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NEW SUCCESSION MODELS IN RURAL PROPERTIES: A STUDY OF GENERATIONAL TRANSFER

NOVOS MODELOS SUCESSÓRIOS EM PROPRIEDADES RURAIS: UM ESTUDO DE TRANSFERÊNCIA GERACIONAL

NUEVOS MODELOS DE SUCESIÓN EN PROPIEDADES RURALES: UN ESTUDIO DE TRANSFERENCIA GENERACIONAL

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ABSTRACT

This study identifies and examines new succession models established on rural properties as a form of generational transfer, replacing the traditional succession model widely discussed in the literature. The research was conducted in the Northwest region of Rio Grande do Sul, using rural properties with ongoing succession processes as units of analysis. In addition to the traditional succession model (defined as the model in which the successor inherits the management and assets of the property from their parents, resides on the property, carries out its activities, and is responsible for supporting their parents in old age), four other models were identified: 1) the son lives on the property while the parents reside in an urban area; 2) the son lives on the parents' property, but in a separate house; 3) the son lives in a rural area on a different property; and 4) the son lives in an urban area but performs activities on the parents' property. Although these models differ from the traditional succession model, the young people involved are considered by their parents to be successors, and they similarly recognize themselves as such.

Keywords: rural producers; successors; cooperativism; young.

RESUMO

Este estudo identifica e examina os novos modelos sucessórios que se estabelecem nas propriedades rurais, como forma de transferência geracional em substituição ao modelo sucessório tradicional, amplamente discutido e estudado pela literatura. Trata-se de um estudo

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realizado na região Noroeste do Rio Grande do Sul, tendo como unidades de análise propriedades rurais com sucessão. Além do modelo sucessório tradicional (definido como aquele modelo em que o sucessor herdava dos pais a gestão e os ativos da propriedade, residindo e desenvolvendo as atividades da mesma, possuindo como responsabilidade o amparo dos pais na velhice) foram identificados, outros 4 modelos: 1) filho reside na propriedade e pais no meio urbano; 2) filho reside na propriedade dos pais, em casa separada; 3) filho reside no meio rural em outra propriedade; e 4) filho reside no meio urbano e exerce atividades na propriedade dos pais. Embora com suas particularidades em relação ao modelo sucessório tradicional, trata-se de jovens que são considerados pelos pais como sucessores, na mesma medida em que se reconhecem como tal.

Palavras -chave: produtores rurais; sucessores; cooperativismo; jovens.

RESUMEN

Este artículo identifica y examina los nuevos modelos de sucesión que se establecen en las propiedades rurales como forma de transferencia generacional, en sustitución del modelo de sucesión tradicional, ampliamente discutido y estudiado en la literatura. Se trata de un estudio realizado en la región Noroeste de Rio Grande do Sul, que tiene como unidades de análisis propiedades rurales con procesos de sucesión. Además del modelo de sucesión tradicional (definido como aquel en el que el sucesor heredaba de sus padres la gestión y los activos de la propiedad, residía y desarrollaba las actividades en ella, y era responsable de amparar a los padres en la vejez), se identificaron otros cuatro modelos: 1) hijo que reside en la propiedad y los padres en el medio urbano; 2) hijo que reside en la propiedad de los padres, en una casa separada; 3) hijo que reside en el medio rural, pero en otra propiedad; y 4) hijo que reside en el medio urbano y ejerce actividades en la propiedad de los padres. Aunque presenta sus particularidades con respecto al modelo de sucesión tradicional, se trata de jóvenes considerados sucesores por sus padres en la misma medida en que ellos mismos se reconocen como tales

Palabras claves: productores rurales; sucesión; cooperativismo; jóvenes.

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1 INTRODUCTION

The generational renewal of rural properties through succession—understood as the retirement of elder farmers and their replacement by younger ones (Leonard *et al.,* 2020)—is one of the most discussed topics in agriculture across various countries. Migration, the refusal of agricultural work, and the aging of farmers are some of the issues that prompt the question: who will work in agriculture in the future?

According to Bertolozzi-Caredio *et al.* (2020), generational renewal is a process that involves three stages: 1) Potentiality, 2) Will, and 3) Effectiveness. The first stage is the recognition of the potential future successor by the farmer and their family; the second refers to the future successor's willingness to take control of the property, and the third stage is the effective succession.

Leonard *et al.* (2020) identified three individual stages that form the foundation of generational renewal, which are intrinsically related: succession (the transfer of generational control to the successor), inheritance (the legal transfer of assets), and the retirement of the older generation. Nevertheless, the effective transfer often occurs only when the farmer feels fully prepared to carry out the process. In many cases, this leads to postponing the transfer, sometimes even until after the parents' death (Conway *et al.,* 2017).

According to Fischer and Burton (2014), three processes are essential for understanding generational transfer: 1) the construction of successor identities (children who have been involved with the rural environment since childhood); 2) progression on the farm ladder (how children progressively become involved in the hierarchy of agricultural work and decision-making tasks); and 3) the development of agricultural business trajectories (changes made to the property's business as a result of the potential successor's influence).

These processes are defined by the authors as an endogenous succession cycle. According to them, the current crisis in generational transfer can be partially explained by the breakdown in the socialization of potential successors during childhood, caused by changes in agriculture, such as the use of more efficient machinery and equipment, labor-saving technologies, and health and safety regulations, among others (Fischer and Burton, 2014).

Recently, a considerable number of researchers have dedicated themselves to studying and analyzing generational succession in different countries, considering various aspects to better understand this process. Among them are Wheeler *et al*. (2012) in Australia; Mishra and El-Osta (2008) and Inwood and Sharp (2012) in the United States; Grubbström and Sooväli-Sepping (2012) in Estonia; Fischer and Burton (2014) in Scotland; Grubbström, Stenbacka, and Joosse (2014) in Sweden; Bednaříková, Bavorová, and Ponkina (2016) in Russia; Chiswell (2016) in England; Cavicchioli, Bertoni, and Pretolani (2018) and Bertolozzi-Caredio *et al.* (2020) in Italy; Cassidy and McGrath (2015), Conway *et al.* (2017), and Leonard *et al.* (2020) in Ireland; and Boscardin and Conterato (2017), Morais, Borges, and Binotto (2017), Morais, Binotto, and Borges (2018), Foguesatto *et al.* (2020), Moreira *et al.* (2020) and), Duarte *et al*., (2021) e Franzen (2024) in Brazil.

Another aspect of studies focused on the theme of succession relates to gender issues, including works by Garcia-Reyes and Wiig (2020) in Colombia; Rietveld, Van Der Burg, and Groot (2020) in Uganda; Pattnaik and Lahiri-Dutt (2020) in India; and Barbosa *et al*. (2020) and Breitenbach and Foguesato (2023) in Brazil. Most of these studies adopt factor-based approaches, aiming to identify factors that may positively or negatively influence the likelihood of young people remaining on rural properties as successors.

Among the factors identified as important in the succession process, internal issues stand out, such as those related to the rural property (land area, profitability, diversification strategies, and inheritance rights) and family factors (education level, skills, practices, knowledge, and intergenerational relationships) (Fischer and Burton, 2014). External issues, such as local labor

market conditions and the effects of the rural-urban interface, also play a role (Bertoni and Cavicchioli, 2016). Additionally, individual, institutional, and contextual factors are evident, with the individual sphere being central to the process. This includes the successor's early involvement in agricultural activities during childhood, which fosters the development of knowledge, skills, and an emotional attachment to the rural property (Bertolozzi-Caredio *et al.,* 2020).

The authors also noted that factors such as low profitability and quality of life are considered by young people when deciding whether to take over the family farm, creating an interface between the vocation for agriculture and contextual factors (Bertolozzi-Caredio *et al.,* 2020). Mishra and El-Osta (2008) add that succession decisions are significantly influenced by government agricultural policies. Conversely, the likelihood of younger generations leaving rural areas decreases if parents support and encourage agricultural studies, and if the family owns land (Bednaříková, Bavorová, and Ponkina, 2016). Additionally, a sense of 'satisfaction' in maintaining family assets, along with a reluctance to dispose of family property, further contributes to the decision to stay (Morais, Borges and Binotto, 2017).

Cavicchioli, Bertoni and Pretolani (2018) reported that succession rates significantly increase when the potential successor is male and the eldest child (firstborn).

Succession is more likely to occur when farmers are older, properties are larger, and there is greater availability of assets and satisfactory income from agricultural sources (Wheeler *et al.,* 2012; Rodriguez-Lizano, Montero-Vega, and Sibelet, 2020). The likelihood of succession also increases on properties that are more technologically advanced and oriented towards innovation (Cavicchioli, Bertoni and Pretolani, 2018).

In contrast, a larger amount of rented land discourages succession, most likely because these lands may not be available for future agricultural activities, representing a source of risk for the successor (Cavicchioli, Bertoni, and Pretolani, 2018). Conway *et al.* (2017) also highlights the older generation's reluctance to step away from work, particularly from managing the property. This disconnect between the retirement of the older generation and the rise of the younger generation to control the property is one of the reasons rural communities today have an aging demographic.

In addition to the aging of rural landowners (Lobley, Baker, and Whitehead, 2010), the absence of succession can negatively impact food production (Osawa, Kohyama, and Mitsuhashi, 2016), the continuity of family activities and traditions (Fischer and Burton, 2014), and the decline of rural properties in terms of investment and technology adoption. This can even lead to the sale of land and assets (Inwood and Sharp, 2012), as well as the loss of qualified labor (Osawa, Kohyama and Mitsuhashi, 2016; Bednaříková, Bavorová and Ponkina, 2016).

Another issue is the masculinization of rural areas, driven by gender inequalities that tend to favor men in taking charge of property management while often questioning the management capabilities of young women (Grubbström, Stenbacka and Joosse, 2014; Mann, 2007). In our study, we aim to bring a different approach to what the existing literature has analyzed, focusing on new models of succession being established on rural properties as a form of generational transfer. In this regard, international literature highlights that 'old patterns of succession are weakening' (Wheeler *et al*., 2012; Brandth and Overrein, 2012). Murtagh *et al.*

(2023), analyzing the situation in Ireland, state that rural employment is an important factor influencing succession.

In Brazil, some researchers have examined the emergence of new succession models replacing the traditional succession model (Boscardin and Conterato, 2017; Moreira and Spanevello, 2019; Moreira *et al.,* 2020). This model has distinct characteristics, beginning in childhood with the socialization of children for work. They start by handling small practical tools and performing age-appropriate tasks, gradually progressing to full involvement in these activities as they mature.

In this context, the workplace also serves as the living space, shared with other family members. Living in the same house means being part of the same household, on the same property, and working in the same location. This arrangement is a key element in the generational transmission process, encompassing both the transfer of business succession (generational succession) and the transfer of assets, particularly property ownership, through inheritance to the designated successor. This transfer includes not only economic but also moral responsibilities.

In summary, the traditional inheritance model involves the successor receiving the paternal property, or part of it, as inheritance. The successor is also expected to live on the property, develop productive activities, and take on the responsibility of supporting their parents in old age, thereby facilitating the generational renewal of rural properties (Boscardin and Conterato, 2017).

In light of the above, the objective of this study is to identify and examine the new succession models being established on rural properties as a form of generational transfer. Beyond this introduction, the article is structured as follows: the next section outlines the data collection methodology, followed by the presentation of results. The results section is divided into two parts: the first provides a quantitative analysis of the profile of successors, while the second offers a qualitative analysis, including representative case studies of each succession model. Finally, the article concludes with notes and final considerations.

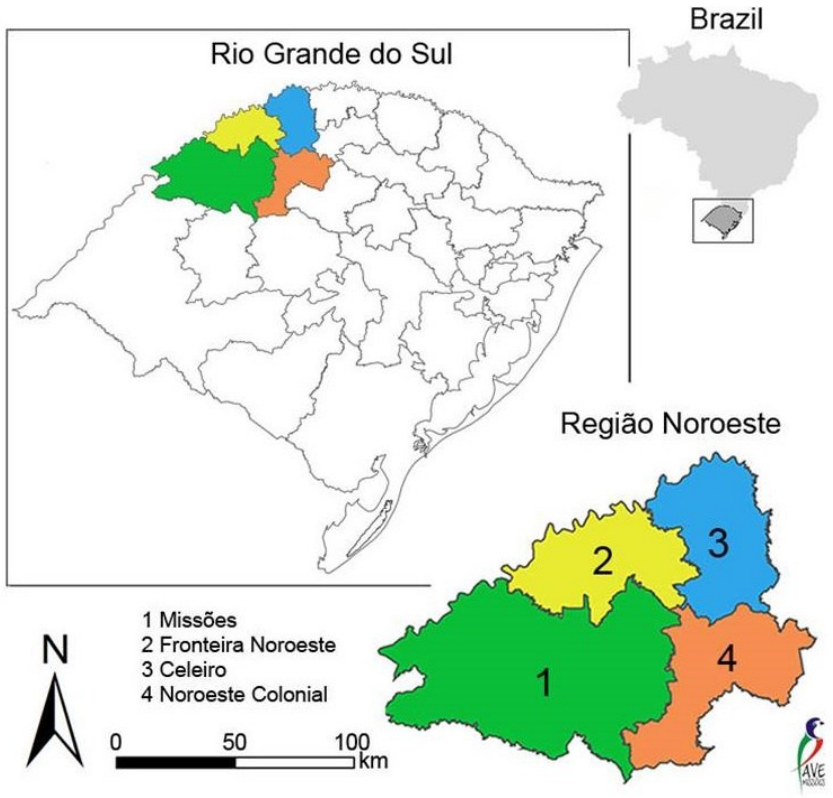
2 METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

The qualitative and quantitative data presented in this study were collected in the state of Rio Grande do Sul. Fieldwork was conducted between June and August 2019. In the following section, we briefly present the study location and the research methodology applied throughout all stages of the study.

2.1 STUDY AREA

The study was conducted in the Celeiro region, located in the northwest of the state of Rio Grande do Sul (Figure 01).

Figure 1 – Location of the study



Source: Ave Missões Project.

The Celeiro region encompasses 21 municipalities and is situated along the border between Brazil and Argentina. Its economy is heavily reliant on the rural population and agriculture, with key activities focused primarily on cattle and pig farming, as well as grain cultivation. According to the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE, 2010), the last population census in 2010 reported that the Celeiro region had a population of 141,482 inhabitants, with 58% living in urban areas and 42% in rural areas. Most municipalities in the region have fewer than 10,000 inhabitants.

Regarding population distribution by age group, the region follows the state and national trend, with a lower proportion of children and young people and a higher proportion of adults and older adults. Between 2000 and 2010, this pattern was maintained in the region: the population aged 0 to 14 years decreased by 26%, while those over 65 increased by 29%. In the 15 to 65 age group, which represents the Economically Active Population (PEA), there was a 1% decrease.

2.2 SAMPLE SELECTION AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In Brazil, identifying the successors or potential successors of rural properties is challenging, primarily because there is no official registry that provides this information (Morais, Binotto, and Borges, 2018). To reach the intended audience, prior contact was made

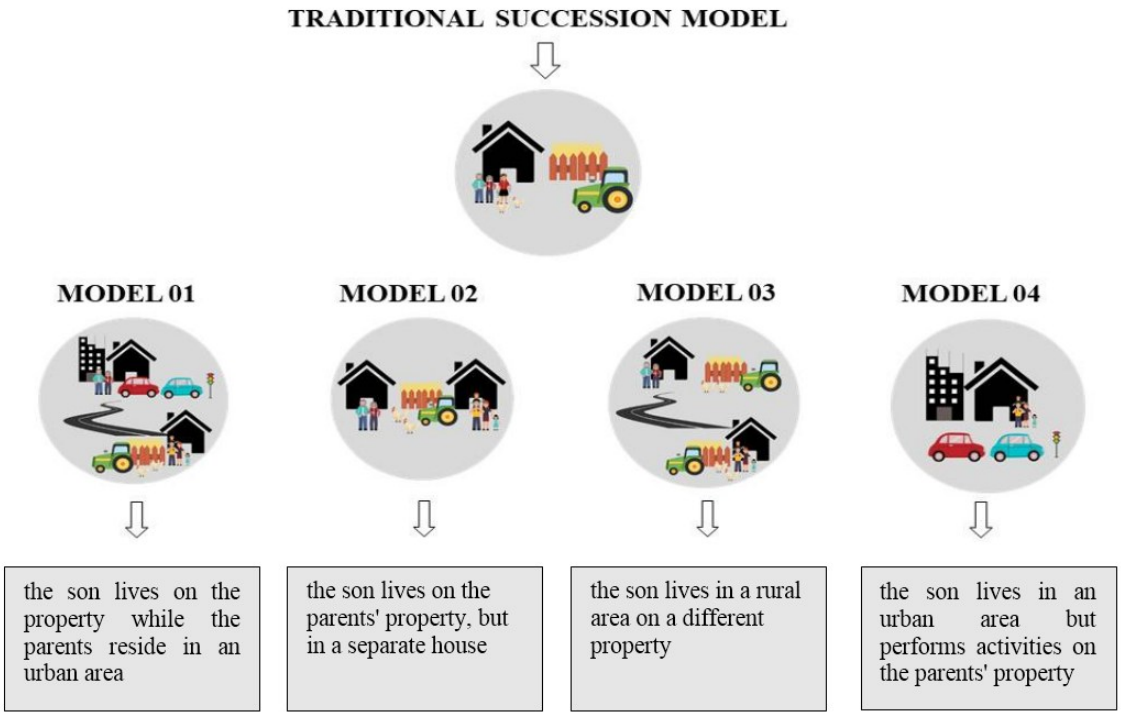
with an agricultural cooperative in the grain sector within the region, which, through its member registration, provided a list of rural properties with identified successors or potential successors.

Data were collected through interviews with 125 successors or potential successors. A potential successor is defined as someone who may, in the future, assume management control of the property or is already recognized by the farmer and their family as the future successor (Bertolozzi-Caredio *et al*., 2020; Chiswell, 2016).

As a sampling criterion, the age range was set between 18 and 30 years. This age group is considered appropriate for this type of study, as life projects are either defined or in the process of being defined. By this age, children have typically decided whether to remain in rural areas. Therefore, the participants in this study are either associates of the agricultural cooperative or their children within the specified age range.

The interviews revealed a series of elements, including the characterization of the family's property, the successor's involvement in management and labor, and issues related to the succession process. To identify the new succession models, the living arrangement was used as the primary criterion. The empirical data revealed four new models of succession in rural properties (Figure 02).

Figure 2 – Succession models for rural properties



Source: Elaborated by the authors (2021)

In addition to the traditional succession model, the following new models were identified: 1) the son lives on the property while the parents reside in an urban area; 2) the son lives on the parents' property, but in a separate house; 3) the son lives in a rural area on a

different property; and 4) the son lives in an urban area but performs activities on the parents' property. Despite their differences from the traditional succession model, these young people are considered successors by their parents and equally recognize themselves as such. The main characteristics of the successors and potential successors of the studied properties are presented below, followed by representative case studies of each model. The primary focus of the analysis is the content of the interviews.

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents a quantitative analysis of the potential successors included in the study. The sample profile is shown in Table 1. In total, four successors were identified in Model 1 (son lives on the property while the parents live in an urban area); twelve successors in Model 2 (son lives on the parents' property but in a separate house); one successor in Model 3 (son lives in a rural area on a different property); and twelve successors in Model 4 (son lives in an urban area but works on the parents' property). The traditional succession model was the most representative, with a total of 96 successors among the cases analyzed.

Table 1 – Characteristics of the sample of young successors

Sample characteristics	**Model 01**		**Model 02**		**Model 03**		**Model 04**		**Traditional**	
Gender	N.	%	N.	%	N.	%	N.	%	N.	%
Female	2	50.00	1	8.33	0	0.00	0	0.00	17	17.71
Male	2	50.00	11	91.67	1	100.00	12	100.00	79	82.29
	Model 01		**Model 02**		**Model 03**		**Model 04**		**Traditional**	
Marital Status	N.	%	N.	%	N.	%	N.	%	N.	%
Single	2	50.00	1	8.33	0	0	8	66.67	76	79.17
Married	2	50.00	8	66.67	1	100	1	8.33	11	11.46
Stable Relationship	0	0.00	3	25.00	0	0.00	3	25.00	6	6.25
Invalid	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	3	3.13
	Model 01		**Model 02**		**Model 03**		**Model 04**		**Traditional**	
Education	N.	%	N.	%	N.	%	N.	%	N.	%
Incomplete elementary school	0	0.00	1	8.33	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Complete elementary school	0	0.00	1	8.33	1	100.00	0	0.00	3	3.13
Incomplete high school	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	2	16.67	7	7.29
Complete high school	3	75.00	4	33.33	0	0.00	4	33.33	33	34.38
Incomplete university education	0	0.00	2	16.67	0	0.00	3	25.00	20	20.83
Complete university education	1	25.00	2	16.67	0	0.00	3	25.00	12	12.5
Postgraduate	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	3	3.13
Technical education	0	0.00	2	16.67	0	0.00	0	0.00	18	18.75
	Model 01		**Model 02**		**Model 03**		**Model 04**		**Traditional**	
Age range	N.	%	N.	%	N.	%	N.	%	N.	%
18 to 20 years	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	3	0.25	27	28.13
21 to 23 years	0	0.00	3	25.00	1	100.00	3	0.25	23	23.96
24 to 26 years	2	50.00	3	25.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	20	20.83
27 to 30 years	2	50.00	6	50.00	0	0.00	6	50.00	26	27.08
	Model 01		Model 02		Model 03		Model 04		Traditional	
Remunerated external activity	N.	%	N.	%	N.	%	N.	%	N.	%
Yes	1	25.00	5	41.67	0	0.00	4	33.33	20	20.83
No	3	75.00	7	58.33	1	100.00	8	66.67	76	79.17

Source: Field research data (2019).

In terms of education, the highest levels were found in Model 04 (son living in the urban area), where 25% had completed higher education, and another 25% were currently attending higher education. In Model 02 (son living on the parents' property in a separate house), educational levels were also relatively high compared to the other models: 16.67% had completed higher education, 16.67% were still in school, and 16.67% had completed technical education.

Regarding marital status, in Model 02 (son living on the parents' property in a separate house), the majority are married (66.67%) or in a stable relationship (25%). This situation is often associated with avoiding conflicts between generations, as the children have already formed their own families. In Model 04 (son living in the urban area), single marital status predominated among the successors.

Regarding the age of the successors, it was observed that the traditional model includes younger successors, with 28.13% in the 18-20 age range and an average age of 23-49 years. In succession models 01, 02, and 04, 50% of the successors are between 27 and 30 years old, with average ages of 26-25 years in Model 01, 26-42 years in Model 02, and 24-42 years in Model 04.

In terms of remunerated activities outside or beyond the rural property, the study found that 41.67% of the successors in Model 02 (son residing on the parents' property in a separate house) engaged in such activities. Similarly, 33.33% of the successors in Model 04 (son living in the urban area) also worked in remunerated activities outside the property. Additionally, a significant percentage of successors from the traditional model (20.83%) participated in external paid work, challenging the traditional concept of succession often described in the literature, which portrays the successor as someone who lives and works exclusively on the family property. Details regarding the productive activities and available land areas of the rural properties are presented in Table 02.

Table 2 – Characterization of rural properties

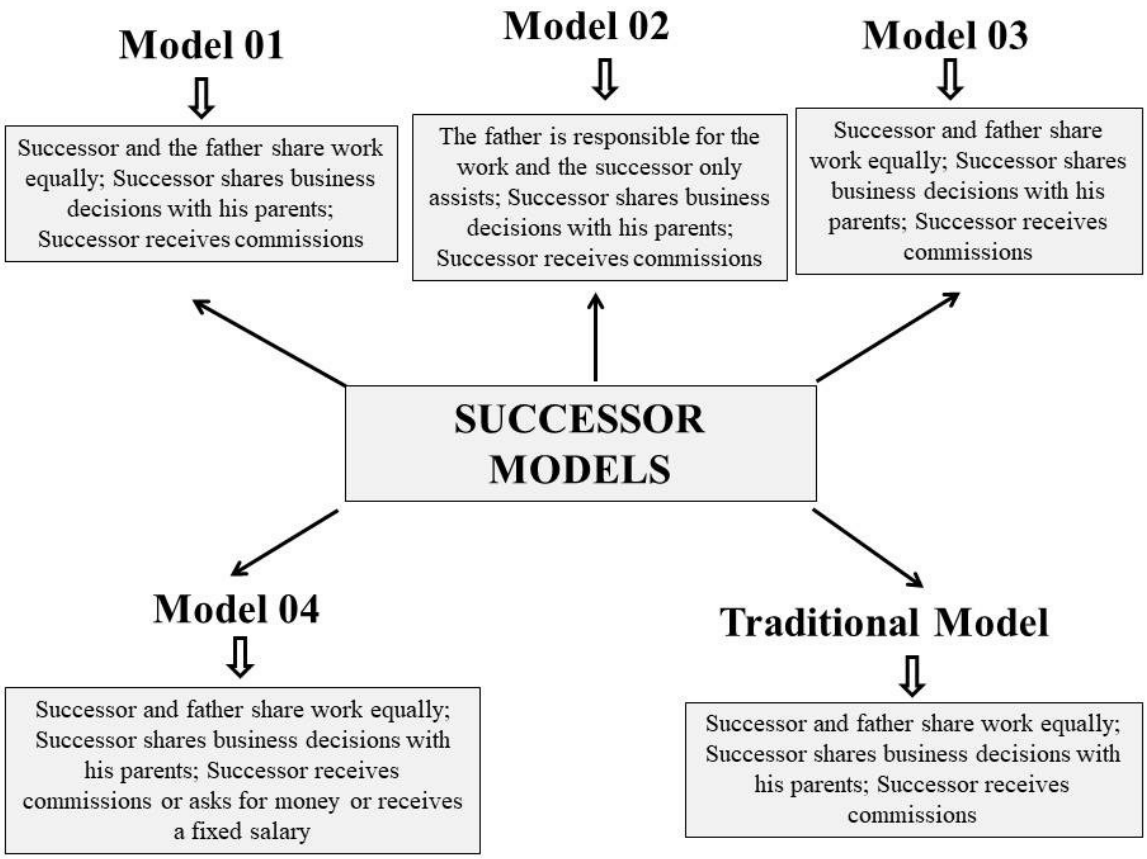
	Model 01		**Model 02**		**Model 03**		**Model 04**		**Traditional**	
Productive Activities	**N.**	**%**	**N.**	**%**	**N.**	**%**	**N.**	**%**	**N.**	**%**
Only grains	1	25.,00	2	16.67	0	0.00	6	50.00	37	38.54
Only dairy activities	0	0.00	1	8.33	0	0.00	0	0.00	2	2.08
Diversified activities	3	75.00	9	75.00	1	100.00	6	50.00	57	59.38
	Model 01		**Model 02**		**Model 03**		**Model 04**		**Traditional**	
Available land area	**N.**	**%**	**N.**	**%**	**N.**	**%**	**N.**	**%**	**N.**	**%**
Until 20 ha	0	0.00	3	25.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	15	15.63
20 to less than 50 ha	3	75.00	3	25.00	0	0.00	2	16.67	27	28.13
50 to less than 100 ha	0	0.00	3	25.00	1	100.00	3	25.00	21	21.88
100 to less than 200 ha	1	25.00	3	25.00	0	0.00	4	33.33	21	21.88
Up to 200 ha	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	3	25.00	12	14.5

Source: Research data (2019)

In terms of productive activities, a significant percentage of the properties are specialized in grain production, particularly in succession model 04, where 50% of the properties focus solely on grain production, mostly soy. This model is characterized by young people living in urban areas, with 33.33% of them engaged in remunerated activities there. Grain production offers greater flexibility in scheduling, allowing successors to balance urban jobs with agricultural activities by working at alternative periods.

It is important to note that, although the cooperative specializes in grains, many of its associates engage in other agricultural commercial activities. In this same succession model (Model 04), properties with larger land areas are concentrated: 33.33% of the properties have between 100 and 200 hectares, while 25% have over 200 hectares. The main characteristics of each succession model, in terms of work, management, and income on rural properties, are illustrated in Figure 03.

Figure 3 – Participation of the successor in the work, management, and property income



Source: Research Data (2019)

With respect to issues related to the work carried out in the rural property, in almost all models In most succession models, the predominant characteristic is that the successor and the father share responsibilities equally, except in Model 02, where the father predominantly takes charge, and the successor primarily assists. This division of labor, with the father in charge and the successor assisting, is also present, though to a lesser extent, in both the traditional succession model and Model 04.

Cassidy and McGrath (2015) reported that young people are often assigned different roles as 'workers' or 'helpers.' These assignments significantly impact their recognition as successors. Young people characterized as workers hold relatively fixed roles, similar to having a job, which comes with a set of ongoing responsibilities and clearly defined roles within the property's dynamics (Cassidy and Mcgrath, 2015).

In all the succession models analyzed, the division of business decisions between successors and parents predominated. However, it was noted, though less frequently, that in some cases—particularly in Model 02 and the traditional model—final decisions are always made by the parents.

Conway *et al*. (2017) reported that the older generation tends to maintain control and managerial authority over the property because they view themselves as indispensable to its management and daily operations. They believe that retiring or stepping away would have disastrous consequences for the property.

Farmers often resist transferring property as a means of sustaining their influence over decision-making and maintaining their position as head of the business. They justify this by emphasizing the value of their knowledge and experience, which they believe compensates for the inevitable reductions in physical capabilities with age. Farmers consider their daily contributions essential to the continued success of the property (Conway *et al*., 2017).

In terms of income division, young successors who live separately from their parents (Models 01, 02, and 03) tend to have greater financial autonomy. A significant proportion receive commissions on the production and sale of products, with 50.00%, 33.33%, and 100.00% of the young people in each respective model. In contrast, in the traditional succession model, the most notable result was that 48.96% of young successors rely on asking their parents for money when needed. According to Moreira *et al.* (2020), successors who are paid through commissions or salaries have greater financial independence compared to those who rely on parental support, which in turn gives them more potential to invest in the property or enhance the family's well-being.

3.2 RESULTS OF QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

This section presents case studies that illustrate each of the new succession models, with references to other analyzed cases when necessary.

Case study 01: Successor Lives in the Rural Area, Parents in the Urban Area

The family illustrating this model owns a 39-hectare property dedicated to dairy farming, with the help of an employee who assists with daily activities. The successor, a 29-year-old woman with a high school education, lives on the property with her 23-year-old husband, who holds a college degree, and their 1-year-old daughter. When the young woman married approximately two years ago, her father decided to move to the urban area, leaving the property for her and her family to live on.

In addition to managing the dairy business, handling domestic chores, and caring for her daughter, the successor also owns a clothing store in the urban area, where she works as a saleswoman. Her connection to the rural environment began in childhood when she helped with dairy activities. At the age of 18, with her father's encouragement, she began managing all the farm activities independently. In her words, the succession process is closely tied to the support she received from her parents: *'It doesn't matter—if the incentive doesn't come from home or if parents don't allow their children to have a say. I developed a passion for the work because my father gave me autonomy and freedom*".

In another case within the same succession model, a 29-year-old man lives on a 160-hectare property with an additional 100 hectares of rented land. He resides there with his 26-year-old wife, and both have completed high school. They focus on grain and dairy farming. After getting married, the young man's parents moved to the urban area. For him, the succession process is closely tied to his passion for farming: *"My wife also enjoys*

it and sees a future in the rural area." He describes the succession as a natural and gradual process: *"We are born with this vision of enjoying the countryside, accompanying our parents in the activities. Over time, they gradually pass responsibilities on to us, and we model ourselves after their experience."* Another key factor that influenced the succession was the property's existing infrastructure, including machinery, facilities, and land area, which the young man described as a *"strong start"*.

Fischer and Burton (2014) describe this process as one in which the young successor has been involved in agricultural activities from childhood, being identified early on as a potential successor. This is referred to as the *'construction of successor identities.'* The successor is then progressively integrated into the hierarchy of agricultural work and decision-making tasks, a process known as *'progression on the agricultural scale.'* Thus, while the daughter's interest in succession may seem 'innate,' there is evidence that this inclination was cultivated over time.

Chiswell (2016), in a study conducted in England, identified two distinct approaches to generational control transfer. The first involves a conservative transfer of generational control, while the second involves a progressive transfer. The author also highlighted the concept of the *'succession ladder'* as described by participants, which depicts the rise of potential successors through a hierarchical list of tasks (Chiswell, 2016).

In this case, the father gradually transfers the management of the property and ownership of the assets to his daughter, who acknowledges the importance of her social role in the rural environment: *'Today, women are in charge of the properties. In the past, compared to my mother and grandmother, they were confined to domestic activities, without recognition.'* A study by Bednaříková, Bavorová, and Ponkina (2016) on young university students in Russia found that the likelihood of leaving the family property decreases when the family owns land.

Case study 02: Son Living on His Parents' Property in a Separate House

This succession model is illustrated by a 27-year-old successor who has completed a technical course in agriculture. The family property spans 25 hectares and focuses on dairy and grain production. The parents, aged 57 and 54, live on the property along with a younger brother, who is 15 years old. The successor lives in a separate house on the same property with his 26-year-old wife and their 7-month-old daughter.

The successor had the experience of working as an employee on a larger rural property for eight years. He returned to the family property at his father's request, as the father was facing health problems and would have had to cease operations if his son had not come back.

The successor describes his relationship with his parents as very positive, stating: *'My parents trust my decisions because they see that things are working, and I studied in this area.'* As a result, the successor manages the work on the property with autonomy, while the parents offer assistance when needed, allowing him to maintain independence in decision-making.

We also highlight the case of a 29-year-old successor who has completed high school and lives on his father's property, in a separate house, with his 23-year-old wife and their 8-month-old daughter. The parents, aged 57 and 54, also live on the property, which spans 32 hectares and focuses on dairy farming. In this case, the son operates with autonomy, while the father provides occasional assistance. The succession process was encouraged by the parents, who proposed further investment in the property when their son decided to stay. For the successor, the process of succession and preparation occurs naturally. As he described: *"It happens automatically with our parents aging—they gradually leave more responsibilities to us*".

Fischer and Burton (2014) described this process as the *'development of agricultural business trajectories,'* which refers to changes made in the farm business due to the influence of the potential successor. The presence of an identified successor provides incentives for more cumulative, expansionist, and diversified agricultural trajectories, contributing to greater business viability. As the certainty of succession increases, development strategies for the property are initiated (Fischer and Burton, 2014).

Inwood and Sharp (2012), in a study conducted in the United States, demonstrated a close relationship between the presence of a successor and the adaptation of rural properties. The study revealed that farmers who had not identified a successor placed less emphasis on increasing productivity, often employing static management strategies or choosing not to invest in the property, instead selling land and assets. Conversely, when families had identified a potential successor, strategies for property growth, such as expansion and diversification, were employed to meet family reproduction goals (Inwood and Sharp, 2012). Similarly, Bertolozzi-Caredio (2024) argues that farmers with defined successors adopt a range of strategies, including agricultural and non-agricultural activities, cooperation initiatives, and the adoption of innovations.

Case study 03: Son Lives in Rural Areas on Other Properties

This case study illustrates the model of a 21-year-old successor who has completed elementary school and lives on a separate property with his 22-year-old wife. The family property, where his parents live, spans 60 hectares and is dedicated to dairy farming, pig farming, and grain production. The son actively participates in agricultural activities on his parents' property, sharing responsibilities with them. For him, the succession process is closely tied to his lifelong enjoyment of agricultural work, as well as the encouragement, support, and knowledge passed down by his parents. The property where the son and his wife live is used solely as a residence and does not support agricultural activities.

According to Morais, Borges, and Binotto (2017), parental social pressure to stay on the family farm plays a crucial role in constructing the identity of a successor. This pressure often awakens the desire in the sons of rural producers to continue working in agriculture and take on the role of managing the family property—key factors that contribute to the succession process. The authors argue that the desire to work in agriculture decreases the likelihood of migration to urban areas. Moreira *et al*. (2020) also identified that parents use strategies to motivate their children to remain on the property and in the family business, with one such strategy being the granting of an independent house to encourage them to stay as successors.

Case study 04: Son Living in the Urban Environment

This succession model is illustrated by a 28-year-old successor who is single and has completed higher education in Agribusiness. He lives in the urban area, while his parents, aged 60 and 56, reside on the family property. The property spans 75 hectares with an additional 125 hectares of rented land, focusing on grain production. In addition to his agricultural responsibilities, the successor owns a mechanical workshop in the urban area. The ability to balance these two activities is possible due to the nature of grain farming, which allows for flexibility. For him, succession is closely tied to the trust his parents have placed in him by granting him autonomy and gradually involving him in the management of the property.
In another example from the same model, a 28-year-old veterinarian lives in the urban area and works at an agricultural cooperative while also managing activities on the family's 60-hectare grain-producing rural

property. His parents, aged 58 and 56, live on the property. His interest in continuing the agricultural activities stems from his parents' decision to allocate him a piece of land for production, which increased his involvement in the farming operations.

Boscardin and Conterato (2017) viewed the situation where younger family members live in the urban area but continue to engage in rural activities as a strategy developed by family farmers to manage the future of the property in the event of non-succession. In these cases, economically 'exploiting' the parents' property by planting commodities, as seen here, does not require intensive or daily attention. However, this does not necessarily indicate a desire to remain in the countryside. Instead, this approach may be seen as a way to generate extra income, as the younger generation often has other paid employment in the urban area (Boscardin and Conterato, 2017)

In a similar perspective, Cassidy and McGrath (2015), in a study conducted in Ireland, reported that the children of farmers who are not, or are unlikely to become, successors still maintain a deep attachment to their parents' property, indicating a desire to keep it within the family.

Maintaining ownership reflects a sense of responsibility to ensure the intergenerational continuity of preserving the parents' work and way of life. These strong bonds reduce the likelihood of non-successors viewing the property as an asset to be sold (Cassidy and McGrath, 2015).

Cassidy and McGrath (2015) argued that parents' property represents an intangible, non-commercial asset for their children, marked by strong emotional ties. As a result, there is often an interest in continuing the parents' way of life, even through different models, as seen in the findings of this study. Despite living in urban areas or having other occupations, these young individuals maintain a close connection to their family property and are, therefore, recognized as successors.

Moreira and Spanevello (2019) identified six different succession arrangements among rural producers: 1) residence on the property with full autonomy in business administration and income management; 2) residence in the urban area with full autonomy in business administration but without income management; 3) residence in the city with partial management of the business and control over income; 4) residence on the property with partial business administration and income management; 5) residence in the city with partial business management but no control over income; and 6) residence on the property with partial business administration and no income management.

According to Moreira *et al.* (2020), generational succession has lost its status as a natural event, as it was in past generations when children remained on the family property out of a sense of moral obligation, love for the land, and a desire to preserve family continuity and heritage across generations. Today, farmers recognize the need to actively motivate their children to take over the family business. This shift reflects the growing concern among parents about maintaining the business and assets, prompting them to make deliberate efforts to ensure the succession process continues.

Based on the results of the strategies promoted by parents, six distinct types of strategies can be identified: 1) occupation strategy; 2) autonomy strategy; 3) new investment strategy; 4)

study support strategy; 5) urban occupation strategy; and 6) asset donation strategy (Moreira *et al.,* 2020).

Boscardin and Conterato (2017) reported the emergence of a new model of ownership transfer in which parents have heirs but not successors. This reflects a desire among parents to leave their property to their children as an inheritance, ensuring the continuity of land ownership within the family, but without the expectation that their children will continue agricultural activities. This perspective is tied to the parents' pessimistic view of the economic viability of rural properties, as they question the benefits of their children remaining in farming. Similarly, Chiswell (2016), in a study of farmers in England, found that parents encouraged their children to explore other opportunities before deciding whether to stay on the family farm.

Brandth and Overrein (2012), in their analysis of changes in paternity across two generations of farmers in Norway, argued that 'traditional patterns' of succession have weakened. The study found that older generations of parents involved their children in farm work, using the property as a space for knowledge transmission. However, younger parents did not share this approach, no longer viewing the property as a primary means of passing down agricultural skills. As a result, for younger parents, agricultural work is no longer central to the upbringing of children in rural areas (Brandth and Overrein, 2012).

4 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This study identified four new succession models that have been established on rural properties as forms of generational transfer. Although each model has its own unique characteristics, the common goal across all of them is to ensure the property remains within the family across generations.

Thus, the traditional succession model is no longer sufficient to explain the diverse arrangements that are being developed to ensure continuity and generational transfer in agriculture. These new arrangements, based on place of residence, form the four new succession models identified and characterized in this study.

The establishment of what we refer to as new succession models, based on the criterion of residence, is particularly relevant because, in the traditional model, living on the property was a *sine qua non* condition for characterizing generational succession. Consequently, other succession models may emerge if and when additional factors or characteristics are recognized as indispensable to defining the succession process.

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