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AN ANALYSIS OF CIVIL SOCIETY PERFORMANCE IN THE PREPARATION OF THE PLANNING OF PALMAS-TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT, FROM 2013 TO 2019

UMA ANÁLISE DA ATUAÇÃO DA SOCIEDADE CIVIL NA ELABORAÇÃO DO PLANEJAMENTO DO GOVERNO MUNICIPAL DE PALMAS-TO, NO PERÍODO DE 2013 A 2019

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Abstract

This work has as its object of study the planning of the city of Palmas-TO, with the objective of verifying what was the contribution of the civil society in the construction of the multi-annual plans, in the period from 2013 to 2019. For this task, we used primary and secondary documentary data sources, as well as information collected through semi-structured interviews. The description and analysis of these data, in addition to relying on a theoretical basis aligned with the theme of this study, they relied, specifically, on the analytical model conceived by Fung (2006), called the *cube of democracy*. Thus, after intense and in-depth investigation it was found that in the two plans carried out in the period defined for this work, the participation of civil society occurred only in the initial phase of these two processes, which includes public plenary sessions and the sending of suggestions via virtual means. Thereby, the performance of civil society members in the construction of the PPA's (Multi-annual Plans) 2014-2017 and 2018-2021 of Palmas-TO Local Government was positive, although these people participated in a small number and with access only to the first stage of carrying out these processes, that is, the face-to-face and virtual public hearings, and for a period of less than two months. Many public actions relevant to the development of this municipality, which were conceived or defended by civil society, were included in these plans.

Keywords: Participatory Planning. Participatory Budgeting. Municipal Planning. Development.

Resumo

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Este artigo tem como objeto de estudo o planejamento do município de Palmas-TO, com o objetivo de verificar qual foi a contribuição da sociedade civil na construção dos planos plurianuais, no período que vai de 2013 a 2019. Para essa incumbência, utilizou-se fontes de dados documentais primárias e secundárias e, também, informações coletadas por meio de entrevistas semiestruturadas. A descrição e a análise desses dados, além de se apoiarem em uma base teórica alinhada com a temática deste estudo, contaram, especificamente, com o modelo analítico, concebido por Fung (2006), denominado *cuco da democracia*. De modo que, após intensa e aprofundada investigação apurou-se que nos dois planejamentos executados no período delimitado para este trabalho a participação da sociedade civil ocorreu somente na fase inicial desses dois processos, que compreende as plenárias públicas e o envio de sugestões por meio virtual. Assim, a atuação dos membros da sociedade civil na construção dos PPAs 2014-2017 e 2018-2021 do Governo Municipal de Palmas-TO foi positiva, embora essas pessoas tenham participado em número pouco expressivo e com acesso, apenas, à primeira etapa de realização desses processos, ou seja, às audiências públicas presenciais e virtuais, e por um período inferior a dois meses. Pois houve o acolhimento, nesses planos, de muitas ações públicas relevantes para o desenvolvimento desse município, idealizadas ou defendidas pela sociedade civil.

Palavras-chave: Planejamento Participativo. Orçamento Participativo. Planejamento Municipal. Desenvolvimento.

Introduction

The origin of the process of civil society participation in the preparation of municipal planning goes back to the practice of direct democratic exercise in decisions about the implementation of public policies in Porto Alegre, Capital of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil, which began in 1989, a practice called Participatory Budgeting (Orçamento Participativo - OP), a term known worldwide (AVRITZER, 2003, p. 13; PRÁ, 2003, p. 191; WU and WANG, 2011, p. 263; LÜCHMANN, 2012, p. 515; WAMPLER, 2014, p. 201). Thus, from the experience of this municipality, this democratic institutional spread to the world (PRÁ, 2003, p. 191; CARMONA and MARTÍNEZ, 2013, p. 27; ALLEGRETTI and ANTUNES, 2014, p. 2; WAMPLER, 2014, p. 201; FEDOZZI and MARTINS, 2015, p. 182).

Souza (2001), Santos (2002), Costa (2010) and Bezerra (2016) attribute the first implementations of the planning model in conjunction with civil society to the governments of the workers' party in Brazilian municipalities. Then, from this initiative, local governments from other political parties also began to practice this democratic institutional.

The concept of OP for Avritzer (2003), Sintomer et al (2013) and Fedozzi and Martins (2015) is distinguished as a combination strategy between representative democracy and participatory democracy. So, these two forms of democratic exercise act, mainly, in the sharing of local power with civil society, with regard to public policy decisions, which can guarantee more equity in the distribution of public goods.

Abroad, the initiative that seeks the participation of civil society in the construction of the city budget in conjunction with municipal governments has been tried by many localities. Thus, this experiment has been carried out in Argentine cities (CARMONA and MARTÍNEZ, 2013, p. 29), Chinese municipalities (WU and WANG, 2011, p. 1), Lisbon and other European locations (ALLEGRETTI and ANTUNES, 2014, p. 1) and many other cities in several other regions of the world (UN-Habitat, 2017, p. 23).

In Brazil, the application of direct democratic institutional in the public budget was also motivated by the experience of Porto Alegre. Thus, from 1989 onwards, in addition to the greater emphasis on the capital of Rio Grande do Sul, there were instances of this institutional in municipalities such as São Paulo (SP), Piracicaba (SP), Santo André (SP), Ipatinga (MG), Betim (MG), Santos (SP) and Jaboticabal (SP) (COSTA, 2010, p. 9).

In this context, the experience of participation in the municipal budget has expanded to the Multi-annual Plan (Planejamento Plurianual - PPA), both in Brazilian cities and states. As for its application in the PPA, this experience came to be known as the Participative Multi-annual Plan (Planejamento Plurianual Participativo - PPA-P) (SOARES, 2016, p. 4).

Also, it is worth noting that the direct involvement of civil society in the public policy decision-making process can guarantee more legitimacy to the exercise of political power (FUNG, 2006, p. 70), at the same time that it acts to distribute public goods with more fairness (FUNG, op. cit. and AVRITZER, 2003, p. 19). This can help to build a suitable environment for development at both the local and regional level.

With regard to the municipality of Palmas-TO, the OP was implemented in that municipality in May 2005, and regulated through Decree number 132/2007, which highlights the objective of sharing public policy decisions with the population of this city (BAZOLLI, 2012, p. 154-155).

However, there are no academic studies that specifically deal with public planning open to civil society participation in the city of Palmas-TO in the period demarcated for this investigation. It was then, in view of this situation that the question of this study originated, namely: how far did the civil society of Palmas, capital of Tocantins State, participate, together with the government of this municipality, in the preparation of the PPAs, in the period from 2013 to 2019?

Thus, from this questioning the macro objective of this work was structured, which is to analyze the contribution of civil society in the preparation of the PPAs of the Municipal Government of Palmas-TO, in the period from 2013 to 2019; which was broken down into the specific targets that follow: to verify which actors participated in the preparation of the planning of the Municipal Government of Palmas-TO, in that period of time; investigate whether civil society took part in this public policy making process through direct democracy; analyze the steps followed in the formulation of this planning until its approval at the City Council, within the time frame demarcated for this investigation and, finally, identify the level of influence of civil society in this process.

Thus, it can be seen, based on the bibliographic research carried out by this study, that the field of scientific research in the area of the exercise of participatory democracy in city planning is quite fertile and can serve as support to leverage the development of cities and their regions. This is one of the justifications for undertaking an investigation like this.

Furthermore, this research was motivated by the concern with creation and with the other phases through which public policies pass, more closely with the direct involvement, in this dynamic, of the actors for whom these policies are produced, that is, those who can contribute with the practical knowledge essential for the growth of the places where these actions are applied.

So, this article was structured in three parts, in addition to this introduction and the final considerations. The first opens space for the following reflections: the relationships between the PPA, the Budget Guidelines Law (Lei de Diretrizes Orçamentárias - LDO) and the Annual Budget Law (Lei Orçamentária Annual - LOA); it briefly addresses the concept of the public sphere and civil society and, still, in this section the theoretical path followed in the research is pointed out. In its turn, the second part of this study addresses the methodology used. Then, the third section of this work presents the description and analysis of the data.

THEORETICAL BASIS

Public Planning and Budgeting

Public planning and budgeting are inseparable processes, since they comprise parts of a larger project, whose application ranges from the identification of problems in the social environment to the choice and implementation of solutions in the form of public policies, aiming to meet the needs of life in society and, also, its development. These processes of public planning and budgeting are composed of the following parts, in the form of laws, which complement each other: the PPA, which is valid for four years, the LDO and the LOA, both are valid for one year.

Following this reasoning, Garcia (2000) and De Toni (2002) clarify that the LDO has the function of intermediating the connection between the plans established in the PPA and in the LOA. In fact, it is at the budget stage, that is, during the preparation of the LOA, that the guarantee, in economic terms, of the execution of the actions fixed for in these plans is provided.

Based on this presupposition, this study addresses the participation of civil society in the multi-annual planning process, considering this as the macro stage of public policy planning, which becomes complete with the sum of the contributions from the LDO and the LOA. Therefore, the planning and public budgeting process at the federal, state and municipal levels aims at producing public actions that can guarantee the development of the most appropriate solutions to the pressing problems of society, in addition to creating conditions for growth in the most diverse areas, such as the social, economic, environmental and educational fields.

Public sphere and civil society

Thus, in this context of public planning, the public sphere is a different space from the State's own environment, in which people interact directly with each other. In this space, individuals discuss the decisions made by political representatives, and comment on issues inherent to life in society, in addition to presenting demands to be met by the State (AVRITZER, 2000; LÜCHMANN, 2002).

The concept of civil society that was discussed and idealized in different ways and scope by great theorists such as Hegel, Marx and Gramsci until it reached the current composition, arose from the dichotomy between civil society and the State, this means that theoretically the first term comprises a space not belonging to the one delimited for the second and vice versa (BOBBIO, 1982). Thus, the State is understood as the political organism that manages and regulates life in society.

Accordingly, the understanding of the term civil society points to the fact that it encompasses people from a community who do not exercise public functions as representatives of the State at any of its levels of composition. So, it can be highlighted that the public sphere is the environment where civil society acts, demanding from public power, solutions to problems or needs of the community.

Theoretical conduct of this research

In order to understand the participatory process in the preparation of the PPA, this research has Avritzer (2003) as one of its sources of theoretical basis, since this author seeks to analyze different modalities of civil society participation in the cities' budget, having as reference the OP in the city of Porto Alegre-RS, pioneer in the implementation of this type of democratic institutionalism. Then, as already emphasized, the PPA and the budget are interconnected instruments of governance through which the planning of public policies is registered, although these instruments are instituted by different laws and have different periods of validity.

Therefore, in the conception of Avritzer (2003, p. 19), the OP allows the discussion of "... an increase in participation in the decision on the distribution of budgetary resources; increased access to public resources and rights; an increase in the capacity to decide and a certain ability to determine the rule of the deliberative process".

From this perspective, popular participation in budgets and also in municipal public PPAs can enable greater engagement of civil society in government projects and in public policy decisions, especially with regard to access to social rights by citizens. In this context, actors who are not directly part of government bureaucracy, acting through the public sphere, have the power to influence decisions about public actions that can promote local and regional development.

According to Avritzer (2002, p. 576), another benchmark for this research, the OP, based on the precursor experiences of Porto Alegre-RS and Belo Horizonte-MG, includes: "... social actors, members of associations and ordinary citizens in a negotiation and deliberation process divided into two stages: a first stage in which the participation of civil society is direct and a second stage in which participation occurs through a council of delegates".

Thus, it is inferred that the construction of municipal planning through a participatory process, according to the model of the cities mentioned, involves a process in which at first the direct exercise of democracy should set the tone for the deliberations; in a second stage, civil society internally elects its representatives who, in practice, will be responsible for forwarding and defending the demands to be included in the planning.

So, the theoretical model proposed by Archon Fung called *the democracy cube* was used in this work because it adapts to the study of the democratic institutional object based on participation, as it is the case of this investigation. According to this analytical scheme, there are three dimensions that represent a more or less participatory decision-making process, namely: *participants*, which indicates who can participate; *communication and decision modes*, which shows how information and decision making are shared, and *the extension of authority and power*, which is the practical result of a participatory dynamic (FUNG, 2006, p. 141).

METHODOLOGY

This investigation follows the parameters of descriptive research, with a predominantly qualitative approach.

According to Gil (2002) and, Prodanov and Freitas (2013), the function of descriptive research is to underline the characteristics of an object of study, whether it is a phenomenon or a population, or even to enable the connection between variables.

In relation to qualitative research, Flick (2004) clarifies that this method should be geared to real situations, based on local and temporal singularities, as well as on the expressions and exercises of people in their places of operation. In this line of thought Prodanov and Freitas (2013) assert that qualitative research enables the understanding of the object to be investigated without dissociating it from the medium with which it interacts and generates multiple meanings. Therefore, this method fits this study.

Procedures of this study

In addition to being descriptive and having a preferentially qualitative approach, this work is also a case study, based on documentary research, semi-structured interviews and data triangulation.

Case studies are usually seen as a procedure that fits well with a range of preferences, in case the research suggests questions such as "how" and "why", when the investigator has little control over the occurrences and when what one intends to research is something of the present time within its real environment (YIN, 2001, p. 19).

Another procedure used by this study was documentary research, which enabled the collection of data about the actors who participated in the planning of the Municipal Government of Palmas-TO, in the period from 2013 to 2019. This collection of documentary data took place from December 2018 to August 2019.

The semi-structured interview was also applied in this investigation. This method has been disseminated in the academic environment and this trend is linked to the fact that it is believed that better quality data for research can be collected through interviews that offer a margin to be increased at the time of application (DUARTE, 2002, p. 141; FLICK, 2004, p. 89).

The number of interviews was defined by the saturation criterion. So, this criterion was used according to the clarification proposed by Duarte (2002) and Fontanella et al (2011), these authors point out that the limit for the number of interviews is demarcated when repetitive information, which is not representative for the research, appears.

The decision about which people to interview was made based on the trial sampling proposed by Barbetta (2012), who defends the choice of the representative elements of the population to be researched. In addition to this procedure, it was also used in this research the criterion for selecting respondents through the method called snowball. Vinuto (2014, p. 203) classifies this method as non-probabilistic and that it is based on a network of references.

Then, the data of this research were described and analyzed based on Bardin (1977) who asserts that the information collected for the investigation needs to go through a pre-analysis. At this stage of the study, the researcher processes the choice of documents to be analyzed and then creates a type of categorization based on the information extracted from these documents, that is, he/she establishes groups of data that are similar. In this sense, it was used the analytical scheme of Fung (2006) called *the democracy cube*, already stressed in the theoretical basis.

During this analysis process, data triangulation was also incorporated into this study, a method defined by Martins (2006) and, Prodanov and Freitas (2013) as an investigation in which information obtained from different sources is compared, this effort being required to have more persuasive and more reliable data.

DATA ANALYSIS AND DESCRIPTION

PPA-P of Palmas-TO for the period from 2014 to 2017 – In-person Meetings

The information described in this section is the result of documentary research and was extracted from the report called Palmas Participa, from the PPA-P 2014-2017 (MUNICIPAL DE MUNICIPAL DE PALMAS-TO, 2013a) and also from reports of the thematic meetings of this PPA produced during this planning (PREFEITURA MUNICIPAL DE PALMAS-TO, 2013b).

Thus, the interaction between the municipal government and civil society in the construction of the PPA 2014-2017 took place through five public hearings, each composed of four thematic meetings that occurred simultaneously, namely: *social development and human rights* (1);

entrepreneurial economy and quality of life (2); public management and social participation (3) and; urban and rural development - infrastructure, accessibility, mobility and urban and rural planning (4). So that, after the opening event of the hearings, these four thematic rooms were formed and people from the community had the possibility of choosing the theme to participate in the discussions on public policies (PREFEITURA MUNICIPAL DE PALMAS-TO, 2013a, p. 13).

So, the means of publicizing these public hearings were communication tools used by the Government of Palmas-TO such as folder, sound car, invitation, banner on the City Hall website, on social networks, among other means (PREFEITURA MUNICIPAL DE PALMAS-TO, 2013a).

There was no documentary evidence that meetings were held, with openness for civil society participation, for reviewing the PPA, for preparing the LDO or for making the LOA, for the period from 2014 to 2017.

The chart that follows shows the summary of participation in the five public hearings for the preparation of the PPA 2014-2017.

Chart 01: Summary of participation in the PPA 2014-2017, in-person mode.

Public hearings / Regions	Number of participants	Number of civil society proposals	Number of members of civil society who express themselves verbally
First Hearing - General Region	311	239	69
Second Hearing - Central Region	28	48	14
Third Hearing - North Region	97	72	23
Fourth Hearing - South Region	163	144	49
Fifth Hearing - Taquaruçu and Buritirana	78	68	22
Total	677	571	177

Source: Prepared by the authors, based on Prefeitura Municipal de Palmas-TO (2013a; 2013b).

The first public hearing to collect proposals to be placed in the PPA 2014-2017 took place on August 17th, 2013, at São Francisco School, located in block 108 north. This plenary session was the one with the largest number of participants, with 311 (three hundred and eleven) people, comprising representatives of the municipal government and members of civil society. The area covered by this audience was called the *general region*, which comprises the entire municipality (PREFEITURA MUNICIPAL DE PALMAS-TO, 2013a).

The second hearing occurred on August 19th, 2013, at Municipal School Antônio Carlos Jobim, in block 1,206 south. 28 (twenty-eight) people attended this event. The territory covered by this plenary was called the *central region*. Among the plenary sessions for the elaboration of the PPA 2014-2017, this second was the one that received the fewest participants (MUNICIPALITY OF PALMAS-TO, 2013a).

Then, in this second participative moment of the PPA 2014-2017 there was a drastic decrease in the number of participants, which fell 91% (ninety-one percent) in relation to the first plenary. However, the number of proposals per participant on that occasion was 1.71 (one point seven one), higher than the previous event, which was 0.76 (zero point seven six).

Concerning the third public hearing of the PPA 2014-2017, this took place on August 31st, 2013, at Municipal School Beatriz Rodrigues, block 405 north. This event was attended by 97 (ninety-seven) people, and 23 (twenty-three) of them produced 72 (seventy-two) public action proposals. In turn, the area covered by this plenary was called the *northern region* (PREFEITURA MUNICIPAL DE PALMAS-TO, 2013a; 2013b).

This third plenary session showed an increase in the number of participants compared to the second, but it did not reach one third of the number of attendees of the first audience. The number of requests per participant was the lowest among these first three events, that is, 0.74 (zero point seven four).

With regard to the fourth public hearing for the participatory construction of the PPA 2014-2017, this event was held on September 14th, 2013, at the Full-time Municipal School Eurídice de Melo, in the Jardim Aurenny III neighborhood. This event was attended by 163 (one hundred and sixty-three) people among members of the municipal government and representatives of the community. The area covered by this plenary was called the *southern region* (PREFEITURA MUNICIPAL DE PALMAS-TO, 2013a).

Thus, the numbers of this fourth event clarify that there was an increase in the number of attendees in relation to the second and third plenary sessions, however there was a decrease of 48% (forty-eight percent) in comparison with the first. On this occasion, the number of demands per participant was 0.88 (zero point eight eight).

For its part, the fifth and last public hearing for the composition of the PPA 2014–2017 in the municipality of Palmas, State of Tocantins, was carried out at the Full-time Municipal School Crispim Pereira de Alencar, in Taquaruçu, on September 21st, 2013. This audience gathered 78 (seventy-eight) participants, comprising members of the municipal government and people from the civilian population. The area covered by this plenary was named *Taquaruçu and Buritirana* (PREFEITURA MUNICIPAL DE PALMAS-TO, 2013a).

Indeed, there was a decrease in the total number of visitors to this fifth plenary session compared to the first, third and fourth, but there was an increase in relation to the second audience. The number of requests per participant remained the same as the fourth hearing.

Although it was not possible to identify precisely, through the documentary data, how many participants were members of civil society present in the plenary sessions of the PPA-P 2014-2017, it is inferred that these represented at least 80% (eighty percent) the number of attendees at these events, based on a thorough analysis of the reports of thematic meetings that contain the registration of the names of the participants and information related to many of these names, such as profession, address and others (PREFEITURA MUNICIPAL DE PALMAS-TO, 2013a; 2013b). Furthermore, it is worth noting that 177 (one hundred and seventy-seven) representatives of civil society expressed themselves verbally at these planning hearings held in 2013, proposing or defending public policy ideas; this corresponds to 26% (twenty-six percent) of the total number of participants in these events.

PPA-P of Palmas-TO for the period from 2014 to 2017 - Participation through the Internet

In addition to the five public planning hearings under analysis, another step was taken to collect suggestions for public policies from civil society. This step took place through virtual means, that is, the address ppaparticipativo.palmas.to.gov was made available by the Municipal Government of Palmas-TO to carry out this collection, from August 19th, 2013 to September 29th, 2013 (MUNICIPAL MUNICIPALITY OF PALMAS-TO, 2013a).

Thus, citizens were able to express their suggestions for demands to be resolved through public policies by accessing this virtual page. Then, each person had the opportunity to submit 5 (five) suggestions: 3 (three) for specific regions and 2 (two) in general for the city (PREFEITURA MUNICIPAL DE PALMAS-TO, 2013a). Hence, the participants of this modality of the PPA 2014-2017 contributed with 130 (one hundred and thirty) ideas to solve public issues.

Therefore, during the face-to-face plenary sessions and virtual participation in the preparation of the PPA 2014-2017, among the areas for which most public policies were indicated, the following stand out: infrastructure; education; health; mobility and security. The sectors that received the fewest requests were culture and sports (PREFEITURA MUNICIPAL DE PALMAS-TO, 2013a; 2013b). Then, several areas relevant to the development of the local community were included among the most in demand by civil society. Subsequently, public actions arising from the participatory process under examination that were included in the PPA 2014-2017 were identified by the acronym PPA-P (PALMAS-TO, 2014).

PPA-P of Palmas-TO for the period from 2018 to 2021 – In-person Meetings

The information reported in this section was obtained directly from the minutes of the public hearings (PREFECTURE MUNICIPAL DE PALMAS-TO, 2017a), carried out for the preparation of the PPA 2018-2021, recorded by technicians from the planning sector of the Municipality of Palmas-TO.

Furthermore, based on the data from these minutes, it was found that, during the hearings for the construction of the PPA 2018-2021, there was an opening for the participation of the population of the municipality of Palmas-TO and representatives of various segments of society.

The method of organizing these hearings was based on the division by thematic areas, with the holding of four plenary sessions in the northern (1), southern (2), Aurenys and Taquaralto (3) and, Taquaruçu and Buritirana (4) regions; from August 5th, 2017 to September 26th, 2017. Each audience was divided into seven meetings according to the following thematic areas, which occurred

simultaneously in separate rooms of the same public place: *agriculture and aquaculture, economic development, entrepreneurship and tourism* (1); *education* (2); *health* (3); *social assistance, culture, youth, sports and leisure, social inclusion, defense of human rights and citizen security* (4); *infrastructure* (5); *modern, transparent and participative management* (6) and; *housing, environment, mobility and accessibility, urban planning and development* (7). Participants were able to choose the topic they would participate in.

Therefore, the way of organizing hearings with openness for civil society participation in the preparation of this PPA was similar to the structure of the plenary sessions for the construction of the PPA 2014-2017, with the exception of the number of thematic areas and public plenary sessions; whereas in PPA 2018 -2021 seven topics were discussed in each of the four hearings, in the previous PPA four thematic axes were discussed repeatedly in five plenary sessions.

Nonetheless, there were differences between these two participatory planning cycles, because during the hearings for the preparation of the PPA 2018-2021, the decision-making strategy on the public policy proposals that became priorities in these events was, in large part, carried out through the vote of most participants in the respective thematic rooms, while in the plenary sessions of construction of the previous multi-annual planning this method was not used.

In fact, there is no documentary evidence that meetings were held with openness for the participation of civil society in the preparation of the LDO and LOA, for the period from 2017 to 2019, nor in the review of the PPA, except the highlight in the minutes of the 2017 hearings stating that these public meetings were intended to prepare the PPA 2018-2021 and the LOA 2018.

The chart that follows presents the summary of the amount of participation in the set of these plenary sessions of the PPA-P under analysis.

Chart 02: Summary of participation in the four public hearings of the PPA 2018-2021 held, respectively, on 08/05/2017, 08/12/2017, 08/19/2017 and 08/26/2017.

Public Hearing / Regions	Number of civil society members	Number of members of the municipal government	Number of civil society proposals	Number of proposals from the municipal government	Number of members of civil society who express themselves verbally
First hearing - South region	181	40	103	234	83
Second hearing - North Region	93	32	50	242	42
Third hearing - Aurenys and Taquaralto	88	39	24	189	28
Fourth hearing - Taquaruçu and Buritirana	60	34	19	191	24
Total	422	145	196	856	177

Source: Prepared by the authors, based on Prefeitura Municipal de Palmas-TO (2017a).

The first public hearing for the preparation of the PPA 2018-2021 with opening for civil society collaboration happened on August 5th, 2017, at the Full-Time Municipal School Almirante Tamandaré, located in block 1,304 south, Avenue NS-04, South Master Plan and it had the participation of 181 (one hundred and eighty-one) people from civil society, and 40 (forty) technicians from the municipal government. In total, there were 103 (one hundred and three) public policy proposals from civil society and 234 (two hundred and thirty-four) from the municipal government.

So, from this first public hearing, it was found that the number of participants that were members of the civilian population was greater than that of the other plenary sessions, and that the number of proposals suggested by this type of actor for the PPA 2018-2021 was relatively insignificant compared to the quantity of public policies defended by the actors of the municipal government. Regarding the members of civil society that effectively participated in proposing ideas

for public actions, it is understood that 46% (forty-six percent) of the members of the civilian population who attended this first plenary session are part of this group.

In relation to the second public hearing for the preparation of the PPA 2018-2021, it took place on August 12th, 2017, at the Full-time Municipal School Padre Josimo Moraes Tavares, located at block 301 north, Avenue LO 09, North Master Plan. This public plenary session was attended by 93 (ninety-three) members of civil society and 32 (thirty-two) members of the municipal administration. At this hearing, 50 (fifty) proposals for public actions were exposed by civil society and 242 (two hundred and forty-two) by the municipal government.

However, it was observed that one of the thematic meetings of this second plenary session was not held, the one that deals with the theme of *agriculture and aquaculture, economic development, entrepreneurship and tourism*, because nobody chose to attend it. The percentage of people from civil society who expressed themselves verbally proposing solutions to collective problems in the context of this second public hearing, in the same way that occurred in the first plenary session, did not exceed 50% (fifty percent) of the total attendees of this group of actors.

The third public hearing for the construction of the PPA 2018-2021 was held on August 19th, 2017, at the Full-time Municipal School Anísio Spinola Teixeira, located at Avenue Antônio Sampaio, APM 07, Bertaville neighborhood, south of Palmas-TO. This plenary session was attended by 88 (eighty-eight) people from civil society and 39 (thirty-nine) technicians from the municipal government. The number of public policy proposals put forward on that occasion was 213 (two hundred and thirteen), comprising 24 (twenty-four) suggestions from the civilian population and 189 (one hundred and eighty-nine) from the municipal administration.

Weaving a parallel between the number of civil society attendees in the first three hearings of the PPA 2018-2021, it is inferred that there was a decrease in this number by approximately 51% (fifty-one percent) from the first to the second plenary session and 5.3% (five point three percent), from the second to the third. It is also understood that only 31% (thirty-one percent) of this group of actors proposed actions to solve public problems at the time of this third hearing.

On the occasion of this third plenary, two of the thematic planning meetings did not take place because no members of civil society opted to attend them. These were the meetings about *agriculture and aquaculture, economic development, entrepreneurship and tourism* (1) and; *social assistance, culture, youth, sports and leisure, social inclusion and defense of human rights* (2).

The fourth and last public hearing for the preparation of the PPA 2018-2021 was put into practice on August 26th, 2017, at the Full-time Municipal School Crispim Pereira de Alencar, located at Street 7th, on the corner of 1st Avenue, number 07, in the Taquaruçu district. This event was attended by 60 (sixty) members of civil society and 34 (thirty-four) employees of the Municipality of Palmas-TO. At this juncture, 210 (two hundred and ten) proposals for public actions emerged, breaking down into 19 (nineteen) suggestions from civil society and 191 (one hundred and ninety-one) from the municipal administration. This fourth plenary session had the lowest participation of civil society among all public face-to-face hearings held to build the PPA 2018-2021.

Analyzing the number of members of civil society who witnessed each of the four public plenary sessions of the PPA 2018-2021, it is inferred that there was a constant reduction in numbers from the second hearing to the fourth.

PPA-P of Palmas-TO for the period from 2018 to 2021 - Participation through the Internet

The data that make up the information presented in this topic comes from the report about the preparation of the PPA 2018-2021 (PREFEITURA MUNICIPAL DE PALMAS-TO, 2017b). Data were also collected from the electronic address participa.palmas.to.gov.br, maintained by the Municipality of Palmas-TO, which enabled the participation of civil society in the preparation of the PPA under analysis through Internet access (PREFEITURA MUNICIPAL DE PALMAS-TO, 2017c).

Thus, this page on the Internet was made available to the population, which allowed the insertion of contributions between July 14th, 2017 and September 10th, 2017, with the aim of allowing civil society to contribute to the choice of public policy priorities to be included in the PPA 2018-2021 (PREFEITURA MUNICIPAL DE PALMAS-TO, 2017b; 2017c).

During the period in which this virtual tool was accessible to receive data, 165 (one hundred and sixty-five) questionnaires were answered. So, the number of public actions requested by civil society for PPA 2018-2021 through the Internet was 391 (three hundred and ninety-one), many of which were repeated by more than one of the participants (PREFEITURA MUNICIPAL DE PALMAS-TO, 2017b; 2017c).

With regard to the areas for which civil society proposed more public actions in the PPA 2018-2021 plenary sessions, in the face-to-face and virtual modes, strategic areas for the structural development of the municipality stand out, such as environment, health and infrastructure. However, the field of education, also fundamental to the city's prosperity, which in the PPA-P 2014-2017 was one of the most demanding, now ranks among those that received the least requests. In fact, the public actions that emerged from the participatory process that took place in 2017 and that were included in the PPA 2018-2021 continued to be identified by the acronym PPA-P, as happened in the previous multi-annual planning (PREFEITURA MUNICIPAL DE PALMAS-TO, 2017a; 2017b; PALMAS-TO, 2018a).

Application of the Semi-Structured Interview

The sample of this research consisted of 18 (eighteen) members of civil society and 17 (seventeen) representatives of the municipal administration, comprising a total of 35 (thirty-five) interviewees. It is important to highlight that most of the research informants participated in more than one public hearing on the studied plans.

The interviews were conducted from July/2019 to August/2019. After the collection, each interview was listened to and carefully analyzed, and subsequently the transcription and categorization of this material was carried out, according to the methodological forecast.

Thus, the following chart explains how many respondents from the two groups defined for the research worked on one or both plans.

Chart 03: Number of respondents by participation in the PPAs 2014-2017 and 2018-2021.

Interviewed members of civil society who participated in the public hearings of ...			Interviewed members of the municipal government who participated in the public hearings of ...		
PPA 2014-2017 only	PPA 2018-2021 only	two PPAs	PPA 2014-2017 only	PPA 2018-2021 only	two PPAs
8	2	8	2	12	3

Source: Prepared by the authors, based on data collected through interviews.

PPA-P 2014-2017: interview data versus documentary records

The 21 (twenty-one) respondents participating in the participatory process of building the PPA 2014-2017, including members of the community and those of the municipal administration, confirmed that there were public hearings for the construction of this plan under analysis in 2013 with the participation of members of civil society, corroborating the information recorded in writing during this process. Regarding the number of plenary sessions of this planning, half of the participants stated that between 4 (four) and 5 (five) of these events were held, while the other interviewees only knew that there were several public hearings. So, the information obtained through the interviews does not contradict what was found in the documentary sources.

PPA-P 2018-2021: interview data versus documentary records

Regarding the functioning of this participatory institutionality practiced in 2017, there are no divergences between the information about the same content contained in the documentary sources and that obtained through the interviews. It was found that the official registration of this process was more structured than that made for the PPA-P 2014-2017. The specific documentation for each meeting of the participatory planning process of PPA 2018-2021 was transcribed in the form of minutes and with a lot of information, while the records of civil society participation in the previous PPA were made through simple reports, which in many cases contain only the name of the thematic axis, the identification of the person responsible for the notes, the names of the participants and the summary of the proposals made by them.

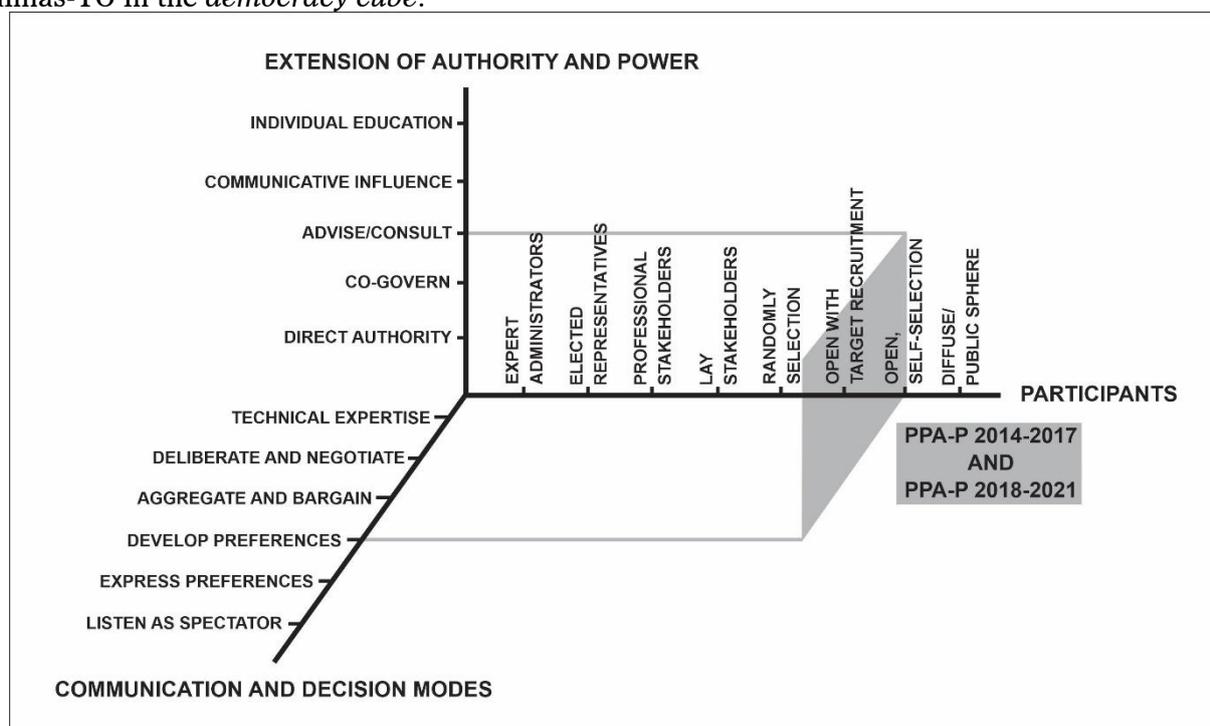
However, it is worth highlighting a relevant aspect for the research that was perceived by few of the interviewees, namely, the existence of 5 (five) of the 28 (twenty-eight) thematic meetings that made up the 2017 hearings in which there were no members of civil society, this means that there was no participatory process on these five occasions. And, only 3 (three) components of the

municipal administration among all respondents demonstrated knowledge this reality. In this case, the documentary sources were decisive for proving such information.

Representation of PPA-Ps 2014-2017 and 2018-2021 in the Democracy Cube

It was found that the performance of these two participatory processes in each of the axes of the *democracy cube* was quite similar, that is why these instruments of participation in planning were projected in the same figure of this theoretical model by Fung (2006).

Figure 1: Representation of the PPA-Ps 2014-2017 and 2018-2021 of the Municipal Government of Palmas-TO in the *democracy cube*.



Source: Adapted by the authors, based on Fung (2006).

The performance equivalence of these two participatory institutions characterized by the Fung model, as represented in figure 1, may have been a consequence of the non-occurrence of sudden changes in the governance of the Municipality of Palmas-TO during the realization of these two processes. In fact, the leadership of the political power of this municipality continued the same in the period from January 1st, 2013 to April 3rd, 2018, a time interval that coincides with the processing of the plans under analysis (PREFEITURA MUNICIPAL DE PALMAS- TO, 2013c; 2017d; PALMAS-TO, 2018b).

Thus, anchored in the information collected by this research, it is noted that the participatory governance exercised by the plenary sessions, in the face-to-face and virtual modes, for preparing both the PPA 2014-2017 and the PPA 2018-2021, reached in the *participants* axis the *open, self-selection* mechanism, as can be seen in figure 1. This positioning is justified because, even though there was no widespread dissemination of these plenaries and the number of attendees was not large, there was no restriction on participation or selection of a specific group of people, which is close to what Fung (2006) defends. For that author, the framing of a participatory institutionality in this category requires that there is no obstacle to the access of participants, leaving the decision to participate exclusively under their own responsibility.

Still, according to Fung (2006), the vast majority of people who participate in participatory institutions such as public planning plenaries do so without expressing their own views. Thus, they do not participate in decision-making and, consequently, they are not able to directly influence the effectiveness of the decisions taken.

In the case of the two PPA-Ps of the Municipality of Palmas-TO studied, as represented in Figure 1, they achieved a participatory mechanism of communicative intensity that does not allow them to be included in a part of this forecast by Fung (2006). Whereas, in the hearings for the

preparation of PPA 2014-2017 and PPA 2018-2021, respectively, 26% (twenty-six percent) of the total number of attendees and 42% (forty-two percent) of civil society participants expressed their opinions on these opportunities for interaction. It is believed that this performance corroborates the classification expressed in figure 1, with regard to the *communication and decision modes* axis.

However, this level of interaction among members of civil society was not sufficient to move any of the mechanisms of direct influence on decision-making power contained in the *extension of authority and power* axis. This must have occurred because participation was not exercised during all stages of the preparation of these two plans, but was restricted to the initial stage, when the public plenary sessions were held. Thus, the decision about which public policies to include in the multi-annual plans under study was exercised by municipal political and administrative authorities, even though these managers have been indirectly influenced in their deliberations and many public actions demanded by civil society participants have been recorded in these plans.

It is worth noting that 116 (one hundred and sixteen) public policies, among those drafted or supported by civil society, were included in the PPA of the Municipal Government of Palmas-TO with effect until 2017 and 48 (forty-eight), in the subsequent plan. Although PPA 2018-2021 had 68 (sixty-eight) PPA-P policies less than the previous plan, this does not indicate that the role of civil society in it was lesser than that in PPA 2014-2017, since planning with validity until 2021 exceeded its antecedent by 11% (eleven percent), when comparing the percentages foreseen, in these plans, of spending on public policies of participatory origin. This reinforces the idea that these two democratic institutions reached the same position within the *democracy cube* of Fung (2006), according to the *extension of authority and power* indicated in figure 1, that is, the mechanism for *advise/consult* (PALMAS-TO, 2014; 2018a).

Thus, important public policies for the development of Palmas-TO, proposed or defended by civil society, were placed in the two plans investigated by this study. Among these actions included in the PPA 2014-2017, the following stand out: construction of health posts; implementation of primary and elementary schools; support for rural producers with agricultural mechanization; support for solid waste management; maintenance and improvement of urban roads and attracting events that generate tourist flow.

Among the actions that emerged from the participatory process in 2017 and included in the PPA 2018-2021, which are also relevant to strengthening the city, the following can be highlighted: promotion of fish production; construction of artesian wells; permanent and continuous training of professionals in early childhood and elementary education; maintenance of sidewalks and cycle paths; construction of housing units for low-income people and the continuation of the execution of several PPA-P actions from the previous multi-annual planning.

Also, in order to verify if the participation of the civil society occurred in other stages of construction of the multi-annual plans under analysis besides the public hearings, during the interviews of people from the two research groups they were asked if, during these planning processes, there were representative structures of civil society in the form of advisers or delegates to monitor the other stages of preparing these plans. The vast majority of respondents stated that this type of representation did not exist, which corroborates with the information extracted from documentary sources. Thus, in these two PPA-Ps investigated, a second stage did not take place, which according to Avritzer (2002) normally occurs in participatory processes like these, in which the participants are represented by a council.

Also in this perspective, although it is outside the scope of this research, the information provided by 4 (four) interviewed members of civil society can be relevant, who stated that in 2012 and in previous years this representative structure composed of councilors and delegates was used in the planning of the Municipal Government of Palmas-TO, when the OP was practiced, which is in line with what Bazolli (2012) points out, as already mentioned in the introduction. So, although this subject needs further study, there is already an indication that there has been a process of marked change in public planning in this municipality since 2013.

FINAL REMARKS

It is argued that the general objective of this research was achieved, given that under the guidance of specific actions to be carried out it was possible to describe and verify the role of civil society in the public planning process of the Municipality of Palmas-TO in the period from 2013 to 2019.

Thus, the first of the four targets to be reached in the search for the answer to the question that motivated this research confirmed the existence of two main groups of actors that had an influence on the public planning of the municipality of Palmas-TO, in the interval of time delimited for this study. These groups are: members of the municipal government, who defended public actions of the preference of the leader of the executive branch and of his advisors and supporters and; members of civil society, who supported, within their power of action, the public sphere, the solution to legitimate problems faced by the population, in the form of a huge variety of practical ideas that can influence local development.

Regarding the second specific objective, although the search for the previous target has already made it possible to obtain information that civil society was present in the PPA-P of the Municipal Government of Palmas-TO, in two cycles of this planning, it was necessary to establish one more goal in the same sense, but that went further, clarifying the intricacies of this participation. Thus, it became clear that the civilian population participated directly in a democratic planning exercise through public face-to-face and virtual plenary sessions.

In relation to the third path taken by this investigation towards its macro objective, it was found that the organization of the two participatory planning processes analyzed followed similar methods, composed basically of public plenary sessions with thematic rooms under the coordination of technicians from the municipal administration, with space for members of the community to interact with each other in discussions; and resources for sending demands for public actions over the Internet. However, these plans presented characteristics that differentiate them in some points, such as: in the division of subjects for discussion at meetings; and in the use of voting to choose priorities, a method practiced in one of the interaction processes, and in the number of plenary sessions used.

Furthermore, it was verified that the participation of members of civil society in these two planning cycles was restricted to the period when public hearings were held and the time when access to the submission of contributions via virtual medium was available. After the end of the execution of these two participatory procedures, there was no opening for the involvement of the civilian population in the other stages of preparation of the PPA 2014-2017, nor of the PPA 2018-2021.

Thus, it is defended the idea that there was no OP practice in the municipality of Palmas-TO, in the period from 2013 to 2019, participatory institutionality (AVRITZER, 2003) that occurred in the cities of Porto Alegre-RS, from 1989 to 2002, and Belo Horizonte-MG, in 2002. Indeed, the participatory modality applied by the Municipal Government of Palmas-TO in the time interval demarcated for this study was the so-called PPA-P, as already demonstrated in the data analysis.

Therefore, it is considered that the last and decisive objective of this study was carried out satisfactorily, which led to the achievement of the greater attribution of this research, that is to know what was the contribution of civil society in the two planning processes under examination. So, it is inferred, above all, based on the use of the mechanisms (FUNG, 2006) that form the *democracy cube*, as already demonstrated, that the two participatory processes of construction of the multi-annual plans object of this study, put into practice, respectively, in 2013 and 2017, reached the level of communicative intensity, however they did not reach the decisive level in the *communication and decision modes*, where are located *collective aggregate and bargain* (1), *deliberate and negotiate* (2) and, *technical expertise* (3).

When referring to the practical results obtained through the participation of members of the civil society of the city of Palmas-TO in the preparation of the two multi-annual plans included in the time interval demarcated for this research, having as a parameter for this the concretization of the inclusion of public actions from this interaction in the respective plans; both made it possible to exercise authority indirectly, that is, the extent of their classification on the axis (FUNG, 2006) *extension of authority and power* did not manage to move the mechanisms with the force of direct decision practice, namely: *co-govern* and *direct authority*.

That said, it is maintained that the performance of members of civil society in the construction of the PPAs 2014-2017 and 2018-2021 of the Municipal Government of Palmas-TO was positive, although these people participated in a small number and with access only to the first stage of carrying out these processes, namely, in-person and virtual public hearings, and for a period of less than two months. However, there was the acceptance, in these plans, of many public actions idealized or defended by these actors, as already proven in this work. Nevertheless, this occurred not due to the direct participation of civil society in the decisions taken in these contexts, but through

guidelines and suggestions offered by those who regularly face the realities where public policies should be applied. In situations like these, generally, the representatives of the public administration (FUNG, 2006) receive, directly from the population, support on public issues that are poorly understood or not perceived by them.

Finally, it is pointed out that one of the initial steps to improve the functioning of democratic public planning institutions, dynamics capable of helping to create solutions for the development of a locality or region, may be the knowledge of how they have been practiced and their impacts on decisions about public policies. It is in this context that this work can be included as a source of contribution.

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