

The New Economic Sociology in the Brazilian Administration Research

A Nova Sociologia Econômica em pesquisas de Administração no Brasil

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this paper is to study the environment and the papers that have been using the New Economic Sociology in the management scientific production in Brazil. Starting with the benefits of interdisciplinary studies, the importance of Sociology to Administration is discussed through the contributions of the New Economic Sociology, a field focused on the sociological analysis of the markets. A systematic survey and an evaluation of the scientific production that used the New Economic Sociology and that was published in Administration reference periodicals from 2006 to 2015, was carried out to measure and evaluate how the discipline is permeating Brazilian management research. As a result, this paper provides a view of the main vehicles of research that published the theme, besides offering a clear vision of the institutional environment and the researchers that use it. It was observed a growing interest in its these concepts. There was substantial increase in the volume of publications, active researchers, journals, in the number institutions housing active researchers and, in the average number of authors per work, showing an improvement in the permeability of these concepts in the Administration academic environment. However, few universities were active simultaneously in the two evaluated quinquennia and, the observations suggested a low institutionalization of the subject.

KEYWORDS: New Economic Sociology; Economic Sociology; Scientific Production; Interdisciplinary Studies; Sociology.

RESUMO

O objetivo deste artigo é estudar o ambiente de pesquisa que vem utilizando a Nova Sociologia Econômica para a produção científica de Administração no Brasil. Partindo dos benefícios da interdisciplinaridade, discute-se a importância da Sociologia para a Administração por meio dos aportes da Nova Sociologia Econômica, um campo voltado para a análise sociológica dos mercados. Realiza-se um levantamento sistemático e uma avaliação da produção científica que recorre à Nova Sociologia Econômica publicada em periódicos de referência na Administração de 2006 a 2015, assim como nos anais do Anpad, para mensurar e avaliar como a disciplina está permeando as discussões de gestão no Brasil. Como resultado, obtém-se uma visão dos principais veículos de difusão da pesquisa que se utiliza desta temática, além de oferecer uma visão mais clara do ambiente institucional e dos pesquisadores que se utilizam do tema. Foi observado um crescimento no interesse pelo uso de seus conceitos. Houve substancial elevação no volume (ajustado) de publicações, de pesquisadores ativos no tema, no número de periódicos, de instituições de ensino superior abrigando pesquisadores ativos e, na média de autores por trabalho, mostrando uma melhora na permeabilidade destes conceitos no ambiente acadêmico de Administração. No entanto, poucas universidades foram ativas simultaneamente nos dois quinquênios avaliados e foram observados elementos que sugerem a baixa institucionalização do tema.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Nova Sociologia Econômica; Sociologia Econômica; Produção Científica; Interdisciplinaridade; Sociologia.

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1 INTRODUCTION

The inability of single discipline knowledge to solve contemporary problems is often mentioned in diverse academic settings. Interdisciplinarity is expected to offer broader solutions because the integration of knowledge solves problems that individual disciplines are unable to solve in their own (Frodeman & Mitcham, 2007, Klein, 1990; 1996).

Challenging the single disciplinary knowledge does not mean rejecting rigor or neglecting standards, but rather broadening the intellectual context in which they are defined (Huutoniemi, 2012). The purpose of interdisciplinary research is precisely to advance the fundamental understanding to solve problems whose solutions are beyond the scope of a single field of research (Porter & Rafols, 2009).

A growing number of researchers have been working to deconstruct disciplinary knowledge and its frontiers (Lattuca, 2001). The proliferation of interdisciplinary funding programs, institutes and incentives geared towards this approach represents the materialization of a contrary tendency to specialization of science and a migration to a new axis (Cunningham, 1997; National Academy of Sciences, 2005), a phenomenon that has been happening in the social sciences (Abramovay, 2004).

Administration, which is an extremely complex field of the applied Social Sciences, in terms of epistemological frontiers, interacts in an interdisciplinary way with other sciences since its constitution (Santana & Gomes, 2007). Knowledge of other disciplines is essential to get immediate answers to situations of high complexity. To understand the systemic reality, Administration researcher's work becomes more complex and interdisciplinary (Vasconcelos, 2012; Cezarino & Corrêa, 2015).

The studies on organizations and management are a multireferential confluence of Sociology, Political Science, Anthropology, Psychology, History, Economics and Engineering (Fischer, 2001). In this context, organization researchers benefit from a greater familiarity with social scientists' research (Bruun, Langlais, & Janasik, 2000).

It is observed that Sociology performs fundamental contributions Administration (Vasconcelos & Cyrino, 2000; Vasconcelos, 2012) because, in addition to illuminating important aspects, allows understanding and improvement in organizational performance (Barney, Wright, & Ketchen, 2001) therefore, their contributions are becoming more and more prominent.

An evidence of this recognition is the special edition of 2015 Ebape Notebooks (*Cadernos Ebape*) in celebration for the centenary of the Brazilian sociologist Alberto Guerreiro Ramos. The tribute is justified in that periodic venue given the dialogue and contributions from Brazilian Sociology to Administration.

Besides that, data collection about scientific research has been contributing to the Brazilian Administration for many years (Machado-da-Silva, Cunha and Amboni, 1990; Caldas, 2003) and the pinnacle of its recognition was the the Forum of Brazilian Scientific Production in Administration, organized by the *Revista de Administração de Empresas* in 2013 (Bertero, Vasconcelos, Binder, & Wood, 2013).

Combining the the arguments that (1) underscore the benefits of interdisciplinary dialogue, (2) the importance of Sociology for Administration and (3) the contributions of the analysis of scientific production, the present paper studies the insertion of a branch of Sociology, focused on studying markets – the New Economic Sociology – in the Brazilian Administration scientific production.

This is a relevant approach. The New Economic Sociology has been showing what real interdisciplinary effort results for the development of scientific knowledge. By bringing together scientists from diverse knowledge fields, the discipline provides evidence of maturity in the production of knowledge by the researchers' self-criticism, recognizing limitations of their field, and the creation of broader and more rigorous analysis frameworks (Serva, 2002).

Interest in Economic Sociology is growing rapidly in the United States and Europe, and this discipline can become one of the twenty-first century's key player for the analysis of economic phenomena, competing with Neoclassical Economics, Game Theory and Behavioral Economics

(Swedberg, 2007). By proposing a simple idea but, with a great impact, sociologists had great influence illuminating study of markets (Lazzarini, 2011). And it appears as one of the most promising reactions of Sociology to the onslaught economic's "discursive imperialism" (Lopes, 2002).

In Brazil, the (New) Economic Sociology is an area with a recent organization. Its main initiation milestones were drawn between 2002 and 2007 notably by: (i) the special edition of the *Sociedade e Estado* journal with the first research collection published in Brazil, in 2002, (ii) the 1st Seminar about Economic Sociology at UFSC in 2003, (iii) the creation, in 2004, of the First Working Groupⁱ about Economic Sociology at Anpad, (iv) a collection by the main Brazilian sociologists in a especially devoted edition to the theme in *Social Tempo* in the same year, (v) seminars about the "análise sociológica dos fenômenos econômicos" in Anpocs' Annual Meeting in 2004 and 2005, (vi) the First Congress of Economic and Financial Sociology (UFSCar) in 2006, in addition to (vii) RAE's Economic Sociology Forum in 2007 (Martes, Loureiro, Abramovay, Serva, & Serafim, 2007; Serva & Andion, 2006).

That said, in Brazil, management journals – especially the *Revista de Administração de Empresas* – have been playing an important role in the consolidation of the New Economic Sociology, both through the publication of reference papers translated into Portugueseⁱⁱ, and the organization of thematic dossiers on Economic Sociologyⁱⁱⁱ.

The objective of this study is to identify the institutional context that the New Economic Sociology was used in the Brazilian research Administration papers. The presence of this discipline was measured in the main Brazilian management vehicles, verifying its growth tendency, the improvement in the quantity and quality of the author collaboration, the expansion of the interdisciplinarity of the researchers' degrees, its teaching institutions and its active geographies, besides the dynamics of training and attraction of researchers.

In summary, we seek to map and evaluate the insertion of the New Economic Sociology in the main Brazilian management journals, to obtain information about the institutional and academic profile of research.

2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The myth that all decisions are conscious and semiconscious underlies the economically neoclassical conception, which sees individuals as predictable, capable of making rational, optimizing decisions and with immutable preferences. It is assumed that all human behavior could be understood by asking people what they think and feel (Madsbjerg & Rasmussen, 2014; Dobbin, 2007).

Based on the dissatisfaction on economists' behavior models, which neglect social factors, sociologists have sought new tools and, one of the most important advances of Social Sciences in the last decades is a result of the effort to fill the gap created by the dominant economic vision (Swedberg, 2004). They sought use Sociology's concepts that best explain human behavior such as the social embeddedness, networks, motivations swings and socially constructed markets (Carruthers, 2005; Dobbin, 2007; Granovetter, 1992; Guillen, Collins, England, & Meyer, Hirsch, Michaels, & Friedman 1990; Smelser & Swedberg, 2005; Swedberg, Himmelstrand, & Brulin, 1990).

In this context, Economic Sociology has been pointed as one of the most promising fields of study of the Human Sciences. The core argument is that economic phenomena, often seen as an absolutely autonomous sphere, is eminently social. Economic actions would not blindly and uniformly accompany the concise and direct paths of rationalization. The market itself should not be seen only as price setting mechanism, capable of being understood through the application of universal and objective attributes.

Economic Sociology shows that the "hand" of the market is very visible and materializes in the cultural and legal institutions under which mercantile exchanges are based. There would, therefore,

be no absolute and abstract economic rationality, but rather "limited by context" – influenced by shared beliefs and norms that emerge from social relations as a whole (Palma & Truzzi, 2012).

In the light of these observations, even the most orthodox economists have been relaxing the hypothesis that trade occurs in impersonal and atomized markets (Lazzarini, 2011). Economic Sociology comes to challenge with the isolation of the *homo economicus* from conventional economics to focus deeply on the impact of the role of social relations and institutions on economic actions of all agents, individually and in the aggregate (Koppner & Alvarez, 2007; Swedberg, 2007).

The New Economic Sociology relies on assumptions that economic action is a form of social action. Granovetter (1990) uses the term *immersion*, coined by Polanyi (1944), which expresses the idea that economic actions are not autonomous as economic theory advocates. Actors would be subordinated to social goals such as sociability, recognition, status and power. Moreover, it is based on the concept that economic action is socially situated^{iv} and cannot be explained by individual reasons alone. It is proposed that economic institutions (like any others) do not automatically arise in an inevitable way – they would be socially constructed. By linking sociological and economic analysis, the discipline obtains a better explanation for socioeconomic facts than the explanation offered by individual theories (Granovetter, 1985; 1990; 1992; Lévesque, Bourque, & Forgues, 2001; Steiner, 2006; Swedberg, 2007). It allows one to access another way of analyzing economic activity. The specific objective of the discipline is to analyze the social construction of market relations and, the historical and social origin of economic phenomena. It examines how economic relations are inseparable of the social context, by studying economic facts as social facts. Among the main themes are the social construction of the market, the role of institutions and social networks in the economic life (Steiner, 2006).

The work of Granovetter (1985) marks the emergence of the New Economic Sociology (Smelser & Swedberg, 2010; Swedberg, 2004; Martes et al., 2007). In it, the author highlights the importance of the analysis of social relations in economic relations. To clarify, it contrasts the two visions: the analysis of the economy through the undersocialized view – when the actors behave rationally aiming at personal interest, taking decisions in an isolated way and independent of their social relations – is confronted with the sociological version – in which the behaviors are regulated by norms and social values acquired by socialization, called by Wrong (1961) of oversocialized.

On top of this contrast, Granovetter (1985) argues that actors do not behave or make decisions as atoms disconnected from the social context, nor do they adopt servile attitude, with a script written by virtue of the social categories they occupy.

Both views ignore the importance of social relations that, when inserted in the analysis, form a different image of the economy. His main contribution is the shift from criticism to the unrealistic concepts of rationality of economists to focus on its failure to incorporate the *social structure* into analysis. The author argues that *social structure* is relevant, since economic action is a social action. This openly criticizes the premise that the decisions of economic actors are taken in isolation – regardless of their social connections – a fundamental assumption of neoclassical economic theory (Zafirovski, 2001; Swedberg, 2004).

Much of what happens in markets is the consequence of social relations. In explaining the approach, the term *immersion* is used to argue that economic actions are immersed in systems of social relations – of interrelated social structures and economic activities. It is proposed that the core of economic ideas should be analyzed with the help of Sociology, using network theory, organizational theory and Cultural Sociology (Swedberg, 2004; Granovetter, 1985). Immersion contributes by providing a better understanding of how social networks impact relationships of trust, transaction costs, long-term relationships, and the occurrence of complex inter-firm transactions.

One of the most important themes of the New Economic Sociology is to study markets as social constructs and not as pricing mechanisms. Markets are no longer seen as an autonomous institutional sphere of the social life, and are be analyzed by their social construction. This involves

a critique of the traditional economy, in which markets are neutral mechanisms of equilibrium between homogeneous individuals and isolated from each other (Abramovay, 2009).

In Brazil, Serva (2002) and Serva and Andion (2006) highlight the relevance of the interdisciplinary dialogue between the New Economic Sociology and other Social Sciences, particularly with the Administration. The object of the organization is discussed as a complex social system. In this scenario, the contributions of the New Economic Sociology to the Theory of Organizations take place in three themes: in business competition, in business groups and in entrepreneurship.

Similarly, Machado and Nascimento (2012) investigate the contributions of the discipline to Administration. The authors do a bibliographical survey of articles that refer to Granovetter (1985) between 1985 and 2008. They find that there is certain discrepancy in the use of the article in the Brazilian scientific literature, compared to the result in foreign journals, a phenomenon similar to that proposed by Bertero, Vasconcelos, Binder and Wood (2013).

In a study of the property relations of the largest Brazilian companies between 1996 and 2009, Lazzarini (2011) uses several aspects of the New Economic Sociology to analyze what he calls "capitalism of ties" – defined as the relation of social actors oriented towards economic outcomes, a concept that is part of the New Economic Sociology. The researcher describes the importance of the state in the economy by showing an increasing degree of interweaving produced by the centrality of state-owned pension funds and the BNDES, in addition to the greater agglomeration of groups. In this context, elements of this theme are observed, such as (i) building reciprocal relationships (established to obtain benefits or gestures of support); (ii) alliances and strategies around political and economic interests based on a relationship model; (iii) relations of power and property; and (iv) influence on the performance of state-owned companies.

Understand in what context the research that uses the New Economic Sociology to clarify problems of the Administration in Brazil is a focus of this study.

3 METHODOLOGY

We conducted a study in the scientific literature that used the New Economic Sociology in Brazil, between 2006 and 2015, to evaluate the environment in which these studies were being carried out. We used three indexing platforms: Spell, SciELO, and Anpad's website. Inclusion to the database was based on three criteria.

First, by the presence (i) of the terms *economic sociology*, *new economic sociology* or *immersion*, in the title, in the keywords or, in the abstract. This activity was complemented by the reading of the studies to validate its relevance.

Then, it was only considered (ii) scientific papers published in the decade of 2006 to 2015, to evaluate the production disseminated after the first milestones that punctuated the insertion of the theme into the local researchers' agenda.

The last inclusion criteria was the presence of the studies in (iii) top management journals, rated B2 or higher (A1, A2, B1 and B2) by the Qualis-Capes 2014 index, in the Management, Accounting and Tourism segment.

Also, the study included researches published in Anpad's events, as long as it met the first two criteria, since the association develops a consistent work in the production of knowledge within the Brazilian Administration (Anpad, 2016) and, it has academic relevance (Vieira, 2003; Bertero et al., 2013).

Similar papers of the same author (or group of authors), with similar discussions or objects of study, were eliminated, keeping only the document of greater relevance, not to bias the database with repeated studies.

Subsequently, the author's and co-author's professional and academic information were collected using primarily information from the Lattes platform to analyze the typical researcher profile that uses New Economic Sociology. The four foreign researchers, who had their papers translated –

Mark Granovetter, Benoîte Lévesque, Neil Fligstein and Marie-France Garcia-Parpet – were left out, since this paper aims to analyze the academic studies authentically published in Brazil.

3.1 Analysis metrics

The document's data, its content, academic and professional relation were analyzed under two metrics: (a) the absolute numbers of authors, educational institutions and other aspects, and by the (b) proportional contribution (the corresponding fraction), weighting the variables by the number of researchers of each work.

4 RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

A total of 49 papers were obtained from the criteria above. That provided 73 different authors, composed of 66% of men and 34% of women, a distribution similar to that observed in Marketing (Mazzon & Hernandez, 2013) and Governance (Duarte, Cardozo, & Vicente, 2012), connected to 48 educational institutions at the time of analysis.

4.1 Knowledge diffusion vehicles

The analysis reveals that, despite the relative diversity of publishing vehicles (16), there is concentration. The *Revista de Administração de Empresas (RAE)* and the Anpad's events are the two vectors with the largest number of publishings, combining almost half (23 of 49 studies). The six sources with the largest presence – *RAE*, *Anpad*, *Cadernos EBAPE.BR*, *Revista de Administração Mackenzie (RAM)*, *Organizações & Sociedade (O&S) e Base* – hosted four fifths of the publications (80 %, or 39 studies). The other periodicals were, individually, the host of only one study in the evaluated decade (Figure 1).

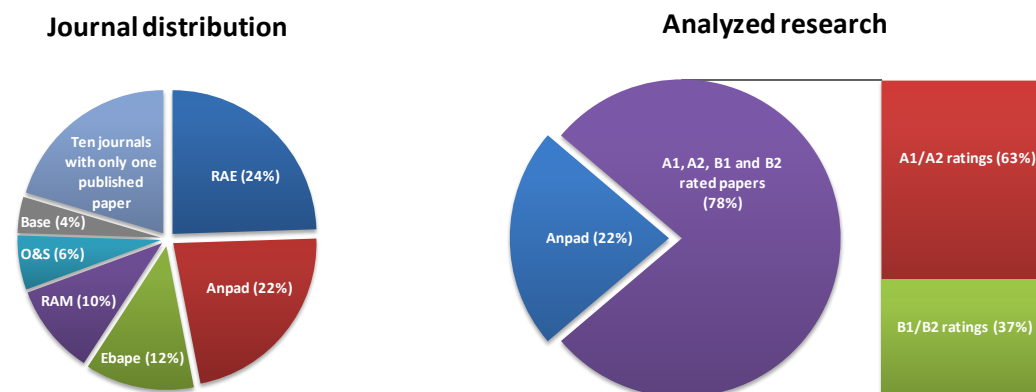


Figure 1 - Analyzed research
Source: Authors.

Observing the magazines ratings, one can notice a greater exposure to the top tier periodicals. The theme was present 24 times in A1 and A2 journals, compared to only 14 times in those rated as B1 or B2 (63% / 37%), while the remainder (11) were published by Anpad.

4.2 Interest growth

Despite the relative stability in the number of studies published between the first five years (2006- 2010) and second period (2011- 2015), when it was identified 25 and 24 papers, respectively, a deeper analysis suggests a more constructive view towards the scientific production

trend. The production of the first five-year period was positively influenced by an extraordinary event. The Forum of Economic Sociology, organized by the *RAE* in 2007, contributed with seven studies that met the criteria of this research, inflating the first period.

Excluding the articles from this special publication, that induced production of non-spontaneous research, the trend is positive. It was observed an increase of 33% between the periods, from 18 to 24 papers.

The usage of the theme, that combines Administration and Sociology, in the main Brazilian management journals is also advancing. The number of research published in journals grew 24% (from 17, to 21). Disregarding the seven articles of the Forum of Economic Sociology (2007), one can observe an expansion of 110%. Similarly, the number of journals delivering articles accessing the discipline grew 2.5x times. Starting from only four in the first period, it reached 14 in the second five-year term. This suggests the theme diversified its presence, showing progress in organization and maturity of the concept usage and application.

The other positive aspect observed in this interface is the substantial increase in the number of individuals who published in the second period. The number of active researchers (without double counting) grew by 31% – from 36 to 47 individuals – revealing another interest expansion trend, which can result in greater production in the coming years.

Regarding the reasons behind this expansion, it is believed that it can be explained by the greater dissemination and interest, by institutional incentives for research publication, in addition to the expansion of the *stricto sensu* administration undergrad programs in Brazil.

4.3 Author collaboration expansion

There was also a substantial improvement in collaboration between authors. It was observed a solid reduction single author production (from 47% of the studies, to 19%, in each five-year period) and a substantial increase research of three or more authors (from 12%, to 33% of total). These phenomena raised the average number of researchers per article from 1.6 to 2.3 (+ 39%).

This fact can be seen as positive because the joint production of scientific articles contributes to the exchange of experiences, supposedly increasing quality and making the papers more competitive, since the authors can bring complementary knowledge and research interests. In addition, it tends to promote an expansion of the number of researchers on the subject.

It should be noted that the increase in the number of researchers that supposedly leads to the development of better studies may also be due to the need to combine efforts to produce more competitive articles and the pressure to improve the evaluation of educational institutions in face of institutional requirements, as it has been observed in different administration areas (Bertero, Vasconcelos, & Binder, 2003; Vieira, 2003; Mazzon & Hernandez, 2013).

In a certain way, we hypothesized that proximity would stimulate the emergence of relationships (Gulati & Gargiulo, 1999; Provan, 1993) identified higher occurrence of multi-author research published works with researchers from different institutions.

Of the 36 multi-author researches, two-thirds (25) were performed only by authors of distinct professional links, which is positive for the quality of the research. The involvement of researchers from different institutions allows the connection of networks with smaller overlaps. Weak links (Granovetter, 1973) acts as bridges, capable of joining smaller groups of the society, connecting one network to another, expanding and strengthening its mesh, allowing acquisition of new knowledge and better disseminating information and ideas.

However, despite the positive bias of exchanges and academic complementarity, one can argue that this phenomenon can also be caused by the lack of researchers of with the same interest in their home institutions, making it necessary to search for external complementation.

In addition to the enrichment of the discussions by researchers from different institutions, it is worth highlighting the expansion of interdisciplinary competencies of researchers. The frequency of research with authors of complementary training expanded between the five-year periods. While only a quarter of lead authors held simultaneous training (at least one degree) in Business and

Social Sciences in the first period, the number of *hybrid* authors leading research increased to one-third in the second five-year period, allowing it leverage the combined knowledge of the different academic backgrounds.

4.4 Most active college institutions

Out of the 48 educational institutions that housed researchers in the 10 years analyzed, only slightly more than half (26) housed at least one active researcher in the first five years. In the following period, there was an improvement in diversification – materialized by the 15% increase in the number of educational institutions with active researchers (from 26 to 30), a tendency similar to the one observed in Marketing (Mazzon & Hernandez, 2013) and in Strategy (Rossoni et al., 2010).

In spite of this fragmentation, the authors affiliated to the ten most prolific institutions were responsible for almost half (49%) of the proportional contribution of the researchers with academic professional link, representing a level of concentration slightly above the 44% observed in Administration (Lourenço et al., 2014), and similar to the 47% observed in Strategy (Rossoni et al., 2010) and the 50% observed in Marketing (Mazzon & Hernandez, 2013). So your concentration level reveals similar to those seen in other mature disciplines.

Bertero, Vasconcelos and Binder (2003) explain that the concentration of authors has its counterpart in the concentration of higher education institutions. The existence of high levels of concentration is explained by the argument that scientific production is centralized. The largest and oldest programs contribute substantially to the scientific production. That said, a few institutions represent the bulk of the scientific production.

An interesting observation is the finding that only a small group of institutions had affiliated researchers that published simultaneously in the two five-year periods. Only eight of the 48 institutions (17%) housed authors who published in both periods of analysis: UFRGS, PUC-MG, UFMG, UFSJ, USP, PUC-PR, UFPR and UFSCar, whereas all of the other 40 educational institutions published in only one of the quinquennia.

Researchers linked to these eight educational institutions (one-sixth of the total) contributed proportionally to a total of 16.9 papers (equivalent to 37% of the output of researchers linked to educational institutions at the time of publication). This group reaped fruits of continuity. Its production grew 42% between the quinquennia, and expanded by 80% after adjusting for the Forum of Economic Sociology (2007).

Another take-away is that the two most productive institutions in the first five years – the Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte (UFRN) and the Positivo University (UP) – contributed with nothing in the second period. Investigating in further depth, two causes were observed. First, most of the researchers linked to the UP published only once throughout the studied period, a common reality in the New Economic Sociology.

That is, only 18% of the surveyed researchers published more than once during the decade evaluated. The share of Finance authors who published over a period of ten years was slightly higher (22%) (Leal, Almeida, & Bortolon, 2013), and slightly below the 25% observed in Marketing (Mazzon & Hernandez, 2013), possibly influenced by different selection criteria and due to its early-maturity stage.

The second cause warrants caution. Both universities have seen its researchers migrate to other institutions and, in the rare cases where researchers with two or more publications (in the ten years) have moved to another academic institution: (i) the original institution was unable to continue production (ii) the researcher continued to develop studies in his "new home".

That is, after the loss, there is no replenishment, nor the emergence of new researchers in the original institutions. The effect of losing the staff and the subsequent "halt" of the publications may indicate that the research engine is the researcher herself. The theme would not be part of the research strategy of educational institutions. The discussion of the theme would not be institutionalized in the teaching environment. Essentially, there is dependence on researchers to

articulate discipline. The actors catalyzing the New Economic Sociology in Brazil would be the researchers, not the academic environments.

Indirectly, these findings reinforce the idea that: (i) talent attraction plays an important role in research (as will be discussed below) and may indicate the houses that has been fostering research on the subject, (ii) reinforces the importance expanding multi-author publications (to broaden the research network and to seed more interest), (iii) put the researcher as the engine of the research, (iv) underline the idea that the discussions are catalyzed in researchers' networks not in institutional networks, (v) suggest a weak institutionalization of research using the New Economic Sociology, (vi) may explain the low recurrence of institutions housing active researchers in the two quinquennia, (vii) besides the low percentage of co-authors within the same institution (the lack of peers and internal support forces the search for external partners), and (viii) tends to inhibit the author to publish multiple papers.

4.5 Researcher training and absorption dynamics

The researchers' curriculum was also analyzed to discover the institutions that most conferred academic degrees to active authors ("researcher trainer institutions"). This result was compared to the institutions that most housed active researchers ("researcher receiver") to assess the dynamics of talent training and attraction.

Paradoxically, four of the six institutions with the greatest proportional publication volume (UFRGS, PUC-MG, UP and UFSJ) played a supporting role in training researchers that used the New Economic Sociology in Brazil. They absorbed in excess than it conferred degrees to active researchers, suggesting that the attraction of talents plays a relevant role when producing theme related research. Only UFRN and UFMG showed a balanced level of training and absorption.

In turn, USP was the institution that most conferred degrees to active researchers in the subject – totaling 24 degrees to 16 individuals. The most active area training these researchers was related to Management, with 63% of these degrees, followed by Social Sciences with 21%, and 13% by Environmental Scientists. This institution permeated the formation of almost a quarter of all researchers. However, few have formed a professional link with it, which may be explained by its natural vocation and by Capes' institutional evaluation incentives that avoid academic endogeneity. His former students produced 4.6 equivalent assignments (in this case, weighted by the number of authors of each paper, and by the amount of degrees that USP awarded to each researcher) – a result 56% above the second place, UFSC –whereas it published only 1.5 equivalent papers. USP was a net donor of researchers, training several professionals who migrated to other universities.

4.6 Analysis of the most active geographies

From the geographic point of view, the most active educational institutions are located in the Southeast and South regions – contributing proportionally to 79% of national production, slightly higher than the 72% observed in Reverse Logistics (Castro, Pires, & Costa, 2015), close to Strategy's 82% (Rossoni et al., 2010) and below 92% of Finance (Leal et al., 2013).

It is important to highlight the significant contribution of Rio Grande do Norte. Adding its 12% to the South / Southeast axis, it reaches 92% of the contribution of authors with professional ties in Brazil.

5 FINAL REMARKS

After highlighting the benefits of interdisciplinarity and the tendency against specialization, the relevance and recognition of the contributions of Sociology to Administration were discussed, notably through the New Economic Sociology. Next, the characteristics of the researches that used the discipline were discussed using, as basis, the mains Brazilian management academic forums between 2006 and 2015.

The numerical analysis of the publications derived three types of results: (i) those that showed a tendency of growth and enrichment of the discussions in this environment, (ii) the findings that showed that the research that uses the New Economic Sociology have similar profile publications to that of other Administration disciplines, and finally, (iii) some aspects that deserve attention were identified.

As observed in other countries, several observations suggest a constructive future for the assessed subject. The presence of the discipline in the main discussion forums has been growing. There was a 33% increase in its (adjusted) publication volume between the quinquennia, driven by the 110% increase in the (adjusted) number of studies in journals (from 10 to 21) and by the growth of 2.5x in the number of journals that publish the articles.

The interest expansion was also observed in the increase in the number of active authors. The number of individuals (without double counting) increased 31%, a fact that is especially important to foster a perennial growth, given the low institutionalization of this research field and the high dependence on individuals.

The level of authorial collaboration has flourished. There was an increase of 39% in the average number of researchers in each paper (from 1.6 to 2.3) and the percentage of multi-author articles increased from 53% to 81% in the second five-year period, allowing greater knowledge exchange among the author groups.

Another important characteristic for the acquisition and diffusion of knowledge was the fact two-thirds of the studies were carried out solely by researchers of different institutions and, the expansion of the number of lead researcher with simultaneous interdisciplinary training in Administration and Sociology – allowing it to leverage the knowledge from different institutions and with different degrees.

It was also observed that the research that use the field presents similar profiles to other disciplines of the Administration. Its distribution of genres, the contribution of the academic production of the ten most prolific institutions and the geographic presence are some of the evaluations carried that indicated that the publication profile is similar to those observed in other disciplines.

The remaining observations deserve further investigation. First, the small number of educational institutions that had researchers publishing simultaneously in the two quinquennials (only eight universities / 17% of the total) attracted attention.

It was also observed a situation that appears to be a lack of institutionalization in the promotion of research on the subject. The incentive and powerhouse of the New Economic Sociology research seems to be the researchers. There appears to be no strong institutional support. Academic departments would not encourage and stimulate research in this academic field. Scientific production is in the hands of the researchers.

When the university loses its researchers, there seems to be no renewal or replacement. That is, the scientific production that uses the discipline ceases at the origin university (house where the researcher left). On the one hand, this shows characteristics of a field still under construction, offering a vast opportunity for substantial expansion.

Another aspect that draws attention is that four of the six institutions with the highest publication volume (UFRGS, PUC-MG, UP and UFSJ) played a supporting role in training of researchers. They absorbed more than conferred degrees to active researchers, underlining the importance of attracting talent for producing research. In turn, USP was the institution that most conferred degrees to researchers who used the topic. However, it had a low level of retention. Its staff only published two research papers, and at the time of the research, the university counted with only one researcher (out of the 69 individuals), despite having trained 16 active individuals in the subject.

Finally, in addition to observing increasing contributions of the New Economic Sociology, the findings of this research show that the field has played an important role in the advancement of management in Brazil. It has been used to analyze relevant and diverse problems.

A series of indicators suggest an increase of interest in light of its capacity to offer better answers to the objects of research, besides illustrating the growth of the discipline. The analysis suggests a promising way to the discipline in the Brazilian management segment.

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ⁱ The creation of research groups is particularly important for the promotion of research, reflecting the increase in cooperation and in improving the quality of the work (Bertero, Vasconcelos, & Binder, 2003).

ⁱⁱ Mark Granovetter (Granovetter, 2007); Benoît Lévesque (Lévesque, 2007); Marie-France Garcia-Parpet (Garcia-Parpet, 2007); Neil Fligstein (Fligstein, 2007).

ⁱⁱⁱ Forum of Economic Sociology of RAE (2007).

^{iv} Means that the economic actions (as well as all actions) of the individuals are not performed autonomously, but are immersed in continuous systems of relationships or social networks, so they don't act of atomized way.