The Favela as a Place for the Development of Smart Cities in Brazil: Local Needs and New Business Strategies

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Abstract: Smart cities are a natural evolution of the concept of sustainable cities. These cities can be analyzed by social, economic, environmental, and technological biases. For this work, we chose the social and economic vision, with a special focus on the poorest and most vulnerable territories of Brazilian cities. These territories in Brazil are called slums, places of poverty but with opportunities for the development of the creative economy with its own brand. Seen by many in a simplistic way, summed up to be geographic spaces of drug circulation dominated by trafficking, Brazilian favelas have been consolidating themselves as a storehouse of innovative minds, a creative territory with multiple and complex cultures. These places today are capable of producing a positive image with potential for market exploitation. Therefore, the objective was to draw a relationship between the creative economy, branding and favelas, considering the concept of smart cities that include products and services from the slums. The present study shows the results of a survey and a bibliographic analysis based on the methodology Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) and with parameters that took into account the favela, branding and the creative economy. Thus, we expect that it will be possible to point out ways to accelerate entrepreneurial actions and foster the development of these locations.

Keywords: slum; creative economy; branding; local development; smart cities

1. Introduction

The concept of smart cities has been influenced by the rapid growth of cities and the demand for social solutions that enable adequate sustainable development, especially after the economic crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in poorer countries. From the perspective of the construction of smart cities, it is essential to consider the social issue of cities, especially in the most vulnerable territories called favelas.

Although the concept of the smart city is not new, there are other aspects that are not directly connected to information technology, for example, the sustainability of territories undergoing increasing urbanization. The favelas in less developed countries seek to find a solution in smart and sustainable cities to improve the quality of life of the local people.

A city needs to be innovative and combine aspects of sustainability. In this study, we went for a social perspective of the peripheral communities of Brazilian cities through the development of the creative economy and branding in the poorest communities in cities, especially in Brazil. Sustainable urban development is not only technological but, above all, economic, and it must value the social dimension.

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Every society is necessarily a “living organism” in constant mutation that, with temporal evolution, produces natural patterns of behavior of its social actors. A change in these patterns can be observed from time to time. They are recognized, identified, and grouped by a certain “collective unconscious”, this being the image by which we remember something [1].

To propose a chain of ideas, it is worth noting that the so-called collective unconscious, in contrast to the individual psyche, has contents and modes of behavior that, with some caveats, are the same that are repeated in all parts of society, as well as in all social actors. Thus, Ref. [1] called it the common psychic substrate of a suprapersonal nature existing in each individual.

This reflection leads us directly to the notion of favela, a term commonly seen in a simple and unique way. This conception occurs because understanding this territory tends to gain a prejudiced perspective [1], reducing it to a geographical space where violence, drug sales, poverty, and lack of hygiene due to the lack of basic sanitation predominate. Such a view does not interest us at this moment when we seek to understand the relationship of actors from a particular sociospatial cut and their identity with the management of local creative economy ventures. In other words, what interests us is the view that “individuals share many values and behaviors related to consumption with similar individuals from various other national cultures” [2].

This sharing of values generates a certain sense of belonging on the part of favela residents who have come to dignify their culture, traditions, lifestyle, and territory over the last few decades. Unlike what one might imagine, this population has already earned the right to remain where they are, in contrast to removal policies [3].

Thus, it is still possible to affirm that the following content collaborates with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations (UN), in this case, precisely, the 4th SDG, which deals with equal access to technical education. The 8th SDG talks about promoting inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all. The 10th SDG focuses on reducing inequalities within countries. Finally, the 11th SDG aims to make cities and communities more inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable. The favela is a strategic component of smart cities, considering that, in the city of Rio de Janeiro alone, there are more than 1000 favelas registered by [4] and directly linked to the 11th SDG.

This paper seeks to understand, with the combination of literature review and the authors’ empirical experiences in the favelas of Rio de Janeiro, relevant issues to these territories. In our studies, we detected the favela as a place of people with potential for the development of smart cities drivers [5], especially new public policies, innovation, and sustainability.

2. Methodology

In order to understand how to make a difference, we carried out a unique systematic review combining studies from three themes relevant to the economic development of the most excluded populations that need to be included by smart cities concept: slums, creative economy, and branding.

The main research question of this study was, “how does a smart city understand the development of new solutions combining local aspects, creative economy in favelas, and branding?” To answer this question, we designed an approach in three steps: bibliographic research; identification of the main points; and general analysis of the bibliography based on the PRISMA method.

Due to the multidisciplinary nature of studies involving the favela, systematic bibliographic research, which takes a broad perspective as a starting point, is a methodological necessity. For this reason, different search engines were used, such as Journals Portal Capes, SciELO, Google Scholar, and Microsoft Academic.
In these four databases that bring together references, abstracts, scientific studies, theses, and academic dissertations, the search for keywords was carried out by the term “favela”, as well as by its Anglo–Saxon counterparts “shantytown” and “slum”. In January 2021, Google Scholar found 592,700 allusions to the terms. Capes Periodicals Portal listed 60,648 citations. In Microsoft Academic, the survey showed 17,888 results. Finally, SciELO had only 740 mentions. Thus, the starting point, a broad look already mentioned here, took place from a total of 671,976 references.

Next, seeking more assertiveness, the keywords “favela”, “shantytown”, and “slum” were combined with the terms “brand” and “creative economy”, excluding 655,434 articles from the initial bibliographic search, and consequently, the total number was reduced to 16,542 references.

In addition, to produce a more current study, the bibliographic survey was filtered, starting to consider only articles and works published in the last five years. Thus, we reached a stage that took into account 6592 articles. These also underwent a treatment where duplicate items were excluded, thus achieving a total of 2598 articles, to which was applied a specific screening logic.

The screening logic mentioned above followed the methodological path and the recommendations pointed out by [6] for systematic reviews and meta-analyses (PRISMA). In this case, the primary strategy consisted of performing an exploratory reading of the titles and abstracts of articles, excluding 2381 items that did not show relevance to the theme of this study. The exclusion criteria were the lack of clarity in the abstract, the lack of peer review, and the language being other than Portuguese, English, or Spanish.

Then, we performed a selective reading, at which time the texts of the abstracts of the 217 articles were evaluated in their entirety, excluding those that notoriously lacked information or thoughts that not collaborated with the issues raised. This phase resulted in the exclusion of another 146 based on criteria such as nonoriginality, low relevance to the investigated topic, and lack of clarity in the research methodology and data collection.

There remained 71 articles that were analyzed in detail. The present study effectively used 34 papers as references that made it possible to see branding as a practice capable of boosting creative economy projects in favelas to comply with the methodological purposes that seek transparency and reliability in the process of PRISMA, as shown in Figure 1.
Figure 1. Summary of bibliographic research using the PRISMA flowchart.

3. Literature Review

The Understanding of Favela

The term “favela”, as well as its translations into other languages, was coined in the mid-19th century to describe degraded areas where the poor lived during the cholera years in East and West London [7]. Later, they could be perceived as a global phenomenon that, for decades, the urban middle class has avoided, seeking in different ways to prevent the expansion of these territories out, due to the fear of the “myth of marginality”.

The slum dwellers, due to low investment in basic infrastructure, were able to protect themselves from the real estate pressures that cities were facing [8]. Moreover, this movement gave housing in these places the historical status of illegal, making the environment even less sensitive to market and government actions. Hence, the nomenclatures “subnormal agglomeration” and “exceptional zone” are used until today, respectively, by the IBGE (Brazilian Institute of Statistical Geography) and by the Brazilian legislation to designate these territories.
When we talk about favelas and their imaginary representation, it is essential to understand how this image was constructed and how the discourse about it developed over time. The territory is seen differently by those who inhabit it and by those who observe it from afar.

The authors of [9] show us how the perspective of those outside this territory can be prejudiced and, at times, cruel in producing a negative meaning. On the subject, the authors state: the beauty of the visual landscape is replaced by narrow alleys, slabs, houses with bullet holes and without plaster, disordered electrical wiring, and heavily armed police, among others. The favela shows off children, black people, and fat people excluded from the first block, all those who, because they don’t fit, are “others” [9].

Contributing to the theme, other authors also report the problem generated by a negative imaginary construction. For example, the 2019 International Symposium on Urbanism once again brought this relationship to the fore. At the time, for example, it became clear that cities like Rio de Janeiro suffer from a phenomenon of double stereotyping. “While the traditional commercialized stereotype of Rio de Janeiro are beaches and samba, the representation of violence in the favela has become a second stereotype of Rio de Janeiro” [10].

In “From Slum to Village: A Semiotic Analysis in Reimaging Urban Space”, the authors of [11] state that favelas end up suffering due to a public mental construction of the past, disregarding processes of revitalization that produce a new sense of place, as well, a new narrative landscape based on a discourse utterly different from what is rooted in the collective unconscious.

This shift in perception can be seen in places like Bogotá and Medellin, Colombia, where urban and social planning helped defeat organized crime. In Brazil, Alagoas, Pernambuco, and Rio de Janeiro have also made efforts in this direction. The creation of park libraries, the search for public–private partnerships, the implementation of Social UPPs, and even the installation of cable cars, despite being abandoned by the public authorities, helped change imagery. In this sense, Ref. [3] explains that if the peripheries were previously characterized as spaces of need, today, their urban infrastructure indicators have significantly improved in central areas.

As far as geography is concerned, in Rio de Janeiro, a referential stereotype contributes to an “imaginary slum” necessarily in high areas or mountains, never in the forest or on the edge of the sea, but always between them, where it is possible to see the wealthiest areas of the rest of the city. However, communities should not be defined solely by their physical boundaries or the style of their housing construction. Favela is a socially developed concept that correlates with power relations. Authors of [12] explain that territoriality is an essential factor in understanding favelas, since it is in this place that the creation of personal ties, cultural interactions, and actions take place, politics and economic suffering. These will reflect the identity and characteristics of the environment.

This article seeks to bring a broad, diverse, and democratic understanding of the favela so that we can understand this population, out of common sense, which still persists in part of the Brazilian population. In the favelas, we find people with creative capacity who use new businesses as engines of survival and who want to build smart cities, seeking a better quality of life for all their inhabitants.

Empirical favelas take on different morphologies. The favela that inhabits the international imagination is located on high slopes with abundant “tropical” vegetation from which one can visually apprehend the beauty and the social and morphological contrasts of the Rio landscape. The notions of “primitive”, “indigenous”, or “vernacular” confirm a powerful subtext that positions the itinerant favela as a place trapped in ambiguity [13].

The proposed study is centered on the nonrepetition of violent images and popular visual representations that symbolically stigmatize the favela and help justify the unequal application of the law on the margins of society [14]. In international literature, favelas are exposed through two distinct perspectives: places of misery and violence or as places of hope [7]. Despite having already exposed the face of misery and violence due to the
academic obligation of the bibliographic review, the aim is to delineate more clearly the perspective of hope to favela residents who take advantage of these locations to create opportunities for a life better and more dignified.

In this sense, it is valid to say that the favela has been given new meaning in recent years. After the pacification of Rio de Janeiro’s favelas, even if without great practical effects on the lives of residents, the presence of the UPP—Pacifying Police Units—in the communities of Rio de Janeiro acted as an international response to image reconstruction. Furthermore, the sporting megaevents, such as the Soccer World Cup in 2014 and the Rio Olympics in 2016, amplified the reconstructions process. In addition, the mainstream media increasingly explores the culture and diversity of these territories increasingly valued by tourists during visits to these places. This movement even helps with a more significant opportunity to generate income for the residents of the territories in question.

All of this brings the image of these territories closer to reality again. Thus, it is possible to have a more trustworthy vision to understand that “the favela has always been responsible and solidary” as stated by the authors of [15] in their book: *A Country Called Favela*. This work shows the evolution of the concept of the favela and the feeling of its inhabitants.

Disproving the prevailing belief, 81% of residents like the community where they live, and 66% are unwilling to abandon it. Fully or with restrictions, 62% admit they are proud of where they live. Probably the main reason for this love and loyalty to the place is the established social solid ties between the residents [15].

The book also has a presentation written by the rapper MV Bill and the television host Luciano Hulk that corroborate these new semiotics. In this presentation, the rapper talks about the favela as “a stronghold of creativity, invention, full entrepreneurship, arts, affection, and solidarity” [15]. Hulk, on the other hand, speaks of the transformations that shape the current scenario. According to him, “previously invisible, the favela has become a consumer market. The citizen, once despised, was elevated to the middle class. He became a target audience for marketing and advertising professionals” [15].

In summary, the favela cannot be seen solely in a negative light. Expressions such as “the problem of the favelas” and “the favela as a social problem” are discriminatory and misleading, and they can be considered false for several reasons, among which there is a high production capacity. In this sense, shacks and land are often areas of extra productivity, and even more, when they are connected to the creative economy.

In general, favelas can deal better with the problems because they are more adapted to the real external socioeconomic conditions and to the real households’ internal structures and needs and their family extensions [16].

Thus, if in the hegemonic narrative imposed was preached an association of the favela with marginality, violence, an environment of little mediation and infrastructure, today the same territory gives way to investments of material and financial nature. For this reason, it is possible to find economic acceleration initiatives aimed at favelas, such as the “fa.ve.1a”, the “G-10 of the favelas”, the “Favela Inova”, or the “Vai na Web”. According to [16], this allows us to think of communities as a space that enables different types of production. The “problem slum” image is then left to establish the “power slum” image.

4. The Logic of the Creative Economy

The concept of “entrepreneurship”, the notions of “creative industry” and “creative economy”, are constantly evolving in functions of different experiences lived around the world, making definitions and forms of measurement and characterization, as stated by [17]. However, many articles have been written about business, economics, and management, questioning the scenario and opportunities in the so-called “creative sectors of the economy” [18], causing the theme to be mentioned, increasingly, also in the media and in business environments.
In any case, to obtain a starting point for the perspective from which the theme is observed, it can be assumed that “the term creative economy originated in world centers of innovation and production, corresponding, therefore, to different means and models of many of the Brazilian productive processes” [19]. Thus, such a term would serve to describe “the entire system of relations of the postindustrial knowledge-based economy—having creativity as an essential factor for economic growth” [20]. Furthermore, its practice is aimed at a profit through enterprises that generate material or immaterial goods, a context in which the production of fashion games can be observed, passing through gastronomy and digital technologies.

Contributing to this review, Ref. [21] presents the creative economy as a new concept in an economic era that applies creativity and information intensively, based on ideas and knowledge of human resources as the main production factor.

In the case above, we could interpret the creative economy to increase and develop economic activity based on creativity, skill, and personal talent. For this author, however, the creative economy practices aim at something beyond goods; they also seek employment opportunities through individual creativity and, of course, dignified and fair life as advocated by the UN 2030 Agenda and the programs of organizations such as UNESCO and the IDB.

In opposition to the aforementioned individual logic, creative economy systems recognize the importance of human capital to foster sociocultural and economic integration, bringing opportunities for entrepreneurship from a political perspective of social inclusion and resistance to oppression [22].

Authors of [23] collaborate by stating that the creative economy is solidary and houses groups that promote the most diverse economic relationships, for example: exchanges, donations, reciprocity, commensality, and cooperation that result in the “emancipation of productive forces” in the reunification of work and the means of production.

Geographically speaking, for [22], the creative economy is understood by many governments and companies as a set of activities, goods, and services based on creativity, talent, or local skill. Therefore, according to [18], several authors refer to this economic model as something that occurs in urban areas with a high concentration of creative enterprises or tourist cities and regional high-tech hubs.

United Nations publications point out that creative economy producers and consumers are emerging in developing countries and economically vulnerable regions [18]; therefore, it is understood that Brazil’s creative economy is a field under construction of rapid development. Moreover, in the last decade, its cultural and creative sectors have experienced continuous and gradual growth, attracting more and more political support [24]. Several authors place the creative economy from a binary approach: The first deals with recognizing human creativity as a driving force for integrating social, cultural, and economic goals. The second approach understands it as a strategy for development, changing the links between culture and economy, and, finally, for opening up economic opportunities based on creative ventures [17].

It is still common to find academic studies that have already abandoned the binary logic and, today, systematize the debate on the creative economy by presenting four theoretical models, which naturally result in the establishment of new methodologies and public policies. For example, in the “Economic Atlas of Brazilian Culture”, a national reference work, Ref. [20] explains, as shown below, that four models will be described generically.

In the first model, called the neoclassical one, the creative industries are only focused on the population’s well-being. As a result, they negatively impact, as they consume more resources and materials than they produce. The second model, recognized as a “competition model”, views the creative sector as a common sector but, despite bringing a certain amount of well-being, results in zero growth. The third, called the growth model, is given by the advancement of the creative industry, establishing new market niches and innovation in existing sectors. Finally, the fourth model, the innovation model, gives
the creative industry a leading role at the national level, transforming innovation into an intangible asset for a country.

In any case, whatever the model, Ref. [25] concludes that the creative economy is always presented as a path to development and full social inclusion, whether updating the traditional relationship between economic functionalities and social activities or simply improvising a new way of starting efforts in the industry. This statement is under the empirical perceptions of the work carried out by “Voz da Comunidade”.

As [26] suggests, it is essential to think, create, and develop a creative economy from an articulated place, for example, a territory occupied by a population, and, based on this space, to think about practical policies, policies to enhance the territory and policies that do not exclude “down to earth” creativity. In the case of the present study, this location is the favela.

**Favela Creative Industry**

So far, there are few studies and a general lack of data on the creative market in Brazilian favelas. Thus, it is also difficult to categorize the agents of the creative economy industry and their activities in general [18].

However, the creative economy enables local development and social inclusion to expand local individual and collective capacities, especially in those considered destitute, since the sectors of this economic logic contribute to growth and prosperity, as its products have great economic potential [19].

Authors of [21] corroborate this understanding by stating that economic development through creative entrepreneurship generally occurs in populations covered by sociocultural diversity, making these territories also grow from a human perspective.

As for the initiatives in the favelas where entrepreneurs and social leaders seek to meet their main need, a solution or optimization of opportunities to improve the community’s quality of life, it is first necessary to examine creative organizations and their production processes, considering the distinction between different industries or sectors and their development contexts [18].

There are many challenges to institutionalizing the creative economy as a public and governmental policy. In contrast, it is necessary to emphasize that entrepreneurial initiatives are developed in favelas even in difficult contexts, driven by the time and resources of young people [24].

Furthermore, according to [27], favelas are areas where residents can enroll their children in schools, access public services, and be protected from discrimination and feel safer to create or undertake. After all, the entrepreneurial environment does not need to be the best from a geographical point of view. Instead, it needs to be rich in potential, whether it is for needs or opportunities.

However, it is essential to highlight that the government’s incentive to entrepreneurship in “pacified” territories connotes an overlapping of the marketing logic, as it ends up generating an individualistic understanding of what should be seen as the collective interests of favela residents [28].

The potential seems to arise from individuals or small groups with fragile political capital. However, Ref. [18] clarifies: the strength of the market structure of a creative economy comes even from micro and small companies. These organizations generate jobs in the production and distribution cycles of the innovative industry chain, showing that associativism and cooperativism are tools for increasing income generation in communities.

Finally, it is essential to clarify that, when the development of the creative economy emerges within the favelas, it seeing as a symbiotic process. The community reinvigorates people’s creative potential to overcome deprivation, and action practices create new favorable scenarios for participatory decision-making [27].
5. The Concept of Branding

The concept of subjectivity is continuously produced, so it cannot be considered punctual or even an innate attribute of human beings. On the contrary, it is built-in in multiple spheres, collective and institutional, linked to each individual’s personal experiences [29]. Although this concept is born from the theories of psychology and social psychology, it is possibly the best way to understand branding.

The author of [30] explains that contemporary advertising communication is undergoing a complete structural transformation, and logos cross, almost imperceptibly, all activities carried out throughout the day. Therefore, consumption starts to operate strategically in the sphere from sensitive to affect cognition.

Brands are also souvenirs, memories of cultures, heritage, images, voices, communications, and narratives. Narrating is giving life to objects that move us. Therefore, what a brand symbolizes depends on the individual, collective memories, and relationships with the brand [31].

Here, there is a caveat. Although [30] uses the term “logomarca”, which only indicates the brand’s design or graphic representation, branding works with brands in general, even encompassing the graphic sphere, but it goes far beyond that. Therefore, “the authors still address that branding is one of the company’s main management processes, as it deals with one of its main assets, the brand” [32].

Collaborating with this notion, Ref. [33] states that the practice aims to generate brand value, in which the economic value of a product is not merely determined by the cost of its material production but also by an immaterial output that creates the symbolic value of the product.

For the above reason, some brands already have excellent worldwide visibility but live in the collective imagination of young people from the periphery, such as Nike, Cyclone, Kenner, Red Bull, and Johnnie Walker, among others that give status when used within the favela.

With the same understanding, Ref. [34] demonstrates that more than a “mere” visual identity or “just” another advertising campaign, branding proposes to build “brand values” and a “brand reputation” through image management strategies.

Authors of [31], however, take this idea further when explaining that “there is an increasing movement in the search to generate love for brands, as if love were a commodity and were for sale on supermarket shelves, or could be purchased in a simple financial exchange”. In this sense, these authors also state that the future of marketing communication involves branding as it seeks to conquer and form “lovemarks”, that is, consumers who create genuinely affective bonds with the communities and social networks they develop.

Branding appears as a marketing effort that takes place in a real, aspirational, or experiential way, aiming to construct the consumer’s imagination [32]. This is imagery that, in the long term, would be converted into five competitive advantages, namely: good brand reputation, consumer loyalty, quality perception, understanding of added value, feeling of affirmation, and belonging to an imaginary community of shared values.

The Branding in the Favela

Branding has already been attributed and used for the development of places and communities. In this context, concepts such as “branding destination” and “place branding” emerged. In the case of the first, according to [32], the approach is studied by several authors, who define the concept as destination brand management.

More complexly, place branding definitions tend to emphasize functional, symbolic, and experiential dimensions of space. Thus, “place branding” involves the interests and actions of various stakeholders, from public actors to business owners and developers, to target audiences and residents [35].
This process of repositioning the image of the favelas can be observed in recent years, when, according to [34], branding sought to build pride of their territory in the inhabitant. Thus, for example, Rio de Janeiro’s favelas, generally seen as hostile spaces of misery and crime, are gradually being transformed into cultural products and tourist attractions in the city of Rio de Janeiro and throughout the country.

It noticed the construction of a “mythical favela”, used in advertising campaigns for the most various brands and products; “in turn, Brazilian products, when traded internationally, also adhere to the favela brand”, while tourism ends up contributing to this process [36].

According to [34], the production of the made-in-favela brand can be exemplified by the campaign “Rio de Janeiro—Trademark of Brazil”, launched in 2011 by the State of Rio de Janeiro, as shown in Figures 2–5 to improve the self-esteem of the people of Rio de Janeiro. In this occasion, the “civic patriotism” and the “favela pride” stood out to organizing Rio de Janeiro society around the moment the state was experiencing. Rio would become a brand and a product that could be associated with other brands to strengthen its brand potential.

![Figure 2. RJ brand launched in 2011.](image1)

![Figure 3. Advertising campaign piece based on the “RJ” logo launched internationally.](image2)

This branding action encompassed an advertising campaign, but it is important to realize that, in fact, all efforts were anchored in the “RJ” logo, which was even applied as a seal on a series of products manufactured in the State to encourage consumption and development locally.

Today, we have in these places a performative element in which the favela space is like the bohemian space; it is a historical space and the transgressive space, packaged as experiences to be consumed [9].
As we have seen before, favelas are vulnerable territories and smart cities through the development of their drivers' need to include those people who need opportunities. Without delving too deeply into the subject, we can say that Brazil still lacks the basics, such as: urban planning, city infrastructure, mobility, public safety, health, sustainability, public policies, and education.

The smart city vision we defend is sustainable from a social, economic, and environmental point of view, an inclusive city and humane, one that seeks to improve the quality of life for all its citizens, in particular for people in situations of greater vulnerability. Thus, we agree with the findings of [43]. In this sense, the reduction of urban vulnerability is one of the main areas of focus of actions and planning processes, providing social inclusion through local development that is connected to the global goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development of the United Nations (UN) and are defined through the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). The goals of sustainable development seek to mitigate the impacts that experts in sustainable development confirm, that by 2050,
85% of the world’s population will live in cities, so cities must be prepared to meet the needs of their citizens and offer the best of their services [45].

From the survey of bibliographical references through the PRISMA methodology for the terms considered key, we were able to shed light on the basic concepts of smart cities [5] and thus expand the process for the construction of this article. As shown in Table 1, the terms used as keywords in the search, together with smart cities, compose the quantitative statistics of articles used in this work.

Table 1. Guidelines in the article.

| Driver Source          | Articles                                      |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Slum/Favela            | [3,4,9–16,22,26–28,33,34,36,46]               |
| Creative Economy       | [5,17–27,30,31,36,47–50]                     |
| Branding               | [1,2,14,16,20,26,28,29,31,32,35]              |
| Smart Cities           | [3,5,6,8,9,11,16,20,24,30,33,37–45,47]       |

7. Final Consideration

Synergistically, a powerful image reconstruction has been carried out with respect to Brazilian favelas, studies in the areas of the creative economy are advancing, and branding techniques are evolving. Thus, while the city “invests in powerful marketing and public relations strategies in building its brand, often strengthening marketing concepts that try to sanitize its image” [46], “entrepreneurship and consumption emerge as windows of access to citizenship and ‘social businesses’ that are gaining more and more strength and investments in the favelas” [28].

Despite the extensive search carried out in search engines, it was not possible for the authors to find vast literature that encompassed the three focus themes in a unified way, that is: favela, creative economy, and branding. This can be considered a limitation of the current research, but it can also be seen as an opportunity to start the debate on themes focusing on the so-called smart cities [5] or global cities [47] that need to be socially, economically, and environmentally sustainable.

Authors of [18] exemplify this idea by explaining that, contrary to what has been pointed out in the theory of creative economy, the initiatives mapped, for example, in the Mangueira favela do not flourish closer to the concentration of industry. Even in the sale of products and services, social organizations’ annual income is low compared to individuals and groups of entrepreneurs, which depend heavily on the State or private sponsorship. In this way, as summarized by [11], the favela is defined more by its potential than by its reality.

In addition to Mangueira’s experience, the power to be creative in the favela is visible through other initiatives. In the Favelas da Penha Complex, on the top of Vila Cruzeiro, for example, Konteiner is located, a show house built with containers that is now recognized as one of the phenomena of the entertainment sector in Rio de Janeiro (Figure 6).

According to [48], “Konteiner is more than a nightclub. With nine containers, it is possible to find in the place: bar, restaurant, hairdressing, and clothing store. It is a cultural center of social interaction and service provision”. In an interview with Jornal Voz das Comunidade, the entrepreneur and founder, Leonam Silva explains that the concert hall was built where it used to be a dump and in an environment where residents only saw violence.

Rio de Janeiro still brings other examples in its favelas. For instance, in the Jacaré community, Jacaré Modas has established itself as a modeling agency that delivers more diversity to the fashion market [48]. Furthermore, as the largest favela in Latin America, Rocinha explores tourism in its alleys with jeeps as if a safari could occur there. At Santa Marta, graffiti and craft shops offer a cultural experience, and in Vidigal, gastronomic tourism imposes itself with the view of the sea as a differential.
Thus, the potential, the formation and development of the favela workforce are real. Within communities, individuals have a strong will and challenge changing the status quo and evolve and adapt resiliently.

Authors of [24] contribute by showing that, from the point of view of urban cultural policy, rethinking favela residents as entrepreneurial subjects serves, on the one hand, the discourse of creative cities to highlight the economic value of creative and cultural activities by thorough training, fundraising, and capacity building. On the other hand, it brings the State closer to urban informality, which, in a specific sphere, for containing less procedural bureaucracy, can be praised.

Authors of [49] explain that some bottlenecks are still capable of holding back the development of the creative economy. The authors lists five factors of concern that should be taken into account: talent, attractiveness and connections, cultural environment, and, finally, the potential to be creative.

However, it is possible that fostering the adoption of best management practices applied to creative businesses will act as an accelerator for local creative industries. Therefore, “the technical and business training agenda, although showing expressive results in the longer term, should not be overlooked even in the short term” [50].

In this way, it is possible to devise territorial governance mechanisms such as community banks or local currencies in the medium and long term, which are real examples that can be implemented in communities. These present themselves as alive, dynamic, and creative, either by need or by local opportunities.

The relationship between creative economy and branding has, indeed, been established over the years. Therefore, it is not by chance that we found many articles that relate to both concepts but were discarded in this work during the application of the PRISMA methodology for not having connections with the favela. Furthermore, this abundance of
literature is easy to understand if one considers that both themes are much studied and debated in communication and marketing schools.

Likewise, the relationship between branding and favela is solidified to the point where, as seen above, concepts such as “branding destination” and “place branding” emerge. In addition, as pointed out in this study, marketing efforts aimed at changing and repositioning the image of favelas emerged from this relationship, producing an idea of a “mythical favela” or “potency favela”.

The relationship between favelas and the creative economy is very present in studies that have presented the practice as a method of economic transformation. Thus, it would be possible to harness the creativity of the inhabitants of territories in situations of social vulnerability. However, as shown in the initiatives mapped in the favelas of Mangueira, Vila Cruzeiro, Jacaré, Santa Marta, Rocinha, and Vidigal, the sale of products and services from these locations is still low.

In the authors’ view, the great finding of this research, which has smart cities as a backdrop, is precisely the local development of territories, called favelas, based on the creative economy. Branding combined with the creative economy is a new field of study, as shown in Figure 7.

![Figure 7. Graphic scheme of favela integration with creative economy and branding.](image)

This article provides confirmation through a systematic literature review that the terms linked to innovation confirm the findings of [5] that reveal the innovative process as one of the most important drivers of smart cities in Brazil, as well as the findings that the sustainable social vision is a driving force for improving the quality of life and sustainable economic development.

There is something fundamentally positive about favela-based work, and its driving force is certainly the challenge of reinventing social and economic representations. Therefore, it is plausible to believe that an intersection between the concepts of “favela”, “branding”, and “creative economy” inhabits the formula for this transformation.

Our research has some limitations inherent to the chosen method, as there were more databases that could have been analyzed; however, as shown in Figure 1, we already had a considerable number of articles to validate via PRISMA and consequently pass through a methodological filter. Future research may consider the databases not yet studied, as well as evaluate the statistical results, as the research is still in progress. Furthermore, the population that will be the target of the research will consist of a focus group composed of entrepreneurs who are part of a project in the favelas of Rio de Janeiro called “Voz Empreendedoras”, which is linked to the nongovernmental organization “Voz das Comunidades”. The research will be carried out in two stages and with different methodologies. In the first stage, to formulate a brand briefing and to generate insights about the product,
design thinking was chosen as a methodology to be applied locally and will be carried out through workshops, with a face-to-face and participatory nature, an action research. In the second stage, after the product has been developed, a new quantitative and qualitative research limited to the universe of the same focus group will be carried out to verify the acceptance of the product by entrepreneurs. It is important to emphasize that the research has not yet been carried out because, at this moment, it is about the formulation of the literature review article based on the PRISMA methodology.

The authors’ conclusions for the research carried out are that the development of new solutions in locations that are known as favelas are part of a strategy for local development of territories based on the concept of smart cities that use sustainability to improve the quality of life of the population, including the most vulnerable, mainly in the social and economic aspects.

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