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**The perception of entrepreneurs about collaborative business: a study in Recife and Metropolitan Region**

*A percepção de empreendedores acerca de negócios colaborativos: um estudo em Recife e Região Metropolitana*

*La percepción de los emprendedores sobre los negocios colaborativos: un estudio en la ciudad de Recife y en su Región Metropolitana*

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**KEYWORDS**

Shared economy.  
Collaborative business.  
Entrepreneurship.

**Abstract:** With the increase in the number of collaborative businesses, there is a gap in studies that address entrepreneurs' perceptions of these businesses. Therefore, this research aims to understand entrepreneurs' perceptions of collaborative businesses in Recife and its Metropolitan Region. In that perspective, descriptive exploratory research with a qualitative approach was developed. We identified 21 businesses located in Recife and the Metropolitan Region. The interviews with entrepreneurs from five collaborative spaces were analyzed using a content analysis. The research results show that the identified collaborative businesses are mostly classified as a collaborative lifestyle. Thus, the motivations mentioned for starting a collaborative business are related to economic and social factors. The meanings pointed out about undertaking this type of business are linked to motivations, some of which are more symbolic and others more objective. Among the difficulties mentioned are lack of access to technology and regulation for the business. And as facilities, the fact that collaborative businesses are in trend. As a final consideration, we conclude that in the perception of entrepreneurs, a collaborative business has characteristics that go beyond the perspective of a business opportunity, bringing other elements to the entrepreneurial action, for example, contributing with other entrepreneurs in developing their business.

#### **PALAVRAS-CHAVE**

Economia compartilhada.  
Negócios colaborativos.  
Empreendedorismo.

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**Resumo:** Com o crescimento do número de negócios colaborativos, observou-se uma lacuna de estudos que abordem a percepção dos empreendedores acerca desses negócios. Assim, o objetivo geral desta pesquisa é compreender a percepção dos empreendedores acerca de negócios colaborativos em Recife e Região Metropolitana. Desse modo, foi desenvolvida uma pesquisa exploratória descritiva com abordagem qualitativa. Identificou-se 21 negócios localizados em Recife e Região Metropolitana. As entrevistas realizadas com empreendedores de cinco espaços colaborativos foram analisadas a partir de uma análise de conteúdo. Os resultados da pesquisa demonstram que os negócios colaborativos identificados estão classificados em sua maioria como estilo de vida colaborativo. As motivações citadas para empreender este tipo de negócio estão relacionadas a fatores econômicos e sociais. Os significados apontados no que se refere a empreender este tipo de negócio estão atrelados às motivações, sendo alguns mais simbólicos e outros mais objetivos. Dentre as dificuldades citadas temos: falta de acesso à tecnologia e de regulação para o negócio. E como facilidades, o fato dos negócios colaborativos estarem na moda. Como consideração final, conclui-se que na percepção dos empreendedores um negócio colaborativo possui características que extrapolam a perspectiva de uma oportunidade empresarial, trazendo para a ação empreendedora outros elementos como, por exemplo, contribuir com outros empreendedores no desenvolvimento de seus negócios.

#### **PALABRAS CLAVE**

Economía compartida.  
Negocios colaborativos.  
Emprendimiento.

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**Resumen:** Con el crecimiento del número de negocios colaborativos, observamos una lacuna de los estudios que abordan la percepción de los emprendedores sobre estos negocios. Por eso, el objetivo general de esta investigación es comprender la percepción de los emprendedores sobre los negocios colaborativos en la ciudad de Recife y en su Región Metropolitana. Así, se desarrolló una encuesta exploratoria descriptiva con el enfoque cualitativo. Identificamos 21 negocios ubicados en Recife y en su Región Metropolitana. Las entrevistas hechas con los emprendedores de cinco espacios colaborativos fueron examinadas a partir de un análisis de contenido. Los resultados de la investigación muestran que los negocios colaborativos identificados se clasifican en su mayoría como estilo de vida colaborativo. Las motivaciones mencionadas para iniciar este tipo de negocio están relacionadas con factores económicos y sociales. Los significados señalados con respecto a emprender un negocio colaborativo están vinculados a motivaciones, algunos más simbólicos y otros más objetivos. Entre las dificultades mencionadas se encuentran: privación de acceso a la tecnología y también una regulación para desarrollar este tipo de negocio. Por otro lado, destacamos como una facilidad positiva el hecho de que los negocios colaborativos están de moda. Por fin, concluimos que en la percepción de los emprendedores, un negocio colaborativo tiene características que van más allá de la perspectiva de una oportunidad de negocio, aportando otros elementos a la acción emprendedora, por ejemplo, contribuyendo con otros emprendedores en el desarrollo de su negocio.

## Introduction

The business models based on sharing provide access to goods and services instead of ownership (Bostman & Rogers, 2011). This phenomenon known as sharing or collaborative economy emerged in the 90s at the United States (Shirky, 2012) and was disseminated by the development of technology that enabled a broader sharing among strangers (Gransky, 2010), as well as a growing concern with issues related to sustainability and the environment, and also the possibility of monetizing excess and idle individual inventories (Bostman & Rogers, 2011).

This new economy is promoting transformations both in how consumption and the production of goods and services are made. Piscicelli, Cooper and Fisher (2015), situate sharing as a transforming factor for individual and local behavior, leading to modifications in traditional business models. A study from *Pricewaterhouse Coopers* (PwC) indicates that by 2025 the sharing economy will move more than US\$ 300 billion around the world (Ceo Opinião, 2016).

Despite showing a great indicator for development, sharing economy, in terms of academic production, is still a topic underexplored. Silveira, Petrini and Santos (2016), in their bibliometric study, raised through the databases of *Scopus*, *Web of Science*, *Springer Link*, *Wiley Online Library*, *Sciverse Sciencedirect* and *Sage*, from 1978 to February 2016, 44 papers on the topic of sharing economy and collaborative consumption, and only by 2012 a continuous growth on the number of publications was identified. In this study, the authors identified through a systematic analysis the four main addressed issues: ontology, an alternative to consumption and its drivers, technology and collaborative business management. Ferreira, Méxas, Abreu and Melo (2016) also highlighted a shortage of papers on these topics, by finding only 19 articles related to the subject of “*sharing economy*” and “*collaborative consumption*” on the databases of *Scopus*, *Scielo* and *Google Scholar*

from 2010 to the beginning of 2016.

According to Silveira *et al.* (2016), in the studies regarding the topics of sharing economy and collaborative consumption, different perspectives are adopted. From a critical point of view, the work of Hern (2015) questions the real meaning of sharing economy and collaborative consumption, considering that their practices are not truthfully opposed to capitalism. Schor (2014) questions if sharing economy really contributes to the ecological issue and if it is not suppressing worker's rights, since they start to be considered as suppliers, thus no longer having rights as employees. On the other hand, Boesler (2013) and Cusumano (2015) address the effects of sharing economy on the traditional industry.

Despite the growth of companies offering collaborative businesses and the interest of researchers on the matter, there is still a lack of knowledge to be pursued: studies that approach the perception of entrepreneurs on collaborative business, in order to identify the assigned meanings, factors that facilitate or hinder the development of these businesses, as well as the motivations of those that undertake a collaborative business. Thus, the general objective of this research is to understand the perception of entrepreneurs on collaborative business in Recife and its metropolitan region. As specific objectives, we have: a) to identify collaborative businesses that may be a part of this research; b) to analyze the motives that led entrepreneurs to develop collaborative businesses; c) to analyze factors that, in the entrepreneurs' perception, facilitate or hinder the development of collaborative businesses; d) to identify the meanings associated to starting a collaborative business.

The choice of the city of Recife and its metropolitan region for this study occurred due to the fact that local entrepreneurs move the sharing economy in the State of Pernambuco. Collaborative businesses started to ascend in 2012

through coworking<sup>1</sup>, services for renting properties, crowdfunding<sup>2</sup> and collaborative stores (Pimentel, 2017). Porto Digital, a technological park and local innovation environment, has been fostering the birth of several businesses based on sharing economy, which has been growing in Recife with the emerging of related businesses, for instance: from providing technical computer services, to sustainable logistics, to social inclusion related businesses (Dantas, 2017). Additionally, collaborative stores are also a big model of business founded on the sharing economy that has been growing lately in the State and getting attention from entrepreneurs wishing to invest in this model (Arcanjo, 2018).

The result of the research, from a theoretical point of view, can contribute with knowledge regarding collaborative business management, since such practice carries elements of innovation and promotes business models different from those that have ownership as its basis. Furthermore, it will help to understand the motivations of those already engaged with these businesses. From a practical perspective, this paper can also provide assistance to entrepreneurs and managers that are already involved with collaborative businesses and those that wish to get involved.

## Theoretical elements of the research

### Sharing Economy

Sharing economy originated in the 90's in the United States (Shirky, 2012). According to Schor (2014), it was driven by the technological advances that allowed to reduce transaction costs of *online peer-to-peer*<sup>3</sup>(P2P), enabling businesses based on exchanging and sharing goods and services among people that didn't know each other. These transactions occur between two people, from a physical person to a physical person, or to platform owners, such as Zipcar (Wirtz *et al.*, 2019).

To Botsman and Rogers (2011), however, the

sharing economy wasn't only fostered by technological factors, but also by social and economical factors. Regarding the social factors, there is the growing concern with issues related to sustainability and the environment. On the matter of economical factors, sharing economy makes it possible to monetize excesses and idle individual inventories. This last factor, according to Schor (2014), promotes the rise of business models in which people are more independent, and creates space for collaborative consumption. According to Wei *et al.* (2021), this is a tendency for businesses that seek to temporarily satisfy the needs of consumers for products and services without the need to own them.

For Teubner (2014), there are many unanswered questions in regard to sharing economy and its behavior, legal and economical aspects. For being on a fast development, the social norms are still not firmly established and adapted to this transitioning reality. In this sense, Erving (2014, p. 13) defines sharing economy as "an economical model that massified and commodified ideas of sharing and collaboration to redistribute underutilized assets". John (2013), however, affirms that sharing economies of consumption consist in a manner of consumption that focuses on the community and interpersonal relations, financial prudence and the concern with the environment. In his work, he points out that technology enables and also boosts collaborative consumption. In this sense, Henten and Windekilde (2016) highlight that digital platforms made reducing transaction costs possible and are the base of sharing economy, once that, without them, it would be impossible for these exchanges to exist, due to the high cost.

For Eckhardt and Bardhi (2015), sharing economy is the economy of access, since that sharing is a manner of nonprofit social exchange. These authors, however, reinforce that what currently exists is an economical exchange, because companies intermediate for the sharing to occur. Therefore they understand that, when

<sup>1</sup> Model of work based on a shared space.

<sup>2</sup> Financiamento coletivo.

<sup>3</sup> Virtual Networks on the Internet aiming to share resources among participants (Rocha *et al.*, 2004).

consumers pay for access to goods and services, they are in search of utility value instead of social value. From this perspective, Schor (2014) underlines that the discourse in favor of sharing economy ignores the negative side of this tendency while it still reports the potential to enable the development of new businesses, generating value in a fairer manner and contributing to diminish the impacts on the environment.

Botsman (2015, parag. 4) suggests five aspects in order to consider a company as part of the sharing economy:

- a) The *core business* is related to promoting access to underutilized or non-utilized properties, with or without profit;
- b) Principles as transparency, authenticity and humanity guide strategic decisions of short and long terms;
- c) The company seeks to value, respect and empower offers and commits to contribute towards the social and economical improvement of their suppliers;
- d) Regarding demand, consumers are benefited by the possibility of paying to have access to goods and services in a more efficient manner (without the need of a purchase);
- e) Business is constructed in the form of marketplaces and decentralized networks so that a sense of belonging, mutual benefit and collective responsibility is created.

Next, we will discuss the classification of types of collaborative businesses established by Botsman and Rogers (2011), seeking also to point out factors that motivate entrepreneurs to undertake this type of business, aspects that hindered their development and meanings associated with them.

### **Development of collaborative businesses**

In regard to the development of collaborative businesses, Botsman and Rogers (2011) proposed

a three-part category system related to the sharing economy activities: product-service system; redistribution markets; and the collaborative lifestyle. The product-service system is defined by paying to use the benefits of a certain product, without the need to purchase it. This way, the business models within this system are the ones that make it possible that products owned by a company or by a person can be shared (Ota, Pião & Melo, 2017), for example, sharing automobiles, tools, or even movies, such as on the Netflix platform. The redistribution market, on the other hand, is associated with reutilizing or reselling products, whose owners wish to pass along, like the exchange of clothes, toys, books, etc.; we can consider the *eBay* platform as an example, for reselling used and unused products. This category is directly driven by technologies, which allows for exchanges between people who have never met before. At last, the collaborative lifestyle, which applies to people with common interest, willing to exchange and share less tangible assets such as time, abilities, space or money, originating the ride services, and the coworking spaces (Bostman & Rogers, 2011). Among the systems mentioned before, Markus and Orsi (2016) consider the redistribution market as the one with more initiative on the internet, followed by the collaborative lifestyle.

Perceiving the growth of these businesses within the sharing economy, some authors debate on what motivates the participants of this economy. To Schor (2014), the motives are related to social, economical and technological factors, variating according to the diversity of platforms and activities. Thus, people can participate with the desire to spend less or earn more money, to aspire for new social interactions, or even due to being attracted to innovation (Schor, 2014; Botsman & Rogers, 2011). Overall, Markus and Orsi (2016) still consider that sustainability inspires the development of new businesses in this model, as the ones already in existence in Brazil: the current renting clubs of rooms, cars, bicycles, fashion items in general, toys, tools, besides services related to the collaborative lifestyle.

According to the Organization for Cooperation and Economical Development (OECD) *Insights* (2016, parag. 8), besides fostering competition among the traditional companies, the sharing economy also promotes other benefits:

- a) Economical development, due to the innovative and technological dimension of these business models;
- b) Environmental sustainability, because the circular economy emphasizes access and service provision, instead of ownership and the production of goods;
- c) Resource redistribution to lower-middle income citizens, who can monetize some underused illiquid assets (in order to soften their consumption throughout the cycle) while accessing some goods and services at a lower price;
- d) Better contribution than traditional business models to other general objectives, such as consumer protection or tax compliance, due to electronic transaction tracing and consequently leading to a higher transparency.

Despite presenting considerable benefits, the sharing economy initiatives also present some challenges. According to Sabino (2017), they question some of society's basic institutions, such as work, trust among strangers and regulations. Primarily, there are challenges related to the institutional recognition, liability system, taxation and administration that the sharing economy initiatives must be submitted to, in order to assure a trusting and secure relationship among those involved.

Another challenge presented by Sabino (2017) is gaining trust of individuals regarding this new model of business. Since it is focused on decentralized market transactions between people, there is a great need to reassure that services will be provided with quality and security. Villanova

(2015) agrees that trust among strangers is vital to the sharing economy and one of the main challenges to be faced by companies that make use of this practice. Therefore, Ota *et al.* (2017) affirm that the main investments of companies involved with sharing economy are marketing costs, communication and training service providers in order to develop reliability and customer loyalty.

One way of overcoming the challenge of lack of trust among strangers, according to Schor (2014), is through online reputation systems. These are responsible for developing trust among those involved. Once the reputation of those that share or rent are exposed, they provide reliability, even among strangers (Schor, 2014).

The last challenge, observed by Sabino (2017), is related to coherence towards working regulations. As initiatives of collaborative business advance and provide more opportunities for people to earn money, a lot of questions are raised regarding the positioning of many companies that place themselves as platforms intermediating for the actors of the sharing economy, instead of traditional employers. They are categorized, thus, as businesses with more flexible jobs, but at the same time, precarious, risky and informal jobs (DG Growth, 2016).

With this in mind, Lazzari, Petrini and Souza (2021) affirm that in contexts of higher economical vulnerability, sharing economy can be the first income of a person, an opportunity due to the lack of jobs in traditional businesses. In contexts of less vulnerability, the income earned is secondary and does not represent the person's subsistence. This difference, for these authors, is not accounted for when sharing economy is regulated, not taking the perspective of the working force into consideration.

For some sharing economy suppliers, those that rent and share, undertaking a collaborative business has meaning. According to Bothun *et al.* (2015), for these suppliers, it means a possibility to monetize underused resources with little use. According to Schor (2014), some companies place themselves as part of the sharing economy for realizing there is a positive symbolic meaning in

regard to sharing, although they tend to go back to the traditional economic model.

### **Methodological elements of the research**

In light of what has been presented and in order to achieve the objectives established, an exploratory-descriptive qualitative research was conducted. In lack of a database to identify the collaborative businesses participants in this research, the Google search engine was used to identify them, using the terms "collaborative businesses in Pernambuco" and "collaborative businesses in Recife". This way, some publications that had information on sharing economy companies were identified. Companies were also identified through Instagram and the snowball method, by indication from the survey respondents. The identified companies were contacted for a semistructured interview with their owners. To this end, an interview script was created with open questions related to the specific objectives and the companies' features, and closed questions related to the profile of the respondents.

The corpus of the research was built with the description of the interviews made with the owners of the participant companies. For Silva and Silva (2013, p. 4), the corpus is

a rational systematic choice similar in function to the representative sample and distinct to it in regard to structural aspects. (...) of an eminently qualitative reference, with the goal to expose unknown attributes directed to perceive the signs, meanings and representations present in a specific social practice.

The typology developed by Barthes (2006) was adopted, which refers to the relevance, homogeneity and synchronicity of materials that form a corpus. Thus, it is understood that the transcribed interviews that form the corpus of this research met such criteria, taking into consideration that: they were relevant to the purpose of the research; homogeneous, since they have the same type of material; and synchronous,

since they were carried out at the same period of time.

The data collected in the interviews were analyzed in a qualitative manner, using the content analysis technique (AC). For this, the three processes established by Bardin (2011) were carried out: 1) pre-analysis, 2) material exploration and 3) treatment of results, inference and interpretation. Therefore, in the pre-analysis, a free-floating reading of the interviews' transcript was conducted with the objective of having another contact with the material, which had happened before during the interview and during the transcribing. This reading was guided by the research objectives, seeking to identify motivations, factors that facilitated or hindered the development of these businesses and also the meanings associated with undertaking a business on sharing economy. In the material exploration phase, with the use of the Atlas.Ti. 7.5.7 software, we identified the record units associated with the analysis categories (motives, hindering and facilitating factors and meanings) that were established based on the objectives of the research. In the third phase, the records identified were analyzed and the results found were interpreted in light of the literature review.

### **Presentation and discussion of the results**

Initially, 17 collaborative businesses located in Recife and its metropolitan region were identified by consulting the Google search website: E-livery, Find up, Moinho Galeria, Espaço 67, Espaço Somos, Conviva, Casa Viva, Quintal Criativo, Me Poupe, Ôpa, Parada Criativa, Espaço Bora, Makossa, *Ecowork*, Noí, *Coworking Recife*, and *Impact Hub*. This number increased to 21 collaborative businesses after the conduction of the interview, once that four other collaborative businesses in Recife were identified with the snowball technique and with Instagram.

During the analysis, it was observed that the companies identified are distinct in what concerns the area of expertise and the products/services being offered, as well as the classification of

collaborative business defined by Botsan and Rogers (2011). Therefore, Table 1 presents the companies identified, information found in their websites and/or social media and their classification. 16 businesses classified as collaborative lifestyle were identified, along with three as redistribution markets and two as product-service systems.

After the survey, from April to June of 2019, contacts were made by phone calls, emails and message apps with all the identified companies. A

reply was received from five entrepreneurs of collaborative businesses in Recife and its metropolitan region, with whom the interviews were carried out. The companies were: Me Poupe, Espaço Bora, Conviva, E-livery and Quintal Criativo. In relation to the profile of the respondents, three were females and two were male. Their ages were between 31 to 40 years old, two had a masters degree and the others had undergraduate degrees.

Table 1  
Collaborative businesses identified in Recife and Metropolitan Region

Number	Company name	Characteristics	Classification
1	Moinho Galeria	Collaborative space to expose products and art in general.	Collaborative Lifestyle
2	Espaço Bora	Collaborative space of fashion, accessories and decoration brands from Pernambuco.	
3	Espaço 67	Collaborative space of products such as: clothes, accessories, shoes, purses, among others. Services: food, beauty.	
4	Espaço Somos	Hybrid space for: beauty salon, tattoo studio, convenience store, bar, and collaborative store.	
5	Me poupe	Collaborative store for clothes, accessories, decoration and house utilities, antiquity, plants, paper material and handmade jewelry.	
6	Conviva	Shared space with health, beauty and office services, besides a food court.	
7	Quintal criativo	Collaborative store of fashion and decoration.	
8	Makossa	Collective store of producers from Pernambuco.	
9	Parada criativa	Collaborative event with local brands.	
10	Opa	Collaborative store of fashion in general.	
11	Casa Viva	Collaborative store of decoration, fashion and arts.	
12	<i>Ecowork</i>	Coworking space.	
13	Noí	Collaborative store for gifts.	
14	<i>Coworking Recife</i>	Coworking space.	
15	Espaço 46	Collaborative fashion store.	
16	<i>Impact Hub</i>	Coworking space.	
17	<i>Demodé Collab</i>	Collaborative store for new and second-hand products.	Product-Service Systems
18	<i>Find Up</i>	Platform for computer technicians.	
19	<i>E-livery</i>	Service for sustainable delivery.	Redistribution Markets
20	<i>Loktoy</i>	Virtual store for renting toys of medium and large sizes.	
21	<i>The 2nd Hand</i>	Virtual store of new and second-hand products.	

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on the companies' websites and social medias (2019).

As for the profile of participant companies, three have similar characteristics in regard to the field of work, which are: Me Poupe (E1), Espaço Bora (E2) and Quintal Criativo (E5). Those three are collaborative spaces that display items from local producers to sell, from different sectors such as: decoration, clothes, shoes, office products, perfumes and toys. When asked about what they

sell in their stores, E1 answered: "Oh, I have everything, from clothes to office material... I have here more than 60 brands." E2, on the other hand, said: "Ah, we were open to everything first, from decoration to fashion", and proceeded to say "but, since last year, we preferred to specialize in fashion... we realized that it is a niche that attracts more public". The Conviva (E3) also operates in



this same perspective of shared spaces, but in a space filled with professionals of several fields: "We have a beauty salon, a pilates studio, clinics of physiotherapy, nutrition, psychology... an accountant and an architect etc." (E3). E-livery (E4), in contrast, is a platform of deliveries made with bicycles, motorcycles or similar modalities, as mentioned by E4: "Today we work with documents, notaries offices, small e-commerces. [...] this is a specific branch for those who want to work with a bicycle or motorcycle or similar modalities... to collect and deliver items using our app".

Based on the answers from the respondents, it was observed that companies participating in the research have little time of existence. The oldest one, E-livery, was created in 2014, as we can see in Table 2.

Table 2

**Companies participating in the research - Creation year**

Number	Company	Creation Year
E1	Me Poupe	2016
E2	Espaço Bora	2016
E3	Conviva	2018
E4	<i>E-livery</i>	2014
E5	Quintal Criativo	2015

Source: Elaborated by authors (2019).

In light of the variety of definitions that are found in the literature about collaborative businesses, respondents were questioned about what characterizes a collaborative business. Table

Table 3

**Characteristic of a collaborative business through the perspective of respondents**

Company	
Me Poupe	"There is a great difference compared to the traditional market, which is the valorization of those that produce properly, there is an awareness to shopping, more exclusive and with fairer payment."
Espaço Bora	"The idea of collaborative business is to share a space so you can be able to use it, since a brand on its own is small and can't afford its own physical space. Therefore, this collaborative model arises to unite people with the same vision, objective, so they can share this in a single space."
Conviva	"It is a place where you can have a voice, where it is not simply: oh, I will pay for this here so I can have the right to use it. [...] But, instead, it is a place that everyone wants to improve, to have a vision to improve... where people have freedom and autonomy."
<i>E-livery</i>	"The idea of collaborative economy is to share services, ideas and needs, so people can make them something larger, but still within an entrepreneurial perspective."
Quintal Criativo	"I see in reality a lot of participation, where everyone is involved with everything and participates in all processes."

Source: Elaborated by the authors (2019).

3 presents a synthesis of the collected answers.

Respondents, as well as authors Botsman and Rogers (2011), used both the terms "collaborative" and "sharing" to refer to these businesses. And according to the answers, as well as to the literature already presented, there isn't also a consensus on the perspective of the respondents regarding collaborative businesses. In agreement with what was said by Teubner (2014), there are still many unanswered questions related to sharing economy and its behavior aspects. It is possible to observe in Table 3 that some answers refer to terms not found in the researched literature regarding the characteristics of collaborative businesses, for instance: "valorization of the producer", "conscious shopping", "participation", providing "freedom and autonomy". Additionally, the answers of some respondents sustain the idea of sharing (be it of services, spaces, etc.) and access as features of these businesses, reinforcing what was said by Botsman and Rogers (2011) on it being a commercial practice that enables access to goods and services. Nevertheless, Botsman and Rogers (2011) also add that the acquisition of goods and services does not always happen, nor even the monetary exchange between the parts involved in the process. In contrast, all participant businesses are involved with some exchange of products, services and/or money, which becomes clearer to verify when respondents were asked about their businesses operation.

Businesses participating in the research and classified as a collaborative lifestyle function in a similar manner. Me Poupe and Espaço Bora rent a space for people to display their products and also charge a percentage on their sellings. Respondent E2, from Espaço Bora, informed that before he started to charge rent, he used to work with a model of consignment: "Where the products were displayed in the store and we used to charge double for their products [...] like, they would leave a product for R\$50,00 and we would sell it for R\$100,00 and return the R50,00 to them after selling it". However, he explained that this model presented them with moments when they couldn't pay for the space, due to being restricted on selling the products, for example. So, today they work sharing the space rent while the exhibitors also leave a percentage to the store.

Respondent E1, from the Me Poupe store, clarifies that they provide a service: "I don't gain from the sale, I gain from the service I provide. I rent a space and sell your product, I offer a service". The percentage charged from sales in this case is to maintain costs with things such as packages and credit card fees. Nonetheless, she still reports to, sometimes, seeking people in situations of poverty that produce while only earning the bare minimum for their work. Therefore, there are some cases in which she waives charging rent and only collects a percentage on the products' sales. Regarding employees, The Espaço Bora has a staff a little larger than all the other businesses. There are 14 people including sales people, photographers, administrative staff etc. Me Poupe, however, has one sales woman who works for three days a week, and on the other days the owner herself acts as a sales person.

Conviva works renting rooms, but differently from the previous businesses, a percentage of sales is not charged from their partners' services. E3 says: "The idea is not to earn money from the space, but rather to cut costs for everyone and let everyone earn from their own work". Still, this is only possible because, in Conviva, services are offered in a way that each professional is present

to provide them, different from the other collaborative stores where each partner leaves their products displayed so that the space owner can take the mission to sell the product. Regarding employees in Conviva, there are only those responsible for cleaning the space.

At Quintal Criativo, the space was not rented in the beginning, but rather there was an agreement where products were displayed in the space in exchange for services, such as salespeople for instance, while producers would let their products in consignment, with 30% of the product sales earned by Quintal Criativo. Yet, E5 says:

I started to see that a lot of collaborative stores were opening in the city and people were charging monthly fees on top of the percentage. Then I decided to also restructure towards this model and take part in this format. I recently put together a portfolio, to promote this way of working: rent a display, rent the space, plus the credit card percentage.

E5 also has two employees to collaborate with store sales, but claims that the exhibitors also play the role of salespeople. In the case of E-livery, since it is a product-service system, they work differently from the rest. They act through an app with the function of fast, scheduled and flexible deliveries.

We have people working with sales, and they manage the app themselves. Today, a person that doesn't have a motorcycle and doesn't have a car, but still has a bike, can apply to collect and deliver according to the demand [E4].

It is important to highlight that E-livery works with documents, notaries offices and small e-commerces. To perform these services, E-livery relies on about 20 cyclists and 9 motorcyclists registered in Recife.

To start understanding motivations, which is one of the specific objectives of this research, the respondents were first questioned about how they

came up with the idea of starting a collaborative business. And sometimes these answers already led to the motivation of undertaking this type of business. That is the case of Espaço Bora (E2):

In the beginning, we were also small entrepreneurs who were missing a space in the market to display our products. We work with fashion and decoration. I am a product designer and my expertise is press shop. My partner is a photographer and fashion designer. We were each one a company like the ones we host today at Espaço Bora. And then we started an event that would connect everything, we used to say that our strength would come from union. So, several brands would come, we would bring music, several segments of the creative economy actually, tattoo artists, food services, there was a moment we hosted technology also.

And then he states the following:

The initial motivation was to create some formula that would help us and other entrepreneurs who needed a space in the market, who were creative, who had products of quality and didn't have a space to display their products.

Still, in another moment of the interview, the entrepreneur mentions another factor that motivates him to work with collaborative business:

I believe that what really motivates me is to disseminate even more the issue of conscious shopping. Knowing who made that product, its history, understand the designer's inspiration when the collection was created, you know?! We sell all of these things when the client comes to our store. We talk about a concept, an identity for each brand [...] I think the future is indeed what we are doing and thus I feel I am on the right path.

Me Poupe was created under a very different

context. E1 was an undergrad student when she needed to present a paper on creative and sustainable economy for a management subject in her course. She then created a work in the perspective of a collaborative space that valued the work of people who produce on their own and are sometimes being exploited for that. After some time, they were offered a space to turn this idea into reality. And from that, the store was opened. Then, in light of this, E1 reports: "My motive for a collaborative store is to provide a livelihood to people based on what they produce and enable them to profit from it, without being a means of exploitation". Meanwhile, respondent E3 tells that it all started when they were already operating in a gallery with a few of the partners they have today. She says:

We were already functioning in a gallery, in a room we used to rent, and we had several ideas to put into practice and couldn't due to the limitations of the place. Anyway, it was quite complicated, for instance, the will to do things outdoors and we couldn't because it was a common area [...] and then we became unsatisfied [...] and looked for another space. When we found this house, which was quite large and had several rooms, it got our attention so we could make something bigger, not only a place for a salon and pilates, but one that could really be a collaborative space with other professionals and people could partner with one another.

She then emphasizes the increase of their client network as their main motivation to undertake a collaborative business. E3 says:

What motivates me is exactly this idea of partnership, because it is very interesting for us as a company, since we start getting clients we didn't have before. Today I have clients from my social media, my publications and from other clients' indications, as well as clients that I didn't seek who are clients from the

phonoaudiology clinic who are referred to me. So, that client, it gets to me due to the partnership. The motivation is this client network that increases a lot when we start working in partnership, and this is true for everyone who is there, we all feel the same thing, the increase of our client lists after our space became a collaborative space.

The motivation to the respondent from Quintal Criativo is very similar to the one from E-livery. She claims how she realized there was an opportunity to open a collaborative store after seeing this model in a trip taken to São Paulo. Nevertheless, she presented the financial issue as the main motivation, due to having an education in a very different area and being unemployed at the time. Therefore, she had the idea of opening a business to have an income.

E-livery respondent revealed that his business idea came due to seeing an opportunity for a market niche, realized during an international trip, which is the use of bikes and a way of replacing other modalities of transporting documents/commodities. He clarified that his business model always had an involvement with the environment issue and the social impact factor, considering that, in the social perspective, an investment in a bicycle is far lesser than a motorcycle or a car, when comparing what opens more doors for job opportunities to people. Simultaneously, the bicycle modality is related to the humanization of traffic and contributes to the environment. Therefore, he decided to invest in a collaborative business, in other words, an internet platform that could intermediate a sustainable delivery service. With time, although these factors are still present, the business motivation for what is today a medium size company, is mainly to achieve the desired profitability.

This and other answers suggested that E-livery had stopped functioning as a collaborative business, which led to questioning the respondent on that regard, who then answered the following:

Yes, when we talk about the idea of collaboration and collaborative companies,

in a sense that is not only socio-environmental, we talk about an idea almost as if people would get together to create a sort of collaborative institution. We stopped being that, around the beginning of 2017, to become a regular company as any other company in the app business. People who were involved and wanted to continue in the business became partners and those that didn't obviously had their share divided. But today the company is like any other, where profitability is the main goal.

Schor (2014) explains what happened with E-livery. According to the author, some companies position themselves as part of the sharing economy for perceiving a positive symbolic meaning on sharing, however they end up going back to using the traditional economic model. Despite the E4 entrepreneur not considering his company as a part of the sharing economy, his model of business is, as mentioned before, a product-service system. On Table 4, we have a summary of the motivation for each interviewed entrepreneur.

Table 4  
**Motivations of respondents for a collaborative business**

Interviewed	Motivation
E1	To provide conditions for people to live from what they produce, without being exploited.
E2	To create a space in the market for entrepreneurs to display their products and disseminate conscious shopping.
E3	To seek out partnerships and increase client networks.
E4	Market opportunity, financial issues.
E5	Market opportunity, financial issues.

Source: Elaborated by the authors (2019).

In light of this, it is possible to see that the motivations of the respondents to undertake a collaborative business are related mainly to economic factors, corresponding to one of the factors presented by Schor (2014) as a motive to participate in this type of business. Social factors, which are those connected to sustainability, are only present in the speech of one respondent (E5)

and technological factors do not appear as a motivation for any of the respondents. The absence of the last factor as a motivation may have occurred due to the classification in which most of the businesses in this research are categorized, which does have technology as a core part of the business. These last two cases presented, Conviva and E-livery, emerged from a perception of a market opportunity, which corroborates that people may be attracted by novelty as Botsman and Rogers affirm (2011).

Subsequently, we sought answers to our second and third specific objectives that pertain to what facilitates or hinders the development of a collaborative business. The first issue to be observed is that respondents had difficulties speaking on what facilitated them to develop a collaborative business. Generally speaking, they would instantly refer to the difficulties and challenges they faced. E2, from Espaço Bora, first stated that his own motivation is what facilitated the development of the business, but afterwards reported the following:

One thing that makes it easier is that we are living in a time where the collaborative model is in fashion. People are starting to think better, rethinking how they consume things, with a more conscious consumption, and it's a reflection of the work we have been doing of being constantly present, showing this to people. It has been said a lot, repeated a lot. So, the final consumer is searching more and there is a growth happening, brands are benefiting from this, becoming more independent.

Still according to E2, the fact that many entrepreneurs are in the same space can become a difficulty. He reports: "To administrate a place where you need to be responsible for about 40 brands in one space. And you have 40 different heads thinking. It can be a little challenging sometimes" (E2). In addition, he also refers to economical issues, reporting the moments when consumers don't have much purchasing power and

thus the sales numbers can drop.

According to E3, from Conviva:

What facilitates is the matter of exchange, the variety of clients inside and also the matter of each one having an active voice. So, like, in our regular meetings we can all give our opinion on everything, including ideas of events, and any other thing we plan on doing. [...] This is a space where everyone has a right, a voice.

In spite of that, E3 added that the same issues of exchange and an active voice in the collaborative business can also hinder things, since not always people agree on every issue. Solution in this case is to have a vote, as E3 states: "But then everyone knows it is a collaborative space, so we know the majority wins and the issue is solved that way, by voting".

E1, responsible for the Me Poupe store, addresses the difficulty to manage the store using technological tools to generate sales reports or to communicate with the exhibitors, since some of them have trouble using technology, many times not knowing how to check their email. Therefore, the work is on various occasions processed manually with some brands, written in paper. She explains that: "I have to be careful with each brand, one person is younger and can manage to check emails, look into a system, access reports, but there are those who I have to call to say: it is sold out, you have to come and refill". She also addresses some challenges regarding the fact it is a new business, there is some resistance by the population in thinking that the products don't have quality because they are not industrialized. Another challenge is to find viable solutions, like she said: "SEBRAE, for instance, since they have a very traditional model of business, don't present to us any viable solution" (E1). Legislation itself, according to E1, "it is not viable to us, there is no legislation for us". Sabino (2017) highlights that the main challenges associated with collaborative businesses are related to the institutional recognition of these businesses, liability regimes, taxation and administration to which the sharing

economy initiatives must be subjected in order to assure a trustworthy and secure relationship among those involved in this practice.

E-livery presented the use of technology as an initial difficulty in their business development. According to E4, people were very resistant to technology, either for not knowing how to operate it, or for having some sort of prejudice. So getting people to use the app to make their request was the biggest issue, but not anymore nowadays. Quintal Criativo, on the other hand, presents the difficulty to seek quality partners, since the number of collaborative stores is increasing in the city and the local market is stronger. E5 reports: "Due to this competition [...] today I don't have that much demand, despite having more experience, people don't come as often as before."

Lastly, we seek to understand the meanings of undertaking a collaborative business. E1, when questioned about it, said the following:

This is what gives meaning to my work, because I was never a person who would fit in a traditional work scheme, which consists in getting some money to pay some bills. [...] I met a person who used to work with harbor management and decided to quit it all to do embroidery. So, what is the probability of this happening and you make it happen for someone? You don't make it happen alone, because it is not up to you only, but I mean, you help make this possible, enabling someone to achieve that. This, for me, makes all the sense in the world.

E2 stated:

To me, working with the collaborative business is achieving a very objective effect that I was looking for in the beginning, which was to have empathy with the brands that had the same goals as I had, and today we can put these brands on the same floor as the big brands, like the ones in the shopping malls. [...] Where would a small entrepreneur have the

opportunity to do something like that?! So, I think that what motivates me is indeed to disseminate even more the matter of conscious shopping, really. To know who made your item, know their history, understand the designers' inspiration when they created that collection, you know?! That is all connected to our sales when the client comes to our store. We talk about a concept, an identity for each brand [...] I think the future is indeed what we are doing and that is why I think I am on the right path.

For these two respondents, we realized that there is a more symbolic issue related to undertaking a collaborative business, such as to assist in making the work of small producers possible. The meanings presented by the rest of the respondents, however, were more objective, related to the financial issue and to the company's responsibility towards the environment and society. For the E3 respondent, undertaking a collaborative business means:

To work in a space where you build that place. It means to have a working place that looks like you. It means to improve our client list, it means lowering our costs, because we divide the costs also. [...] So, it is very cool, this idea of lowering the costs. If we didn't have these partners with us there, we probably wouldn't be able to afford not even this house, because the costs would be too high to maintain, so partnership lowers our costs. Makes the business possible.

With a different take, E4 says: "We don't really think much about it. [...] but, we realize that the company has a socio-environmental responsibility and that this has an impact, not only in collaborative economy, but in regard to society". E5, in contrast, was shorter on her answer. When questioned she said that "it means to have a second income for me". We can observe that the meanings are closely related to their motivation. Next, in

Table 5, we presented a synthesis of the factors that facilitate and hinder this business and the meanings presented by the respondents.

Table 5

**Facilitating and hindering factors and meanings presented by the respondents**

Company	Facilitating factor	Hindering Factor	Meanings
Me Poupe	-	Lack of access to technology, lack of regulation	To help facilitate the work of small entrepreneurs
Espaço Bora	Collaborative business is in fashion	Quantity of people involved in the business management, changes in the economy (clients' lost of purchasing power)	To give opportunity to smaller brands and disseminate conscious consumption
Conviva	Exchange of partners, client list, participation with an active voice	Quantity of partners in the decision making process	To improve clients list and reduce costs
<i>E-livery</i>	-	Resistance to technology	To work in a business that has socio-environmental responsibility and impacts society.
Quintal Criativo	-	Finding quality partners	Second income

Source: Elaborated by the authors (2019).

**Final Considerations**

The present article had the objective to understand the perception of entrepreneurs on collaborative businesses in Recife and its metropolitan region. Although 21 businesses were identified, only five companies agreed to participate in the research, with four being classified, according to Botsam and Rogers (2011), as a collaborative lifestyle, and one as a product-service system.

To answer the general objective of the research, we analyzed the motivations for this line of work, factors that would facilitate or hinder the development of collaborative businesses and we identified the meanings given by entrepreneurs to work with this type of business. Results showed economical and social factors as motivation to undertake a collaborative business. The environment issue, present in the literature as one of the motives for collaborative businesses, was presented as a meaning only by the E-livery entrepreneur. The technological factor, regarded by some authors as the main incentive and motivation for this practice, was not reported by the respondents neither as a motivation nor as a facilitator for the development of the business. It is

important to highlight that this result may have occurred due to the fact that the businesses participating in this research are at large collaborative stores that don't have technology as their business core.

We conclude that in the perception of the entrepreneurs, a collaborative business has characteristics that extrapolate the perspective of an entrepreneurial opportunity, bringing other elements into action, such as contribution with other entrepreneurs in the development of their businesses. This perspective is aligned with the social factors presented by two respondents as motivation to undertake this sort of business. To start a collaborative business means to have the possibility to contribute with small entrepreneurs, small brands, but also to strengthen negotiations.

As a contribution to the academic studies, we were able to understand the perception of the entrepreneurs, mainly those undertaking the lifestyle collaborative business. Terms not seen in the researched literature were identified as characteristics of these businesses, such as: valorization of producers, conscious shopping, possibility of having a business in a physical store, since alone it was not possible, a space where everyone has a voice. Furthermore, the fact that

many partners collaborate in these businesses was pointed out as a facilitating factor, but also a hindering factor regarding managing the business. It facilitates, with the collaboration of different partners, bringing in more clients, for instance. And makes it more difficult in the business decision making process.

It is worth noticing that in these businesses, the collaboration process involves partners with multiple roles. At the same time they share the responsibility of the business with the owner of the space/store, they can also be seen as clients, since they receive/demand services from the owner to support their business. Such a fact reinforces a feature of this type of business where the role of the partner is mixed up with the role of the client.

This research has limitations related to the methodological procedures. A statistical criteria was not adopted to select respondents and the analysis of the data was qualitative, thus not being possible to generalize the results. This, however, indicates a path to other papers. Therefore, it is suggested for future research, to carry out studies that deepen the results found by applying a quantitative methodology that covers a greater number of businesses of all classifications.

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