

Received: 12/24/2019

Accepted: 04/24/2020

RURAL YOUTH FROM RIO GRANDE DO SUL / BRAZIL: GENDER ISSUES IN GENERATIONAL SUCCESSION

JOVENS RURAIS DO RIO GRANDE DO SUL/BRAZIL: QUESTÕES DE GÊNERO NA SUCESSÃO GERACIONAL

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Abstract

Gender issues involved in the process of rural succession in Brazil are present in the research agenda related to concern for the future of rural areas. Taking these aspects into consideration, the objective was to identify whether young rural women from Rio Grande do Sul (RS) project their future in the countryside, intend to be successors of their family's rural property, or envision a future in the urban environment. Allied to this, we sought to identify factors that influence family succession and the permanence of these young people in the field, as well as possible gender distinctions involved in this process. For the survey of quantitative data we used a closed questionnaire, applied in the second half of 2018 to 743 young rural men and women who attended high school in RS. Although 47.9% of young people are interested in staying in rural areas, young women, when compared to young men, are less encouraged by their parents to stay on the property, have less interest in all aspects that address rural issues, such as being a successor (28.6%), being a manager (31.5%), and stay on property (33.5%). Issues related to non-recognition of female work and the difficulties encountered in working in the countryside, as well as possibilities for professionalization and gain of autonomy in the urban environment, drive the interest of young women in leaving the countryside.

Keywords: Young women Family farming. Passage of the patrimony.

Resumo

Questões de diferenciação de gênero no processo de sucessão familiar rural no Brasil estão presentes no cenário machista que compromete o futuro do meio rural. Levando em consideração estes aspectos, objetivou-se identificar se as jovens mulheres rurais do Rio Grande do Sul (RS) projetam seu futuro no campo, pretendem ser sucessoras da propriedade rural de sua família, ou vislumbram um futuro no meio urbano. Aliado a isto, buscou-se identificar fatores que influenciam a sucessão familiar e a permanência destas jovens no campo, bem como possíveis distinções de gênero

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envolvidas neste processo. Para o levantamento de dados quantitativos utilizou-se de questionário fechado, aplicado no segundo semestre de 2018 a 743 jovens homens e mulheres rurais que cursavam o Ensino Médio no RS. Pode-se constatar que, apesar de 47,9% dos jovens terem interesse em permanecer no meio rural, as jovens mulheres, quando comparadas aos jovens homens, além de serem menos incentivadas pelos pais a permanecer na propriedade, têm menos interesses em todos os aspectos que se relacionam com o meio rural, como: ser sucessor (28,6%), ser gestor (31,5%), e permanecer na propriedade (33,5%). O não reconhecimento e desvalorização do trabalho feminino, as dificuldades encontradas no trabalho no campo, além de possibilidades de profissionalização e ganho de autonomia no meio urbano, impulsionam o interesse das jovens mulheres em sair do meio rural.

Palavras-chave: Jovens mulheres. Agricultura familiar. Passagem do patrimônio.

Introduction

Family farming is the type of farming with the most amount of properties worldwide, characterized by belonging to and being managed by one or more members of a family (MACDONALD; KORB; HOPPE, 2013). There is growing concern about the continuity of family farms. Continuity depends on the success in the process of transferring assets to the next generation and the permanence of at least one member of the family in charge of the work, managing the property and supporting parents in old age (BOSCARDIN; CONTERATO, 2018).

Rural families are struggling to complete the process of property succession, creating social and economic problems (BOSCARDIN; CONTERATO, 2018). Research on "rural succession" is related to the prospects of rural properties. Attention to rural youth, key agents in this process, is essential (ONUBR, 2016; BREITENBACH; CORAZZA, 2019).

In addition to the heterogeneity of Brazilian rural youth (GALINDO, 2019), there are gender disparities in the succession process both in Brazil and internationally (HEREDIA; CINTRÃO, 2006; REDIN et al., 2013; DEERE; LÉON, 2003). The following stand out: the sexual division of agricultural work; parents' preference of male children as successors (FARIA, 1995; MENASCHE et al., 1996; SILVA, 2019; REDIN et al., 2013; DEERE; LÉON, 2003); the differences of living conditions, treatment, recognition, remuneration, autonomy, and opportunities between men and women in agriculture (HEREDIA; CINTRÃO, 2006).

This gender bias manifests itself since women's childhood, following a patriarchal tradition present in Brazilian (ANJOS; CALDAS; COSTA, 2006), Latin American (KESSLER, 2005), Australian (CROCKETT, 2004; ALSTON, 2004) and Indian agriculture (GUPTA, 1987). Male labor is valued more than female labor, and activities that do not generate income or that are considered as just assistance are delegated to women. This excludes women from the succession process (MALÁN, 2016).

Moreover, in the rural environment of Rio Grande do Sul (RS), Brazil, there is an intensification of masculinization, a selective exodus of women aged 15 to 24, a reduction in birth rates, an increase in the elderly population, as well as a predominant male population aged 15 to 29 years (FROEHLICH et al., 2011; CORAZZA; DEMAMAN; BREITENBACH, 2015). These factors can compromise succession of rural properties, as well as interfere in social and productive dynamics (TROIAN; BREITENBACH, 2018).

Many young people aspire to future jobs outside the country. Some of the main reasons are difficulties and uncertainties related to agricultural work, greater opportunities in the urban labor force, access to study and facilities (CASTRO et al., 2013). For many young people, the desire to live, study and work in the city exceeds the future expectations that rural areas offer. This scenario has been observed in previous researches, as well as some observations of the reality of RS. This issue raises concern both in rural families or in the academic community. Specifically parents who need successors at present or in the future are concerned and uncertain about the future of their children and farms. While children are insecure regarding generational succession and their financial and professional future.

Taking into account the problems of rural succession and gender, the main questions of this project were: *How do gender differences impact permanence in the countryside and farm succession in RS? What are the main factors that influence young women to stay in or leave agriculture?*

The general objective was to identify if young rural women of RS project themselves into the future in the countryside, if they intend to be successors of their family's rural properties, or if they aspire to a future in the city. The specific objectives were: a) to identify the factors that influence the permanence of young women in the countryside and family farm succession; b) to identify the differences between the male and female gender regarding migration, succession and their motivations.

Rural youth and permanence in rural properties

The socialization of successors, since their childhood, with the typical activities and daily life of rural properties are factors that positively assist in the process of transferring management, assets and the consequent farm succession (MALÁN, 2016). This also encourages successors to choose pursuing studies in areas related to agricultural sciences (BREITENBACH; CORAZZA, 2019). In addition, the success of the succession process is related to the investment of the patriarchs in the property (VIIRA; PÖDER; VÄRNIK, 2014), which can motivate those who may foresee a prosperous future in that line of work.

The exodus of young rural women has specific motivations, among them: the incentive they receive from the family for educational training and the lack of incentive to stay in the countryside; the modernization process in agriculture that has resulted in the devaluation of female labor in farming; their lack of leadership and autonomy; and the fact that they are not considered for land inheritance (CAMARANO; ABRAMOVAY, 1999; ANJOS; CALDAS, 2005; BRUMER, 2004).

Farming in the southern region of Brazil is one of the most masculine and aging practices (ANJOS; CALDAS, 2005). In the state of RS, 87.9% of the owners of agricultural establishments are men, while only 12.1% are women. This result demonstrates the scarce participation of women as managers and rural landowners. 3.6% of the total owners of agricultural establishments are under the age of 30 and 38.9% are over the age of 60 (IBGE, 2017). Considering that young people are the renewing force to develop the rural environment and the family form of organizing work and production, in the medium and long term, this scenario represents the commitment of the succession process of agricultural activity, risking the sustainability of this process and rural society as a whole (BOSCARDIN; SPANEVELLO, 2018).

This has already been observed in the 2% reduction in the number of family properties when compared to the agricultural censuses of the years 2006 and 2017. In addition, there was a reduction in the average number of persons employed by the establishment, which went from 3.2 people in 2006 to 3.0 people in 2017 (IBGE, 2006, 2017). Changes in the population pattern of families are evident, with a drop in fertility levels and migration towards urban areas (BOSCARDIN; SPANEVELLO, 2018).

Thus, it is essential to develop studies to map the interests and demands of rural youth, in order to support efforts that encourage them to stay in the countryside by offering quality of life and professional achievement. Considering gender issues present in all spheres, it is imperative to investigate aspects of gender distinctions in agriculture and generational succession. For this reason, the historic preference of sons as successors over daughters can influence the decision of young people to leave or remain in the countryside, as well as it can be decisive for the future of agriculture. This was an issue addressed in the study. The discussions in the following section, "Gender and rural succession in agriculture", were considered as part of its theoretical basis.

Gender and rural succession in agriculture

Marriage is one of the most important cultural dimensions in the analysis of family farming. There is a historical trend of resistance by young women farmers to marry rural men. This increases the female rural exodus (STROPASOLAS, 2004).

Women not only consider housing options in rural or urban areas, but also notions of 'independence and dependence'. In other words, they do not migrate to an urban environment in search of a better living condition, but rather especially for the independence that this choice can offer (STROPASOLAS, 2004). Women find greater autonomy in the city, greater ease of insertion into the world of labor and society. This is the result of the gender division in rural properties and families. Male labor is more recognized, while female roles are engulfed by prejudice (VILLWOCK; GERMANI; RONCATO, 2016; SILVA, 2019).

In international and Brazilian literature, there is a consensus on the low recognition of women in agriculture (VILLWOCK; GERMANI; RONCATO, 2016). Worldwide, the division of labor in agriculture is defined according to gender: men prefer farming and exercising the role of successor to properties, which is generally the case in Latin American countries, not excluding Brazil (VILLWOCK; GERMANI; RONCATO, 2016; DEERE; LÉON, 2003). This is also observed throughout history in several European countries, the United States of America, Australia and England (LOBLEY, 2010; SIMEONE, 2007; GLOVER, 2014). This preference for men is due to patriarchal traditions, such as in Latin America (KSSELER, 2005) and India (GUPTA, 1987); due to religion, such as in Australia (SUESS-REYES; FUETSCH, 2016; CROCKETT, 2004); as well as due to social culture, such as in India (SHARMA; RAO, 2000).

Some countries evidence changes in this scenario, indicating greater democratization in the division of land, as for example Argentina (NEIMAN, 2013). Women have also participated in the diversification of activities in rural properties in Canada –through their insertion in organic agriculture (HALL; MOGYORODY, 2007)– and in the USA –with the insertion of family properties in the processed fruit market (INWOOD; SHARP, 2012)–. In Estonia, in the case of properties where men have a different source of income, women are protagonists in agricultural activities that were previously male-dominated (GRUBBSTRÖM; SOOVÄLI-SEPPING, 2012).

Research conducted internationally shows that public policies are promising instruments for young people to be encouraged to remain in agricultural activities. Europe has the best and most promising initiatives in public policies to encourage young people to stay in the countryside. However, there is still a need to improve the way they are built, and to demand such public policies to be followed, since they are generally designed without clear communication between government and farmers and since they exclude effective participation of young people in their creation and consolidation (VIIRA; PÖDER; VÄRNIK, 2014; ĐURIĆ; NJEGOVAN, 2015).

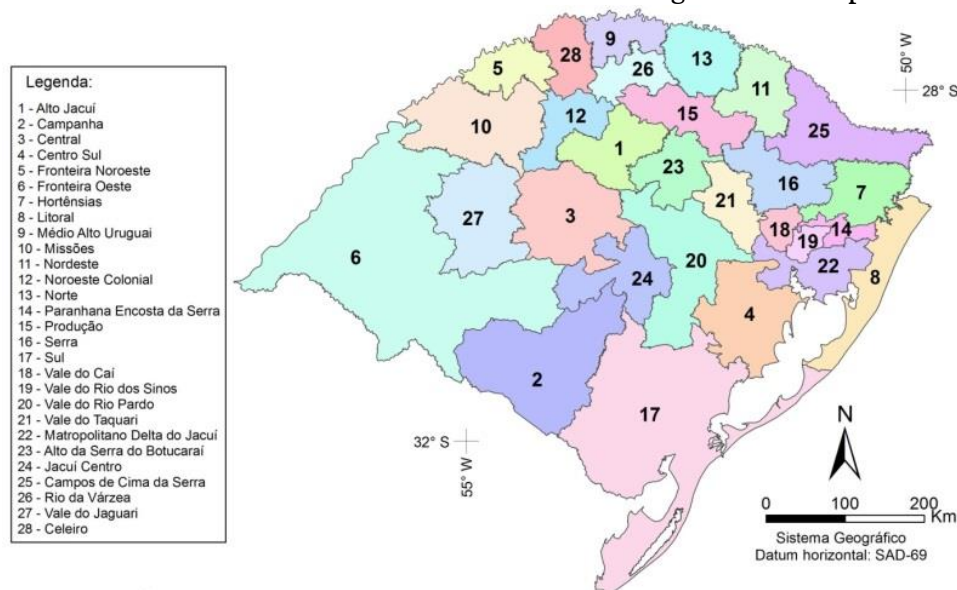
Methodology

The methodology is mixed, using both quantitative and qualitative techniques. Mixed research promotes interaction between qualitative and quantitative aspects, using descriptive data pertinent to the researched problem, complementing with quantitative data and statistical analysis (COE, 2012). The qualitative analysis was done when performing bibliographic research, used to build the basic theory of the study, to debate, explain and collate the results of the quantitative research, following Creswell (2007). The quantitative aspect was based on empirical research data, with a closed questionnaire, sequential data tabulation, and statistical analysis.

The main methodological aspects of this research are presented below:

- a) **Empirical research period:** Second semester of 2018;
- b) **Research target audience:** Rural youth, children of farmers, aged 14–21, high school students from municipal, state and federal schools in Rio Grande do Sul (RS), Brazil, from all state regions. The choice of the target audience was due to the process that has taken place since 1940, of rural youths leaving the countryside and migrating to urban areas (CASTRO et al., 2013). The age group is justified by the historical transformation in the profile of people who migrate to the city, since the age of migrating has been reducing and therefore the chances of young people under 20 years of leaving the countryside have increased (CAMARANO; ABRAMOVAY, 1999; IBGE, 2010).
- c) **Education level sampled:** The period of high school education is important in the lives of rural youth. When they finish this school period, they have to decide which path to follow. This is the period in which they choose whether to pursue higher education and, if so, whether they will opt for studies related to agribusiness or a different area (BREITENBACH; CORAZZA, 2017).
- d) **Geographical delimitation of the study:** In order to obtain a representation of rural youths who attend high school in RS, the research covered the 28 regions of COREDES (Regional Development Councils) in RS (Figure 1). The questionnaires were answered in 56 high schools across 56 state municipalities. These were intentionally selected, considering including one school per municipality and two municipalities for each region.

Figure 1: Division of the State of Rio Grande do Sul based on Regional Development Councils.



Source: Adapted from Regional Development Councils (Coredes) of Rio Grande do Sul-2008, by Fundação de Economia e Estatística [FEE], 2009, Maps: FEE. Available in: <http://mapas.fee.tche.br/wp-content/uploads/2009/08/coredes_rs_2008.png>. Access in 23/06/2019.

e) **The instrument used for data collection in the empirical research:** The empirical data was obtained from a closed questionnaire, previously elaborated, as directed by Babbie (2003). The questionnaire was applied in classrooms and directed to all students in the sampled high schools. The questionnaire consisted of seven sections of questions, based on Breitenbach and Corazza (2017, 2019) (Table 1).

Table 1: Organization of the questionnaire used for data collection.

Parts	Objectives
Part 1	Identify the profile of young people: Age; genre; marital status; lives with parents;
Part 2	Recognize the property profile: Size; location; activities; family nucleus;
Part 3	Identify the intentions of academic training and rural succession: Intention to enter college, to remain on the property after high school, to be a manager and successor and to live in the urban environment; parents' motivation to attend college and stay in rural areas;
Part 4	Identify the incentive received by young people for rural succession and to remain in rural areas; financial incentive and motivations to stay in rural areas;
Part 5	Identify aspects related to youth participation in management, work and rural succession: Participation in work, management and decision making on the property;
Part 6	List conditions of permanence in rural areas: Difficulties, uncertainties and valorization of agricultural work; social and political programs; valuing family traditions; delay in the succession process; several generations in the same land; recreation; food and housing.

Source: Prepared by the authors.

f) **Research participation:** To participate in the research, young students declared themselves as rural youth, with direct relations with the rural environment, living in a family of farmers and with income from agricultural activities.

g) **Respondents:** The number of respondents was 743 rural youth.

h) **Data tabulation and statistical analysis:** The data obtained from the questionnaires were tabulated in a spreadsheet developed in Microsoft Office Excel®. Statistical analysis was performed using the PSPP statistical program. This program is free and used as an alternative to SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science for Windows). Univariate and bivariate analyses in Social Sciences (FONSECA; FARIAS, 2011) can be performed with the software. The statistical analyses are described in Table 2.

Table 2: Statistical analyzes performed in the present research and corresponding descriptions.

Analysis	Description
Descriptive analysis	Analysis of the frequency of the variables considered in each question of the closed questionnaire;
Bivariate analysis	Performed using the Chi-Square test, to identify the correlation between two categorical variables and to assess the existence of independence between two qualitative variables. In this analysis, all variables were crossed. The Chi-Square independence test considers that the hypotheses are analyzed as follows: H0: There is no correlation between the variables; H1: There is a correlation between variables. For the Chi-Square test, the level of significance was considered to accept or reject the H0 hypothesis of $p < 0.05$.

Source: Prepared by the authors.

i) **Analysis and discussion of results:** This step used qualitative data gathered from bibliographic research, with which quantitative data was discussed, corroborating or contrasting the results of empirical research.

Results and Discussion

The results obtained through a survey of 743 rural youths who attended high school in 53 schools in the state of RS in 2018 are hereby presented. They are subdivided into three sessions and later followed by discussions based on national and international bibliographic-scientific research.

Sample profile regarding study and rural succession interests

Of the 743 young participants, aged between 14 and 21 years, 46.7% were women, and 53.3% were men. In Brazil, 50.41% of the age group of 10 to 24 years old is composed of young men (IBGE, 2010). This is corroborated by the fact that the gross birth rate in Brazil has decreased over the years. In 2000, it was 20.86 (per thousand inhabitants), while the projection was down to 14.16 (per thousand inhabitants) by 2015 (IBGE, 2013). This has encouraged greater recent discussion about family succession, and has also alerted to the importance of looking after properties and honoring the proper succession process.

The continuity of rural properties is linked to the process of rural family succession. This process is determined by the passage of property, of tangible and intangible goods, from the older generation to the younger generation. In Figures 2 and 3, the intentions of professionalization of young people in RS will be presented, and the interest of young people to remain in rural properties, with a special focus on gender differences.

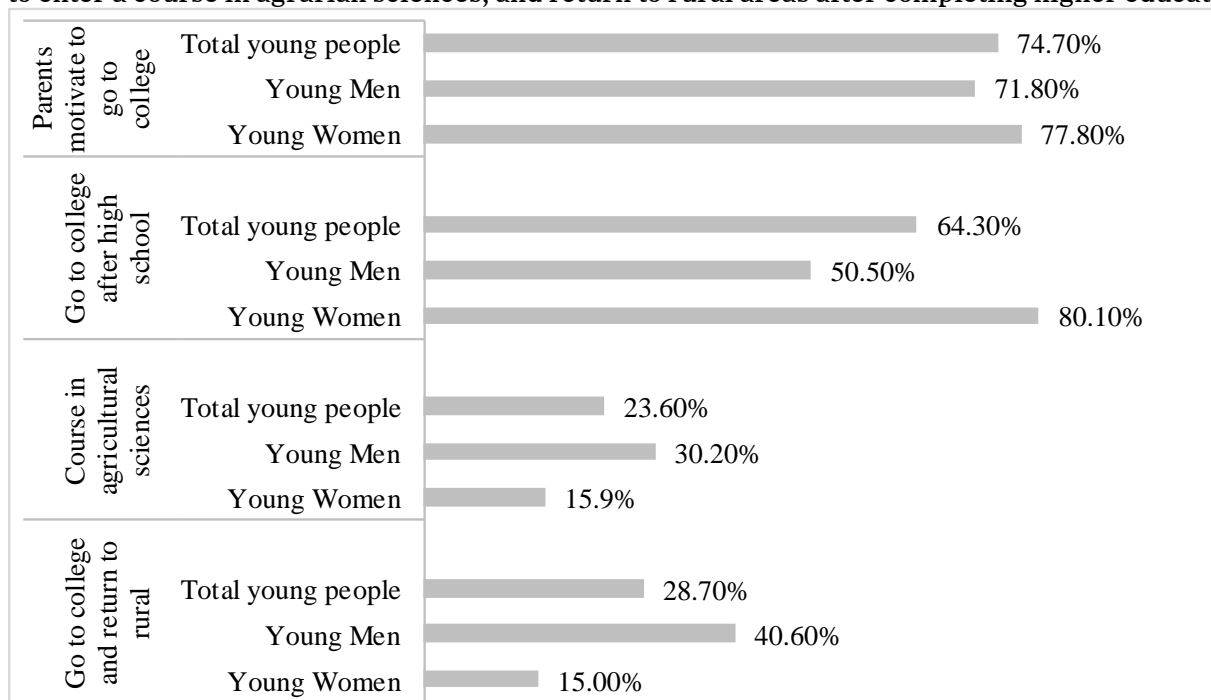
74.7% of the total of young people feel very motivated by their parents to attend college (71.8% of young men and 77.8% of young women). However, after completing high school, 64.3% of young people are interested in entering college, while 24.2% have not yet decided. 80.1% of young women and 50.5% of young men intend to go to college.

Out of those who wish to go to college, only 30.2% of young men and 15.9% of young women want to study agricultural sciences. 40.6% of young men and 15% of young women intend to return to rural properties after college. The incentive for agricultural education is essential to expand the interests and intentions of young people to remain in rural areas. When considering the case of Ireland, this type of education (agricultural) is increasingly more prevalent, being driven by financing policies, which provide training for future farmers (MCKILLOP; HEANUE; KINSELLA, 2018).

National and international surveys show that young people who choose to pursue studies in areas related to agriculture are more likely to return to the countryside, when compared to rural young people of the same age group who do not (CAVICCHIOLI et al., 2015; POTTER; LOBLEY, 1996; BREITENBACH; CORAZZA, 2017).

Professionalization is a positive factor for the future in agriculture. Technological advances increase the demand for professionals who know how to manage and select pertinent information to develop and improve rural properties (BREITENBACH; CORAZZA, 2019). However, in Brazil, the percentage of rural owners who cannot read or write is 23.1%, while in RS this percentage is 3.6% (IBGE, 2017). Owners who have higher education are 5.55% in Brazil and 6.17% in RS (IBGE, 2017). If compared to 2006, the percentage of educated farmers has increased, as it was 2.82% in Brazil and 3.22% in RS (IBGE, 2006).

Figure 2: Motivation of young people in Rio Grande do Sul to attend college after high school, as well as to enter a course in agrarian sciences, and return to rural areas after completing higher education.

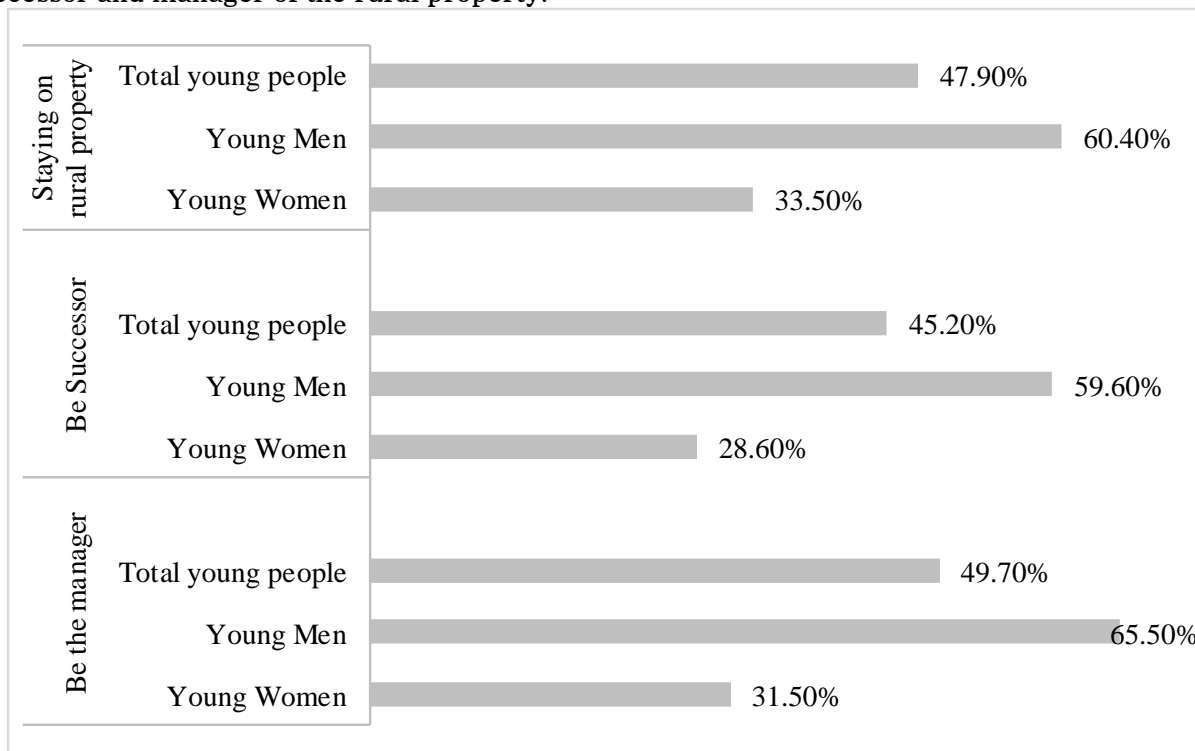


Source: Prepared by the authors based on the research data.

Figure 3 shows the results regarding young people's interest to remain on rural properties, to become property successors and managers. Young women are less interested in staying on their parents' property (also found by BREITENBACH; CORAZZA, 2019; HEREDIA; CINTRÃO, 2006). Only 33.5% of all young women are highly interested in staying on the property and in the countryside, while 28.6% are interested in becoming property successors, and 31.5% in becoming managers. Young men show more interest in all aspects listed.

Part of this is why women are at a disadvantage and their role is minimized in rural property activities (ABRAMOVAY et al., 1998; BREITENBACH; CORAZZA, 2019). They remain as helpers, taking care of household chores or with less participation in the activities of the property that generate income, without receiving remuneration or recognition, suffering gender prejudices, which in turn discourages them (DEERE; LÉON, 2003; KESSLER, 2005; GRUBBSTRÖM; SOOVÄLI-SEPPING, 2012; BREITENBACH; CORAZZA, 2019). Consequently, there is greater autonomy and participation of young men on the property (SUESS-REYES; FUETSCH, 2016).

Figure 3. Perspectives of young people in Rio Grande do Sul to remain in the countryside, be the successor and manager of the rural property.



Source: Prepared by the authors based on the research data.

Hall and Mogyorody (2007), in a study conducted in Canada, and Inwood and Sharp (2012), in a study conducted in the USA, emphasize the importance that women have gained in property management activities with diversification. In these cases, there is a greater insertion of women, giving greater visibility, encouraging and appreciating their role on the properties, encouraging their interest in staying in the countryside (VIIRA; PÖDER; VÄRNIK, 2014; SUESS-REYES; FUETSCH, 2016).

Factors that influence young people's permanence in the countryside and their interest in family succession

Based on research such as that of Prediger (2009), Castro et al. (2013), Brumer (2007), Breitenbach and Corazza (2017), Viira, Pöder and Värnik (2014), Calus (2009), Conway et al. (2016), among others, some aspects that motivate young people to leave or stay in rural areas were selected. These were used as a basis for the construction of the questionnaire and were confronted with the rural youth of RS to position themselves on the different factors.

Table 3 shows the conditions that contribute to the permanence or not of rural youth in the countryside in RS in order of importance, by gender.

Table 3: Conditions that motivate young people in Rio Grande do Sul to leave or stay in rural areas.

	Conditioning	% of motivated young people		
		Total young people	Young Women	Young Men
Reasons for leaving the countryside	More possibilities for study, employment and professional growth outside the field.	45.2	60.7	31.7
	Devalued agricultural work.	37.8	45.7	30.7
	Low incentive with public policies.	30.8	34.7	27.7
	Devaluation of female labor in rural areas.	29.2	41.9	18.3
	Uncertainties in agricultural activities.	29.1	38.2	21.1
	Little access to: leisure, internet and urban facilities.	27.9	35.8	21.1
	Little remuneration for the agricultural activities that it develops.	27.7	33.5	22.6
	Low investment in rural property (technologies and improvements).	27.2	31.5	23.6
	Difficulty in starting a family in rural areas.	23.0	22.8	23.1
	He doesn't like agriculture.	21.1	30.9	12.7
	Complaints from parents about the farming profession.	20.5	26.3	15.2
	Amount of land area of your parents (little).	19.8	22.0	18.0
	Low incentive for parents to stay in rural areas.	19.3	23.4	15.5
	No autonomy to make decisions on rural properties.	16.5	22.0	11.9
	It has three generations still on the rural property.	10.9	13.6	8.6
	Agriculture doesn't make money.	10.0	11.3	8.9
Ashamed to be a farmer.	5.4	4.3	6.4	
Reasons to stay in the countryside	Leisure and tranquility in the countryside.	80.2	80.0	80.5
	Quality of life in rural areas.	78.5	80.1	76.9
	Proud to be a farmer.	72.4	70.2	74.4
	Cheap food and housing.	72.1	70.8	73.1
	Agriculture as a good income alternative.	70.1	65.0	74.6
	Trust relationship with neighbors and community.	65.4	61.6	68.8
	Appreciation of family traditions.	65.3	61.0	69.1
	Good remuneration for the activities carried out in the field.	64.3	60.7	67.5
	He likes the profession of a farmer.	63.3	52.6	72.6
	Investment that parents make in rural property.	61.4	56.7	65.5
	Parents give autonomy to participate in rural property decisions.	58.4	48.3	67.3
	Parents encourage them to stay in the countryside.	56.8	46.3	65.7
	Amount of land that parents have (sufficient).	56.8	49.1	63.2
	Encouragement of private and cooperative organizations.	54.0	48.0	59.4
Incentive of public policies.	38.4	27.5	48.0	

Source: Prepared by the authors based on the research data.

It can be seen that the possibility of study, employment and professional growth outside the countryside is the factor that most influences people leaving the countryside, especially young women. Subsequently, the low valuation of farming, the lack of incentive from public policies, the devaluation of female workers in rural areas and the uncertainties regarding agricultural activities, as factors pointed out by young people, and in a higher percentage by young women, stand out as the reasons that most contribute to the desire to leave the countryside.

The aspect related to being ashamed of being a farmer is something that motivates only 5.4% of young people to leave the countryside. This indicates that, despite having reasons to leave, young people are proud of their profession as farmers, since 72.4% indicate an emotional connection with agriculture as a reason to stay in rural areas.

As in Brazil, in the European Union, the rural exodus is related to the absorption of agricultural workers by the non-agricultural sector (OLPER et al., 2014). Many young people intend to leave the countryside in Estonia, Ireland and Belgium, due to a lack of interest in agriculture, low level of knowledge and experience in farming, the reluctance of older farmers to make room for young people, or low viability of agricultural holdings (VIIRA; PÓDER; VÄRNIK, 2014; CONWAY et al., 2016; CALUS, 2009).

Together with the pride of being a farmer, there are other reasons listed for young people to stay in the countryside: leisure, tranquility, and quality of life in the countryside; food and cheap housing; agriculture as a good income alternative; trusting relationship with neighbors and the community; valuing family traditions; good remuneration for such activities; enjoyment of the profession; and high investment on behalf of their parents on the property (technology and general improvements).

The aspect with the lowest impact on people's motivation to stay is the encouragement of public policies. Đurić and Njegovan (2015) have recommended, following the example of the EU, greater participation by young people in program and policy development, enabling the simplification of administrative procedures and providing more information. In addition, the help of national rural development programs, aimed at encouraging and supporting the rural youth to remain in the countryside, is important. These programs are implemented through training, counseling and access to information (ĐURIĆ; NJEHOVAN, 2015).

The choice of young people between staying and leaving rural areas depends on the family's social and economic context, but also on the succession process (KESSLER, 2005). The rural population has typical family ties and emotional connection with the countryside, maintaining values and traditions (DURSTON, 1998). The land is the main element that unites people, the reason for the production and reproduction of successive generations (ROMERO, 2012; JURADO; TOBASURA, 2012). Ties and feelings influence rural succession decisions (GRUBBSTRÖM; SOOVÄLI-SEPPING, 2012), as observed in this study.

Gender, permanence and generational succession in rural areas in RS, Brazil

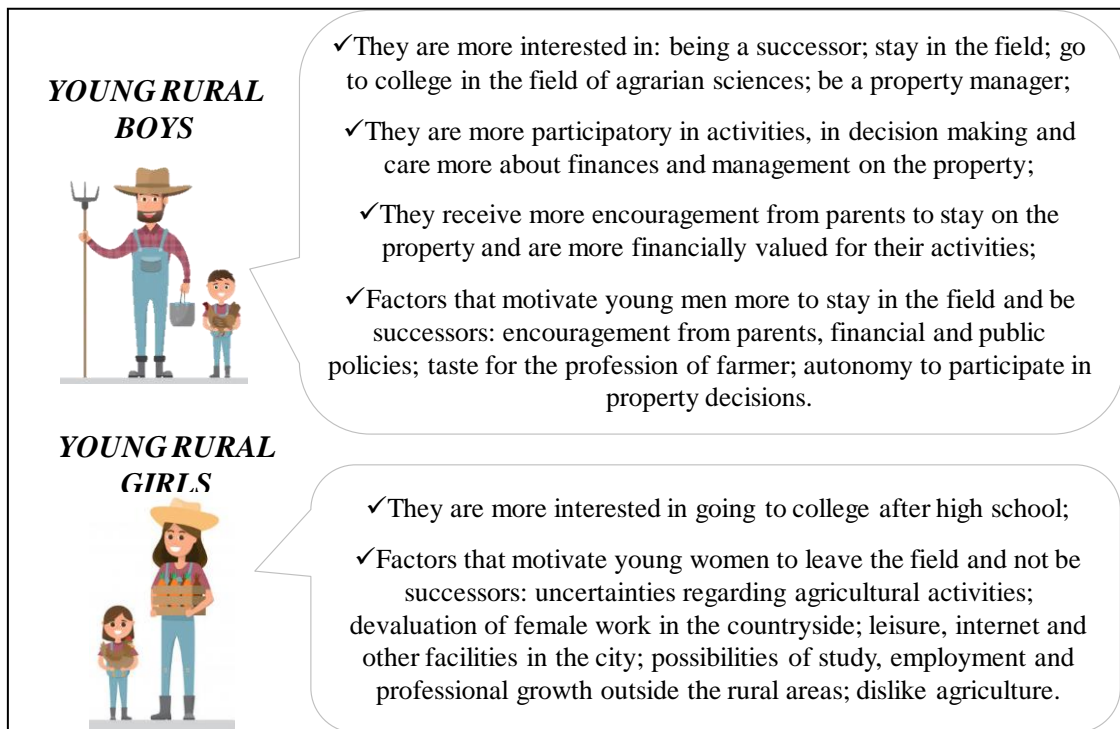
Research has already stated that the participation of young people in decision-making and in agricultural activities on properties positively influences them to stay in the countryside (FISCHER; BURTON, 2014; SIMEONE, 2007). In the case studied, 28.1% of young people have high participation in the decision-making of properties, while 48.1% help in agricultural activities. Regarding gender, 40.6% and 69.0% of young men participate in decision-making and operational activities, respectively, while 13.9% of young women participate in decision-making, and another 23.7% in activities.

Another aspect that can motivate young people to stay in the countryside is the incentive they receive from their parents to stay on the property. From the perspective of gender, it is evident that young men receive more. 22.5% of young women, compared to 43.4% of young men, receive high incentives from their mothers; while the incentive from fathers is high for 32.1% of young women and 55.1% of young men. Nonetheless, 38.2% of young people testify that they would feel more motivated and confident to stay in the countryside if they had more encouragement from their parents (46.7% young men and 28.3% young women).

When correlating the gender factor with the other items surveyed in this study, young men envision being successors more (Chi-Square Test $p < 0.05$), as shown in Figure 4. Young men have more desire to stay in the countryside and become successors, a consequence of a more favorable environment to awaken that desire (Chi-Square Test $p < 0.05$). Young men are more fond of farming as a profession but are also more financially valued and more encouraged by parents to continue working in agriculture. Young women, on the other hand, are more influenced by the uncertainties of agricultural work and feel that their work is not valued in rural areas. They believe that urban life provides greater facilities and opportunities for leisure, study, employment, professional growth and autonomy.

This research found a significant gender differentiation in rural youth in RS. Young women have less autonomy, incentive and desire to remain in the countryside and be successors. When analyzing the hierarchy by gender and generation, young women occupy lower positions of autonomy and decision-making power in the countryside. These results are similar to those found in Brazil by Breitenbach and Corazza (2017) and Castro et al. (2013); in Latin America by Deere and León (2003); in Estonia by Grubbström and Sooväli-Sepping (2012); in Omaha / Nebraska by Carolan (2018), among others.

Figure 4: Gender and permanence in the countryside as a rural family successor in Rio Grande do Sul.



Source: Prepared by the authors based on the research data.

It appears that the traditions of transferring tangible and intangible assets in family farming coordinate decisions about who will be the successor, with male children being the preferred ones. Breitenbach and Corazza (2019) warn that this gender differentiation in rural RS starts in families, where parents give greater incentives for their sons to remain on the property, to participate in managerial and operational activities, while daughters are encouraged to study and leave the countryside.

Conclusions

This research had the objective to identify if young rural women of RS project themselves into their future in the countryside or rather in the city, and if they intend to become successors of their families' rural properties. The following question was posed: *How do gender differences impact permanence in the countryside and farm succession in RS? What are the main factors that influence young women to stay in or leave agriculture?*

In response to the research objectives and questions, it was found that there is a gender difference in the succession processes of RS. Young rural women are less interested in becoming successors and rather envision their future in the city. They intend, more so than young men, to go to college after high school. Still, the factors that influence young women to leave agriculture are the difficulties they encounter in the countryside as women, such as the lack of recognition of their work and the greater possibilities for professional advancement and social autonomy in the urban environment.

Young men, in turn, have a greater interest in becoming successors and staying. Most of those who plan to go to college pursue agricultural studies aiming to return to their parents' property. They are more participatory in activities and are more interested in property management issues. Part of this is explained by the significantly greater incentives they receive from their parents, such as greater financial appreciation for the activities they perform on the property compared to young women. According to the results obtained based on the chi-square test, it was possible to verify that young men (72.6%) enjoy farming more (vs 52.6% of young women) and have greater opportunities to participate in decisions regarding the property (40.6% of young men vs 13.9% of young women).

One of the main difficulties affecting farming succession in RS is the gender difference that persists. The patriarchal culture that predominates in rural areas is discouraging, does not prepare young women for succession, makes them feel devalued and facilitates the projections of their

personal and professional futures outside the countryside. They want decision-making and financial autonomy, which they lack in rural areas. Young women do not aspire to become hard workers with little recognition and autonomy.

Even so, a transformation in the rural environment is notorious since patriarchy in Brazilian rural areas is decreasing. Male superiority is no longer absolute in rural areas and has been questioned by organizations and women in the countryside. Although the scenario is not yet ideal, it is undergoing a positive transformation.

Hopefully, this research will serve as a reference for other studies, as well as to develop and guide both state and national public policies, since it was possible to list factors determining the permanence of young people in the countryside, emphasizing gender issues. Technical assistance entities can use the results of this study as a basis in order to increase education and rural extension programs, as well as foster work that can encourage the permanence of young people in the countryside.

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