

Women participating in the coffee events in Brazil

Mulheres que participam dos eventos de café no Brasil

Mujeres participan en eventos de café en Brasil

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Abstract

There is no doubt about the importance of coffee cultivation to the Brazilian economy, a fact revealed by a large number of national and international events in this sector. However, it has only been in the last two decades that women have taken part in such events, mainly because of the prejudice that prevailed until the beginning of the 21st century. The present study was carried out with the aim of identifying the profile of the women participating in the events of the coffee throughout Brazil. A total of 556 questionnaires were applied during events held in the years 2016 and 2017 in ten coffee regions of Brazil. The questioned were composed by 23 questions addressing: schooling; the areas of performance and income of women in the coffee sector. Approximately 25 per cent of the women interviewed have post-graduate level training, and only 0.6 per cent are not literate. Most women operate in the area of coffee production have the monthly income between 2 to 5 minimum wages. In general, women who work in the coffee sector and participate in events linked to the national coffee industry, work mainly in the production stage and have a high degree of education, however, receive low wages.

Keywords: Coffee production; Coffee harvest; Socioeconomic; Coffee cultivation; Level of instruction.

Resumo

Não há dúvidas sobre a importância da cafeicultura para a economia brasileira, fato revelado por um grande número de eventos nacionais e internacionais do setor. No entanto, somente nas últimas duas décadas as mulheres têm participado destes eventos, principalmente pelo preconceito que prevaleceu até o início do século XXI. O presente estudo foi realizado com o objetivo de identificar o perfil das mulheres que participam dos eventos de café em todo o Brasil. Foram aplicados 556 questionários durante eventos realizados nos anos de 2016 e 2017 em dez regiões cafeeiras do país. Os questionários foram compostos por 23 questões abordando: escolaridade, área de atuação e renda das mulheres no setor cafeeiro. Aproximadamente 25 por cento das mulheres entrevistadas têm formação em nível de pós-graduação e apenas 0,6 por cento não são alfabetizadas. A maioria das mulheres que atuam na área de produção de café tem a renda mensal entre 2 a 5 salários mínimos. Em geral, as mulheres que atuam no setor cafeeiro e participam de eventos ligados ao setor, atuam principalmente na etapa de produção e possuem alto grau de escolaridade, porém, recebem baixos salários.

Palavras-chave: Produção de café; Colheita de café; Socioeconômico; Cultivo de café; Nível de instrução.

Resumen

No hay duda sobre la importancia del cultivo del café para la economía brasileña, hecho también revelado por un gran número de eventos nacionales e internacionales en este sector. Sin embargo, fue sólo en las dos últimas décadas que las mujeres participaron de tales eventos, principalmente a causa del prejuicio que prevaleció hasta el inicio del siglo XXI. El presente estudio fue realizado con el objetivo de identificar el perfil de las mujeres participantes de los eventos del café en todo Brasil. Un total de 556 cuestionarios fue aplicado durante los eventos realizados en los años de 2016 y 2017 en diez regiones cafeteras de Brasil. Los cuestionados fueron formados por 23 cuestiones abordando: escolaridad; las áreas de rendimiento y renta de las mujeres en el sector cafetero. Aproximadamente el 25 por ciento de las mujeres entrevistadas tienen formación a nivel de postgrado y apenas el 0,6 por ciento no son alfabetizadas. La mayoría de las

mujeres operan en el área de producción de café y tienen ingresos mensuales entre 2 a 5 salarios mínimos. En general, las mujeres que trabajan en el sector cafetero y participan en eventos relacionados con la industria cafetera nacional, trabajan principalmente en la fase de producción y poseen alto grado de escolaridad, pero reciben bajos salarios.

Palabras clave: Producción de café; Recolección de café; Socioeconómica; Cultivo de café; Nivel de instrucción.

1. Introduction

Throughout the history of Brazil, since 1727, coffee has been a product of the demands of the international market. According to Colistete (2015) in the first decades of the twentieth century, coffee cultivation produced wealth and accelerated the development of the country, especially in the state of “São Paulo” (Reis, 2010).

Currently, Brazil exports over 32 million bags (60 kg) of coffee each year, being responsible for the annual revenue of US\$5,3billion (CECAFÉ, 2021), which ensures the country the position of the world's largest exporter of the product.

The high value of Brazil's coffee exports can be explained as a result of the diversity of producing regions, amongst which may be mentioned the region “Sul e Centro Oeste de Minas Gerais”, with an approximate annual production of 11.7 million of bags (60 kg) (CONAB, 2021). In addition to high productivity, it is worth noting that the quality of the coffee beverage raises its market value, highlighting in this aspect the “Matas de Minas” region (Ferreira et al. 2016).

The production of coffee in the most diverse producing regions, according to Santos et al. (2017), stimulates the economy generating jobs, especially in the harvest and post-harvest period. In addition to generating employment directed to coffee plantations, the coffee-cultivation also stimulates other sectors of the economy, among which, according to Santos et al. (2017), stands out the commercialization, with emphasis on specialty coffees. It is also essential the role of women who, according to (Ferreira et al, 2017; Schneider et al, 2020; Da Silva et al, 2021; Narváez et al,2022.) are active throughout the Brazilian coffee chain, from work on the farm to specialized services such as logistics and marketing.

Due to the strong base of the coffee sector in Brazil, it has been perceived the increase in the occurrence of events directed to coffee cultivation, including those of international scope.

However, such events until the beginning of the 21st century had an exclusionary character, with the predominant participation of men with higher socioeconomic status (Cielo, 2014). Even according to the author, women often feared to participate in events linked to national agriculture, including in this aspect events linked to coffee cultivation, mainly due to the prejudice existing in this sector.

However, women have recently been increasingly involved in such events, supported by national and international organizations, which aim to increase the participation of women in the labor market (Wivaldo, 2019), especially in coffee cultivation, highlighting the International Women's Coffee Alliance (IWCA) and Solidariedade, committed organizations with the recognition of the importance of women's participation in Brazilian agriculture.

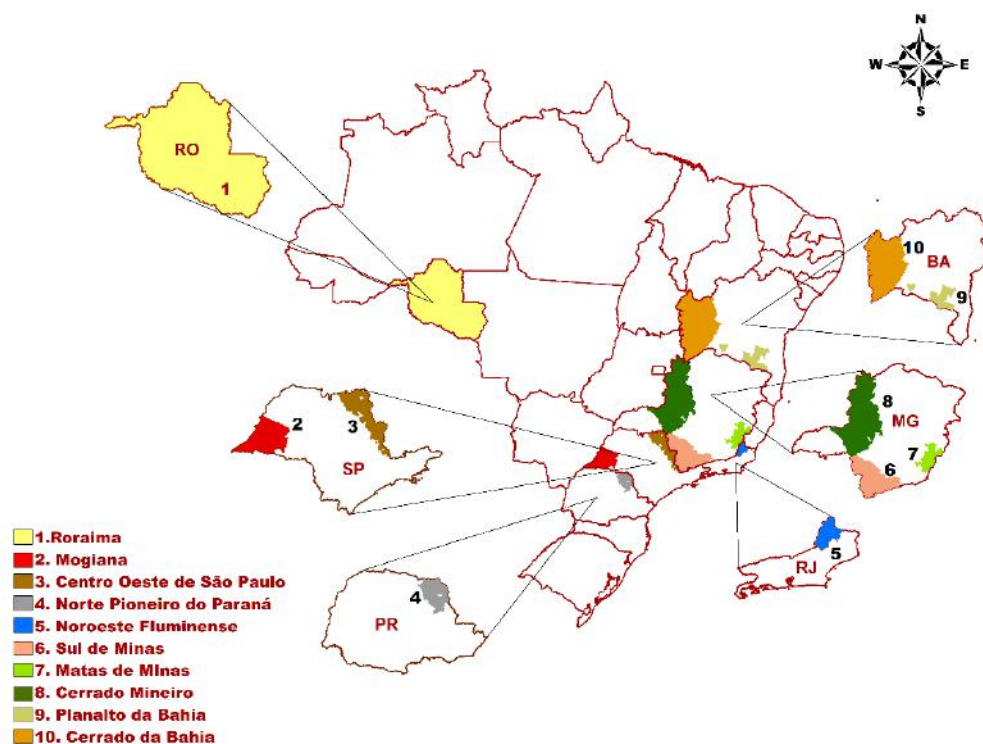
Based on the consideration above, this study aimed to analyze the socioeconomic characteristics: monthly income and schooling, as well as the analysis of data related to the sector of activity of women who currently participate in events related to Brazilian coffee in ten important producing regions of the country.

There is increasing discussion about the different roles that women play within the coffee production (Baliza et al, 2021; Brumer 2004). It is believed that women that participate in events linked to coffee cultivation, have mostly high degree of schooling and work in the coffee sector, mainly in the area of teaching, research and extension, receiving high wages. This scenario in which women with a better academic background stand out in numbers in the participation of events related to coffee cultivation may be directly associated with socioeconomic characteristics. Thus, this research seeks to trace and describe two socioeconomic characteristics, as well as the area of action of women who participate in events directly linked to coffee.

2. Methodology

Ten coffee regions of Brazil were selected to compose the area of study. The research was carried out between the months of July 2016 and April of 2017, through the application of a half-structured questionnaire (Baliza et al, 2021; Pereira et al, 2018), composed of 23 questions. 556 questionnaires were applied (Figure 1), and the set of answers aimed to answer three main questions about women who work in the Brazilian coffee cultivation and participate in events linked to coffee, namely: "Who are the woman who works in Brazilian coffee production chain; in which areas of coffee cultivation the women are more active in Brazil; and what are the future perspectives of women in the coffee sector? "

Figure 1. Location of the coffee regions of Brazil that form the study area.



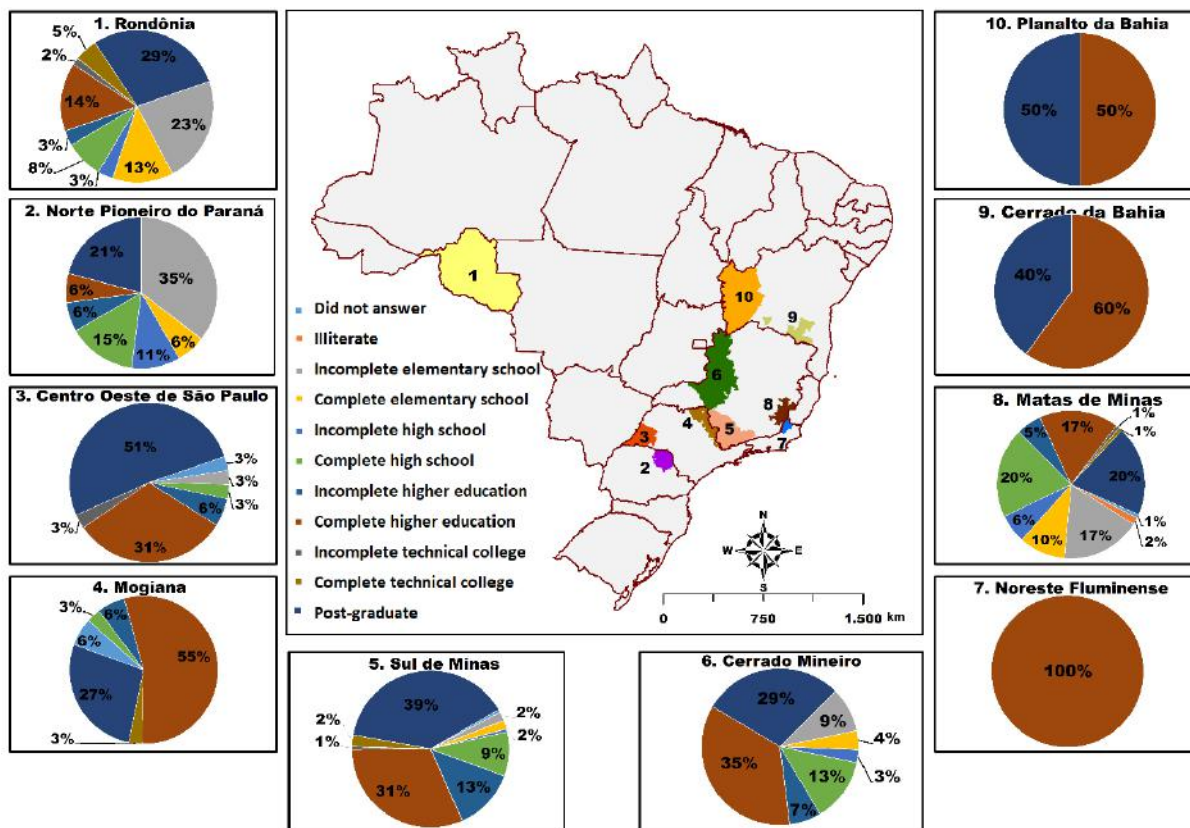
Source: Williams P. Marques Ferreira (Coordinator) Humberto Paiva Fonseca (Elaboration).

The study was based on collection of sampling data, which enabled the characterization of the situation of the women participating in the study and, consequently, from the presented context, the best interpretation and elaboration of the reality of the women who work in the Brazilian coffee production and participate in events linked to this sector. The questionnaires were applied online and at events associated with coffee activity. The figures were elaborated through the use of the ArcGis 10.3^R software.

3. Results and Discussion

Figure 2 shows the characteristics of "schooling" of women working in the coffee production chain in Brazil that participate in events linked to Brazilian coffee cultivation.

Figure 2. Representation, in 2017, of the schooling of women working in the coffee production chain.



Source: Williams P. Marques Ferreira (Coordinator) Humberto Paiva Fonseca (Elaboration).

Based on Figure 2, it can be observed that the woman who participates in events for the coffee cultivation throughout all the coffee producing regions of Brazil, have a high level of schooling (Arzabe et al. 2017), except for two regions, “Mogiana” and “Norte Pioneiro do Paraná”, in which the women mostly indicated that they had incomplete elementary school.

It can also be observed in the figure 2 that, of the total number of questionnaires applied, about 25 per cent of the answers reveal that the women participating in the events have a postgraduate degree, with only 0.6 per cent of them are not literate. The smallest participation of women with low schooling in events for coffee cultivation may be associated with the inadequate dissemination of these events in the mass media more common to rural women, such as radio and television.

Women who are mostly in coffee farms and usually have greater participation in the production process of this product have a more significant restriction of access to the digital media, in which these types of events are generally more popular.

Another aspect that can contribute to the lower participation of rural women from the farms is that these events are often carried out outside the region where these women live and thus need to be moved them to another region, a fact which requires more significant financial and logistical resources, thus increasing the limitation of the participation of these women in this type of event.

Among all the coffee cultivation regions of Brazil, those with the highest number of postgraduates were the “Sul de Minas”, the “Centro Oeste São Paulo”, the “Planalto and Cerrado da Bahia”, all above 35 per cent, and the region with the smallest number of postgraduates was the region of the “Norte Pioneiro do Paraná”, with about 21 per cent women.

The highest number of Postgraduates in the “Sul e Centro Oeste de Minas Gerais” may be associated with the presence of the Federal University of Lavras (UFLA), which hosts in its campus the Center for Excellence in Coffee Production, in addition to the large number of research carried out in coffee cultivation by researchers institutions such as EPAMIG and

EMBRAPA. The “Sul e Centro Oeste de Minas Gerais” also stands out as the largest producer of coffee in Brazil, with approximately 11.7 million of bags (CONAB 2021), a fact that also favors the presence of entities linked to coffee such as Procafe, Concafé among others.

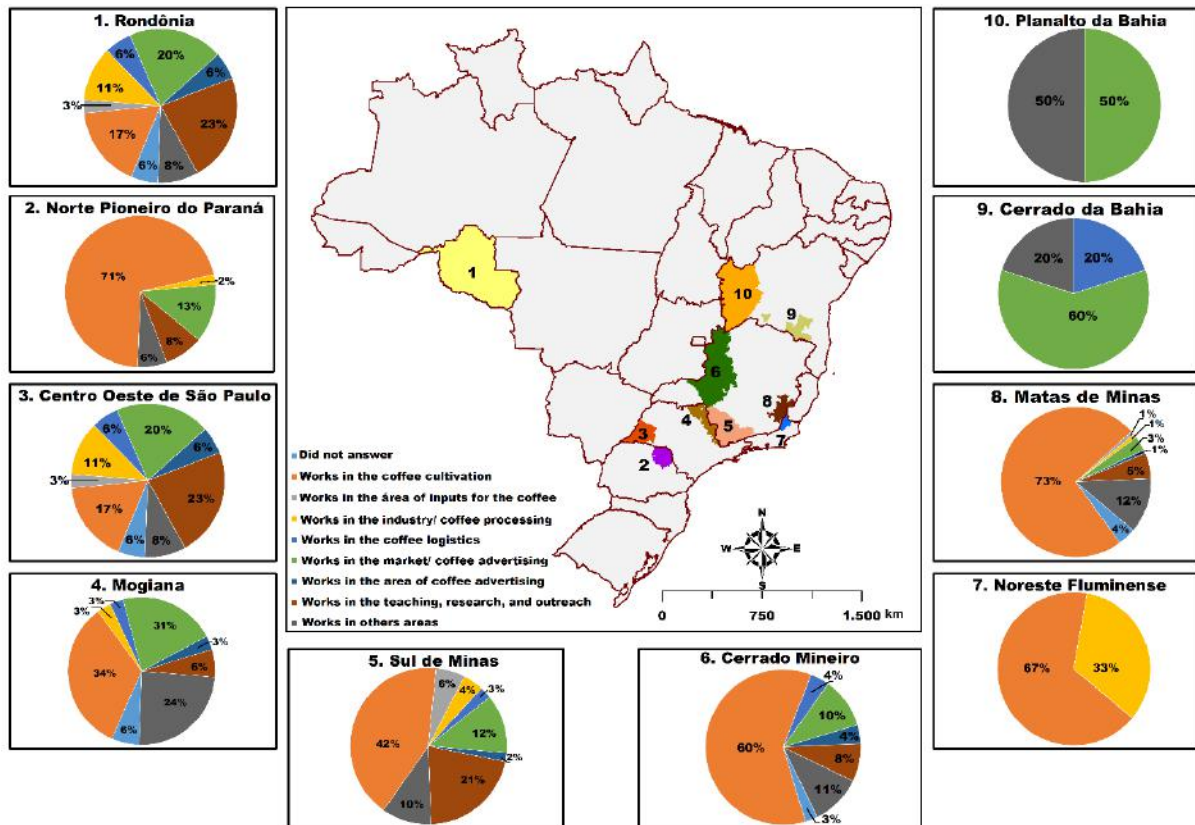
Considering the division of geopolitical regions of Brazil, it can be noted that the Southeast region was the one that showed women with the highest level of schooling (IBGE, 2019).

In the southern region, represented by the “Norte Pioneiro do Paraná”, women with incomplete elementary education represent 35 per cent of the total. In the northern region, represented by the state of Rondônia, 29 per cent of women have postgraduate studies, and 23 per cent have only incomplete elementary education, highlighting this region as the most contrasting among the others that were evaluated.

The coffee region of the “Sul de Minas” showed women with a high level of schooling, between the graduates and postgraduates the value exceeds 65 per cent of the total interviewees (Figure 2). This fact may be associated with the higher performance of women in the Research and Extension Education sector in the Sul de Minas Gerais, 21 per cent (Figure 3).

According to Ferreira et al. (2017), 56.9 per cent of the women working in the coffee sector in Brazil perform their activities directly in the coffee production stage, and this data is also noticeable in the figure 3. It is noted that in the different regions of the study of Brazil, for the most part, the work of women occurs in the production of coffee, being that the three producing evaluated regions in the state of Minas Gerais are the ones that show greater engagement of women in this activity. i.e, “Sul de Minas” (42 per cent), “Cerrado Mineiro” (60 per cent) and “Matas de Minas” (73 per cent).

Figure 3. Representation of the distribution of the percentage of the area of activity of the woman participating in the coffee production chain.



Source: Williams P. Marques Ferreira (Coordinator) Humberto Paiva Fonseca (Elaboration).

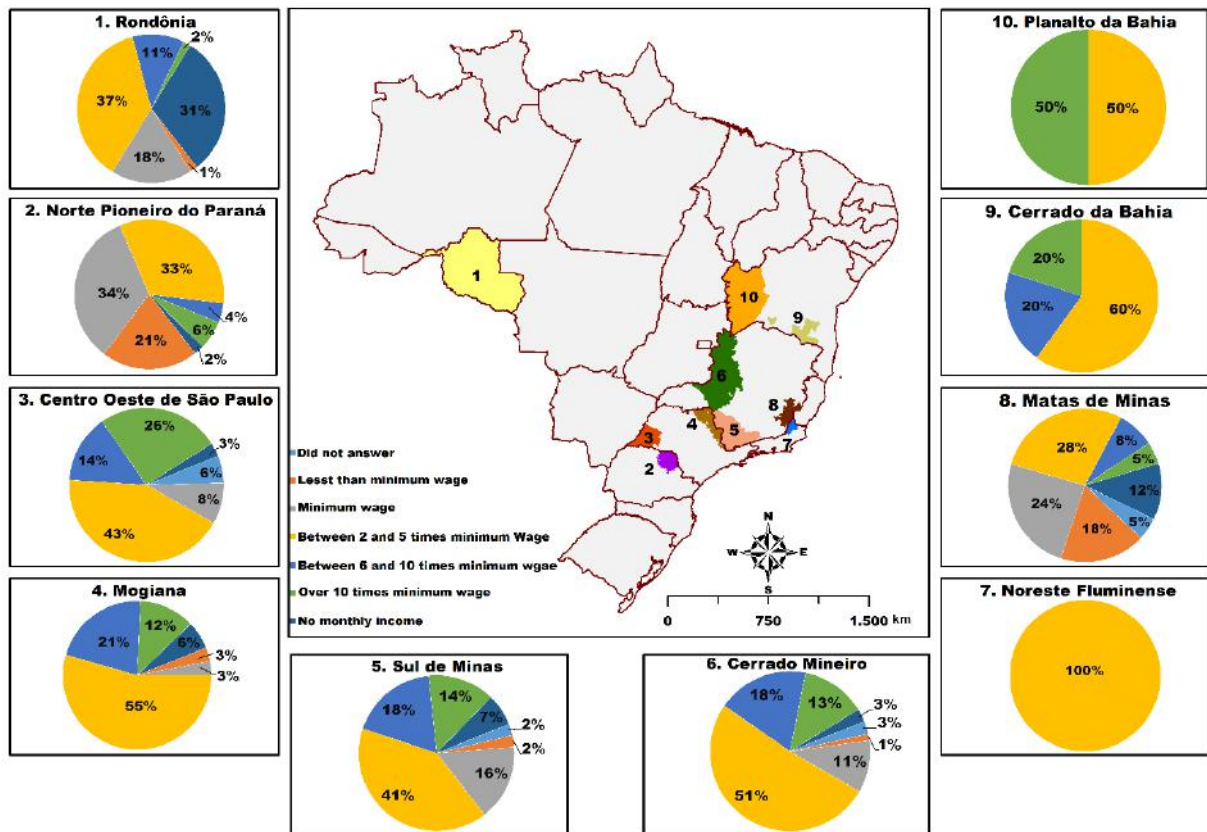
It is also possible to observe in figure 3 that in the state of Bahia women are more active in the market sector and in the coffee trade sector, a fact that is contrasting when compared to the other coffee regions of the country, in which, for the most part, coffee production is the activity most often performed by women.

The state of São Paulo, represented by the coffee cultivation regions "Centro-Oeste" and "Mogiana" was the one in which the greatest diversity of women's activity was identified by productive sector, with emphasis for the "Centro Oeste" where only 17 per cent of women work directly in the production of coffee.

The two regions with the highest production of coffee in Brazil, "Sul de Minas", and "Matas de Minas", are distinguished concerning the performance of the woman linked to the production of coffee. Being the "Sul de Minas" represented by 42 per cent, while the region of the "Matas de Minas" is 73 per cent.

In addition to the prominence of women's activities in the coffee production sector in the regions of the "Matas de Minas" and in the "Sul de Minas" (Figure 3), women in these regions also stand out in terms of wages, in which more than 50 per cent of women in both regions receive between 2 and 5 minimum wages (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Representation of working women in the coffee production chain for monthly income data.



Source: Williams P. Marques Ferreira (Coordinator) Humberto Paiva Fonseca (Elaboration).

It is possible to observe from figure 4 that for the most part the remuneration practiced for women is below five minimum wages. This data goes against the market logic which, according to Souza et al (2015), has a direct relationship between schooling and wage remuneration, and as the level of academic education rises, wages also tend to follow this flow.

Still, from Figure 4, it is observed that in all coffee regions of Brazil it can be seen that women have a monthly income of 2 to 5 minimum wages, a value considered low due to the great contribution of women in the sector, and when evaluated the Value that the Brazilian coffee cultivation moves annually, which according to CECAFÉ (2021) is about US \$5,3 billion in

exports.

Figure 3 and 4 shows that in the southeastern region of Brazil the states that stand out in the coffee cultivation are “Minas Gerais” and “São Paulo”, with the most significant number of women working directly in the production of coffee, and in these states are also practiced the highest wages (IBGE, 2010). On the other hand, in the northern region of the country, many women who work in the coffee cultivation do not even have a monthly income, revealing a worrying data for the maintenance of the activity in that region, which is one of the most unequal.

In the north of the country, represented by the state of “Rondônia”, 43 per cent of women have graduated, or postgraduate level (Figure 2) and 49 per cent have a monthly income of 1 minimum wage or less. This fact is contrasting when analyzing both data (schooling and income) because there is a tendency, according to Potrich et al. (2015) and Souza et al (2015), that people with a higher degree of academic education receive higher wages, and the inverse is also true. In this way, this coffee region goes against the others, because despite the high level of schooling wages are low.

4. Conclusion

It can be identified that coffee women, who participate in events of the coffee sector, showed a higher performance in the coffee production stage, with a mean salary lower than US\$ 1,100, despite the majority having a high schooling level.

The women of the different regions of Brazilian coffee production are also distinguished in other respects. The monthly income is an example, since for each region there is the predominance of an average wage value. In Rondônia most women do not have a monthly income, in the “Norte Pioneiro do Paraná” women receive less than 2 minimum wages and in the “Cerrado Mineiro” the majority receives between 2 and 5 minimum wages.

Regarding the socioeconomic characteristics, the coffee cultivation sector in which women are most active is the production of coffee, while the sector with lowest level of activity is the logistics and advertising.

The geopolitical regions where the highest wages are practiced in Brazil are the Southeast and Northeast, with emphasis on the “Planalto and Cerrado da Bahia”.

According to the facts, there is still a long way for women to get a better wage and professionalization in niches filled mainly by men, such as coffee tasting, classification, logistics, and advertising. And so, we expect that in the future the programs that sponsor research in the coffee sector will ensure that women have better job opportunities and receive more space to lead research projects.

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The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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