

A New Vision of Economics, Relational Field and Third Place: Diving into Economic Sociology

Think about it, the economy is not just a bunch of numbers, graphs and markets. It's actually a reflection of our society, our relationships and our values! This is what the New Economic Sociology (NES) helps us to see.

NES, which emerged in the 1980s, questions the traditional view of the economy as something separate from society, where people are just “calculating machines” chasing profits. Instead, it places the economy at the center of society, showing how institutions, networks and even culture influence our economic decisions.

Think about it, do you choose a product just because of the price or also because of the brand, the company's reputation, or recommendations from friends? This shows how social the economy is!

The article explores several interesting ideas within the NES. One is the “gift paradigm”, which suggests that the exchange of gifts and favors is just as important as the exchange of money. Another idea is that of the “plural economy”, which recognizes the importance of non-market activities such as voluntary work and production for one's own consumption.

It also discusses how NES helps us to understand changes in the world of work, the role of institutions and the importance of governance. It even makes us question the current model of development, which often ignores the social and environmental impact of our choices.

But how does all this apply to sustainable development? NES shows us that we can't pursue development without taking society and the environment into account. After all, the economy is just one part of a larger system, and we need to find a balance between human needs, natural resources and our social relationships.

The article reviews the literature on the New Economic Sociology, with a focus on its contribution to sustainable development. It addresses different currents of thought within NES, both in French and English, and highlights the importance of considering the economy as a socially constructed phenomenon.

The authors argue that NES offers tools for rethinking the development model, with a focus on equity, quality of life and the relationship between North and South. It argues that sustainable development requires a transformation of the production and consumption system, as well as a democratization of the economy and regulatory bodies.

The research is set in the context of contemporary retail, focusing on strip malls, a type of shopping center that has gained prominence in Brazil. It seeks to analyze how the relational field, the connections and interactions between different actors, can be a competitive differentiator in strip malls, considering the importance of the “third place”.

The research is justified by the change in consumer behavior, which seeks personalized and meaningful experiences. The concept of the third place, which fits into this new scenario, offers a space for social interaction and unique experiences.

The study contributes to understanding the role of the relational field and the third place as strategic tools for the success of strip malls through a descriptive qualitative approach, with field research and open interviews with strip mall managers.

The theoretical framework is based on economic sociology and the concept of “third place”. The study draws on authors such as Bourdieu, Oldenburg and Gruen.

The research explores the concept of the “third place” and its importance in creating welcoming and personalized spaces in strip malls. Field research with managers reveals that building a strong relational field can be a competitive differentiator, enabling customer loyalty and standing out from the competition.

The article's content analysis highlights the emphasis on changing consumer behavior, which seeks experiences that go beyond the simple commercial transaction. In this sense, the concept of the “third place” is fundamental, providing consumers with an environment for social interaction and unique experiences.

The study also highlights the importance of economic sociology as a theoretical basis for the research, making it possible to analyze the relationships between the economic, social and cultural aspects that shape the behavior of consumers and companies in the context of strip malls.

Overall, the article presents an in-depth analysis of the role of the relational field and the “third place” in the success of strip malls, offering valuable insights for managers and retail professionals. The field research and content analysis corroborate the theoretical framework, demonstrating the importance of creating welcoming, personalized environments that promote social interaction in order to attract and retain customers.

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Further reading:

<https://submissao.singep.org.br/12singep/proceedings/arquivos/190.pdf>