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## Collective capabilities in social innovations in the light of the 5C Cycle: An analysis of the Paraíba Network of Community Banks

*Capacidades coletivas em inovações sociais à luz do Ciclo 5C: Uma análise da Rede Paraíba de Bancos Comunitários*

*Capacidades colectivas en innovaciones sociales a la luz del Ciclo 5C: Un análisis de la Red Paraíba de Bancos Comunitarios*

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### ABSTRACT

This article aims to empirically analyze the representation variables of the 5C Cycle of developing collective capabilities in social innovations: Capital, Conscientization, Conciliation, Collaboration, and Confluence. It brings relevance to studies in the area, as well as a contribution to strategies that develop collective capabilities in social initiatives. A study of the multiple cases of the Paraíba Network of Community Development Banks was constructed. It became evident that the use of capital and confluence practices are reflected mainly in the diffusion of practices of the initiatives. It is concluded, from a collective capabilities perspective, that the analysis of this framework in real contexts subsidizes collective capability development practices and promotes improved management of social innovation initiatives and the consequent local development.

**Keywords:** social innovation; capabilities approach; social currencies; community development banks; local development.

### RESUMO

Este artigo tem como objetivo analisar empiricamente as variáveis de representação do Ciclo 5C de desenvolvimento de capacidades coletivas em inovações sociais: Capital, Conscientização, Conciliação, Colaboração e Confluência. Traz relevância aos estudos da área, bem como uma contribuição para estratégias que desenvolvam as capacidades coletivas nas iniciativas sociais. Construiu-se um estudo dos múltiplos casos da Rede Paraíba de Bancos Comunitários de Desenvolvimento. Evidenciou-se que a utilização do capital e as práticas de confluência são refletidas principalmente na difusão de práticas das iniciativas. Conclui-se, sob uma perspectiva de capacidades coletivas, que a análise desse framework em contextos reais subsidia práticas de desenvolvimento de capacidades coletivas e promove melhoria da gestão de iniciativas de inovação social e o consequente desenvolvimento local.

**Palavras-chave:** inovação social; abordagem das capacidades; moedas sociais; bancos comunitários de desenvolvimento; desenvolvimento local.

### RESUMEN

Este artículo tiene como objetivo analizar empíricamente las variables de representación del Ciclo 5C de desarrollo de capacidades colectivas en innovaciones sociales: Capital, Conciencia, Conciliación, Colaboración y Confluencia. Aporta relevancia a los estudios en el área, así como un aporte a estrategias que desarrollen capacidades colectivas en iniciativas sociales. Se construyó un estudio de los múltiples casos de la Red Paraíba de Bancos de Desarrollo Comunitario. Se hizo evidente que el uso de capital y las prácticas de confluencia se reflejan principalmente en la difusión de las prácticas de las iniciativas. Se concluye, desde una perspectiva de capacidades colectivas, que el análisis de este marco en contextos reales subsidia prácticas de desarrollo de capacidades colectivas y promueve una mejor gestión de las iniciativas de innovación social y el consecuente desarrollo local.

**Palabras clave:** innovación social; enfoque de capacidades; monedas sociales; bancos de desarrollo comunitario; desarrollo local.

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

The field of social innovation (SI) has gained multiple characters with the advancement of its research. The concept ranges from simple ideas to formalizing structured social organizations focused on innovation for social change (Cajaiba-Santana, 2014; Portales, 2019; Schubert, 2018; van der Have & Rubalcaba, 2016). Therefore, interdisciplinarity is required for a greater understanding of its scope (Cajaiba-Santana, 2014; Ziegler, 2017b). In this perspective, some studies use the human capabilities approach (Sen, 1990, 2001) to direct discussions based on the SI. Whose social actors are considered the pillars of comprehensive transformations based on this phenomenon (Abad & Ezponda, 2019; Chiappero-Martinetti & Von Jacobi, 2015; Sferrazzo & Ruffini, 2019).

This congruence between the skills approach and social innovation allows studies centered on people and their ability to perform, which are already found in the literature (Howaldt & Schwarz, 2017; Tiwari, 2017; Ziegler, Molnar, Chiappero-Martinetti & von Jacobi, 2017). In this sense, it is argued that social actors are seen as effective agents and, therefore, constitute a fundamental point of SI initiatives, conquering agents' simultaneous role and the public of their achievements (Sferrazzo & Ruffini, 2019; Ziegler, 2010).

From this perspective, the 5C Cycle of developing collective capabilities in social innovations is proposed, improving the 3C model of Ibrahim (2017), which presents collective capabilities in grassroots social innovation. With the 5C Cycle, the categories capital, conscientization, conciliation, collaboration, and confluence are discussed as fundamental processes for that dynamic. Based on this understanding, this article aims to analyze the processes (qualitative variables) of these categories in the banks of the Paraibana Network of Community Banks, reflecting an exploration and empirical description.

Community development banks are seen as solidarity-based economy initiatives (Singer, 2002). Thus, assuming the role of self-management granaries, especially concerning the purpose of their actions, such as promoting social well-being with satisfaction social needs (Juliani, Juliana, Souza & Harger, 2014; Medeiros, Machado, Pereira, Costa & Gomez, 2017). In this way, they stand out as laboratories for social innovation practices (Vieira, Parente & Barbosa, 2017), through projects with community purposes, in collective and democratic self-management, devoid of private profits and with the generation of social change (Ibrahim, 2017; Moulaert, Martinelli, González & Swyngedouw, 2007; Portales, 2019; Vieira et al., 2017).

This research is justified to allow the advancement of the literature about the scientific congruence between the field of social innovation and the approach to capabilities and provide an empirical contribution to the study of strategies and actions that develop collective capabilities in social innovation initiatives.

The theoretical articulations of the studied framework

are current. They need an analysis in real contexts, which can provide subsidies for the practices presented in the literature to improve the management of social innovation initiatives, promoting the consequent socio-economic development of the communities in which they operate these are inserted. To this end, the cases chosen for empirical exploration are justified by their characteristics of social innovations and their essentially collaborative structures.

Structurally, in addition to these introductory aspects, this study presents the theoretical framework adopted, the methodological aspects, and, finally, the results and final considerations.

## 2 CAPABILITY FOR SOCIAL INNOVATION

Seeing the field of social innovation in interdisciplinary perspectives (Cajaiba-Santana, 2014; Ziegler, 2017b), studies have emphasized social actors from the perspective of capabilities (Sen, 1990, 2001). This approach has an evident congruence with social innovation, whose actors are the basis of social structures for this purpose (Sferrazzo & Ruffini, 2019; Ziegler, 2010). In this sense, from the mobilization of these agents' resources and capabilities, social transformation is aimed at (Chiappero-Martinetti & Von Jacobi, 2015; Nicholls & Murdock, 2012; Sferrazzo & Ruffini, 2019).

Sen's approach (1990, 2001) essentially leads to the understanding of social actors' concepts of "effectiveness," "capabilities," and "agency" (Deneulin & McGregor, 2010; Sferrazzo & Ruffini, 2019). The first contemplates the actions of these individuals in search of their purposes. The second discusses the freedom of action for thought actions. Furthermore, the third concept reflects efforts to implement the previous ones. Both suggest reflections and applications for human development (Sen, 1990, 2001) and have been used in several areas, especially in the field of social innovation, due to their human, social and collective character (Cajaiba-Santana, 2014; Ibrahim, 2017; Ziegler et al., 2017).

Although some works have already tried to explain the presence of Sen's vision applied to social innovation initiatives (Howaldt & Schwarz, 2017; Ibrahim, 2017; Sen, 1990; 2001; Tiwari, 2017; Ziegler et al., 2017), the work de Ibrahim (2017) presents the proposition of a theoretical model, entitled Model 3C. This theoretical construction discussed the promotion of collective capabilities through grassroots innovations in three processes: conscientization, reflection inherent to the individual sphere of the social actor; conciliation, an effort aimed at collective consensus; collaboration, cooperation between the actors involved. However, the 3C Model does not describe the internal processes present in the three proposed categories and omits some processes belonging to the dynamics discussed so far, such as the mobilization of resources performed by social actors (Bourdieu, 1986) and the diffusion of practices for scalability initiatives, as well as the local impact

generated (Cajaiba-Santana, 2014; Howaldt, Kopp & Schwarz, 2015; Moore & Westley, 2011; Portales, 2019; Souza, Lessa & Silva, 2019). Studying these subprocesses ensures enrichment of capability development theory and practices.

With this theoretical articulation, there is a need to improve the 3C Model in the sense of unraveling its subprocesses and presenting new elements essential to the

theoretical representation of the dynamics it represents. In this perspective, 5C Cycle is proposed, a model designed to represent the collective capabilities generated in social innovations from five processes (categories): capital (as a resource mobilizer), conscientization, conciliation, collaboration, and confluence (Table 1). In these processes, it is argued that the community has a direct impact on the development of capabilities in social innovations.

**Table 1**  
5C Cycle Descriptors

Categories	Subcategories	Descriptors	Cluster of studies that substantiate the processes
<b>Conscientization</b>	Critical reflection	Role of critically reflecting and generating strategies.	Cajaíba-Santana, (2014); Correia et al. (2016); Ibrahim (2017); Robeyns (2005).
	Personal engagement	Discipline and adherence to tasks.	Correia et al. (2019); Fligstein (2007); Ibrahim (2017); .Sen (1990, 2001); Young (2011)
	Desire to improve life	Desire to obtain results.	Cajaíba-Santana (2014); Ibrahim (2017); Schubert (2018); Sen (1990, 2001); Tsakanika (2017); Voorberg et al. (2015).
<b>Conciliation</b>	Organization of activities	Adequacy and division of activities.	Ibrahim (2017); Mumford (2002); Tsakanika (2017); Schubert (2018); Sen (1990, 2001).
	Active voice of those involved	Democratic participation.	Correia et al. (2019); Ibrahim (2017); Portales (2019); Scoppetta et al. (2014); Scott-Cato e Hillier (2010); Voorberg et al. (2015); Ziegler (2017b).
	Skills acquisition	Search for development of social skills.	Baron and Markman (2000); Correia et al. (2019); Fligstein (1997, 2007); Ibrahim (2017); Robeyns (2005); Sen (1990, 2001); Sferrazzo e Ruffini (2019); Ziegler (2017b).
<b>Collaboration</b>	Congregational leadership	Encouraging collaboration from leadership.	Cajaíba-Santana (2014); Chiapero-Martinetti e Von Jacobi (2015); Correia et al. (2019); Fligstein (2007); Ibrahim (2017); Nicholls e Ziegler (2017); Schubert (2018); Voorberg et al. (2015); Ziegler (2017b).
	Cooperation between actors	Cooperation between internal actors to achieve organizational goals.	See studies above.
<b>Confluence</b>	Confluence between factors of the organizational environment	Confluence of factors between various domains, such as external environment, operational context and culture, moderated by contingencies related to social/environmental concerns.	Cajaiba-Santana, (2014); Chiapero-Martinetti e Von Jacobi (2015); Dawson and Daniel (2010); Moore et al. (2012); Nicholls e Ziegler (2017); Rey-García et al. (2019); Ziegler (2017b).
	Diffusion of practices as a confluence of knowledge	Confluence of financiers, visionaries, organizations, artists, academics and civil society in general that share interests related to social innovations.	Borges et al. (2020); Cajaiba-Santana (2014); Correia et al. (2018, 2019); Dawson e Daniel (2010); Huddart (2010); Ibrahim (2017); Nicholls e Ziegler (2017); Oliveira et al. (2018); Rey-García et al. (2019); Ziegler (2017b)
<b>Capital</b>	Economic Capital	Economic resources available.	Bourdieu (1986).
	Social Capital	It is said of networks of trust and reciprocity.	See studies above.
	Cultural Capital	It is said of culture (education, style, intellect) linked to social actors.	See studies above.

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

It is understood that the mobilization of resources subsidizes the dynamics of this development according to the concept of capital by Bourdieu (1986), which presents the tangible or intangible elements essential to organizations: economic capital, represented by financial resources; social capital, related to trust and reciprocity between actors; and cultural capital, which represents aspects related to the history, education and cultural diversity of these actors. According to Bourdieu (1986), forms of capital are related to power since they reflect the driving force for any initiatives in society. In this sense, they fundamentally support the capability development process in social innovations by financing actions and projects (Bourdieu, 1989; Portales, 2019; Tsakanika, 2017; Ziegler, 2017b).

At the individual level, the conscientization process, provided by the 3C Model (Ibrahim, 2017), is presented as a transformation in the cognitive sphere to engage social actors. It is the generation of critical thinking aimed at the individual's restlessness to improve life. The intrinsic elements proposed by 5C Cycle about this process are critical reflection, personal engagement, and the desire to improve life (Cajaiba-Santana, 2014; Correia, Oliveira & Gomez, 2016; Ibrahim, 2017; Sen, 1990, 2001; Schubert 2018; Tsakanika, 2017).

Then there is conciliation, a category that is reflected in a keyword: consensus. For this purpose, collective interests guide joint actions with the objective of a common good in three elements: the organization of activities; the active voice of those involved; and the acquisition of skills (Baron & Markman, 2000; Ibrahim, 2017; Portales, 2019; Scoppetta, Butzin & Rehfeld, 2014; Sen, 1990, 2001; Sferrazzo & Ruffini, 2019; Voorberg, Bekkers & Tummers, 2015). This process is the basis for the next category, which represents a collaboration between actors with different characteristics within social innovations, capable of causing changes, such as strengthening their capabilities and roles (Cajaiba-Santana, 2014; Chiapero-Martinetti & Von Jacobi, 2015; Ibrahim, 2017; Nicholls & Ziegler, 2017; Schubert, 2018; Ziegler, 2017b). They are elements: congregational leadership and collaboration between actors.

Finally, the confluence is presented as the last C of the framework. It integrates the confluence of information and organizational factors about the external environment, the local culture, and the operational context, moderated by contingencies related to social/environmental concerns, and the dissemination of practices with the consequent expansion of initiatives and, as a last resort, local

development (Borges, Dandolini & Soares, 2020; Correia, Oliveira & Gómez, 2018; Dawson & Daniel, 2010; Huddart, 2010; Ibrahim, 2017; Moore, Westley & Nicholls, 2012; Rey-García, Calvo & Mato-Santiso, 2019). They are elements: the confluence between factors of the organizational environment and the diffusion of practices as a confluence of knowledge.

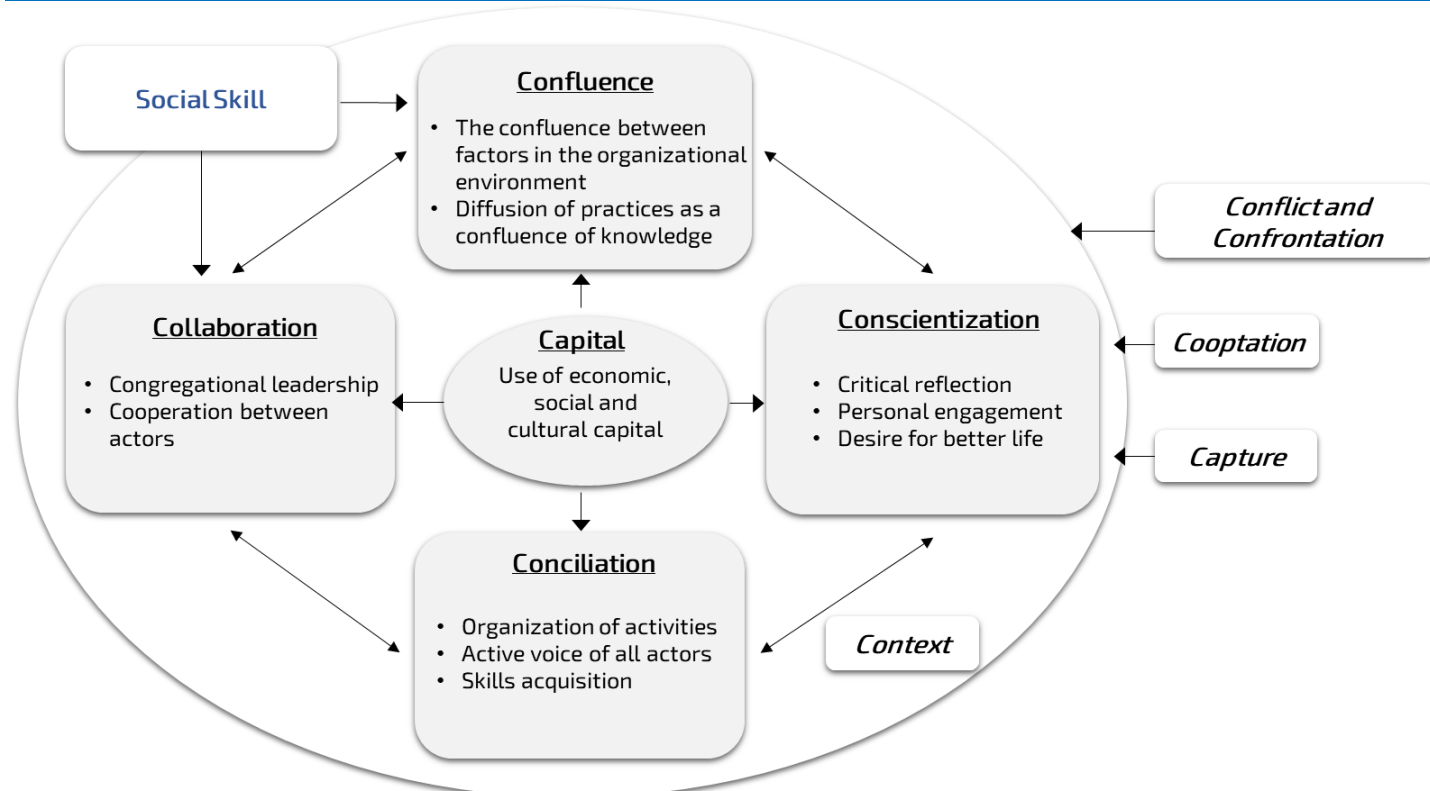
With this theoretical articulation, the sum of conscientization, conciliation, and collaboration processes (Ibrahim, 2017) is added to new fundamental elements foreseen by seminal works such as "The Forms of Capital" (Bourdieu, 1986) and "Social Skill and Theory of Campos" (Fligstein, 2007).

Advancing in the discussions, the so-called "influencing variables" are also presented in the cycle. Among them, the most significant in the context, since it can influence the entire cycle, positively or negatively (resources, location, culture, among other factors) (Gerometta, Haussermann & Longo, 2005; Ibrahim, 2017; Moulart et al., 2007; Robeyns, 2005; Sen, 1990, 2001; Ziegler, 2010). The other variables are conflict/confrontation, a breach of the human relationship capability that generates failure in cooperation, cooptation, little choice of the participating actors, and capture, imbalance in the positive interaction between actors through competition.

These variables that induce losses or gains in the process, also called invisible C's, was already foreseen in the model by Ibrahim (2017). However, to mitigate these effects, the 5C cycle suggests social skill (Fligstein, 2007) as an enhancer of cooperation in terms of trust and reciprocity, favoring productive articulation between related actors.

Finally, the confluence stands out as the set of activities aimed at disseminating practices, scalability, and strategies for expansion and local development. Are moderated by contingencies related to social/environmental concerns, which build the scope of social innovation initiatives (Cajaiba-Santana, 2014; Chiapero-Martinetti & Von Jacobi, 2015; Dawson & Daniel, 2010; Moore et al., 2012; Nicholls & Ziegler, 2017; Rey-García et al., 2019; Ziegler, 2017b).

In this effort to empirically represent the processes presented, this theoretical articulation suggests an empirical exploration in the sense of providing contributions to the development of collective capabilities in social innovations from real contexts of the social actors' practices. The 5C Cycle is shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** The 5C Cycle.  
Source: Elaborated by the authors.

### 3 METHODOLOGY

This article aims to analyze the 5C Cycle in the banks of the Paraíba Network of Community Banks. To this end, a qualitative approach was adopted. This multiple case study explores and describes the categories foreseen by 5C Cycle, presenting detailed information about the studied phenomenon (Freitas & Jabbour, 2011; Llewellyn & Northcott, 2007; Yin, 2015). Thus, this research strategy improves the theory based on an analysis in a real context (Freitas & Jabbour, 2011).

By accessibility and local development criteria and by association characteristics aligned with the processes presented in 5C Cycle, the Paraíba Network of Community Development Banks (CDBs) were chosen as the unit of analysis. With the literature's support, data from these cases were collected through semi-structured interviews, whose script was elaborated from the theoretical construction under analysis. They included questions that address the interviewees' profile, the 5 C's of the proposed model, and specific questions about the influencing variables.

The corpus built had seven respondents (E1, E2, E3, E4, E5, E6, and E7), key actors (managers and other employees) from the four banks studied, described in Table 2. The structure of CDBs employees is lean, and all accessible subjects were interviewed, whose statements answered the questions in question until theoretical saturation.

Then, additional documents - materials included on the object's website, photos, and audiovisual presentations with internal information on the bank's practices - were also used to enrich the analysis and direct observation. Thus, a triangulation of data was obtained to minimize subjectivity and ensure the research's validity and reliability (Flick, 2004; Paiva, Souza Leão & Mello, 2011; Ullrich, Oliveira, Basso & Visentini, 2012; Yin, 2015).

**Table 2**

Interviewee data

ID	CDB	Function	Time
E1	Lagoa	Responsible for CDB (coordinator)	01:22:16
E2	Cinco Lagoas	Responsible for CDB	00:41:37
E3	Cinco Lagoas	President of CDB	00:40:01
E4	Jardim Botânico	Responsible for the implantation of CDBs	00:33:25
E5	Lagoa	Credit Agent	00:22:18
E6	Lagoa	Ex-credit agent	00:54:46
E7	Maringá	Responsible for CDB	00:48:20

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

Finally, the data were processed by the ATLAS.ti software and analyzed using thematic content analysis, in which categories were chosen for this analysis (Bardin, 2011). Thus, the transcripts of the interviews were made in a denaturalized way since it sought to understand the content of the communications and possible inherent deductions, to the detriment of communication details of the subjects' speeches (Nascimento & Steinbruch, 2019).

## 4 ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

### 4.1 Characterization of the study object

Through principles of solidarity economy, in alternative practice to the merely utilitarian conception of the economy of financial products and services, specifically in solidarity finance (Singer, 2002), social actors create social innovation initiatives, called Community Banks of Development (CDBs).

These institutions are supportive of an associative and community nature. They aim to reorganize local economies, develop work and income, and search for a new financial logic in their places of operation, resulting in local social and economic development. Thus, they represent essential instruments of the communities they operate (Melo Neto & Magalhães, 2009; Mostagi, Pires, Mahnic & Santos, 2019).

In Paraíba, these initiatives are part of the Paraibana Network of Community Banks, an alliance between banks that occurs not only structurally but endowed with partnerships and collaborative activities. On December 17, 2016, this association took place during the first State Course on Solidarity Finance and Financial Change, building a network of community development structure that consolidates local initiatives and strengthens the fronts of action the exchange of experiences among institutional actors.

With this perspective of community mobilization, the Paraibana Network of Community Banks reflects a social innovation initiative. The following community development banks are included: Jardim Botânico bank, belonging to the São Rafael Community in João Pessoa, the Lagoa bank, in the city of Lagoa de Dentro, the Maringá bank, in the city of Pombal and the Cinco Lagoas bank, in the city de Remígio / PB (Rede Paraibana de Bancos Comunitários, nd). Both with their specific cultural and socioeconomic characteristics, but with operations that follow the same performance dynamics.

An essential instrument for this type of initiative, which gives the tonic of defended financial movement, is the social currency. It is indirectly intended to achieve social transformation and the local development of the community. Created as an alternative instrument to encourage local and sustainable consumption, whose exchange for money is prohibited, it is recognized by producers, consumers, and traders (Brito & Oliveira, 2019; Silva, 2007), and is also used digitally, in the e-money app.

This type of currency, also called solidarity currency, or local currency, does not allow an exchange for money due to its social purpose, which corroborates the following principles: 1. Participatory democracy: management carried out by the community itself, with transparency in the

administration and sharing of responsibilities; 2. Continuity: permanence in exchange relations; 3. Trust: belief in the currency's effectiveness; 4. Money as a means of circulation and not as a useful purpose: without interest or premium for retaining the currency; 5. Promotion of social well-being: focus on collectivity (Brito & Oliveira, 2019; Soares, 2016). This understanding consolidates, together with the practices described in the following sections, the initiative as social innovation and as a locus for developing collective capabilities.

Thus, the use of social currency and the other processes related to the functioning of CDBs are in line with the postulates of social innovation in several aspects (Cajaiba-Santana, 2014; Portales, 2019; Schubert, 2018; van der Have & Rubalcaba, 2016). Act in synergy in practices that express the dynamics of development led by the base, discussed from capabilities (Ibrahim, 2017; Sen, 1990, 2001).

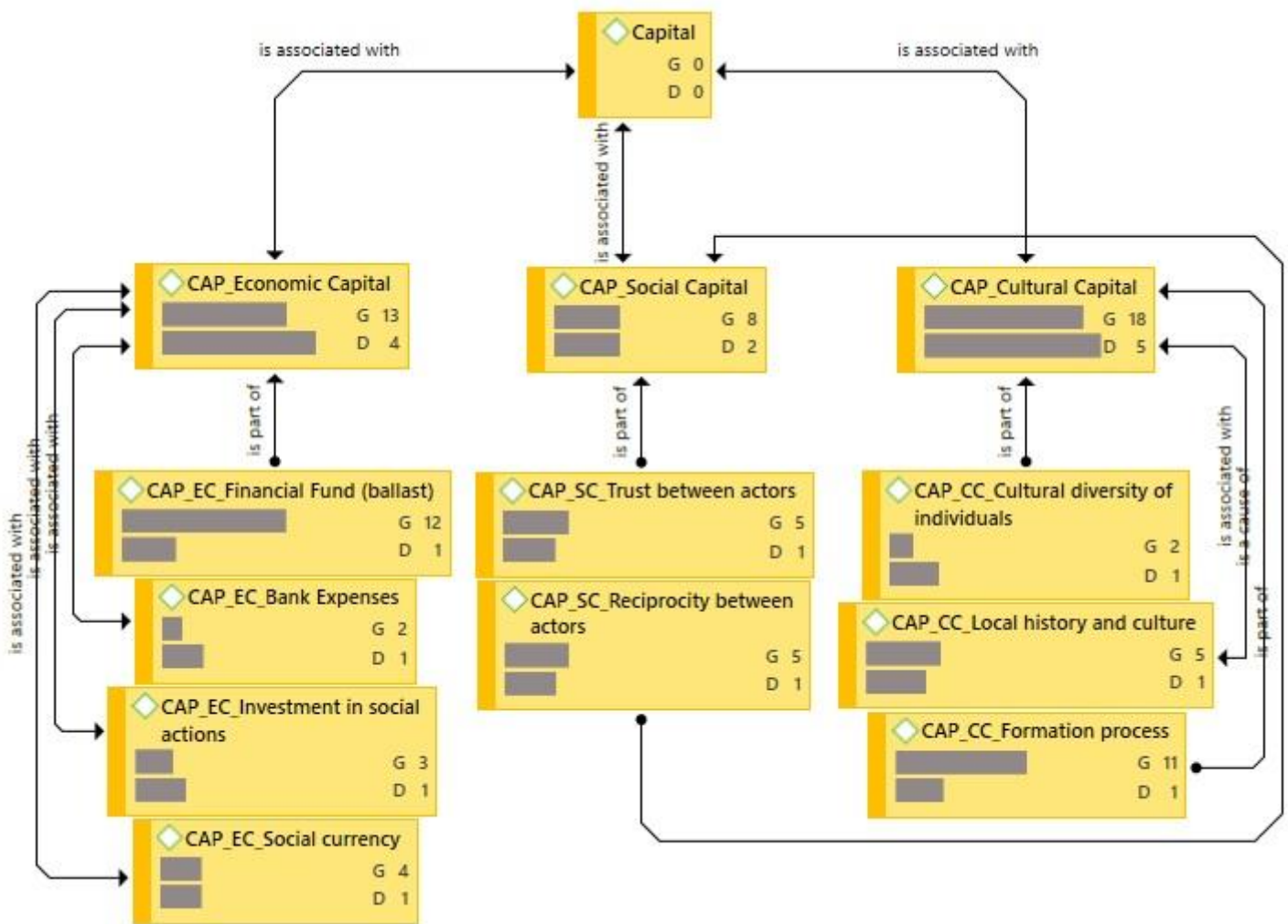
### 4.2 Evidence of 5C Cycle in the Paraibana Network of Community Banks

The data collected provide subsidies for representing the dynamics of the 5C cycle in the CDBs of Paraíba. In addition to semi-structured interviews based on the theoretical scope to be explored, documentary research was carried out on the dynamics of community development banks (CDBs) in the State of Paraíba, through photos, posters of internal and external events, videos produced by the participating actors, documents from the official website of that network, multimedia presentations, and relevant legislation. In this attempt, enough data was raised to discuss each category of this instrument's processes and the so-called invisible C's as influencing variables immersed in the discussions. Both elements are described from the code networks generated by the ATLAS.ti software.

Thus, the subjects' statements and the supplementary documents' information make up the analysis presented below. In citation networks, the letters G correspond to the number of mentions to the referred code. The letter D refers to density and does not imply analysis.

#### 4.2.1 Capital

This category is defined as the mobilization of resources, whether economic, social, or cultural (Bourdieu, 1986), by social innovation initiatives. The citations, broken down into the three types of capital presented, are arranged in the codes presented in Figure 2. These codes (or subjects) demonstrated confirming aspects of the elements present in the categories of 5C Cycle. The subjects cited by the interviewees are arranged within each category descriptor.



**Figure 2.** Capital category.  
Source: Elaborated by the authors.

In this category, the interviewed subjects' speeches make unanimous mention to the element of CDBs called ballast. According to Rigo and França (2017), it is a system - a requirement of the Central Bank of Brazil - that provides for a credit fund present in the coffers or a specific bank account of the community bank and corresponds in reality to each social currency that circulates in the community. In this sense, it is evident that, in the context and segment of the studied initiatives, there is the presence of economic capital as one of the total subsidies to the other dynamics.

As a means of breaking social barriers (Burchardt, 2004; Orton, 2011; Sen, 1990, 2001) and the leading resource mobilizer and consequent generator of economic capital (Bourdieu, 1986; Rigo, França & Leal, 2015), the social currency is the main instrument for forming the backing of community banks. For this purpose, social actors are concerned with obtaining resources through loans, payments, purchases, and social currency exchanges within their communities (Rigo et al., 2015).

It is observed, then, that the formation of this credit fund is also part of the capability development process, as evidenced by this subject: "Each bank has to create its backing. We did bingos, bazaars, some institutions help too.

When we make this loan, when the merchant comes to do the exchange too." (E4). This is because CDBs create incentive strategies for community actors to use social currency (Rigo et al., 2015).

Among other purposes, these resources serve to defray the bank's expenses, which "[...] range from rent, from the place where the headquarters operates to the maintenance of equipment, payment of energy, water, the bills that are day-to-day activities of any institution" (E1). With the creation of these mechanisms, the objective is to minimize one of the problems caused by the context variable, fundraising by social initiatives (Biggeri, Testi & Belluci, 2017), when they use the necessary means for action in a context adverse. Then, the clarification on this element is evident:

If I open a business, I need capital to invest in purchasing products or making that trade move. So, for a bank to work, it has to have a certain amount in its safe, in its teller. We call it ballast, which is that protection for it not to "break" in the first week that it opens (E1).

This resource's use is mainly due to the relationship of trust and reciprocity between the social actors who use it

since the process of circulation of this currency is aimed at the collective good. Thus, community adherence is necessary for the effective functioning of this credit fund generation dynamic. The theoretical understanding of social capital provided by Bourdieu (1986) is emphasized here. The social cohesion reflected in this model of the economy is reflected, as well as the pillars of social skill, in guaranteeing satisfactory relations between social innovators. It remains to be pointed out that social capital, once present in this type of initiative, manages to promote the feeling of collectivity and integrate the efforts necessary for the effective performance of processes. Especially concerning their optimization based on the construction of collective capabilities (Ibrahim, 2017), which would not be possible without this intangible resource (Fligstein, 2007).

In this sense, it is observed that the social capital of the studied initiatives is considered satisfactory and, without it, several actions taken would not exist: "[...] the bank only works if there is trust, if there is reciprocity. And there is no point in wanting the bank to promote any activity thinking that we are the main and most important figure" (E1).

Finally, just as the literature teaches (Bourdieu, 1986), we can see cultural capital in the cases analyzed. It is a component directly related to social actors, including at an individual level, which concerns the culture and knowledge that these actors provide to CDBs. A significant example of the cultural appreciation in these initiatives is the information present on the notes of social currencies, which refer to the history of the communities, the cultural and environmental representation, and the achievements of its population, such as public buildings and popular stories.

Our municipality was created in a region where there were five lagoons. That is why the name of the community bank is Cinco Lagoas. Moreover, the name of our currency, Reis, because our first inhabitant in the municipality was called Remígio dos Reis. So, they are historical references that mark (E2).

As for cultural diversity, the subjects talk about the benefits of their presence: "It is always important to have cultural diversity. [...] sometimes, the problem that we cannot see, a person with a different view of the event may be able to see and bring a solution more practically and plausibly" (E5).

In the speeches of the subjects, cultural capital is evidenced in the mentions of cultural diversity present in these organizations, in need to carry out a process of training individuals and the practical realization of this process and references to local history and culture. These subsidies constitute a fertile economic space for social innovation (Ziegler et al., 2017). This last factor is decisive for the choice of names and graphic representations of banks and social currencies. Therefore, this type of capital is directly related to the principles of solidarity economy

practiced in the community (Singer, 2002). Since the community's cultural dynamics directly influence the strategies of social initiatives and the potential of the region, the example of agriculture, handicrafts, community radio, commerce, among others, are absorbed into the impact chain of the community development bank.

In this perspective, it is observed that, in this type of social initiative, there is the presence of the three forms of capital provided by Bourdieu (1986), articulated in several elements, from the process of formation of banks to the performance of operational activities. Moreover, those involved in these activities reinforced the importance of these resources for these organizations' effectiveness. Which reveals the fundamental subsidies to the dynamics of 5C Cycle.

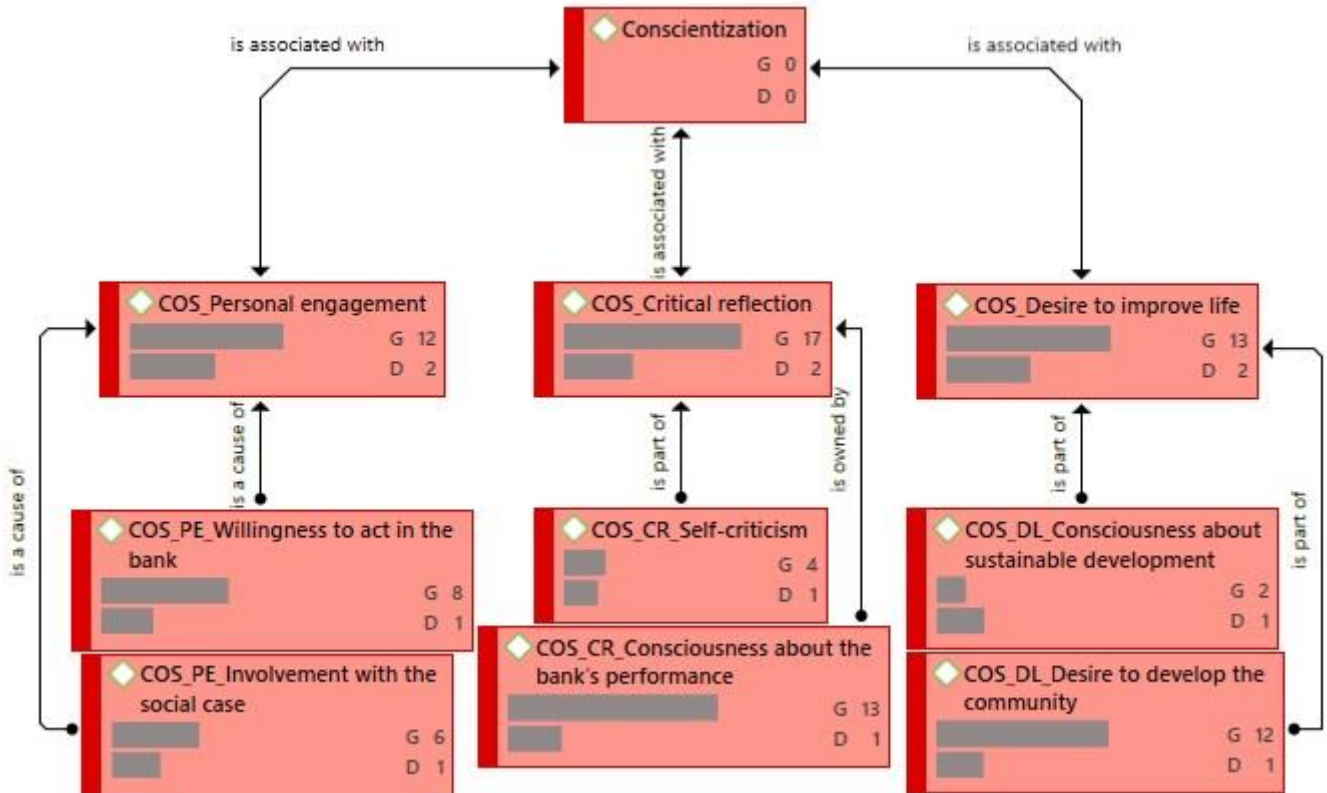
#### **4.2.2 Conscientization**

In this category, the role of critically reflecting and generating strategies, adherence to tasks, and the desire to obtain results aligned with the cause advocated by community banks were explored (Singer, 2002). These activities are part of a process defined as the incorporation of the meaning and purposes of that social innovation initiative by the actors involved (Cajaiba-Santana, 2014; Correia et al., 2016; Correia, Melo & Oliveira, 2019; Ibrahim, 2017; Schubert, 2018; Sen, 1990, 2001; Tsakanika, 2017; Voorberg et al., 2015; Young, 2011). All of these processes are defended as the result of a process that occurs in social actors. The related elements are shown in Figure 3.

In agreement with the idea of social innovation (Cajaiba-Santana, 2014; Oliveira, Correia & Gomez, 2018; Schubert, 2018; van der Have & Rubalcaba, 2016), community bank actors believe that "to work in the bank, it is important engagement, [...] connection with the community" (E4). A more significant concern of the institution in "[...] sustainably working on development, with correct consumption, more conscious consumption, fair consumption" (E1), an conscientization built by these participants. Then, it is revealed that the specificity of a CDB makes it differ from a standard organizational structure, requires preparation focused on the social objectives of this type of innovation. So, there is an intense conscientization process.

Although the interviewed subjects have aged, cultural levels, and are in different contexts, a significant alignment in the interviewees' discourse was observed throughout the interviews. They all demonstrated knowledge about their community banks' functioning and the other banks in the network to which they belong. Thus, it is understood that there is an effective conscientization process in these initiatives. In this sense, the feeling and practice of personal engagement are presented as the main driver of this conscientization.





**Figure 3.** Conscientization category.  
Source: Elaborated by the authors.

The subjects point out how the actors with personal engagement should be:

A person who believes, who puts faith in the business, which puts it forward. It is what we expect, at least. Because if I believe and two other people do not believe, it is difficult for us to put it forward. It has to be all together (E3).

[...] for seeking social transformation, it may include people who are excluded from the traditional financial system and do not have a bank account, do not have access to credit, things like that. This is one of the factors that motivate me a lot and make me engaged in this project of community banks: including these people, enabling the municipality's social and economic development (E6).

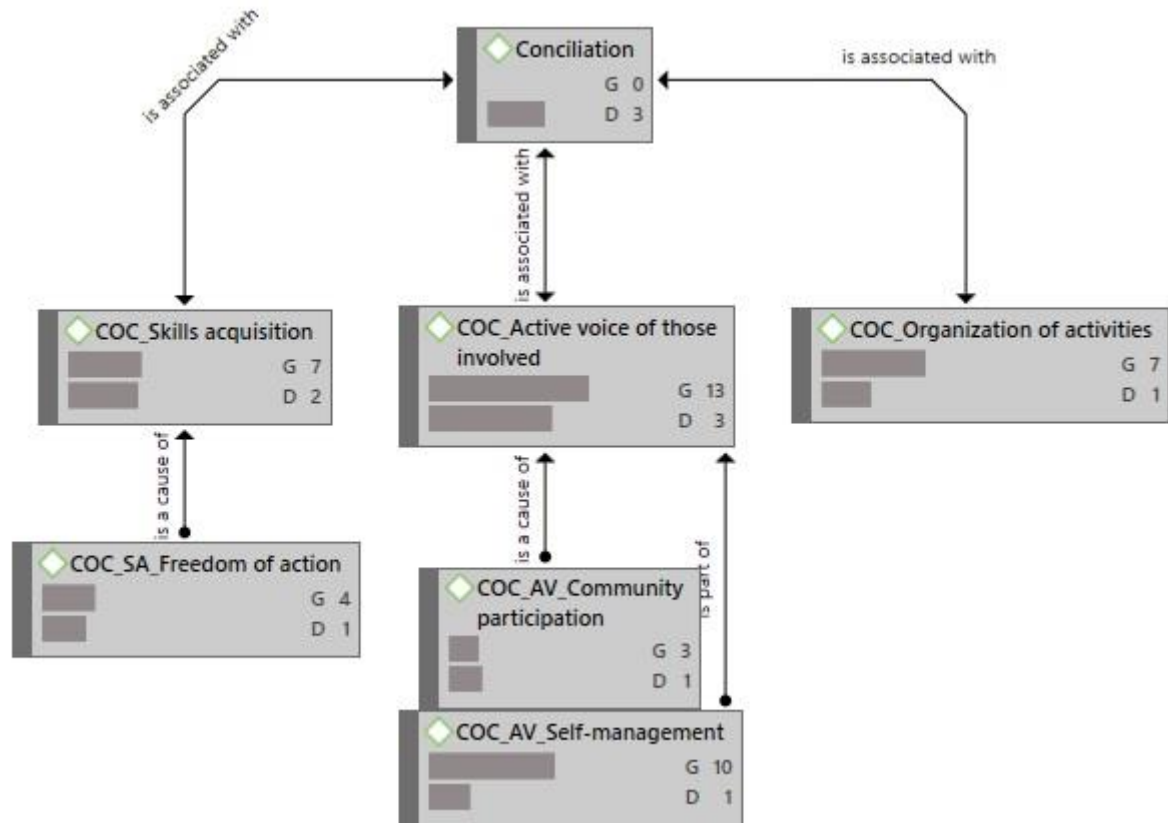
It is possible to observe that the actors participating in these community banks' engagement are directly related to a genuine desire to improve their lives, represented by the desire to develop their communities. Its representation is in the opportunity of socioeconomic growth for users of the bank's services, in addition to ensuring the promotion of the local economy through the strengthening of the social currency, among other factors. These conceptions are seen as engines of social change (Moulaert et al., 2007), aimed at several community purposes, such as improving income, education, and food, for example, through constant critical reflection.

With this view, what is sought is a broad social transformation (Biggeri et al., 2017; Chiappero-Martinetti & Von Jacobi, 2015; Ibrahim, 2017; Tsakanika, 2017). Thus, it is possible to cover the community in which they live and reach global scalability, taking successful and locally concentrated practices to other communities.

For this advance, the population's conscientization and adherence are essential and constant stages in the process, also being part of the social transformation foreseen by social innovation, whose agents are also the beneficiaries themselves (Cajaiba-Santana, 2014; Howaldt et al., 2015; Moore & Westley, 2011; Portales, 2019).

#### 4.2.3 Conciliation

This category refers to the reconciliation between individual interests and the collective interests of social actors, related to the community's context in which they are inserted. In this sense, conciliation is defined as constructing a shared good vision through consensus among those involved and joint efforts in the activities performed. They are corroborating the literature (Correia et al., 2019; Fligstein, 1997, 2007; Ibrahim, 2017; Portales, 2019; Schubert, 2018; Sen, 1990, 2001; Sferrazzo & Ruffini, 2019; Tsakanika & Chaves-Ávila, 2017; Voorberg et al., 2015; Ziegler, 2017b), avoiding further conflicts and confrontations in the collaboration process (Ibrahim, 2017). The elements of this consensus are expressed in Figure 4.



**Figure 4.** Conciliation category.  
Source: Elaborated by the authors.

In terms of organization of activities, the Paraíba Network of Community Banks members has a defined organizational structure. Its guidelines are born from the policies of the so-called management entities, which can be community organizations such as associations, forums, churches, NGOs, and unions, for example, as long as they are in line with the network's purpose. They are responsible for training and planning the implementation of the activities of each community bank. In a decentralized way, management councils also appear, determining the details about the operation, name, products offered, management characteristics, and partnerships related to the managed initiatives.

Examples of initial activities common to all CDBs are the so-called specialized training emphasizing internal management. These trainings aim to define strategies for articulation with new partners, the bank's operational management, local producers, credit agents, and consumers. Still, in this sense of conciliation of interests, participants are offered the Social Marketing course to promote education on the fundamentals on which the bank relies.

As an essential end activity for community banks, there are the credit assessment and granting processes. This process follows a standardized procedure among the members of the Paraíba network, as one of the subjects succinctly describes:

The person came to the bank to apply for credit. [...] There is a credit agent who, first, does a survey to find out the real need for this, paying a visit to the person

who is requesting it. Then, he brings this request, and we gather the council, which sees the viability, whether it releases or not (E7).

The CDBs structure is lean and composed of credit leaders and agents. In addition to being responsible for credit-granting activities, they carry out operational activities: socioeconomic mapping of the community, customer service, possible articulations with bank partners, and currency exchanges. They also engage in projects to publicize the institution's activities in a consensual process called "local sustainable involvement."

In these structures, social innovation's inclusion character prevails (Boni, Belda-Miquel & Pellicer-Sifres, 2018; Ibrahim, 2017; Pellicer-Sifres, Belda-Miquel, Lopez-Fogues & Boni Aristizabal, 2017; Ziegler, 2017a), to the detriment of cooptation, in which consensus ensures active participation of all activity participants. Since for the definition of their implementation, maintenance, and operation policies, "banks always welcome criticism and new ideas" (E5). Based on the right to vote and the active voice of those involved: [...] "it is a space for collective decision-making, in which people will not be able to act separately or benefit someone. So, we make this clear, in the beginning, for those who want to participate" (E1).

This process goes beyond the meaning of the inclusion process of these social actors. There is the freedom of action that guarantees self-management, foreseen by the solidary economy (Singer, 2002). It is active participation with the acquisition of critical social skills for

professional and personal development, ensuring the real character of the transformation of these actors at the expense of the mere development of the structures they belong to.

One of the interviewees points out this process:

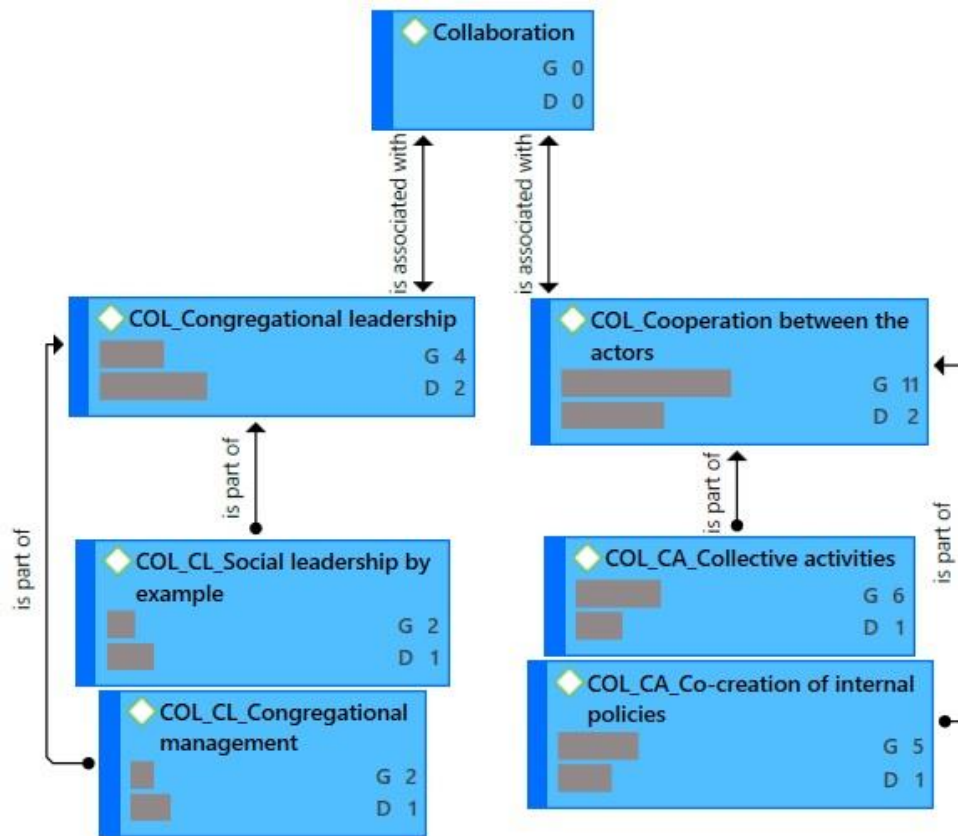
The community bank transforms people's lives and skills. Those involved themselves see a development in their careers by participating in activities. I myself see that the bank, in fact, contributes so that people can see a different economy (E2).

In this context, reconciling the various goals revealed by practices in real contexts is effective in the cases analyzed. The possibility of alignment between individual commitments and collective commitments of individuals is highlighted (Alkire, 2005). Thus, they contemplate the adequacy and division of activities, democratic participation, and the search for social skills development (Fligstein, 2007;

Ibrahim, 2017; Schubert, 2018; Tsakanika, 2017; Ziegler, 2017b). They are acquiring vitality when it demonstrates to these individuals the importance of the cause they pursue and the social rewards of their actions.

#### 4.2.4 Collaboration

This category is defined as the collaboration process between the actors involved in social innovation initiatives (Cajaíba-Santana, 2014; Chiapero-Martinetti & Von Jacobi, 2015; Correia et al., 2019; Fligstein, 2007; Ibrahim, 2017; Nicholls & Ziegler, 2017; Schubert, 2018; Voorberg et al., 2015; Ziegler, 2017b) on two levels: the leadership that brings together and mobilizes the participants of the initiatives, seen as incentives and controllers of the execution of activities, and cooperation between other members during the activities, as shown in Figure 5.



**Figure 5.** Collaboration category.  
Source: Elaborated by the authors.

In the Paraíba community development banks, the collaboration process is initiated by these social innovation initiatives' leader. Through his knowledge, experience, and adherence to the cause, he becomes an example. This process begins with the training of key actors with banks that have already been implemented. In the words of E1, "every project when it starts always has to have a mentor, a person who is nearby, who presents the idea, who accompanies". Rewhichring to his leader, another subject corroborates: "In his example I believe. He always buys everything with the coin, with the tintin. He is an example to motivate people and

circulate the social currency more" (E5).

However, it is worth noting that the structure is formed from the bottom up since the leaders are not already consolidated organizational structures. It is worth mentioning that the CDBs have lean structures linked to the community, therefore reflecting the participatory power of everyone involved. In this way, just for understanding, social actors engaged with the community cause and who participate in training with the functioning banks are called leaders to acquire the necessary knowledge for the implementation of a new bank, with other stakeholders who

join the project.

It is then reinforced that "in a community business, teamwork is essential for the good development of the actions of thinking collectively and thinking about the good of the community" (E6). In this sense, the cooperation process between the actors happens importantly and practically in the development of the activities performed by the actors involved in a community bank; since the purpose is not to elect "winners" or "losers," the effect of the capture, but minimize this negative variable and promote collective social change (Ibrahim, 2017; Portales, 2019).

The spirit of cooperation is a spirit that has to be worked on. What is out there in society is competition. It is not cooperation, so I will work in social organizations and, over time, have support from working groups in cooperation (E2).

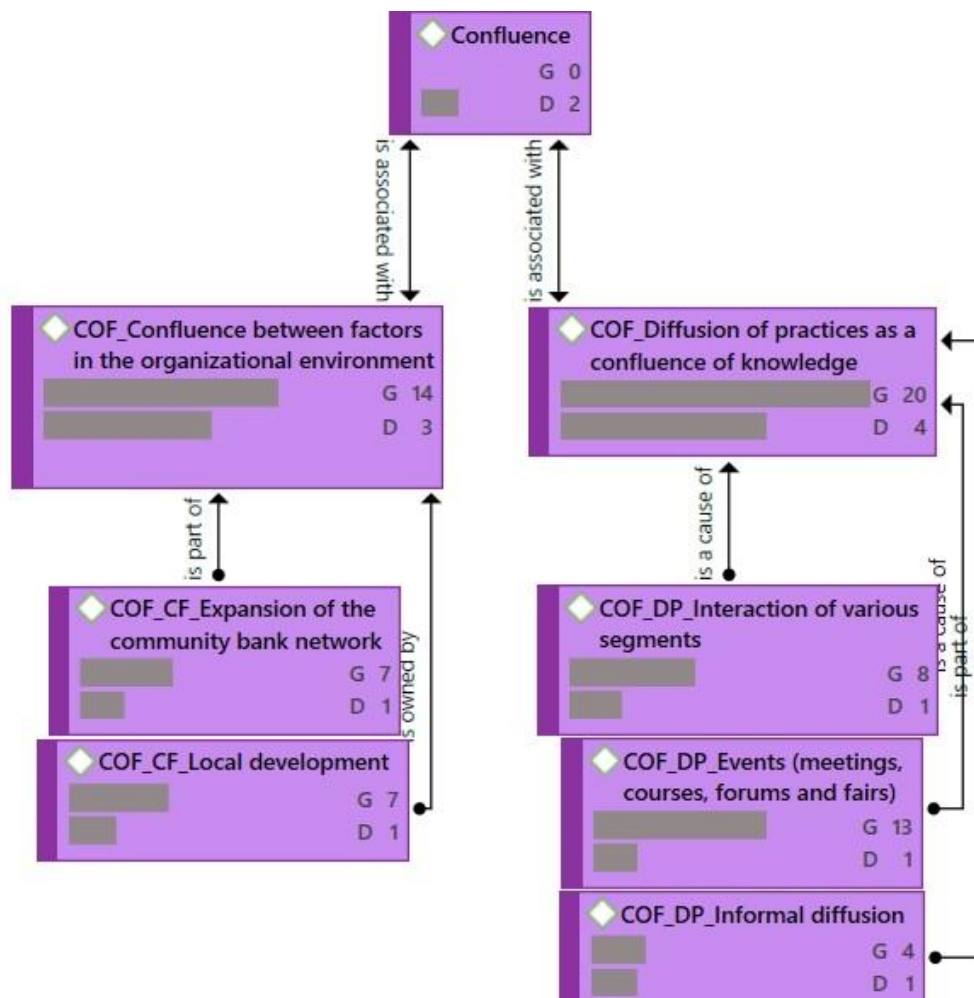
In the face of the evidence, collaboration, to the detriment of competition, is the primary means of action to achieve the organizational and collective objectives within community banks, since, respectively, a search for social change, predominantly through cooperation, and another, purely financial or power benefit (Portales, 2019). Thus collaboration is presented as an essential element and a

reflection of various influences discussed throughout this analysis.

#### 4.2.5 Confluence

This category is defined as the central activity of disseminating SI initiatives' practices among social actors and institutions of all spheres, in the sense of building efforts for widespread adherence to the defended causes, articulation of partnerships and investments, and scalability of the executed projects, as well as the confluence of organizational factors that, as a last resort, promote the expansion of initiatives and local development (Cajaiba-Santana, 2014; Howaldt et al., 2015; Moore & Westley, 2011; Portales, 2019; Souza et al., 2019).

All of these efforts are supported by social/environmental concerns. These generate transformations intended by social innovations in minimizing social problems in the search for social transformation (Cajaiba-Santana, 2014; Chiappero-Martinetti & Von Jacobi, 2015; Dawson & Daniel, 2010; Moore et al., 2012; Nicholls & Ziegler, 2017; Rey-García et al., 2019; Ziegler, 2017b). Figure 6 shows the elements mentioned by the subjects.



**Figure 6.** Confluence Category.  
Source: Elaborated by the authors.

Based on the trust and reciprocity generated between those involved in acquiring social skills (Baron & Markman,

2000; Fligstein, 1997; Fligstein & McAdam, 2012), they move forward and make the organization they belong to reach this point crucial part of the capability cycle. In this context, starting from the capital and its consequent use, these social actors' capability development begins, which reaches a last collective capability effort, foreseen by the category called confluence, whose scope is endowed with two processes- basis: the confluence between factors in the organizational environment and the diffusion of practices as a confluence of knowledge.

In the scenario of banks belonging to the Paraíba network under analysis, it is understood that there is a space for multiple activities. As mentioned by all respondents, CDBs act as the main means of disseminating information and relationships between institutional actors; further designs community banks and develops participants; allows the diffusion of practices and exchange of experiences for the success of the business; in addition to the sale of products that move the local economy, solidarity economy fairs.

As E1 says: "Every Friday, we hold the solidarity economy, family farming, art and culture fair in Lagoa de Dentro. It is a space where we sell, learn, teach and train". (E1).

In addition to the solidarity economy fair, there are also solidarity economy forums, which focus on debates on best practices carried out by banks. At these events, CDBs exchange experiences, performance strategies, and knowledge about the processes performed and captured partnerships for their future actions. Key actors in banks that have not yet been sown are familiar with the initiatives' philosophy and dynamics and expand the movement to their locations.

In this sense, the events are promising strategic spaces for articulating and disseminating community bank practices. The following excerpt discusses the feeling of one of the interviewees regarding the events promoted by the bank to which he belongs, emphasizing that it is a common practice to all other banks:

Events are significant to us. Due to partnerships and contacts, we have already obtained some assistance. This strengthens our work because we manage to improve the way the bank works, equipment, purchase of material for tents, tents, tables, and chairs for upcoming events. Here in Lagoa de Dentro / PB, there is an event in December or January, the State Seminar on Solidarity Finance, which is already in its fourth edition. We are going on Thursday. We have already received people from all over Brazil. In the three days of the event, 100 to 150 people come to see the city, the fair, the bank, and the currency and give visibility to the project (E1).

In this diffusion purpose and formally planned spaces and forums, there are informal dissemination practices. Such as those involved in the CDB can be a credit agent, leader, producer, trader, or even the benefited community actor. [...] "it spreads information to family and friends about

the bank, in an attempt to help people understand what the bank is like, how it manages to engage people to join the cause it defends and how it makes it happen" (E3).

In this sense, there are also external institutions that share formal knowledge about the community initiatives portrayed. Educational institutions, especially universities, have a significant role according to one of the subjects: "I see the university as an important space for the diffusion of these innovative initiatives."

With all the initiatives' organizational processes, an effort is made to expand their structures, whether physical or in terms of the scale of social transformation, for reflecting on community development, since "banks bring all the rescue, beyond local development. And this is related to cultural rescue. It is so much that, on the back of the coins, for example, there are the folk groups in the city, the river, all these elements involved "(E7).

For this purpose of cultural appeal and community development, community banks are created. They are inspired by similar existing initiatives, which form leaders for new deployments. In Brazil, Banco Palmas is a precursor community development bank, located in Fortaleza / CE, and cited as a reference by all interviewed subjects. Thus, the expansion process of the Brazilian network of community banks took place with the initial efforts of Banco Palmas:

Banco Palmas, which today is the largest community bank in the country, is responsible for coordinating the Brazilian Network of Community Banks and has implemented several actions. We can proudly say that he is the grandson of Banco Palmas because Banco Botânico is the son of Banco Palmas, and we are children of Banco Jardim Botânico. There is a connection in the process of training, mobilization, and construction. He is a reference for us today (E1).

This expansion of the CDBs network takes place with the meeting of various segments of society that can enrich discussions or with donations of any resources and training and exchange of experiences between already consolidated institutions. In Lagoa de Dentro / PB, for example, the Lagoa bank brought the community together for training in financial education with a view to facilitating the bank's opening process, considering the dissemination of knowledge as an initial step for mobilizing the actors. It is always thought to strengthen the capabilities of those involved as an essential factor for developing the projects carried out, showing the emphasis on the social actors of the base (Ibrahim, 2017).

Finally, collective practices are reflected in the local development of the impacted communities (Souza et al., 2019). In addition to the development of capabilities and skills of the social actors involved, they are bringing the desire to improve their lives and the socio-economic development of communities (Ibrahim, 2017; Melo Neto & Magalhães, 2009; Mostagi et al., 2019).

## 5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This article aimed to analyze the categories of 5C Cycle in the banks of the Paraibana Network of Community Banks. The conscientization process's strength was evidenced mainly from the presentation of strategies aligned to the cause of the CDBs, which translate into promoting critical reflection, the personal engagement of social actors, and the community feeling of life improvement. In this sense, there is a remarkable conscientization of the bank's performance to sustainably develop the community.

In this empirical exploration, the other elements of the proposed theoretical construction were also highlighted. Initially, capital became evident, as a category that describes the mobilization of resources by process agents, as subsidies for the dynamics of CDBs, based on economic evidence (ballast and social currency), social (trust and reciprocity mediated by social ability) and cultural (local history and cultural diversity).

Then, the existence of conciliation and collaboration processes in community banks is presented, in line with the framework's categories built from the literature. Respectively, the consensus - as a critical word - among the social actors of the initiatives in their most varied activities, as well as the collaboration employed between these participants to optimize the processes carried out.

Finally, through the operation of the CDBs network in Paraíba, the local development of the communities in which they operate is initiated, initiated in disseminating thought and implemented practices and expanding these initiatives, foreseen by the "confluence" category. With this analysis, we have, then, that all the processes foreseen by 5C Cycle were found in the contexts under analysis, characterizing the cases studied as granaries for the development of capabilities. Thus, this study's theoretical contribution focuses on the representation of collective capabilities promoted by social innovation actors, seen in a prism of development agents (Chiappero-Martinetti & Von Jacobi, 2015; Ibrahim, 2017) and offers a theoretical-empirical articulation meaningful for understanding this phenomenon.

Following this path, as a managerial contribution, CDB's practices were also presented as inspiring elements for management models aimed at social innovations and other organizations that wish to develop collective capabilities in their human structures (Howaldt & Schwarz, 2017; Ibrahim, 2017; Sen, 1990; 2001; Tiwari, 2017; Ziegler et al., 2017): training practices and constant training on the principles of solidarity economy and community bank functioning (conscientization); building internal consensus through deliberative council and democratic meetings (conciliation); practices articulated between CDBs leaders and employees to achieve organizational objectives (collaboration); management of economic, cultural and social capital in order to subsidize all the actors and resources necessary for the purpose (capital); and, finally, diffusion of practices through events and actions carried out

by social innovation initiatives, such as fairs and seminars on solidarity economy (confluence).

As limitations, it is understood that the study used a cross-sectional view on a farm concentrated in the State of Paraíba, as well as it was carried out in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, the interviews were conducted remotely. It is suggested that future studies carry out a longitudinal exploration with comparisons between social innovation initiatives from different segments and contexts and quantitative analyses that add subsidies for measuring the processes described by the framework.

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