

Production And Trade Of Typical Handcrafted Products (Pats) From The Coast Of Paraná

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Abstract:

Background: Typical Handcrafted Products - PATs are a viable alternative for generating income for more than 400 families on the coast of Paraná, and despite it's relevance, few studies were found on the subject. Thus, this research aimed to investigate whether the commercial strategies adopted by micro and small producers of PATs are capable of prospecting the activity in the regional scenario, improving the quality of life of residents in the region.

Materials and Methods: An exploratory-descriptive research, technical visits and participant observation were carried out between October 2022 and April 2023 with 32 producers.

Results: The study revealed that the PATs' main delicacies produced and marketed were pastel, empadao, empadinha, rissoles, coxinhas, dumplings and croquettes, bobó, and in terms of raw material, the most used was shrimp (n=66.01%), followed by hearts of palm (n=32.26%), crab meat (n=18.05%) and shellfish (n=15.022%). With regard to the commercial strategies adopted by micro and small producers of PATs, most of the interviewees used social networks, in particular WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram. The biggest difficulties regarding the production and trade of PATs, in the interviewees' self-perception, were the management models adopted linked to the reduction in the number of clients outside the seasonal period and the adverse weather conditions that affected the profitability of the enterprises.

Conclusion: It was concluded that the use of PATs as an alternative for income and economic development was confirmed, as it was recorded that the lowest earnings (R\$2,250.00 to R\$3,900.00) between the analyzed groups generated similar average income (R\$ 2,853.00) the national average, however most producers (n=88%) had an income higher than the national average, and in a significant percentage the income was more than twice the national average.

Key Word Tourism; traditional communities; family industry; marketing.

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I. Introduction

The coast of the State of Paraná in southern Brazil is a region of great contrasts, while the main city has the seventh highest per capita income in the state, a significant portion of the population lives below the poverty line (ANACLETO et al., 2017). Several conditions contribute to the condition of poverty experienced by a large number of inhabitants in this region, in particular, the rural exodus and the decline of artisanal fishing, productive activities that in recent decades have forced a large number of people to seek new income alternatives.

Among the viable income generation alternatives Curvelo et al. (2016) observed that on the coast of Paraná, residents or remnants of rural communities represent more than 80% of the entrepreneurs of regional fairs where PATs (Typical Handcrafted Products) are sold, and involve a contingent of more than 400 families, (FERREIRA et al., 2017) who have in this activity the only or main source of family income, in addition to being

responsible for marketing and maintaining the culture of typical regional craft products. Ferreira et al. (2017) complement the studies by Curvelo et al. (2016) and state that the trade of these typical craft products represent an important way of generating regional income. In this aspect, it is important to point out that each region has its gastronomy, peculiar foods, marked by its production, conservation, recipes, ingredients, preparation and presentation techniques, responsible for characterizing foods as typical products of that place, transforming this product into a kind of representative of a group of people, reflecting their way of life, their taste, their culture, according to Martis (2009) the concept of typical products relating to gastronomy is:

A gastronomic delicacy traditionally prepared and tasted in a region, which is linked to the history of the group that tastes it and integrates a cultural panorama that goes beyond the dish itself.

The proposition and typical food according to Maciel (2001) is much superior to the offer of different or picturesque foods, it implies in the representation of the ways of life of a group of people, existing in the food practices associated with belonging and local history.

The appreciation of typical regional products emerges as an alternative to alleviating poverty in the caçara (SANNOMIYA, 2020) communities, because according to Flandrin and Montanari (1996), typical food kitchens can offer gains in economic resources, and be a source of regional development, the assumption and corroborated by Fagliari (2005) describes that many typical products and regional dishes can be worked on in order to become more attractive in the tourist context, and in recent decades has risen the search for the combination of these elements that involve, in addition to tourism, the culture, characterized by exposure to the local daily experience, in this way, tourist activity on the coast of Paraná can be intensified with the commercialization of typical products, providing an increase in income generation, creating work and protecting the natural and cultural heritage of regional communities.

Specifically with regard to the coast of Paraná, despite Cavalcanti et al. (2020) present PATs as a strong opportunity to generate income on the coast of Paraná, Ferreira et al. (2017) and Curvelo et al. (2016) warn that among the main obstacles, the forms of production and commercialization adopted in the region stand out, and that these products are always associated with micro entrepreneurs or individual micro entrepreneurs, whether formalized or not.

The PATs market on the coast of Paraná is made up of small producers, who mostly work in the informal business and in small quantities, who produce their products within their urban homes, fishing or rural communities, but these resources are little exploited for potential ways of regional development.

Understanding the scenario of a production segment according to Anacleto et al. (2017) is more easily obtained from the characterization of the ways in which the agents involved in this phase of the process act, and based on this knowledge, it is possible to establish the similarities and discrepancies that exist within each segment. Also according to the author, investigating and understanding strategic commercial management relationships becomes essential in proposing models that can increase commercialization levels by creating a collaborative relationship and business opportunities, especially for formal and informal individual micro-entrepreneurs and micro-entrepreneurs.

Thus, with a view to subsidizing a better understanding of the current scenario of strategic management of PATs on the coast of the State of Paraná, we present the result of a research that sought to investigate whether the commercial strategies adopted by micro and small producers of PATs are capable of prospecting the activity in the regional scenario improving the quality of life of residents in that region.

II. Material And Methods

Initially, to obtain information about the most relevant PATs on the coast of Paraná, a bibliographical research was carried out regarding the last five years and the types of production and trade of PATs existing in the various municipalities of the coast of the State, in addition, a visit was made to the city's tourism department in the region, during these visits, some people were identified for the beginning of field data collection, and as these people were interviewed, they were asked for new indications of other people with similar activities in a self-generated sampling process.

Data collection took place between October 2022 and April 2023, as proposed by Anacleto et al. (2017) an exploratory-descriptive research was carried out based on technical visits, participant observation and interviews with 32 people, aiming to identify how the processes of production and trade of PATs were established on the coast of Paraná.

We sought to identify which were the most processed products, the origin of the suppliers, how was the commercial performance system like, how the commercial relationship with wholesalers and raw material suppliers took place, the processes related to the marketing mix, as well as to identify which were the adopted strategies that resulted in a competitive advantage for microentrepreneurs.

The distribution and classification of the economic condition according to Critério Brasil (ABEP, 2023) was adopted.

The discussion about the implications of the observed reality in the context of the production and trade of PATs was carried out based on the organization of a crossed impact matrix on five potential factors during the research and by participant observation.

The cross impact matrix was organized according to Anacleto et al. (2017), with this matrix assigning percentage values from 0 to 100 to each opinion expressed by the producers, and later the information was crossed, including all responses, comparing the respective influence exerted and the influence suffered in the implications that hinder production and trade of PATs on the coast of Paraná, the higher the index, the greater the relevance and attention to be devoted to improving processes.

The cross impact matrix generated a management relevance index that was obtained by the equation:

$$IR = \frac{InRn * InPn * 100}{\sum Sisp}$$

IR= Relevance Index of the evaluated situation;

InRn = Received influence index;

InPn = Index of provoked influence;

Sisp= Sum of the index (InRn *InPn) of all the questions analyzed by the participants.

After completing data collection, as proposed by Anacleto et al. (2021) the interpretative analysis was adopted, carried out through the data triangulation technique with similar groupings. This technique occurred with the association of information collected in the interviews, in relation to the data obtained in the analyzed documents, and in the participant observation during the interviews in the commercial enterprises.

III. Results

The main delicacies produced and marketed from the PATs were pastel, empadao, empadinha, risolis, coxinhas, puff pastry, dumplings, croquettes, bobó, pies, portions, broths and stew, and in terms of raw material, the most used was shrimp (n=66.01%), followed by heart of palm (n=32.26%), crab meat (n=18.05%), shellfish (n=15.022), fish (n=14.99%), oysters (n=9.01%), crab (n=4.19%), squid (n=4.19%), octopus (n=4.19%) and lobster (n=4.19%).

The raw material sources of all respondents prioritized the acquisition of local partners due to the freshness of the products obtained, although in some cases the cost of this raw material was higher. The exception in the supply of raw materials was in products based on heart of palm and shellfish, whose raw materials from other regions were also fresh, but at a lower cost than those offered by local producers and wholesalers. With regard to family income, only three classes were identified by the Critério Brasil of economic classification ABEP (2023) (TABLE 1).

Table no 1: Characterization of the population sample of handcraft producers of typical products in relation to inco.

Critério Brasil class	Family income R\$	% of interviewees
C1	2,250.00 up to 3,900.00	12
B2	4,000.00 up to 7,799.00	60
B1	7,800.00 up to 18,799.00	28

The field research revealed that among the interviewees there was equality between the genders in the management processes, and regarding the marital status, there was a predominance of married people (n=84%), followed by people who were formally in a cohabitation (n =14%), single people (n=4%) and divorced with (n=4%).

The average age of the interviewees was 44.2 years old, with regard to the level of education, the highest number of people with high school education (n=60%), elementary school education (n=36%) and college education (n=4%).

With regard to race, the study identified a large majority of people of white skin color (n=96%), followed by a lower incidence of brown skin color (n=4%), not having identified people of other races.

The study revealed that the most used place for commercial activities was the property itself (n=64%), followed by the rented one (n=32%) and with a lower incidence of ownership (n=4%).

The average time of professional performance related to the production and trade of PATs was 7.2, most respondents (n=66.7%) work more than 8 hours a day, with income from this business being the main family income.

With regard to the classification of the company, the majority classified the enterprise as an individual microentrepreneur (n=34.6%) and Microenterprise (n=34.6%) followed by those who classified themselves as non-formal business (n=30.8%). In addition, of the entrepreneurs interviewed, in relation to receiving assistance

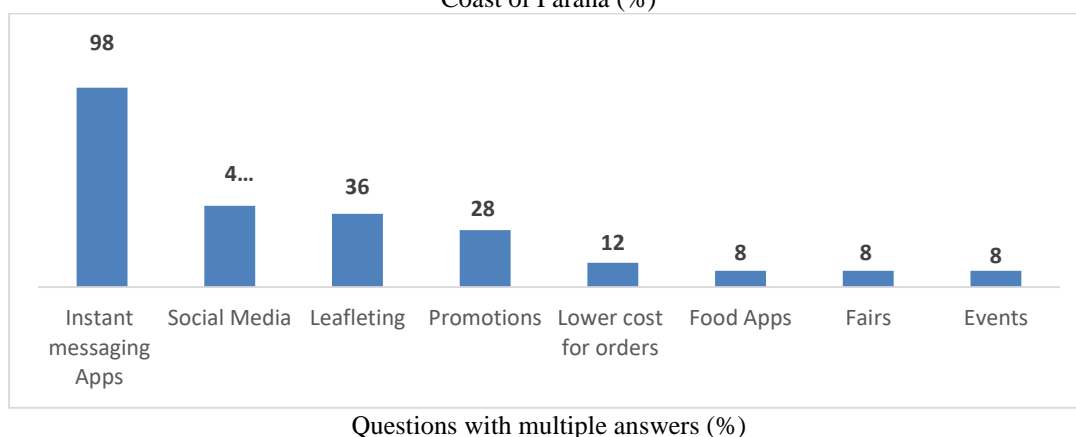
during the pandemic, most did not receive assistance to supplement their income (n=79.2%), followed by people who received it (n=20.8%).

With regard to apprenticeship or business improvement courses, more than half of the interviewees (n=53%) did not take any training courses, yet the majority (n=72%) reported that they have planning, monitoring and evaluation of administrative and financial activities as they classify that they work with perishable products and planning is crucial in the profitability process.

Regarding the method used to commercialize the products, most of the interviewees use direct sales to consumers (n=84%), followed by exhibition at fairs (n=12%), with the main commercialization period being the summer season, at this time temporary labor is hired, and according to the report of the majority of interviewees (n=96%) to help in greater quantity in the production processes.

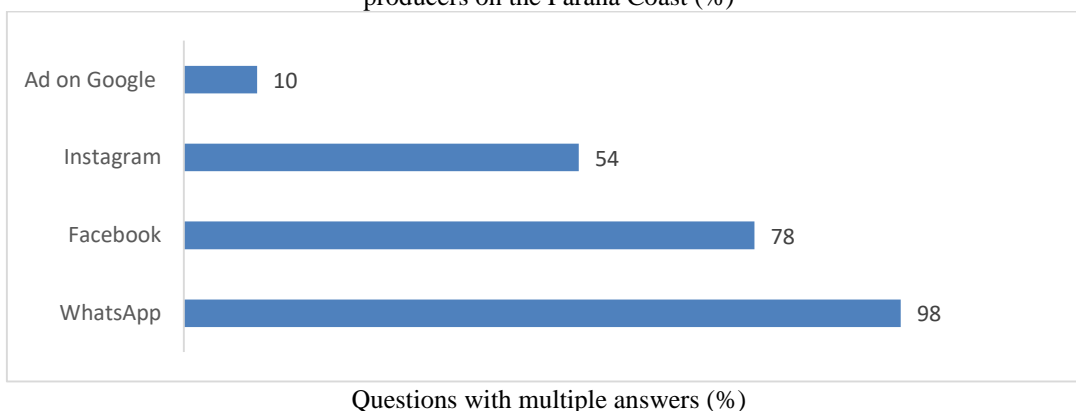
With regard to the commercial strategies adopted by micro and small PAT producers, most of the interviewees used social networks (n=40%) as a way of publicizing the products followed by the use of the leafleting technique (Figure 1).

Figure no 1: Figure 1. Main commercialization strategies of PATs by small handcraft producers in the Coast of Paraná (%)



The use of social networks or the web was cited by the vast majority of interviewees as being viable commercial strategies in the perception of micro and small PAT producers (Figure 2).

Figure no 2. Main social media or web networks used as PATs marketing strategies by small handcraft producers on the Paraná Coast (%)



The biggest difficulties (Table 1) regarding the production and trade of PATs, in the interviewees' self-perception reveals that the management models adopted linked to the reduction in the number of customers outside the seasonal period are the implications that most affect survival and profitability of the ventures.

Table no 1. Limiting factors for the production and trade of PATs on the coast of Paraná.

Classification	Negative impact factor	Relevance Index
1	Inadequate enterprise management	22,14
2	Number of customers outside the summer season	22,14

3	Adverse weather conditions	15,82
4	Inadequate structure for production during peak sales periods	9,81
5	Difficulty accessing credit to expand the business	8,01
6	Inadequate marketing	6,96
7	Maintenance of quality service	4,99
8	Trained workforce	4,99
9	High price of raw materials in the summer period	3,06
10	Location of the enterprise	2,08

IV. Discussion

The world is experiencing a significant moment, where the number of people who are truly interested in the origin of the products they consume is growing, in this context the types of production associated with multiple processes where, in addition to the quality of the product itself, the appreciation of the local production systems and the history of production strengthens new economic relationships where the value of things is not just justified by the monetary issue.

The trend described goes against the grain of high standardization processes and Commodities, or even mass production, valuing healthy products, the origin of the products and also whether production and trade respect the prerogatives of fair trade and the use of the family workforce.

The production and trade of PATs on the coast of Paraná is presented in this concept, despite being a product of local origin and production, prepared in a different way from other regions with unique ingredients, these products are traditional and it persists and resists in time, with the same characteristics in terms of preparation, visual appearance, texture and flavor as they were initially made decades ago.

The use of PATs as an alternative for income and economic development can be understood as possible, as the lowest earnings (R\$2,250.00 to R\$3,900.00) among the analyzed groups generated an average income similar (R\$ 2,853.00) to the national average as Saringer (2023) describes, however the majority (n=88%) had an income higher than the national average, and in a significant percentage the income was more than twice the national average.

The use of PATs, as a development alternative, contradicts the logic of commodities, given that there is no excessive standardization nor the search for a unique flavor, Mcauley et al. (2007) describe that new organizational forms for small productions should be considered as alternatives for income generation and development and emphasize that the use of family labor, use of digital technologies in production and trade, creative freedom in production units, but at the same time participatory and collective actions shared by the same values with the individuals who develop their businesses anchored in history and belonging to the region where they are inserted and a strategic path to be considered.

The use of PATs as a development alternative mostly meets the assumptions of new forms of organization, however three factors must be considered as a factor to increase the efficiency of these products in generating income and local development.

The first factor is related to the quality of production and efficiency in serving consumers, a study developed by Anacleto et al. (2023) reveal that consumers on the coast of Paraná, in a general context, assessed that the qualities of PATs need improvement, especially in terms of flavor and texture, which are sources of dissatisfaction after consumption.

Although quality is classified as a subjective view, derived from experience and personal preferences, it is premised that those that best satisfy consumer preferences are considered by them to have high quality. Despite what is described seems to have a certain amount of obviousness, this view should be considered by the producers, given that during the research they did not show a problem related to the quality of their productions.

The core question in this context is related to the doubt about how production can meet very different individual preferences among the wide range of consumers with their individual preferences, in order to obtain an adequate configuration of the quality of the product to be offered to the market. The answer to this question can be more easily obtained as PAT producers create the habit of listening to their customers, and commit themselves to respecting the quality assessment processes of their products, research evaluations made as simple as small cards can result in the understanding that there is a consensus of desirability in relation to certain product attributes, and based on this premise, the production process identifies the collective specifications as quality and starts to act in accordance with the desires of consumers, and since a product that deviates from specifications is likely to be classified as poorly finished and unreliable, providing lower satisfaction than a conformably produced primary focus of attention.

Therefore, despite not being a standardization product in the commodity model, the consumer in general is not very tolerant of excessive variations in the taste and texture of a food, and in the extent that he had a good experience in the consumption of PATs, the repurchase or reconsumption, will occur seeking the unique flavors of that producer, so the producers must consider quality control practices during manufacturing, which aim to ensure that the planned quality level is achieved, at the lowest possible cost with the smallest possible variation

in flavor and possible texture, but that maintains the proposal of each productive unit with its peculiarities and tradition.

The second factor to be analyzed is the use of social networks in the PATs commercialization processes, the study showed that the social networks adopted by the producers are the most commonly used by the trade, however Anacleto et al. (2020) describes that after the pandemic period, the purchase of products via the web became a reality and, especially in the food areas, this tendency of expansion has been consolidated, however, according to the authors, the use of e-commerce and social media, could be better explored directing commercial actions to a higher income public proves to be efficient, this information corroborates what is described by a study developed by Anacleto et al. (2023) who reported that consumers in a general context rate the price of PATs as high. Thus, despite the use of WhatsApp being the preference of producers and consumers, Volpato (2023) describes other social networks used in other food sectors in Brazil that have a strong commercial capacity and were not even mentioned by producers in the present study, namely: YouTube, TikTok, Messenger, Pinterest and Twitter.

The choice of social networks for the use of PATs should be reviewed by the producers, given that facebook is the second most used social network, however despite its relevance Natal (2023) reveals that in Brazil Instagram has had successful commercial advances in particular with the use of free publication in “stories” that are highly viewed and are classified as a much stronger commercial point on Instagram, according to the author, there has been a migration of users from facebook to instagram, especially those with better purchasing power. Still in this context Anacleto et al. (2020) allude to the use of Pinterest, which currently has around 28 million users in Brazil, whose profile of people with higher incomes is characterized by the search for products other than traditional ones.

The third issue to be considered regarding the production and trade of PATs on the coast of Paraná, comes from the need to adopt scientific administration in the management processes, it is urgent that it be emphasized again that despite being a differentiated form of enterprise management, based on the culture and in the productive tradition, it must make use of scientific management as a form of organization and search for high quality given that despite being a model of handcraft production, the production system of the PATs presents similar characteristics of the formal organizations.

In general context Savedra (2021) describes that a production unit will only reach high levels of quality when the principles of scientific management are adopted, among the various techniques available, even if simple, the principles of the PDCA cycle adjust to craft organizations being able to promote profound improvements. In this process, responsibility is clearly divided between production and sales, actions are planned, daily activities are controlled, especially quality, and finally, performance is monitored and, whenever necessary, corrective measures are taken. The PDCA cycle allows the production units to create elements and have the necessary organization to carry out the diagnoses, establish courses of action based on the diagnoses, and establish control to perpetuate the improvements.

Djau et al. (2012) warns that the design and production of craft products vary according to the local culture and history, and is benefited by the necessary raw material available in the region and precisely this synergistic set is transformed and, income-generating action in which financial compensation occurs immediately, and this becomes relevant as, in general, entrepreneurs in this segment do not have much time and resources to invest in market recognition, or in improving their techniques and the quality of their product.

However, in regard to the production and trade of PATs, it is necessary to break this cycle, given that the production units have structural management problems due to lack of knowledge, and because they do not have conditions to train managers, they continue to have deficiencies in the conduct of daily work and reduces the possibility of efficiency of the PATs production unit.

V. Conclusion

The study revealed that the main delicacies produced and marketed from the PATs were pastel, empadao, empadinha, rissoles, coxinhas, dumplings and croquettes, bobó, and in terms of raw material, the most used was shrimp (n=66 .01%), followed by hearts of palm (n=32.26%), crab meat (n=18.05%) and shellfish (n=15.022).

With regard to the commercial strategies adopted by micro and small producers of PATs, most of the interviewees used social networks and despite the use of WhatsApp being the preference of producers and the most used in Brazil, other social networks used in other food sectors in Brazil have strong commercial capacity and were not even mentioned by the producers in the present study, namely: YouTube, TikTok, Messenger, Pinterest and Twitter, which represents the possibility of expanding the production trade.

The use of PATs as an alternative for income and economic development was confirmed, as it was recorded that the lowest earnings (R\$2,250.00 to R\$3,900.00) among the analyzed groups generated an average income similar (R\$ 2,853.00) to the national average, however most of the producers (n=88%) had an income higher than the national average, and in a significant percentage the income was twice the national average.

The greatest difficulties regarding the production and trade of PATs, in the self-perception of the interviewees, were the management models adopted, it is urgent to emphasize that despite being a differentiated form of enterprise management, based on culture and productive tradition, producers must make use of scientific management as a form of organization and search for high quality given that despite being a model of handcraft production, the PATs production system has similar characteristics of formal organizations. Apparently the adoption of the use of the principles of the PDCA cycle adjusts to craft organizations and can promote profound improvements in this type of organization.

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