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## THE JEANS IN THE POPULAR BRAZILIAN PANORAMA

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### **ABSTRACT**

In recent years the jeans industry in the Brazilian market has shown growth (3.9% per year) (SEBRAE 2013a) expansion of production (365.1 million pieces of jeans) (IEMI 2013) and commercialization, highlighting the popular markets (Oliveira and Braga 2015). This article presents an investigation about the production and commercialization practiced by Brazilian households production jeans, through the following methodological procedures: bibliographic rescue and direct observation (Saunders et al. 2011), visits to popular fashion centres in the regions of Southeast: São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro and the Northeast: Agreste Pernambuco and Fortaleza, Ceará. The goal is to collect information that allows characterizing the modes of production and commercialization of the popular segment of women's jeans. The data collected demonstrated that in both regions the popular household enterprises, despite having manufacturing practices based on empirical knowledge, in precarious physical structures and equipment, workers are of the same family and/or neighbours, have shown positive economic income growth productivity and expansion in trade, the main selling point the fairs and shopping. Although this sector is relevant to the jeans segment in the Brazilian market, it has not been explored, highlighting the unprecedented aspect of this research in Brazil and even global context.

**Keywords:** women's jeans, popular households enterprises, popular fairs and shopping

### **INTRODUCTION**

The popular market in Brazil, specifically the fashion market, has been showing great economic movements in several regions. (Appel 2012)

These movements are due to the increasing in the number of domestic and casual clothing, when it comes to the extension of marketing spaces and the expansion of clothing production. Mainly about manufacturing jeans parts, being women's pants one of the most produced and wanted by consumers in popular markets. (Alves 2009)

For these considerations, this article brings up a survey about the outlook of production and trading practiced by Brazilian domestic jeans pants producers.

In order to carry out this research, it was applied the combination of the following methods(Saunders et al. 2011): bibliographic rescue and field observation about the popular jeans trading markets, with visits to popular Brazilian fashion centers in the

regions of Southeast (São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro) and in the Northeast region (Toritama in Agreste Region of Pernambuco, and Fortaleza, Ceará).

This study aims to collect information, which allows characterizing the modes of production and trading applied on the popular Brazilian segment of women's jeans.

### ***BIBLIOGRAPHIC RESCUE***

The establishment of jeans manufacturing centers in informal home clothing was given to the implementation of the popular market of garment production process. According to Abreu, Jorge, and Sorj (1996) and Araújo and Amorim (2002), it was driven by economic instability context, where the industry looks for cost savings and, consequently, to layoff workers.

Therefore, these "unemployed" workers from the clothing industries were organized and started working at the informal economy in garment manufacturing, with similar features to those ones presented by the big brands, being more accessible because of the lower prices. (Araujo and Amorim 2002)

According to Silva (2008) the flow of the garments manufactured in home clothing manufacturers from the suburbs firstly intended to source multi-brand companies that supplied the big magazines, but due to the instability and lack of payment, they started to sell to traders from fairs held in city centers during the night, that's why these places are called "feirinha da madrugada" (dawn fairs).

Since then, these businesses have been progressing with significant increasing on production, and expansion of marketing, giving rise to great popular fashion marketing centers in Brazil, with a moving of thousands of buyers, such as dawn fair in Brás, at São Paulo's downtown, the SAARA region at Rio de Janeiro's downtown, the Sulanca fair at the Agreste region, in Pernambucano, and the dawn fair at José Avelino Street in Fortaleza, Ceará.

In São Paulo, the dawn fair in Brás receives about 15,000 shoppers daily (Sobrinho 2013), at the Sulanca fair there are 60,000 people that run almost R\$ 1 million (€ 226,000) and at José Avelino's, in Fortaleza, we can register about 20,000 customers each fair, and according to the Executive Secretary from the downtown's executive center of Fortaleza (SERCFOR) the estimative of business transactions is from R\$5,000 (€ 1,130) to R\$20,000 (€ 4,530). (Braga, Abreu, and Oliveira 2015)

Such cities, besides holding the main centers for clothing trade, they are also considered the biggest denim producers in the country

Some researches (SEBRAE 2013; IEMI 2013) point out that these regions in recent years, the jeans industry, the Brazilian market has shown a growth of 3.9% per year (SEBRAE 2013th), outstanding the expansion of production and marketing, especially related to the popular markets. (Oliveira and Braga 2015)

According to carried out studies during the year 2012 and presented by SEBRAE (2013b), the Agreste region in Pernambuco is one of the major production and marketing center of denim in Brazil, it's due to its representation in the segment, featuring about 20,000 enterprises, generating more than 100 000 jobs for the whole region and producing 900 million pieces per year.

In Brazil, according to the scope IEMI (2013), in 2012, 349.8 million pieces were produced, presenting an increase of 27%, comparing to 2008.

### ***MATERIALS AND EXPERIMENTAL METHODS***

It was used a combination of methods for the building and designing of this research: bibliographic rescue and observation field. It's started with a survey about scientific publications and economic reports, which present information about the Brazilian popular

fashion market, focusing on the denim production and trading, what has shown relevant economic happenings in some regions of the country.

The direct observation field with visits to popular Brazilian fashion centers in the regions from the Southeast: São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro; and the Northeast: Agreste region in Pernambuco and Fortaleza, Ceará. This is a method described by authors as Gil (2008) like an important way for anchored data collection because they allow direct contact with the venues of the popular denim business.

Data collection is oriented from the determination of a specific plan for observation and recording information, in order to establish categories for the examination of selected areas. According to Provdanov and Freitas (2013) through a script you can get a conscious observation, directed and ordered for a particular purpose.

During the visits to São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Fortaleza and Toritama, it was used an observation script as described below, on Table 1:

**Table 1:** Observation Script

TRADING CENTER
1 – Observation of trading center's neighborhood
2 - Trading center's physical structure
3 - Outlets' Structure
4 - Observation of sold pieces
5 – Origin of Clothing Manufacturer
6 - Production Mode
7 - Buyers

## RESULTS

### *Field observation*

The visits to popular denim fashion trading centers, as described above, was carried out following a plan based on the objectives for data collection in order to confirm the information collected in the bibliographic rescue and seeking to respond to the object aimed by this research.



The presentation of the data is organized regionally, starting with the cities from the southeast and then the cities from the Northeast.

Southeast Region: São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro Cities

**Table 2:** Observation Script of Southeast Region

OBSERVATION SCRIPT	SÃO PAULO	RIO DE JANEIRO
1.Observation of trading center's neighborhood	Street sellers on sidewalks and in front of the subway station.	Next to the main business centers in the city in the, and also to the National Library and several historic buildings, as the first Civil Engineering University in Brazil.
2.Trading center's physical structure	Two-floor building connected by escalators, each floor divided into picture galleries of outlets. Lighting and ventilation under nice conditions and with wide space for shoppers' walking.	SAARA is a neighborhood whose streets concentrates several types of popular products stores and which has the largest number of retail outlets that offer clothing at low prices

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3. Outlets' Structure	The outlets are organized with the using of furniture, designed with a part for storing and another with shelves, which shows off the main products.	There are three types of outlets: shops, metal boxes and stands.
4. Observation of sold pieces	We can find four models: high-waist pants, closing with buttons and zipper, simple washing, keeping the blue jeans, just modeling and skinny legs; pants with rib mesh applications, closing with laces and zipper, destonado wash with light colors and modeling with straight legs; pants with side applications knit rib, zipper closure and buttons with sparkles, modeling with straight legs; and pants with destroyer washing, torn effects on the front and black background modeling and fair-skinny legs.	There were two models: high-waist pants, closing with buttons and zipper, simple washing, keeping the blue jeans and modeling of skinny-legs; and pants, with destroyer wash, torn effects on the front and bottom black and fair modeling, skinny legs.
5. Origin of Clothing Manufacturer	They are manufactured in domestic workshops in the region Bras	From clothing workshops of Brás and from factories at Agreste region, in Pernambuco.
6. Production Mode	Production fragmented - each part of the manufacturing step is carried out in a different workshop	Production fragmented - each part of the manufacturing step is carried out in a different workshop
7. Buyers	80% are wholesaling buyers in cities in the state of Sao Paulo and Brasilia to other states, Minas Gerais and Goiás and 20% of consumers in São Paulo	75% are local consumers of tfrom Rio de Janeiro, 15% of buyers who retail in other cities from the state of Rio de Janeiro and other states such as Minas Gerais



### Northeast Region: Toritama and Fortaleza

**Table 3:** Observation Script of Northeast Region

OBSERVATION SCRIPT	TORITAMA	FORTALEZA
1. Observation of trading center's neighborhood	It sits on the banks of the road that give access to the city of Caruaru. Several street sellers.	On the neighborhood of the Centro Cultural Dragão do Mar, the Central Market, the Metropolitan Cathedral of Fortaleza and several Popular Fashion malls.
2. Trading center's physical structure	A large shopping mall, popular shopping with wide space for walking through the corridors between the stores; there's no good lighting conditions and ventilation, there's a food court and an area with banking service.	Free Street Fair, without a fixed structure.



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3. Outlets' Structure	The outlets are small shops, the main ones feature air conditioning, window, the minors are already assembled with metal structures, which house the counters of visits to customers and at the bottom shelves are fixed for displaying the products.	The outlets have various models: tarps on the ground, stands in table format and metal and wood structures with deposit boxes and stands to serve customers
4. Observation of sold pieces	There are different models of jeans, and the most frequent models are the pants with destroyer wash, torn effects on the front and a black background; about modeling, skinny legs and high-waist pants, closing with buttons and zipper; simple washing, in several shades, from the darkest to the brightest of indigo blue, fair modeling and skinny legs too.	The most common jeans are the pants with destroyer wash, torn effects on the front and a black background; about modeling, skinny legs and high-waist pants, closing with buttons and zipper; simple washing, in several shades, from the darkest to the brightest of indigo blue, fair modeling and skinny legs too.
5. Origin of Clothing Manufacturer	All parts are manufactured in familiar garment from Toritama and some towns close to there.	All parts are manufactured in familiar garment from Fortaleza and from cities at its the metropolitan area.
6. Production Mode	Fragmented production. Each piece of clothing step is performed in a different workshop, even reaching to rural areas of the city.	Fragmented production. Each piece of clothing step is performed in a different workshop. Female jeans pants in the production process can reach several districts of the city and metropolitan area of Fortaleza.
7. Buyers	All buyers are dealers came from neighboring cities and other states from different regions of Brazil.	95% are buyers for reatling in cities from the state of Ceara and other states, Brasilia, Minas Gerais, Goias, and most of these are from other Northeast states such as Bahia, Piauí, Maranhão, Rio Grande do Norte and to the North: Pará, Amazonas and Roraima; and 5% of consumers from Fortaleza and tourists who are in town on vacation

### **CONCLUSIONS**

The data collected shows that both regions, Southeast and Northeast, the production of the popular denim is made by household income projects, confirming the data submitted by the previous research (Silva 2008).

It can observe that the production of jeans features mainly designed models, applying professional techniques, abandoning empirical knowledge and offering well-made products whose quality can be related to complex washes and finishes. Nevertheless, the manufacturing practices continue to be produced through poor equipment and physical structures, workers are of the same family or neighbourhood.

Only in Toritama we found that the production involves people from more distant places, such as its rural areas.

It was found that despite the economic crisis currently experienced in the country, Brazilian popular fashion trades, specifically in jeans marketing, positive economic returns, presenting production growth and expansion in the market, mainly disposing its fairs and malls.

Based on bibliographic rescue and the intersection of the data collected, it was revealed that despite the business expansion and economic growth developed by these popular markets, publications and developed investigations into the popular fashion universe have few representation in academic environments and research institutes, and existing publications can't be considered enough as broadcasting information from the scene at all. Although this sector is relevant to the jeans segment in the Brazilian market, it has not been explored, highlighting the unprecedented aspect of this research in Brazilian and even global context.

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