


THE IDENTITY OF RURAL PRODUCER AND THE INFLUENTIAL CATEGORIES IN THE SUCCESSION PROCESS

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study was to identify, in the literature, the categories related to the identity of rural producers that can influence the succession process of rural properties. To this end, a systematic review of 32 scientific articles selected from the Scopus, Science Direct, and Web of Science databases was carried out. The results showed that the identity of rural producer has been related to the agricultural profile; rural tourism; gender in agriculture; health care; agricultural practices; successor identity; attachment to the land; and aging of the farmer and manifest resistance to changes in their own lives and in the property. In addition, the categories gender in agriculture, identity of successor; attachment to the land; and aging of the farmer presented more relevant elements for a rural succession process, in which the difficulties and obstacles of the process can be explained by the strong identity of rural producer present in the event.

Keywords: Identity in agriculture. Rural succession. Rural successor. Rural success.

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INTRODUCTION

Agriculture is an activity that has been created, recreated, adapted and developed over four thousand years, the last two centuries have been marked by major changes for society, which has given this activity a social and economic importance for countries (JONES; GARFORTH, 1998). The United Nations projects that by 2050 the world population will reach approximately 10 billion people, which points to sustainable growth as an agenda for strategic discussions (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations – FAO, 2018).

Land use is based on the relationship between economic development and environmental conservation, which demands a balance between current performance and preservation for future generations (dos Santos, et al, 2024). In this context, farmers play an important role in planning the implementation of sustainable practices and continuing food production (FAO, 2019). However, transformations that should not be ignored are social changes, with the joining of minority groups in important spaces and the impact of technology on new generations (Moraes, Salvador and Jacometti, 2024). Agriculture faces worldwide, in addition to population growth, impasses such as changes in dietary patterns, industrial development, climate change, urbanization and consequently migration (FAO, 2017).

Osawa et al. (2016) claim that the discontinuity of rural properties may affect food production in the future, compromising global demand. Strategies for farmers to remain in the business are related to inserting the rural property in a production system that contributes to global and local development, which reflects a desire to maintain traditional cultures based on socially constructed identity (STENBACKA; BYGDELL, 2018).

However, continuing production and maintaining rural property traditions is linked to the need to identify an individual who later goes through the process of rural succession, that is, takes over the management of the property (Cassidy; McGrath, 2014). The authors add that keeping the farm in the family 'goes deep' into identities characterized by strong emotional bonds.

Thus, the process of rural succession is marked by the influence of social and economic factors (LEONARD et al, 2017); psychological factors (BURTON; WALFORD, 2005); patterns of behavior and attitudes (CONWAY et al., 2016); pressure from people close to them (MORAIS et al., 2018); identity created by the successor (Cassidy; McGrath, 2014). Therefore, it must be developed in the long term, so as not to cause a critical event for the families (FISCHER; BURTON (2014). In addition, because they operate in a unique context that differs from family businesses in other branches, it opens space for research

that brings results regarding future strategies and success of rural properties (SUESS-REYS; FUETSH, 2016).

In order to better investigate the relationship between the identity of rural producer and the succession process, this review has the following research question: What are the categories, present in the literature, that are related to the identity of rural producer? The objective is to identify, in the literature, the categories related to the identity of rural producers that can influence the succession process of rural properties.

METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

This article consists of a systematic review of the literature, adapted from Brereton et al. (2007) who defined three major processes: the plan, the conduction and the documentation. For this, some main steps were followed: define the research question and objective; determine databases; define search terms/descriptors; establish search criteria; identify pre-selected studies; initial analysis and; final analysis of the selected articles.

The searches were carried out in (1) databases: Scopus, Web of Science and Science Direct. Searches (2) were performed on the title of the article or abstract or keywords (*Article title, Abstract, Keywords*). The terms used in the searches (3) were: "*farming identities*"; "*farmer identity*"; "*successor identity*" and *farm*; "*identity related*" and *farm*; "*identity formation*" and *farm*; "*identity related*" and *farmer*; "*identity formation*" and *farmer*; and "*self-identity*" and *farmer*. Only (4) scientific articles, articles in English, were chosen, there was no determination of the time period and rigor and relevance were valued (SUESS-REYS; FUETSH, 2016).

The selection of databases (1) for the searches was based on their relevance to science, highlighting the role of bringing together peer-reviewed productions from the most diverse areas. The criteria adopted for the searches (2) were to ensure that the terms/descriptors were clearly present and easy to identify. The defined terms/descriptors (3) are the ones that best match the theme and objective of the article. In addition, the use of quotation marks (") ensured that the terms were side by side in searches. The initial results indicated 275 articles according to the database and term/descriptor. A total of 126 articles were pre-selected, for this, the abstracts of each one were explored in an attempt to classify those that showed content for the proposed objective. The pre-selected articles were listed followed by the flagging of duplicate articles, by access to these articles in full. For the initial analysis, 58 articles were selected, based on titles, abstracts and keywords. A previous reading was carried out to fit the articles into categories of analysis. In this phase, 26 articles were excluded due to unavailability or the focus on the theme not being

significant or because they did not present rigor and relevance previously defined as criteria. The research then had 32 articles for reading, interpretation and categorization

The searches were carried out from 04/18/19 to 05/04/19. The analysis was carried out on the results/discussion/final considerations of the articles. To aid in the analysis, the VOSviewer and Excel® software were used.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

In possession of the 32 articles on the identity of rural producers, a division into categories was carried out, an interpretation was made to group the findings and the identification of categories that can influence the succession process. Chart 01 gathers information from the articles analyzed in the review, indicates the categories in which they fit, and then presents the discussion of their results.

Chart 01: Conceptual framework of the analyzed articles

| Article | Author(s) | Categoria (s) | Study Location |
|---|-------------------------------|---|---------------------------|
| <i>Beyond the Economic: Farmer Practices and Identities in Central Illinois, USA</i> | Wilson et al. (2003) | • Agricultural Practices | USA |
| <i>Injecting social psychology theory into conceptualisations of agricultural agency: Towards a post-productivist farmer self-identity?</i> | Burton e Wilson (2006) | • Agricultural Profile | United Kingdom |
| <i>Tracing the process of becoming a farm successor on Swiss family farms</i> | Mann (2007) | • Successor Identity | Switzerland |
| <i>Public perceptions of hybrid poplar plantations: trees as an alternative crop</i> | Neumann et al. (2007) | • Attachment to the Earth | Canada |
| <i>Farm diversification into tourism e Implications for social identity?</i> | Brandth e Haugen (2011) | • Rural tourism | Norway |
| <i>Farming and tourism enterprise: Experiential authenticity in the diversification of independent small-scale family farming</i> | By Domenico and Miller (2012) | • Rural tourism | England |
| <i>The Emergence of Rural Support Organisations in the UK and Canada: Providing Support for Patrilineal Family Farming</i> | Price (2012) | • Healthcare • Gender in Agriculture | United Kingdom and Canada |
| <i>Succession planning and temporality: The influence of the past and the future</i> | Gill (2013) | • Ageing of farmers • Attachment to the Earth | Australia |
| <i>Healthy ageing: Farming into the twilight</i> | Rogers et al. (2013) | • Ageing of farmers | Australia |
| <i>Expand or exit? Strategic decisions in milk production</i> | Ferguson e Hansson (2013) | • Agricultural Practices | Sweden |
| <i>Decoupling farm, farming and place: Recombinant attachments of globally engaged family farmers</i> | Cheshire et al. (2013) | • Successor Identity • Attachment to the Earth | Australia |
| <i>Reconstructing the good farmer identity: shifts in farmer identities and farm management practices to improve water quality</i> | McGuire et al. (2013) | • Agricultural Practices | USA |
| <i>Capturing the Multiple and Shifting Identities of Farm Women in the Northeastern United States</i> | Brasier et al. (2014) | • Gender in Agriculture | USA |

| | | | |
|---|------------------------------------|--|---------------|
| <i>Farmer Identity in Multifunctional Landscapes: using a collective identity construct to explore the nature and impact of occupational identity</i> | Groth et al., (2014) | • Attachment to the Earth | Australia |
| <i>Farmer identity, ethical attitudes and environmental practices</i> | Sulemana and James (2014) | • Agricultural Profile • Agricultural Practices | USA |
| <i>In search of legitimacy under institutional pressures: A case study of producer and entrepreneur farmer identities</i> | Stenholm and Hytti (2014) | • Agricultural Profile | Finland |
| <i>Tillage practices and identity formation in High Plains farming</i> | Strand et al. (2014) | • Agricultural Practices | USA |
| <i>Understanding Farm Succession as Socially Constructed Endogenous Cycles</i> | Fischer e Burton (2014) | • Successor Identity | Scotland |
| <i>The development and validation of a collective occupational identity construct (COIC) in a natural resource context</i> | Groth et al. (2015) | • Attachment to the Earth | Australia |
| <i>Performing Gender and Rurality in Swedish Farm Tourism</i> | Cassel e Pettersson (2015) | • Rural tourism • Gender in Agriculture | Sweden |
| <i>Farmer identities and responses to the socialebiophysical environment</i> | McGuire et al., (2015) | • Agricultural Profile | USA |
| <i>A Social Identity Analysis of Climate Change and Environmental Attitudes and Behaviors: Insights and Opportunities</i> | Fielding and Hornsey (2016) | • Agricultural Practices | Not specified |
| <i>Soil as a key criteria in the construction of farmers' identities: The example of farming in the Austrian province of Burgenland</i> | Wahlhütter et al. (2016) | • Agricultural Practices | Austria |
| <i>A good farmer pays attention to the weather</i> | Morton et al. (2017) | • Agricultural Profile | USA |
| <i>Assessing Managerial Efficiency of Educational Tourism in Agriculture: Case of Dairy Farms in Japan</i> | Ohe (2017) | • Rural tourism | Japan |
| <i>I Would Go if My Arm Were Hanging off": A Qualitative Study of Healthcare-Seeking Behaviors of Small Farm Owners in Central New York State</i> | Droullar et al. (2017) | • Healthcare | USA |
| <i>No one to fill my shoes: narrative practices of three ageing Australian male farmers</i> | O'Callaghan e Warburton (2017) | • Healthcare • Ageing of farmers • Attachment to the Earth | Astray |
| <i>The 'Good Farmer': Farmer Identities and the Control of Exotic Livestock Disease in England</i> | Naylor et al. (2018) | • Agricultural Practices | England |
| <i>Joint Farming Ventures in Ireland: Gender identities of the self and the social</i> | Cush et al. (2018) | • Gender in Agriculture | Ireland |
| <i>Educational tourism in agriculture and identity of farm successors</i> | Ohe (2018) | • Rural tourism • Successor Identity | Japan |
| <i>Empowered by stigma? Pioneer organic farmers' stigma management strategies</i> | Let's go to the hill et al. (2019) | • Agricultural Practices | Finland |
| <i>Harnessing the power of identity to encourage farmers to protect the environment</i> | Lequin et al. (2019) | • Agricultural Practices | Not specified |

Source: Prepared by the authors (2019)

An initial reading to differentiate the articles into categories allowed us to relate the identity of rural producer with the agricultural profile; rural tourism; gender in agriculture; health care; agricultural practices; successor identity; attachment to the land; and ageing of the farmer. 'In general, the articles present different findings on the identity of rural

producers, in various parts of the world, which made it possible to interpret them in different realities and also, according to the category framed (an article can appear in different categories). The main results and the discussion of these categories are presented in the following subsections.

CATEGORIES RELATED TO RURAL PRODUCER IDENTITY

Agricultural Profile

The agricultural profiles were defined in the literature according to the mode of production adopted in the rural properties. McGuire *et al.* (2015) state that farmers' identity is a way of understanding how their beliefs deduce the practices that are employed and their involvement in improving and protecting systems inside and outside the farm. And yet, according to Morton *et al.* (2017) influence management decisions, how they adapt in relation to environmental conditions and the type of management employed, that is, in the strategies used in rural properties.

Farmers' identities are constructed based on each person's attitudes, beliefs, and experiences, based on family, community patterns, education, previous agricultural practices (MCGUIRE *et al.*, 2015), and geographical, cultural, structural, and economic factors of a location (BURTON: WILSON, 2006). The social context can also affect identity and this situation awakens multiple identities in farmers (STENHOL; HYTTI, 2014; MCGUIRE *et al.*, 2015).

With the analysis of the articles, the profiles presented by the authors were: 1) Productivist: farmers prioritize production efficiency to obtain high yields and profits in view of the way rural properties operate (STENHOL; HYTTI, 2014; MCGUIRE *et al.*, 2015; MORTON *et al.*, 2017); and use chemical technology and up-to-date equipment (MCGUIRE *et al.*, 2015). 2) Conservationist: farmers have values that reflect long-term goals and actions (MORTON *et al.*, 2017), offering protection and resilience to the resources used, while keeping the land productive and profitable (MCGUIRE *et al.*, 2015; MORTON *et al.*, 2017). 3) Civic: farmers have a leadership role and responsibility in the community, help friends and neighbors, and share knowledge and equipment, to be an active, civic, and engaged member (MCGUIRE *et al.*, 2015). 4) Naturalists: are farmers who they balance agricultural production with a strong interest in wildlife (flora and fauna), being hunters/fishermen or even observers of nature (MCGUIRE *et al.*, 2015). 5) Entrepreneur: farmer seeks to become bigger and better, regardless of social norms and the institutional environment. They use the experiences of others to evaluate the best practice to achieve

growth, and as they do not follow the same path as other farmers, they consider achieving a competitive advantage for the rural property (STENHOL; HYTTI, 2014).

Sulemana and James (2014) established that identities can be contrasted between conservationists (protecting the environment) *versus* productivists (economic growth and job creation); optimists (bright future) *versus* pessimistic (bleak future); and technologically oriented (utilization of new technologies) *versus* Focused on tradition (emphasizes tradition), this representation is due to the vision they provide of the environment, the future and technology.

The renowned research by Burton and Wilson (2006) identified changes in agricultural regimes, with a transition from the productivist mode to the post-productivist mode and to multifunctionality. In the productivist mode, there was a growing dependence and intensification of agriculture and conviction in technical approaches to land management, the role of production is emphasized and is constituted by the identity of agricultural producer and agribusiness person; in the post-productivist mode, there was a growing consideration of environmental factors and diversity of approaches to land management, the role of the environment is emphasized and it is constituted by the identity of conservationist and diversifier; while in the multifunctional mode farmers can maintain all identities simultaneously and when a certain situation arises choose the most appropriate one, it is emphasized that all identities can exist simultaneously (BURTON: WILSON, 2006).

In short, it was possible to perceive that the types of identities of farmers are formed by the elements that make up the social context in which they are inserted, reflected in the way of conducting the rural property. In addition to monitoring changes in agriculture, personal and economic interests and environmental concerns.

Health Care

For the discussion of the identity of rural producer linked to health care, O'Callaghan and Warburton (2017) identified that farmers are emotionally tough, resistant and independent, which makes up traits of a masculine strength that can result in isolation, difficulties and poor mental and physical health. Price (2012) adds that because farmers consider agriculture as their home, their lifestyle, involving their family and all their experience, men can harm their mental health and even transmit stress to their wives.

The act of a farmer seeking health treatment can indicate a factor that compromises identity and is capable of hurting the pride of being a farmer. In addition, pressures and commitments to protect agriculture take precedence over other priorities, including how to

use their time and money. The effective search for medical care often occurs due to the worsening of perceived symptoms; by the insistence of their spouses; and, by increasing age, so that prevention is allied to the long-term continuity of the rural property (DROULLARD *et al.*, 2017).

With these findings, it was possible to identify that health care issues are delicate for farmers, as they represent a way of hurting a masculine identity based on traits of strength and pride.

Rural Tourism

Rural tourism is considered a relatively new activity in agriculture, which aims to awaken the development of tourism practice (OHE, 2017), be a new opportunity for rural producers (OHE, 2018) and enable innovation and competitiveness in the agricultural sector (CASSEL; PETTERSSON, 2015).

Ohe (2017) identifies that this change in activity presents obstacles that are related to the identity of rural producer and can affect more traditional agricultural identities (DI DOMENICO; MILLER, 2012). There are farmers who consider the diversification of activity as a betrayal of the agricultural profession, which puts them in a struggle with their identity (BRANDTH; HAUGEN, 2011). This makes it essential, then, that there is a change in the identity of conventional rural producer, for a management innovation to occur, that is, a change from the subject immersed in the agricultural production environment, to the subject who conducts a new activity (OHE, 2018).

Ohe (2017) investigates educational tourism in agriculture, highlighting that there is an association between managerial efficiency and farmers' identities, since these motivate different behaviors, use of agricultural resources and acquisition of necessary skills. Ohe (2018) lists measures such as professional training, focusing on learning administrative skills, building a social learning network, and involving women in activities because they are able to promote the necessary identity change in young people.

The way farmers rebuilt themselves with rural tourism as work and sustained their identities was identified by Brandth and Haugen (2011) exposing that the importance of the service that will be offered on the rural property lies in taking good care of the guests, telling stories of their lives, sharing knowledge about agriculture, the type of food served (homemade food), in the decoration of the place, in the activities available (fishing, hiking), in the clothing used, among other actions that contain rooted agriculture. Thus, the previously built agricultural identity, heritage and culture, becomes the product and main attraction and also reinforces rural tourism.

Cassel and Pettersson (2015) point out that the separation between tourism and agricultural production is reinforced by gender differences (discussion in section 3.3.4). In addition, they point out that the connection between agriculture and tourism becomes important to provide a high-quality tourist experience, which transforms the rural property into a place of consumption of experiences and develops the rural identities of rural owners, conclusions similar to those of Brandth and Haugen (2011).

The enthusiasm that farmers feel for diversification presented a few reasons: the influence of economic issues as the main reason for accepting that there is really a need to diversify; and lifestyle as a way of keeping agriculture alongside the activity they are involved in, that is, the transmission of the farmers' lifestyle characterizes what they do as important. However, there are farmers who, because they choose to diversify their activity, show resentment, where tourism is seen as inferior and less important. Thus, even though the need for diversification has been verified, the identities previously created in the families of farmers see rural tourism as an unwanted activity (DI DOMENICO; MILLER, 2012).

The discussion around rural tourism has shown that the activity can be a way to transmit the rural lifestyle to people. However, a change in the activity carried out on the rural property can affect the identity of rural producers because, in addition to the difficulty in the preparation necessary to manage a new business, farmers feel unmotivated and resentful in leaving activities carried out and built by previous generations.

Gender in Agriculture

To verify the disparity between the roles played by men and women in agriculture, the articles presented discussions about the performance and space that both have already achieved. When linked to identity, Cush *et al.* (2018) point out that the farmer identity is usually composed of the male figure, who has control of agricultural capital and a position as head of the family.

There seems to be a tendency to recognize and respond to the dominant identity on the farm to a male farmer. These men can adopt a posture of exchanging experiences only with those they sympathize with and have the same way of life. The role of women, on the other hand, often includes working outside the home, helping on the farm, having domestic and maternal responsibilities and even creating an image of 'emotional caregiver', hiding their own needs (PRICE, 2012). In other words, there is a predominance of men as dominant farmers exercising the main activity, while women perform a secondary activity, being unpaid helpers on rural properties, being something natural and incorporated into the culture (PRICE, 2012; CASSEL; PETTERSSON, 2015).

On the other hand, establishing partnerships between men and women on rural properties can be a way for both to own the business. However, for women there is more struggle to gain recognition as farmers in society, because in the face of the rural culture traditionally constituted of patriarchal and patrilineal norms, desire and persistence must be constant. Although the path for women is more arduous, they demonstrate equal capabilities, conquering spaces, sharing efforts and work and also committing themselves within family farming. Women's determination, persistence, work and resilience were the factors that made the necessary change possible (CUSH *et al.*, 2018). Brasier *et al.* (2014) They added that women on rural properties can develop various roles, such as working on the rural property, outside it, entrepreneurship, among other activities that allow them to act at different levels and types of involvement, that is, plurality roles on the rural property. Which can put them in a more egalitarian role, sharing business management and decision-making tasks.

The authors identified that for men and women to play a role in agriculture, the paths are different. For men, there is a tradition within families to designate rural property for their care, while women need to conquer space and recognition and also maintain a positive image in society.

Agricultural Practices

The association of farmers' identity with agricultural practices involved a diversity of articles on environmental conservation themes. It was noticed that this discussion takes place due to the conduct of farmers in society, since good agricultural practices of environmental management and conservation are essential for sustainable development (SULEMANA; JAMES, 2014).

In this way, even though they are essential for food production, farmers have come to be perceived as responsible for the negative impacts caused to the environment by their businesses (McGUIRE *et al.*, 2013) and as influencers in environmental results and policies dedicated to agri-environmental issues (LEQUIN *et al.*, 2019),

Fielding and Hornsey (2016) indicated that conflicts related to environmental issues or resources are associated with the identity of farmers, because, in addition to constituting their values and beliefs (WILSON *et al.*, 2003), it is also related to the functioning of the business on the rural property (FERGUSON; HANSSON, 2013) and the adoption of the practices used (WILSON *et al.*, 2003),

Among the factors that determine the continuation of non-conservation practices are the guarantee of efficacy, control and yield (WILSON *et al.*, 2003); the desire for profit

(WILSON *et al.*, 2003; McGUIRE *et al.*, 2013); believing that their actions have ethical implications (SULEMANA; JAMES, 2014); and considering that changes are uncertain for business (FERGUSON; HANSSON, 2013);

The adoption of an identity of a farmer concerned with the environment, for McGuire *et al.* (2013), corresponds to the construction of a good rural landowner style, being able to encourage other farmers and share knowledge about the risk taken and necessary attempts, until they gain enough confidence to also incorporate environmental conservation practices on the rural property.

Fielding and Hornsey (2016) add that there is a greater possibility for farmers to act in an ecologically correct way when a group presents norms and people with whom they identify, as social identity will influence attitudes, beliefs and pro-environmental actions.

Regarding the conversion to organic agriculture, the contributions related to the identity of farmers showed the change from conventional agriculture to organic agriculture as a way of establishing a new agricultural identity that involves leaving behind traditional norms, especially the management practices previously used (STRAND *et al.*, 2014; WAHLHÜTTER *et al.*, 2016; LÄHDESMÄKI *et al.*, 2019; LEQUIN *et al.*, 2019).

For Lequin *et al.* (2019), it is up to policymakers to encourage future pro-environmental behaviors, either by encouraging or inciting their commitment, so that there is a change in behavior and a change in customs associated with the identity of farmers.

Regarding the treatment of animals, Naylor *et al.* (2018) found that being a good rural landowner involves a complexity of identities: the good landowner who shows concern for the health and well-being of the animals; the good neighboring rural owner who is concerned with preventing the spread of diseases and with the operation of the business; and the good rural owner public that is concerned with portraying good practices to maintain reputation. Thus, the identity adopted involves individual, collective and those outside the sector.

Thus, the findings showed that agricultural practices are associated with the need for changes in the business already consolidated by farmers. The abandonment or not of conventional practices is linked, in addition to the identity of the farmers, to economic and ethical factors, old customs, social recognition, political pressure or even to future concern for the environment.

Successor Identity

Being born and raised on the family's farm strengthens attachment to the land and determines a farmer's identity (CHESHIRE *et al.*, 2013). Fischer and Burton (2014) define

involvement in agriculture from an early age as the main factor that contributes to the construction of an agricultural trajectory and the development of a rural successor identity.

Ohe (2018), by emphasizing that experience on the property is a decisive factor for the formation of a successor identity, highlights the learning opportunity as a way to form skills that are necessary for agricultural management.

For a young person to choose to work on the rural property, the introductory phase of this choice presents the predominance of identity in any decision. The identity in favor of agriculture is related to factors such as autonomy, the opportunity to work outdoors, enjoy agricultural work, work with animals, perform non-standard tasks, willingness to work with parents, continue the family tradition, size of the property, number of children, educational level, income potential, sales potential, and attractiveness. These factors are perceived more positively with increasing age, highlighting the willingness to take over, the willingness to work with parents and considering the house on the rural property attractive, as the main reasons (MANN, 2007).

In addition, interest in agriculture is built in the long term, considering family history, sense of place and attachment to rural property as important for the construction of a successor identity. The practice of involving children in the rural property allows them to become aware of the execution of tasks, the importance of each task, the way of carrying it out, the possibility of proposing changes, which indicates a commitment and can build the identity of the successor. In addition, it awakens a feeling of ability to maintain the rural property and of commitment to continue the family tradition (FISCHER; BURTON, 2014).

It can be seen that the construction of a farmer's identity is related to the individual's involvement with the rural property, as early as possible, either by aiming to continue family traditions and/or by considering work in agriculture attractive.

Ageing Farmers

The insertion of farmers in the environment and in the agricultural culture, in addition to shaping their lives, restricts and limits their ability to deal with contemporary changes, pointing to aging as a focus (O'CALLAGHA; Warburton, 2017). In the relationship between identity and aging of farmers, retirement itself is a great challenge in everyone's life, however, it becomes more difficult when it involves leaving their home, their land, their community (ROGERS *et al.*, 2013). Gill (2013) also points out that the family's past is an important record of its identity, an affirmation of itself and a way to strengthen its place in history, which is why farmers express the desire and need to keep the rural property in the family.

However, the decision to sell or not a rural property symbolizes a challenge that involves a lifetime dedicated to the land and the identity created, which is built by deeply rooted ideological beliefs and social norms of rural masculinity. Finding an alternative for the future causes farmers to feel fear, loss of identity and values. In addition, the lack of a next generation to hand over the management leaves them disappointed, but even so, they show hope for family farming for the future. In short, farmers aim to maintain their identity, even in the face of aging and generational succession challenges (O'CALLAGHA; WARBURTON, 2017).

For elderly farmers, it is complicated to sell the rural property or leave agriculture, as the decision-making related to the management of the rural property is supported by identities deeply rooted in the values that link farmers to the land and to agricultural occupation (ROGERS *et al.*, 2013). In addition, the future of rural property comes up against questions about whether agriculture is considered a viable option and who will actually want to take over the rural property (GILL, 2013).

Aging is therefore a challenge, because in addition to the physical wear and tear it causes on farmers, it also makes it difficult for them to manage technological, commercial and market issues in the business world. The search for healthy aging must be based on government support, provoking a cultural change that helps families to assess risks, consider realities and have access to services offered by the government (ROGERS *et al.*, 2013).

It was possible to verify that, over the years, management difficulties and the aging of farmers cause concerns about how to continue the business, and they consider the process of leaving the rural property difficult and even so, they want to pass it on to the next generations of the family. It is noted that keeping the rural property in the family is important for its identity and to preserve traditions.

Attachment to the Earth

The construction of a strong connection between farmers and the rural property represents an influential origin of the farmer's identity (CHESHIRE *et al.*, 2013). The connection between the identity of the place and the identity of the farmer involves a link with the conquered land and the agricultural landscape (NEUMANN *et al.*, 2007; GROTH *et al.*, 2015). There is also the influence of factors such as the hours worked on the rural property, the performance of work outside the property, being a member of organizations related to agriculture and considering that the profit obtained by being a farmer is greater

than not by being (GROTH *et al.*, 2014) and also by the use of the land and the mode of management (GROTH *et al.*, 2014; GROTH *et al.*, 2015).

For farmers, their land represents the mode of production for past, present and future generations. A change in land use can affect power relations and thus threaten their identity (NEUMANN *et al.*, 2007). Consequently, developing an attachment and sense of belonging to the land makes farmers question how to find an alternative for the future of the rural property (O'CALLAGHA; WARBURTON, 2017). For Gill (2013), succession decisions include considering the past and the strong connection that the family may have with the land; the present, marked by environmental, social and economic pressures; and the future marked by uncertainties.

O'Callaghan and Warburton (2017) point out that the decision to sell or not a rural property symbolizes a challenge that involves a lifetime dedicated to the land and to ideological beliefs deeply rooted in agriculture and social norms of rural masculinity. Gill (2013) then emphasizes that farmers express a desire to keep the rural property in the family, due to the attachment to the land and the need to affirm the family and the place in history, configuring a domination of the past over the present.

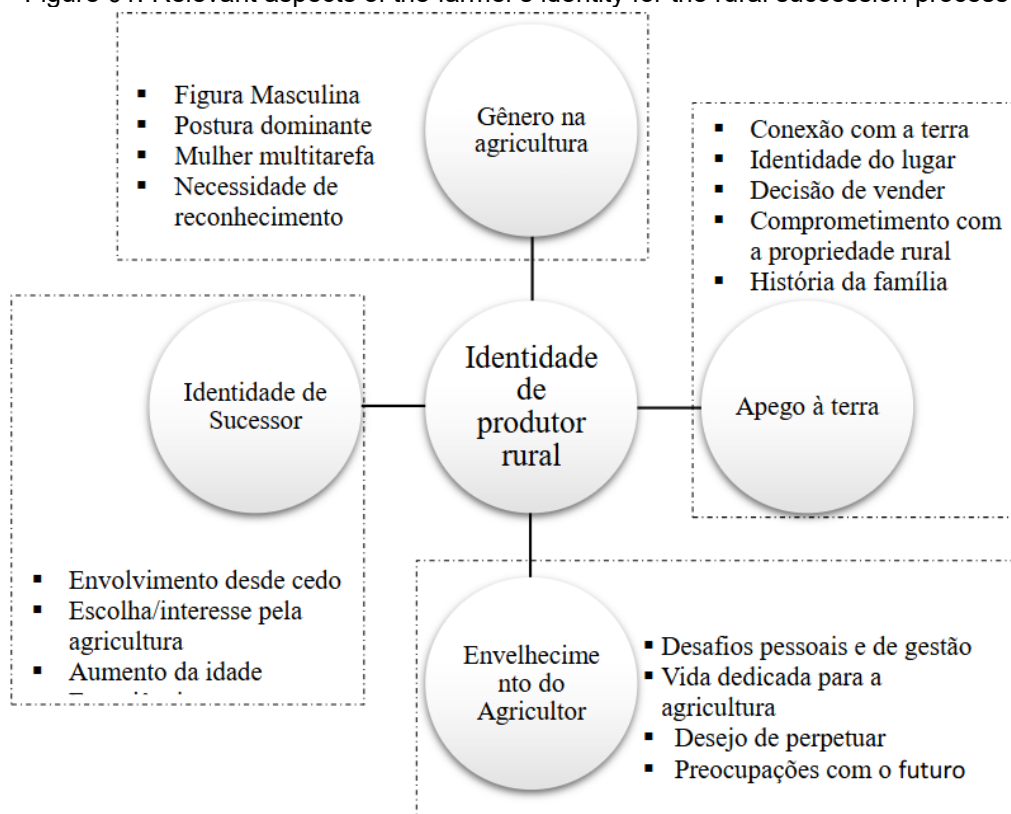
The act of wanting to keep the rural property in the family is also configured in a feeling of commitment assumed by the farmers. Where, even though they are not continuously present on the rural property, the bonds created with the place are intrinsically linked to the history of the family. It is not about spending their entire lives on the same farm, but about the essential part of who they are and how to pass on family traditions between generations (CHESHIRE *et al.*, 2013).

It was possible to verify that the attachment that farmers develop for their lands strengthens their identity as farmers and reflects on the desire to maintain and perpetuate the land in the family.

IDENTITY OF RURAL PRODUCER AND THE SUCCESSION PROCESS

Through literature discoveries, it was possible to verify which topics related to the identity of rural producer can be part of the rural succession process, the most relevant were: gender in agriculture, identity of successor, aging of the farmer and attachment to the land, such indications are exposed in Figure 01.

Figure 01: Relevant aspects of the farmer's identity for the rural succession process



Source: Prepared by the authors (2019)

Based on the aspects highlighted in each category, in Figure 01, it can be seen that when relating the identity of the rural producer with the succession process in the properties, there is room for discussions regarding the opportunities of succession in the rural property according to the sex of the individual; the aspects that help individuals to become successors; the impact that the identity of the place and the connection with the land causes in the succession process; and how the The aging of the farmer may or may not characterize an obstacle in the succession process.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The research question of this review was to verify which issues are related to the identity of rural producers in the literature, aiming to identify the points related to the identity of rural producers that can influence the succession process of rural properties. The results showed, among all the findings, that the identity of rural producer can be considered influential in the succession process.

The identified categories highlight that issues related to health care, agricultural practices adopted on the property, rural tourism and types of identity are influenced by the identity of the rural producer, in which the strong traits created and rooted in agricultural

customs hinder actions that involve change, whether on the rural property or in their own lives.

Regarding the categories that can most intervene in a rural succession process, attachment to the land, the aging of the farmer, gender in agriculture and the identity of successor include discussions that pointed out difficulties and obstacles that a strong identity of rural producer can create for the process, such as the resistance to accept a woman on the property, aging and attachment to the land prolonging the process and the need to identify a successor determined to take over.

The findings in the literature presented evidence from studies carried out in different parts of the world, so the results could not be generalized to farmers around the world. However, there were similar indications that may highlight a similar behavior among farmers, thus generating the possibility of replicating these findings in other realities.

As a limitation, subjectivity in the inclusion and exclusion of the articles used was identified. As a future suggestion, studies could investigate, through empirical work, the formation of identity in properties that are passing through or are discussing the succession process, thus making it possible to better understand the presupposed relationships

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