns practically how to sell, handle money, take care of their business, and manage their clients. It's like a real-life university, which generates knowledge and growth in people, and that makes them stay here, they find themselves, it becomes not just a job, but a sense of unity."
Interviewee (5)	"I know that the fair is like a springboard for the young people's future, a real path to their success. They stay busy, earn money, and mature. What could be better?"
Interviewee (6)	"So, when I joined the fair, I saw that we young people have the potential to grow tremendously, you know? Then I realized how many people here have a lot of experience at the fair; they embrace you, they teach you, you know? Passing on what they already know; so, for us young people, it's very interesting to be among adults. Learning from what they have to teach us, you know? Because there I felt very welcomed by the adults, I felt like a daughter at the fair, you know? So, they go and tell me, 'Oh, do this, this is really interesting for you, being young, you will develop.' There's a lot of support, many people to help me."
• Q (12) - How does the fair enable young people to access education and training?	
Interviewee (1)	"The fair is very social; the training sessions also include young people, everyone, actually. Everyone who wants to participate does so, and everyone learns together."
Interviewee (2)	"There are young people who, before coming here, had never taken a course. Yes, because it's about opportunities, right? At the fair, those who are with us in the training sessions with teachers and in research, they see and learn both the theory and the practice, which is very important, right? Because when we are in a classroom, we expand our view, we grow."
Interviewee (3)	"As for the young people, there's me, Guilherme, and a couple of other younger people, and of course, we know the value of the fair in bringing this knowledge; I learn a lot about business, clients, and so on. At the fair, everyone has their own sectors: crafts, food, everything has its own space, and we learn in the training sessions, and also in each space and with each vendor."
Interviewee (4)	"Through the fair, young people find opportunities to access knowledge, start their own businesses, learn new things, and prepare for the future."
Interviewee	"The fair is more than commerce; it's, as I've said, a springboard for young people's future! Here, they learn in

(5)	practice, develop through training, and prepare for the job market."
Interviewee (6)	"At the fair, we learn a lot. We have a study space that helps with both personal and professional development. We talk a lot about the economy, about growing Brazil, you know? Not just from my perspective but from a collective one. This is very enriching for our minds and helps us see what the world offers for our education. It's perfect for us to use as an example in the future, you know? So it's also very interesting."

Source – Research Data (2024)

Analyzing "Table 8 – Issues Related to Goal 8.6," it is clear that all the interviewees unanimously agree that the fair provides opportunities to reduce youth unemployment, highlighting the potential for entrepreneurship, practical learning, and social inclusion as significant benefits.

Although there is a consensus on the fair's benefits for young people, some interviewees mention the need for a fixed physical space where the fair could operate daily. This could contribute more significantly to attracting and retaining young people in this activity, reinforcing the point made by Silva and Ferreira (2024) that solidarity-based economic enterprises in Brazil still face some challenges and obstacles, such as limited access to resources and spaces, which are essential for strengthening and growing the fairs.

Table 9 – Issues Related to Goal 8.8

• Q (13) - Do you feel safe and protected in the fair environment to sell your goods and offer your services?	
Interviewee (1)	"Yes. It's a safe environment, free of risks. We have that here, I don't even worry because I know I'm safe, and everyone feels good about it. Our goods are exposed, and there was an instance when a customer bought an item without anyone being there and left the money behind. I think that's the most beautiful thing in the world. Can you believe it? But it really happened."
Interviewee (2)	"Oh, absolutely! There was even a moment when I had to leave, and so did my other partners, right? All at once, and we left the sweets at the stall. When we came back, everything was fine, others were keeping an eye from a distance, and everything was in place. I've never even seen a fight or theft, nothing like that. It's a very safe place."
Interviewee (3)	"Definitely, it's a very safe space, there's security at the entrances, we trust everyone who comes and participates because nothing has ever happened, and with God's will, nothing will. That's one of the reasons I stay here, the safety aspect. I've thought about starting something on my own, but there's so much violence, so many robberies, and we don't have the means to hire security, right?"
Interviewee (4)	"I feel safe here because we are a very strong and united community, we help each other, one looks out for the other if someone needs to step away, and there has never been a problem. There's also the campus security, right? So I've never seen or heard of anything."
Interviewee (5)	"Yes, for sure. It's very safe here, I've never worried about security."
Interviewee (6)	"Yes, that's very important. You know what happens at the fair? We have people who may sell the same merchandise as you, but there's unity there, you know? We protect each other, we help each other, and if someone needs to step away, we look after each other's stalls. Nothing has ever gone missing. And because it's here on campus, it's extremely safe, my dear."

Source – Research Data (2024)

After analyzing "Table 9 – Issues Related to Target 8.8," the following conclusions can be drawn: All interviewees agree that the fair environment is safe and protected for selling their goods and offering services; they also emphasize mutual trust and the absence of security incidents. Several accounts denote the sense of security in the fair environment, and it is evident that they identify as part of a united and supportive community that helps maintain a secure environment, benefiting from local security provided by the Higher Education Institution (IES).

Based on the analyzed responses, it is possible to conclude that the interviewees perceive the fair environment as safe and protected. Mutual trust and collaboration among participants are highlighted as key factors in maintaining the integrity of goods and ensuring peace of mind during business activities. It is worth noting that this perception of security helps create a welcoming environment conducive to developing commercial activities at the fair, aligning with the objectives of SDG 8.8, which promotes safe and inclusive working environments. This supports the stance of the ONU (2023) regarding achieving Sustainable Development.

Table 10 – Issues Related to Goal 8.9

• Q (14) - How does participating in the fair allow people to perceive local products as promoters of culture?
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Interviewee (1)	"How can I put it... it's like this: I buy from you, you buy from me, so I am valuing your product, and you are valuing mine. I think our fair strongly operates on this principle, and in doing so, we promote culture, the local products from our land, among ourselves and also to visitors."
Interviewee (2)	"The fair attracts both locals and tourists. In fact, during the São João festivities, it gets really crowded! That's when I start selling canjica and corn cake that my mother makes. So, all of this is tradition, it's culture, as you asked - it helps strengthen our local culture."
Interviewee (3)	"The fair breathes culture. The culture of the Northeast, true Northeast. We choose times of the year to promote traditional products, like during São João with canjica, rubação, and arrumadinho. Personally, I promote culture through food, and the customers love it. Of course, these foods are available every year, but there are specific dates when they are even more appealing, so to speak."
Interviewee (4)	"The fair is culture! Here, you find highly cultural products, made with tradition. There are people here whose grandfather was an artisan, whose parents were artisans, and now the daughter is following in their footsteps. Each product tells a story, a little piece of our culture."
Interviewee (5)	"There are many products at the fair that strengthen our culture. I see this especially with traditional products that enhance and promote the visibility of the Northeast—even beyond Brazil."
Interviewee (6)	"Handicrafts, right? Speaking of handicrafts alone, they are culture, they are our roots, and we carry culture with us. I tell customers: 'Oh, this doll here is made of cotton, rope, and chita fabric—this is our culture, our materials turned into art, you see?' And they buy it and take a piece of our culture with them."

Source – Research Data (2024)

Analyzing “Table 10 – Issues Related to Target 8.9,” it is evident that the interviewees’ responses consistently state that participation in the fair promotes the visibility and appreciation of local products as cultural promoters. They highlight the exchange among fair participants and the presence of traditional products in events such as São João, a traditional festival in Brazil’s Northeast.

The accounts demonstrate the relationship between the fair and the promotion of local culture, emphasizing the importance of traditional products and family traditions and recognizing handicrafts as a cultural expression within the fair. This is achieved through fair trade practices that reduce social vulnerability, as many of these fairs include historically marginalized groups, offering them opportunities for cultural inclusion (MOURA *et al.*, 2023).

It is also evident that the interviewees see themselves as agents of local cultural promotion by selling their products to local customers and tourists. This highlights their pride in offering products that represent the cultural identity of the Northeast and reinforces the role of the fair in valuing this regional culture and its traditions.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the analyses and discussions presented in this study, the Solidarity Economy Fair of the analyzed higher education institution (HEI) is an important instrument for achieving the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 8. It promotes sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all its participants and the local community.

Furthermore, the fair provides a safe and healthy environment, valuing artisanal work and local production. Participants are integrated into a network of supporters, including professors, researchers, and other social actors, becoming agents of local development by either driving the regional economy and/or strengthening cultural identity. Additionally, they contribute to a socio-environmental movement that seeks sustainability through conscious consumption and adopting environmentally responsible practices.

However, the research also highlights challenges that must be addressed to expand the fair's impact. Among them are the need for greater male participation, strengthening organization among participants, increasing the frequency of editions, and establishing strategic partnerships to enhance its reach. Despite these challenges, prospects are promising, positioning the fair as a model with the potential to contribute to sustainable development.

Given these findings, this study provides relevant scientific and managerial contributions. Firstly, it expands the field of research and theoretical knowledge on sustainable development, solidarity economy, and solidarity enterprise fairs, empirically demonstrating their impacts on income generation, social inclusion, and cultural identity appreciation. This study establishes a solid conceptual foundation for future investigations, allowing further exploration of the factors influencing the success of such initiatives.

Additionally, by examining the experience of a specific fair, this research paves the way for

comparisons with other fairs held in different institutions and contexts, enabling broader analyses of the diversity and challenges within this economic model. Finally, the study also offers methodological contributions by providing an analytical framework that can be used to evaluate similar experiences, facilitating the development of public policies and managerial strategies. These include the creation of participatory management mechanisms, establishing cooperation networks among different fairs and solidarity enterprises, and implementing social marketing strategies to increase the fairs' visibility and expand their reach among consumers and institutional partners.

For future research, it is recommended that longitudinal analyses be conducted to assess the impact of fairs over time, investigate external factors influencing the success of participating enterprises, expand the sample of interviewees, and replicate the study in other contexts.

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