

Public Management Role for the Encouragement of the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem in Imperatriz (Ma) – Brazil

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Abstract— This study aims to analyze the participation of municipal and state public management in fostering the entrepreneurial ecosystem in the municipality of Imperatriz (MA) and is based on the six pillars proposed: public policies, financial capital, culture, institutions support, human resources, and markets. The descriptive research method was used; the semi-structured interview for data collection; descriptive document analysis and the application of sensemaking techniques, such as visual map and narrative strategy. The research is also qualitative, by accessibility criteria, and in the field for comparison with the data obtained in the mapping. About documentary research, a temporal scaling of the last ten years was carried out. It is observed, in view of the mapping, that there is engagement and efforts of the municipal and state public administration directed towards entrepreneurial actions, above all, these actions need to be more widespread among higher education institutions. The data obtained in the field analysis were relevant to this investigation, showing the inclusion and participation of public management in the development of actions that optimize and develop the entrepreneurial ecosystem in the municipality. The data obtained in the two types of analysis were compared by triangulation to promote a clear understanding of the role of Empress' public management within the investigated scenario. Therefore, it is concluded that the objective of this study at the end of the assessment was achieved.

I. INTRODUCTION

The world scenario has been going through several demographic, social and especially economic transformations in short periods of time, especially from the 20th century onwards, as it was mainly during this period that new ideas that improved the lifestyle of individuals were intensified.

These ideas usually come from innovation, from doing something original, or positioning themselves to have a vision under a new paradigm through actions, services or

products that already exist, promoting significant ruptures or substantial improvements (Moraes, Lobosco & Lima, 2013). For these ideas to happen, they rely on entrepreneurs, who have peculiar characteristics, think eccentrically, face challenges and risk inventing the unprecedented, exploring new paths to undertake.

These particularities of entrepreneurs need to be contemplated and understood, since with the advent of globalization, competition has become increasingly fierce and the consumer more demanding.

For many decades, economic policy has directed its efforts in support of large organizations or large economic groups already established, to establish balance and economic sustainability. This model, in the view of Carvalho, Viana and Montovani (2016), had flaws and weaknesses given the economic crises with significant regional impacts.

Therefore, it can be said that the economic atmosphere suitable for entrepreneurship is still conditioned to young and innovative organizations, which appear with greater capacity to adapt to volatile markets, and with greater ability and speed to react to changes (Moraes & Lima, 2019).

Entrepreneurship cannot be considered a single solution to the challenges of economic policy. For this reason, there was an opening for economic growth and for the improvement of regional social well-being.

In this scenario, the importance of the entrepreneurial ecosystem became notorious, considered a regional space that comprises many institutional and individual actors, promoting the entrepreneurial spectrum of entrepreneurship and innovation.

Another important point is that entrepreneurship has been the core of public policies in most countries. The increase in entrepreneurship in the global context increased in the 1990s and expanded in dimension in the 2000s, which will be noticed during the reading of the subsequent sections related to the theme (Howkins, 2005).

Today, several fields of knowledge are concerned with investigating the phenomenon of entrepreneurship, such as economics, business management, sociology, psychology, anthropology, management history, marketing, finance and even geography, representing various views of entrepreneurship.

Consequently, the entrepreneurial ecosystem emerged in this scenario, which in the view of Mason and Brown (2014) corroborates this discussion as it corresponds to a set of interconnected, existing and potential business actors; in addition to organizations such as corporations, venture capital, business angels and banks; from institutions such as universities, public sector bodies and financial bodies; and processes, such as the rate of business emergence, number of highly successful entrepreneurs, levels of business ambition and society's progressive mentality.

This meaning highlights the importance of formal and informal links as intermediaries of execution within the regional business environment. In this respect, the focus on entrepreneurial ecosystems provides a new point of view

and different characteristics, analyzing the geographic concentration of local economic activity.

It is noteworthy, however, that the term entrepreneurship, according to Mason and Brown (2014), came from the private administration, but is increasingly inserted within the public initiative as a tactic to engage, modernize and stimulate the public situation in each region.

In this way, entrepreneurship makes it possible for the action stimulated by the public power, whether local, regional, or national, to promote the optimization and development of dynamic and active entrepreneurial ecosystems, causing, consequently, sustainable economic development.

Understanding the factors that contribute to fostering the entrepreneurial ecosystem, the multiple fields of innovation that are part of entrepreneurship, is not a simple task, however, when working with strategic planning and with the entrepreneurial action plan, it is acquired an efficient and effective that has proportions in the long term. Therefore, it is possible to achieve satisfactory results in this regard.

For that, it is necessary the effective participation of the public spheres, to foment the local entrepreneurial ecosystem and to ascend the economy of a certain region. Public management for local actions leverages business activities, making the success of policies to support SMEs supported by a regional innovation system.

The articulation between private organizations, employer, commercial and class co-optations, financial institutions, teaching and research centers and policy bodies that distinguish a system of innovations change according to each region, which in a way imposes limits on policies based on successful experiences from developed regions.

The entrepreneurial ecosystem, innovation and entrepreneurship are noted as dynamic actions, marked by peculiar aspects, in which information/knowledge is agglomerated by learning and mutual influence among stakeholders. In this context, knowledge of the panorama of the municipality of Imperatriz (MA) – Brazil - is essential, precisely because it highlights the components of the entrepreneurial ecosystem and its promoters.

From this perspective, it is worth noting that this study is based on a momentary representation of the current situation of the entrepreneurial ecosystem, through information from the last ten years investigated.

It was found that there is a gap in this research because the studies that are dedicated to understanding the role of public management in promoting the entrepreneurial

ecosystem in the municipality of Imperatriz are insufficient or even non-existent.

Therefore, the question that guides this research is: how is the participation of public administration in fostering the entrepreneurial ecosystem in the municipality of Imperatriz (MA) - Brazil?

II. PUBLIC POLICIES FOR THE PROMOTION OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Public management in Brazil often goes through many challenges, especially about the direction of public policies and the competence of administrators to follow its guidelines as stated in the Brazilian Federal Constitution of 1988, in article 37: legality, morality, publicity and efficiency (Brasil, 2007).

Countless times, these discussions go beyond the limits of the institutions and directly affect the city's inhabitants, who position themselves as particularities of making public (Lucas & Moraes, 2019).

When discussing the inefficiency of the use and applicability of public resources Capez (2017) reports that the irregularity in the application of public money prevents the resources from providing quality public education, at a level compatible with that of the private network; turns public hospitals into warehouses for the sick and wounded awaiting death; what sometimes happens in the service queue itself; makes public employees poorly paid and discouraged workers, which feeds the lack of commitment to the function, among other aspects.

It is noteworthy that public management, from the point of view of understanding, differs in several factors from conventional organizational administration. This discrepancy focuses on the objectives, as a traditional organization aims to leverage quantitative results, while the public one aims at the population's quality of life (Carneiro, 2010).

Also, according to the conception of Carneiro (2010), public institutions are also considered organizational institutions, however, in contrast to private organizations, they do not aim at profit, but rather seek to correspond to the expectations and interests of society. It can also be said that public companies also use administrative resources and expedients similarly to private organizations: they are run by public administrators (managers), hired or career employees.

According to this theory, the dichotomy between business management and public management is extremely exact, but it does not match its execution. This is because most public administrators in Brazil, in the view of

Silveira (2006), operate the bodies for which they are responsible as if they were private organizations.

According to Carvalho, Viana and Montovani (2016), one of the most important components of an entrepreneurial ecosystem are the public policies promoted by the Government, whether it is about policies aimed at SMEs, but also about a range of policies related to taxation, financial services, telecommunications, transport, labor markets, immigration, industry support, education and training, infrastructure, and health. In terms of public policies aimed at entrepreneurship, several studies can be identified that report the importance that governments give to SMEs and their role in job creation (Carvalho, Viana & Montovani, 2016, p. 89).

Entrepreneurship public policies aim to create circumstances that promote the emergence of innovative actions, reaching the socioeconomic scenario, maximizing the insertion of new jobs with qualified professionals prepared for the labor market, in addition to innovations with highly competitive value.

Given this situation, public policies to promote entrepreneurship have been perceived and implemented in the light of the concept of economic growth stage practices mentioned by the authors Porter, Sachs, Cornelius, Macarthur W., Macarthur J., and Vasquez (2002) in studies carried out for the World Economic Forum in 2002.

The State has its main role as a promoter of the entrepreneurial ecosystem, however, it is also incumbent upon other spheres of government, such as municipal domains and entities, to assume and play this role in the vision of increasing economic and social indices in the region, adopting public partnerships. for an effective construction of local entrepreneurship.

When reflecting on public policies, the main aspect to be considered for the expansion of its effectiveness is related to solving the issue of the diversity of realities observed in this scenario of the entrepreneurial ecosystem of SMEs.

In analogy to public policy, Mason and Brown (2014) named a typology to foster entrepreneurial ecosystems. Table 1 presents different approaches and elucidates them.

Table.1: Types of Public Policies for the development of the entrepreneurial ecosystem

FOCUS	EXAMPLES
Entrepreneurial Actors	Business accelerators, business incubators and talent attraction.
Entrepreneurial	Business Angels, venture

Organizations	capital, banks, service providers and universities.
Entrepreneurial Connections	Public-private partnerships, partnerships and alliances, learning, local and global connections.
Entrepreneurial Guidance	Entrepreneurial education, and networks.

Source: Mason and Brown (2014)

It is noteworthy that, in addition to these typologies, there is the role of universities, which fits perfectly into the process of entrepreneurial orientation, as they perform essential functions to improve and leverage intellectual skills in the region (Moraes *et al.*, 2016).

It is also important the participation of service providers such as lawyers, accountants, recruitment agencies and business consultants, who understand the obligations and needs of entrepreneurial organizations, helping newly emerging organizations to minimize difficulties and the practice of non-crucial outsourced exercises (Mason & Brown, 2014).

III. METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURE

The research used in this investigation, which corresponds to the phenomenon studied, is qualitative and descriptive in nature, which according to Bauer and Gaskell (2017) seeks to explore various thoughts and concepts, tending to a broader and deeper investigation, researching attitudes, trends, and the complexity of the human behavior. It is a method that has a relevant role in the field of organizational studies.

Still on this topic, Garcia and Quek (1997) argue that qualitative research is concerned with processes and meanings that are not measured in terms of quantity, accuracy, or constancy. Godoy (1995) corroborates by saying that researchers who choose this type of research are intrigued and motivated to investigate how the process takes place and not just the results that will be obtained within the investigation.

This paper adopted, in terms of nature, the public management of the municipality of Imperatriz, including the mayor of the municipality, a senator from the state of Maranhão, the superintendent of political articulation of the State and some councilors of the municipality.

Regarding the research design, it is a documental, qualitative analysis since the intention is to bring documentary representations of a relevant nature within

the studied context. It also brings an interview involving public managers. In this aspect, documents are seen as a source of data that allowed the investigator to embark on a qualitative research, which is why they need exclusive or particular care.

Documents are non-reactive sources since the subsidies or information contained in them are preserved for long years, which in the past could be considered organic sources of information of historical, economic, and social origin, as they constitute important elements of this same situation (Godoy, 1995).

Documentary research, still according to Godoy (1995), is suited to the study of time frame, aiming to investigate one or more convergence, behaviors, and intentions. It so happens that the absence of a standard model and the entanglement of data coding are endorsed by many researchers as elements that bring methodological difficulties, precisely because of their degree of complexity.

Also, with regard to document design, and by way of temporal scheduling, legal provisions were taken into account, such as the investigation of draft laws, master plans, official documents, public circular and bodies such as the Commercial Association of Empress (ACII), the local press newspaper, the City Council and the Municipal Bidding Law (MPEs).

This is because these are elements that contain pertinent information that evidence or not the participation of municipal public administration in fostering entrepreneurship in Imperatriz.

In the construction of this paper, descriptive research was also used, which, along the lines of Vergara (2000), shows attributes or particularities of a certain population or phenomenon as it forms relationships between the variables, defining their nature.

It is added that this method proposes to map the particularities, the characteristics of a set of elements and build relationships between the evaluated variables.

In this research, for the data analysis procedure, sensemaking techniques were used, such as: visual mapping (visual map) and narrative strategy. Sensemaking refers to the construction of meaning, becoming important in face of complex situations in which it is necessary to make or promote a sense of the experience (Weick, 1995). Mapping is a visual technique, a map, and it is a relevant instrument to present information visually and describe actions in a succinct and expressive way. Mental or visual maps, according to Frey (2009), are considered relevant to absorb and organize information, knowledge, and other fundamental elements.

As for the narrative strategy, it can be said that most research processes seek to involve a resource of this type in some issue, as it is considered a fundamental product of the investigation. It is added that, when properly conducted, this strategy provokes a feeling of *dejavu* among experienced readers (Weick, 1995). About data analysis, the processes and meanings involved in this research were not measured in terms of quantity, intensity, or frequency.

IV. RESULTS

This study relied on information extracted from semi-structured interviews and field research, which corroborated the confrontation and association of the information collected.

To preserve the identities of the actors involved and promote greater reliability to this investigation, the participants were designated here as G1 and G2 in the case of managers of the state of Maranhão and the municipality of Imperatriz; V1 and V2 the councilors; and S1 and S2 the State and Municipal Secretary and Superintendent respectively.

The interviews took place in the absence of other people who could, in any way, interrupt or disturb them. The fact that the interview was preceded by semi-structured questions also facilitated the dialogue. Highlights were given to each high point of the interviews, as well as the situations experienced and perceptions about public management in the region. All reports were different in some cases and similar in others, however, with a wealth of information.

In this investigation, we sought to expose the crucial elements as well as the highlights presented, since, to reach a good ethical direction, it is necessary for the researcher to be aware of what he is looking for, his objectives or the element he seeks to know (Salomon, 2001).

Each of the interviews was carried out on alternate days, according to the schedule and availability of the participants involved in the study. A priori, it was questioned which actions the public management of Imperatriz develops to support companies to grow and hire qualified labor. So V1 replied:

A bill was sent to the city council that benefits micro entrepreneurs, that is, those who are starting their activity in the market, providing for partnerships with bodies such as SEBRAE so that they can foster this informal economy or that of the micro entrepreneur. We know that it is still in its infancy, as the project was voted on by the chamber

a short time ago, it is only 5 months old. This was forwarded with the participation of civil society, trade association bodies, businessmen and micro-entrepreneurs and in addition to the city council, which is the executive body that implemented this project (V1).

The interview excerpt refers to the indicator "entrepreneurial actions", represented in this research as one of the diagnosed variables that relate to each other and that are associated with fostering the entrepreneurial ecosystem. In this case, in V1's speech there is a desire to implement the project, however, according to his own words: "it is still in the initial phase". There are only expectations.

It should be remembered that there are partners, such as SEBRAE, that develop entrepreneurial actions that effectively support the promotion of the entrepreneurship ecosystem in the municipality. Therefore, the actions promoted were not explained by the interviewee in question. In this questioning, S1 mentioned that:

Yes, it happens. Although it could happen more effectively. We have a city that has a purpose since its structuring that grows much more in theory than in the field of practice. Therefore, developing mechanisms that optimize entrepreneurship in Imperatriz so that it can become a true center of potential is still a challenge, but it is undoubtedly something that can be achieved. And I believe we will achieve (S1).

In the interviewee's perception, there is entrepreneurial action, even if still timidly on the part of the municipal public administration. If there were greater engagement of actors and entrepreneurial stimuli, this would no longer be so challenging. Also, in relation to indicator A, V2 explained:

Today, in Imperatriz, we have almost 300 thousand inhabitants and we have approximately 18 thousand academics regularly enrolled [...] On the other hand, we have two public universities here, UFMA – Federal University of Maranhão and UEMASUL – State University of Maranhão do Sul. we have several private universities, we have the IFMA – Federal Institute of Maranhão; a hundred courses in almost all areas, precisely to meet this new reality, which refers to market demands for increasingly qualified professionals. Companies generate this opportunity; however, it is necessary to have a team prepared for this, and in this case, I see higher education organizations with great strength and Emprress is well served by this (V2).

It was noticed in the interviewee's speech that universities, as well as institutes, are included in the process of construction and entrepreneurial mobilization. Obviously, the workforce that comes from these academic environments concentrates an important part of knowledge and ends up standing out from the mass workforce, which can favor them to ascend professionally. In this same prism, respondent G2 exposed:

The city hall was our first partner in the implementation and application of legislation, which was the Complementary Law 123/2006, which institutes the statute of micro and small companies. This statute was created at the national level and then each State and Municipality approved its own. From the moment the city hall approves this legislation, it gives different treatment to micro and small businesses to grow within its municipality, and this differentiated treatment ranges from the issue of support to formalization - especially of individual micro entrepreneurs, who are a type of company that you can have a simplicity in the formalization process and even in the process of dealing with this entrepreneur, in addition to facilitating that some public policies meet the micro and small companies (G2).

Interviewee G2 continues, saying that there are examples that attest to this partnership, such as:

[...] public purchases, mainly in food purchases, the PAA and the PNAE, which are programs aimed at education, so the city hall already directs them to micro and small businesses in the municipality, as well as the process bidding. Because, the tenders already give a preference to micro and small companies, so there are a number of devices within the city's legislation that favors it. For example: if there is a tie between a small and a large company, the small company has the advantage of presenting R\$ 1.00 more in its proposal and coming out as the winner of the contest. At the level of competition, public notices of up to R\$ 80,000.00 are directed to micro and small companies, so the large company no longer participates (G2).

That said, one must also consider that public-private partnerships still bring benefits to contracted companies, which ends up boosting the local economy. This reinforces the thinking of Etzkowitz (2005), when he says that there is a growing awareness that collaboration with the private sector, in PPPs, has the ability to provide numerous benefits for improvement and efficiency in the public sector, from the acceleration of a advance of infrastructure

as well as improvement in public management. Analogous to this argument, respondent V1 replied that:

In relation to the workforce itself, when it comes to public authorities, it is already much more qualified in terms of partnerships, we have many more partners working in this issue of own qualification, with employees more involved in the small business cause. SEBRAE also does this with the public authorities [...] In terms of the market, the qualification of the workforce still leaves a little to be desired, as we have entrepreneurs who still do not have a good qualification, they leave the desire in the supply of products and services, or in the manner of management. And that is why we develop partnerships to work towards improvements, whether in the technical and operational part, here are partners such as SENAI, SENAC, SEST), or in the management part, which we have the educational institutions, the city hall itself and so on (V1).

It can be seen here that SEBRAE is a strong ally of the city hall for the development of the entrepreneurial ecosystem, so the statements by Etzkowitz (2005) again fit in this context. The author says that a region can only be fostered for the purposes of economic advancement as each actor in the entrepreneurial ecosystem starts to adopt the role of the other, establishing alliances with a common purpose, which confirms the statements made by V1 and G2.

V1 was asked about the partners to foster the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Empress's companies: *"In addition to SEBRAE, there are some technical schools (private), Banco do Nordeste, the micro friend, which has partnered with entrepreneurs who use this microcredit and training as well, but SEBRAE is still the most active (V1).*

Accordingly, the statements of interviewees V1 and S1 present similar opinions in affirming SEBRAE's effective performance as a partner of the entrepreneurial ecosystem, also meeting the vision of V2 when it says:

The Municipality of Imperatriz has in its structure the Secretariat for Economic Development – SEDEC and it, in turn, has the attribution of seeking training partners for the personal development of individuals who will enter the labor market. There is a concern in this regard, despite high school education being a prerogative of the State, but the city government maintains a job of directing these young people to the job market. [...] Here we have the Commercial and Industrial Association of Imperatriz – ACII and we have FIEMA – Federation of Industry of the State of

Maranhão, which is the biggest owner of the GDP of the State of Maranhão, and together we have some actions, as a bank of talents, the management of jobs, which are programs managed by SEDEC in partnership with ACII, FIEMA, CDL – Chamber of Store Directors that work in harmony, seeking to place and replace people in the market (V2).

Based on this information, the process of searching for partnerships is essential for building an efficient entrepreneurial atmosphere. The answers refer to the indicator 'public-private partnerships', which refers to public-private partnerships that are driving forces for the development of the local economy. Still on the prism of this same indicator G1 replied:

It is important that there is a partnership between the federal, municipal, and state government, each one of these entities has its taxes, and each one of them participates with its share to encourage these projects, because if it only depends on the private sector, the risk is greater. That is why there are PPPs – Public-Private Partnerships to enable exactly that. Municipalities can help in this regard with land, for example, where the Industrial District enters, they can also help with fiscal and economic incentives. This favors the growth of this entrepreneurship ecosystem (G1).

Through this same questioning, V1 alludes that:

We at SEBRAE have the city hall as the main partner, along with its secretariats and subfolders. We have as a great ally the educational institutions, especially those of higher education, but we also have those of basic and technical education that also help us in this matter, we have class entities, such as: Regional Councils, Commercial Associations, city council, Chamber of Store Managers, CONJOVE, Startup Associations that are carrying the issue of innovation very well here in the municipality. So, we have several partners, several agents involved that work together with SEBRAE (G2).

It was found that the partnership between public entities and the private sector is essential, since both, interacting towards common interests, contribute to the growth and development of the community and region.

Another point raised refers to the large industries in the region. In V1's opinion: *"The large industry that exists today in the city is Suzano Papel e Celulose, but society, including mine, is very questioned about hiring people for high positions in our region" (V1).*

The respondent adds: *"A lot is taken from our (environmental) ecosystem, they benefit from it, generate wealth for them, however, for the municipality itself, there is not much benefit, especially in hiring local labor in higher positions to mass labor at operational levels" (V1).*

Here, there is already a certain dissatisfaction with the local industry. S1 was also asked about this same spectrum in relation to industries and he replied:

There is Suzano, a Pulp and Paper industry, in our region. But I want to emphasize by saying that the model that Empress has and has grown was a kind of "predatory" model, as there is an idea of a movement of exploitation of commodities and this ranges from distributive sectors such as the energy issue and I quote here the gigantic hub of the Estreito hydroelectric plant and the pulp and paper plant, which is the case of Suzano in Imperatriz. These companies have very "predatory" characteristics because they in fact exploit the natural wealth and once, they are completely established, they create a difficulty in accessing local labor, so this is a problem in my opinion (S1).

The respondent added:

I see Imperatriz-MA in relation to the industries that they are being promoted by the Government of the State of Maranhão, and I cite the case of the recent Piracanjuba that is coming to our city to constitute a large center for the processing of milk (dairy and dairy products). I also mention the leather hub that is established between Imperatriz and the city of Governador Edson Lobão, which are structures that can quietly let Imperatriz be just a commodity export hub, so that we can process these products and aggregate value achieving income for the region (S1).

Based on the interview reports, indicator 'public-private partnerships' is a crucial point in fostering a strategic partnership, since industries have the role of leveraging and developing the economy of a given region.

Regarding this issue, G2 said that: *"[...] the industry is closely linked to the issue of transformation, and when it comes to transformation, it is the addition of value to the product. So, from the moment you have this added value, we believe that there is collaboration for the development of the city" (G2).*

V1 adds saying:

In the sense of developing entrepreneurship, I share this same vision, if we were to list the industries that we have here, you will find the Suzano company, in which practically all of its fleet of

transportation of inputs, which is wood, are made up of small and micro entrepreneurs. that invested in this logistics. Apart from the other courses she has brought since her implementation of mechanics, planting, which motivate people to take this course and then invest in their own business. In addition to that, we have Piracanjuba, which is coming, which will invest in the production of milk and its derivatives, which is also an entrepreneur, which they end up buying from other investors as well (V1).

It is important to note that the existing industry in this scenario is important because it signals a positive trend in the local economy and trade and service sector, as mentioned by Porter (1998).

Concatenated to this context, it was questioned whether there had been planning for the implantation of these industries, and the public administration recognized that it expected an economic boom after the arrival of the industries to the municipality. V1 was expressed:

I believe there was no organization. Some people here called themselves the "father of the project" of implementation, but when the car wash operation started and Suzano was mentioned, many people ended up abstaining, and then the city did not plan in my view, it did not qualify, the real estate boom where speculation is carried out did not sustain itself, and today we see a city with many houses for rent, many houses for sale, many condominiums that were made to serve this workforce are vacant, because the skilled workforce withdrew from the municipality (V1).

In this aspect S1 also replied:

In fact, there is always a plan, but when you look deeper you realize that there isn't or wasn't there. In the specific case of Suzano, it is a typical example, we have to carry out a process of accumulation of land, of exploitation of this land for vegetable production, and when the wood is removed, it takes up to a decade for this land to actually generate again fruits and vegetables. The same thing happens with other industries (S1).

The respondent adds: *"I am convinced that the accumulation of strength between the partnership of these bodies to create a master plan organized with the Industrial District so that we could do all kinds of industrialization based on this planning process" (S1).*

It is concluded that V1 and S1 have similar opinions, as they both believe that there was no effective planning for

the implementation of the industry and that the expected economic development has not yet occurred.

On the other hand, there is the perception of interviewee V2, which contradicts these lines. The interview excerpt provides a brief explanation of strategic planning in the implementation of the local industry:

Suzano's coming here has a very peculiar history. It was initially going to be installed in the municipality of Porto Franco, a few kilometers from here, also on the riverbank. There, yes, there was a political intervention, both by the State at the time, with the governor and our mayor here at the time, together with the city council, including the Commercial Association and organized civil society - which really got organized and mobilized. Everyone went to Suzano in São Paulo, which is the headquarters, to explain that the same river that passes there, passes here, that Porto Franco, would not have the same hotel structure, medical structure, sufficient fuel and other series of attributes, once that they would have to travel to get treatment at Empress. So, nothing better than staying in a city that already offers all the necessary support. [...] And when Suzano's plant was disclosed, the city automatically understood how much would enter the municipal coffers through the collection of the IPI, ICMS and countless taxes that are collected with an organization of that size. So, all of this was previously thought out and strategically planned, as it would heat up and give more oxygen for the municipality to work more on actions towards development (V2).

It can be seen in this testimony that there was a strategic planning process. The indicator 'strategic planning' highlights this element, associated with the sociocultural aspect and which directly influences the promotion of entrepreneurship. It was verified, in the interviewee's speech, that the objectives outlined by the public administration are in harmony with those of civil society, that is, the community, which in this case participated in the actions planned and directed towards the development of the region.

In this way, an addendum is made that civil society has shown increasingly organized, participatory, and enthusiastic in the aspect of public issues and in this case, explained by the respondent, it did not deviate from the rule. According to Safarti (2013), public actions are born from common goals, individual or collective, in public benefit, so this involvement is necessary.

Another important aspect questioned was whether public, state, and municipal management has entrepreneurial action plans. In this regard, interviewee V2 said:

[...] The State Government has an Economic Development Secretariat – SEDEC, which is concerned with this issue of attracting new ventures. We have a privileged position in Maranhão, which is the Port of Itaqui, which has one of the most important drafts in the world and is second only to Amsterdam in the Netherlands, and it is closer to Africa, this geographical position makes the issue of international trade much easier and in a way it undertakes. We have two railways that pass here, the North South and Carajás, even if the ore is extracted from Carajás it passes through here, the municipalities where the rails cut, they have a cooperative and receive some incentives, royalties from this exploration. The State maintains this policy of attraction and the industrial districts themselves are there for everyone to see. There is EMAP, located in São Luís, which is the agency that controls the Port of Itaqui. In the municipality of Imperatriz there is a series of actions. Because all this is part of the will of the main municipal manager (mayor) to have the understanding that it is necessary to undertake and seek new actions. In my opinion, we are on a good path (V2).

It was noted in this speech the presence of the element represented by the identifier 'entrepreneurial action', which was repeated twice in this analysis: firstly, when the respondent reported the entrepreneurial actions. It is perceived that the mobilization for the speed of these actions is a determining factor for a region to grow and develop at economic levels.

Parallel to this, it was described that with the creation of Law 1680, of 2017, the Municipality of Imperatriz-MA should present the Municipal Plan for Entrepreneurship and Innovation to the local community.

In this juncture, the Municipal Secretariat for Economic Development (SEDEC) recently promoted training with all departments in the municipality to integrate public policy actions, meeting with representatives of Urban Planning, Civil Defense, Public Policy Secretariat for Women, and other representatives, to verify and be aware of the progress of the plans of each administrative sector (Imirante, 2017).

Another aspect that confirms this was mentioned by S2, who said:

Law 1680 established the Municipal System of Entrepreneurship and Innovation with more than

30 complementary institutions. The objective is to strategically articulate activities and mobilizing actions to increase economic development in the region. The mutual influence between the secretariats and other institutions will develop channels and qualified tools to support entrepreneurship and innovation for the Municipality (S2).

In line with this statement, G2 reports:

In relation to the State, I'm sure so. Because there is a state-level committee that works on entrepreneurship and that SEBRAE participates, and it is headed by the Governor, where he calls several actors, SEBRAE collaborators, municipal secretariats, all of this to work on the entrepreneurship agenda in the State of Maranhão. And from there, it unfolds into several actions, such as, for example, we also have the State Board of Trade, which is implementing in all municipalities a system called REDE SIM, aimed at facilitating those who want to open their business and interconnecting all the organs: fire department, taxes, health surveillance. This system reduces the deadline for opening the company. And this involvement, as the General Law 123/2006, is an indication that the State and municipality are tuned in to this issue of stimulating micro and small businesses within their environment (G2).

In this aspect, it can be said that entrepreneurial actions are those that promote administrative changes or even allow the implementation of new methodologies and that can be initiated by a single subject or by several individuals (Carneiro, 2010). Thus, it includes the strategic planning of the public sector, allied with the private sector, as an instrument of participatory management through entrepreneurial actions.

From this point of view, V1 complements:

There are also government programs such as 'More Production'. For the rural producer, there was a program that ended which was more focused on industries, so from time to time they have government actions. There was the business mission that already made an edition to China and are already going to make the second one. So we do see engagement. In relation to the municipality, I see it in the same way, there is the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Committee, which deals with various institutions that meet to debate what actions can be taken in the municipality for development (V1).

This ratifies the importance of promoting actions that stimulate entrepreneurial capacity and help to foster and heat up the local economy. Therefore, within this same questioning of entrepreneurial actions, respondent S1 replied:

As a State, we are carrying out a conclusive project for the Industrial District, which will create not only from a tax point of view, greater appreciation for industries that come from abroad or even those that already have potential for local growth but will create more participation. decisive role of the State, in the sense of generating more jobs and income for the region (S1).

There is a concern of the State in optimizing mechanisms that promote the economy and that have a positive impact on the generation of employment and income for the municipality. S1's speech refers to the 'job and income generation' indicator, which characterizes exactly this crucial point of employment and income, and which needs to gain more and more notoriety within governmental and municipal agendas.

What is the role of public authorities in relation to universities was questioned. Interviewee V2 said:

One of the university's roles is extension, which goes beyond the institution's walls, and the city hall is an important partner. I'll give you a very practical example, in the area of health, for example, we have medicine here at UFMA (Federal), medicine at CEUMA which is a (private) university, there will be biomedicine at PITÁGORAS, nursing at various institutions in public and private. The Municipal and State public authorities have a series of units installed in the city, there is the HMI – Municipal Hospital of Imperatriz, which has an agreement with higher education institutions (public and private) for the internship issue, which is already a partnership very important (V2).

In this sense and in the same prism of the conception of V2, the respondent V1 added: *"The role is to create opportunities for this mass that is formed in the research and extension universities, so that these people together with the universities can be occupying the discussions and the positions offered by these companies"* (V1).

It is clearly noted here the importance of universities for the growth and development of entrepreneurship in the region and how the engagement of public authorities with the academic environment is essential to generate opportunity for the community inserted in this universe, ensuring qualified professionals in the occupation of positions. Still within this scenario V1 mentions that:

[...] the role of public authorities in relation to universities is linked to the qualification of labor with a clear objective to investigate market trends. I believe that every market trend arises there within the academy, with studies, with research, because, from the moment we have this study and research, mainly applied to individual micro entrepreneurs, we will have new trends in the market and that they will consequently open new markets. For example, here last year (2020), we partnered with a research program at UFMA, which is INOVAR, they carry out a market diagnosis with the companies and they will identify whether that company is aware of the market opportunity and what it does with the market opportunity (because companies are often attentive but do nothing). Then we gathered at SEBRAE about 60 small companies, each company received a lecture, which had a market diagnosis carried out in partnership with UFMA. They received feedback on what point to take advantage of the market and what stocks they were failing. Public authorities need to be interacting because knowledge is built from that (V1).

Parallel to this, it is worth noting that extension research as a link between academia and society is an opportunity for public management to build assertive public-private partnerships, because, according to Bresser (1989), this interrelation promotes competitive advantages and provides benefits for society.

The role of public authorities in companies was also asked, and V2 stated:

There is an incentive for companies to grow in Empress. Both for those who are arriving and for those who already exist. There is frequent dialogue via the Commercial and Industrial Association of Imperatriz – ACII, Chamber of Store Directors – CDL (very active in the region), in addition to the Unions. Everyone is always very tuned in, discussing important issues for the region. For example, at Christmas time, there is a campaign to decorate the city, there are the Municipal and State public authorities, the private sector, unions, and representative entities, of course I gave a very simple example here. But I realize that there is a permanent dialogue between the initiatives [...] (V2).

Given this statement, V2's speech is configured as the indicator 'dialogues between initiatives', which is characterized by the promotion of dialogue between public and private initiatives to ensure greater incentives for local organizations, so that grow and obtain economic results

that contribute to the region's development. Therefore, the same V2 when asked about the role of public authorities in relation to SEBRAE replied:

In the case of Imperatriz, there is a partnership, in relation to the attraction of labor, training of personnel, among others. I say this because invitations arrive at City Hall frequently. For example, in relation to bakery there is an effort to learn the whole dynamics of the bakery chain. The Secretariat for Social Development - SEDES and the Secretariat for Economic Development - SEDEC have a series of pertinent actions. Another example, the "pop center", which is a center, where people are passing through, without prospects, 'housed', let's say, and are placed, precisely in these courses, in order to somehow awaken to acting, a professional aptitude. Thus, these people will have a perspective of the future, will have a job, income and possibly a family. [...] So there are numerous actions of the public power that march together with SEBRAE (V2).

In line with the interviewee's speech, a connection is made to the indicator 'capturing opportunities', referred to here as an element of capturing opportunities and which is related to the sociocultural aspect. Considering what was exposed by the interviewee, SEBRAE and the public administration corroborate efforts to promote programs and actions capable of attracting new investments. The formation of a team or of new talents can incur in the identification of a good opportunity, which in turn can generate the formation of the team and fundraising. Also, about this question, G2 reports that:

Our main partner of SEBRAE is the government. And when we have this ease of dialogue with the government, our actions really develop in a much easier way to have a better city. Of course, the public power is not the only partner, we have municipalities that sometimes do not have the figure of the public power there, and we always look for a business organization entity or a trade association or even a group of entrepreneurs organized to for us to develop our actions. But, when we have a public power as the main partner, SEBRAE's actions are without a shadow of a doubt much more efficient (G2).

Here, once again, the 'entrepreneurial action' indicator appears to reinforce the action of public-private partnership in the context of the municipality of Imperatriz. It was questioned which municipal secretariats work for the development of local entrepreneurship. To do so, S1 said:

I will talk here about SINFRA – Infrastructure Secretariat, which was supposed to be very active in our city, but I suspect that it is not. It even poses obstacles to this growth and development of local entrepreneurship in my view. Lack of planning is perhaps the biggest problem. The lack of technical capacity of managers, I also see as a problem. And this ends up having a very strong impact on the city's management. So, I am particularly independent of proselytism, I have the understanding that in this aspect the municipal administration is lacking (S1).

In this same aspect V1 mentions:

Here in Imperatriz there was a Secretariat for Economic Development – SEDEC, but unfortunately, for about nine years now, the only role it had was to send this project of the local micro entrepreneur, and from the moment it reached the City Council, we demand more actions, therefore, in my view, in a generic way, the Secretariats are not showing so much service in this regard (V1).

In this context, there is a weakness in relation to the performance of some Secretariats since the effective performance of these public bodies are decisive increments in the encouragement and growth of entrepreneurship. Regarding this G2 alludes to:

There is the Secretariat for Economic Development – SEDEC, which is very active, and in previous terms we did not have this involvement as we have now, and this is a very positive point. In previous terms, it was more the Agriculture Department, which is usually a partner, the Municipal Revenue Department, which is also a partner because it deals with permits, invoices, among others. But this year, we have a partnership with the Department of Education - SEDES, which we have a strategy of entrepreneurship and innovation in schools, and we also have the Municipal Department of Taxes (G2).

It is noted that the involvement of municipal secretariats is linked to the attributions of formulating and executing plans, programs and projects that are linked with government agencies and entities and private and public bodies, providing a scenario that supports the attraction of new investments with costing and modernization existing economic activities.

The Secretariats' actions are also part of operating as a facilitator between the government and entrepreneurs, with the intention of attracting and optimizing investments (Carneiro, 2010). As for the projects designed to develop the entrepreneurial ecosystem, S1 replied:

[...] today we have important production chains that are linked to the logic of trade, for example, in the trade relationship. Today, the State government has an important program called Juro Zero, where the State Government encourages small children's entrepreneurs to access via bank credit up to R\$20,000.00 and pay in various installments, with the interest earned on this amount being paid by the State. Therefore, it is an incentive for the small entrepreneur. We also have in some sectors that involve the issue of microcredit, those who wish, for example, to establish themselves as a State to sell school supplies, those who are veterinarians who want to sell products to AGED - State Agency for Agricultural Defense of Maranhão and to Maranhão State Agency for Research and Rural Extension - AGERP, those who want to make leather, for example, a production chain. Also, those who want to partner with the State and establish relationships with their dairy products so that the State can also promote this milk chain. And of course, our flagship, the Industrial District, which is without a doubt a more effective action by the State, in the sense of reducing taxes, breaking some barriers, including bureaucratic ones, so that industry and commerce can develop better (S1).

Partnerships are important for the development of efficient projects. In this sense, it is noted that there is a favorable insertion of designs towards the implementation of actions that support the entrepreneurial amplitude in the municipality. Regarding this, G2 complements saying that there is also:

[...] the project that SEDEC is carrying out, which is the capillarization of service to MEI through the CRAS, through higher education institutions. And there is also, for example, the innovation incentive program, where a part of the resources, of the taxes will be destined to the promotion of innovation, which is an initiative of the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Committee, that is, it will have a resource (fund) coming from the government for innovation projects in our municipality. Apart from other actions being carried out in partnership with SEBRAE (A1).

Based on this report, it is added that the relationship between public and private, about educational policy, is a constitutive element of social and economic transformations. It is not a point of determination, but of inclusion and process (Carvalho, Viana & Mantovani, 2016). Therefore, universities are relevant in the composition of the entrepreneurial ecosystem, therefore, the strengthening of these alliances is necessary.

The public administration partners were asked to promote the entrepreneurial ecosystem in the region, and V1 replied: *"Our partners are the Industrial Association of Imperatriz - ACII, SEBRAE, City Council and the community itself" (V1).* In this same aspect, respondent V2 added:

The partners are formed by the Secretariat of Economic Development - SEDEC, Secretariat of Social Development - SEDES, Industrial Trade Association of Imperatriz - ACII, Federation of Industries of the State of Maranhão - FIEMA, National Learning Service - SEBRAE, Chamber of Store Directors - CDL and Universities - public and private (V2).

The increase in partnerships or strategic alliances is considered an effective mechanism within organizations, whether public or private. Within this aspect, indicator B appears again in the analysis, represented by the public-private partnership.

Nevertheless, the interviewees make clear the existence of a strategic grouping for a common objective. It is known that partnerships need to start by understanding the challenges and activities that are involved within the established alliances, hence the importance of the assertive choice of allies that aim to ignite an organization. In this case, organizations in the macro sense of the word since we are talking here about the entire entrepreneurial ecosystem of the municipality.

Another relevant issue raised, which is linked to the previous one, questions the existence of strategic planning in the search for public-private partnerships in institutions and companies in the municipality. In this sense, respondent S1 reported:

[...] Due to the fact that Maranhão has had a deficiency in investments for decades, the private initiative ended up working as a strong vehicle for all of this. But I suspect that a lot is changing. The construction of full-time schools, the IEMA schools, which are full-time vocational schools that will end up generating a huge number of qualified labors, the partnership that the State is making with many companies. For example, with Suzano, with the production of leather, milk, the trade sector, and also investments in infrastructure through some hubs such as the riverside. All of this ends up directing and making us believe that a future that lies ahead can be better (S1).

G2 reports that: *"On our part (SEBRAE) yes. We map the areas that we want to serve in a certain period and year, and through those areas that we intend to serve, we*

are looking for who our partners are so that we can carry out these actions, whether public or private" (G2).

There is evidence, in relation to the interviewees' statements, that strategically planning partnerships is important to establish economic growth. In this regard, the speeches of participants S1 and G2 refer to indicator C, an element represented here by economic development. Public-private partnerships provide a greater likelihood for a region to develop economically.

What can be seen from the interviews, in the case of the municipality of Imperatriz, is that although some weaknesses have occurred, there is a demonstration of actions by the local government for partnerships with other public and private emissaries, directing their efforts to leverage the ecosystem entrepreneur in the region.

V. CONCLUSION

According to the data collected for the mapping of the entrepreneurial ecosystem, the municipal management of Imperatriz provides entrepreneurial stimuli.

Although there are efforts aimed at the entrepreneurial promotion of local public management, the participation of municipal public agents and higher education institutions (IES), which play an important role in the entrepreneurship scenario, is still not widespread.

It is also noted that in various regional and local events, discussion spaces are opened regarding entrepreneurial issues with the aim of developing the municipality's economy. These events are mostly attended by SEBRAE, which is a foundation within the ecosystem, and local educational institutions, colleges, and universities.

For this reason, in the proportion of clashes or in approximate equivalence, the public authorities would need to provide more enticement from the HEIs in this juncture addressed.

The efforts and the necessary designs need to be more widespread to give concreteness to the projects outlined more quickly, with the intention of promoting the development, in a more efficient and growing way, in the entrepreneurial ecosystem of the municipality.

It can be said that the entrepreneurial ecosystem is composed of the elements of public policy, culture, financial capital, support institution, human resources and markets, and the performance of public authorities can propagate concomitantly within these variables.

About financial capital, it was diagnosed with the documental analysis that there is also a need for progress, since the direct participation found was that of the

BNDES, in the participation in a project that took approximately 20 years to assume format and be effective.

As for the aspect of culture, the municipality had some inclinations and achievements directed towards entrepreneurship, although there has been no change since 2004, when the municipality's master plan was created, until the present moment.

This year is not part of the time frame of this research; however, it was mentioned because it refers to the only master plan that currently exists. There is a new master plan in progress at the City Council, however, it has not yet been put into effect.

On the other hand, support institutions, such as SEBRAE, stand out in this scenario, as they have been playing important roles in partnership with the local government, promoting courses and effectively stimulating entrepreneurship in the city.

In relation to human resources, Instituto PROE collaborates with companies in the search for professionals with technical qualification, with skills and competence to occupy business positions and administrative functions, which characterizes a relevant issue from the point of view of generating incentives for the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Finally, it can be said that the fact that the Imperatriz market is considered dynamic and competitive and the city's economy is the second largest in the state, the municipality attracts considerably many entrepreneurs to this ecosystem.

It is noteworthy that this research aimed to analyze the participation of public management in fostering the entrepreneurial ecosystem of Imperatriz. Therefore, it moved towards data with greater foundation and concreteness, which were obtained through interviews, since mapping alone would not be enough to vehemently affirm the role of public management in fostering this ecosystem.

As for the limitations of the research and recommendations for future studies, it is noteworthy that even if the objective has been achieved, it is important to emphasize that all research, especially of a qualitative nature, has constraints, that is, some limitations.

A limiting aspect was the difficulty of scheduling interviews in relation to some actors, since the commitments of the public administration delayed the collection of information, which focused on rescheduling visits, which were often recurrent.

Another guiding point is related to the fear of having the identities revealed, even knowing that the research has an ethical apparatus and the free document clarified to ensure the identification of those involved. It is noteworthy

that not everyone had the same fear, only some participants.

Regarding future work, it is recommended to deepen this study to understand entrepreneurship and its direct relationship with innovation and research the governance of the entrepreneurial ecosystem and the conflicts of public and private interests.

Finally, it is plausible to ensure that the research regarding the role of public management in fostering the entrepreneurial ecosystem in the municipality of Imperatriz was relevant, as it is a material that will serve as support to assist other researchers working in this same line of research.

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