

DEMOCRATIZATION OF EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS: structuring elements of an action plan mobilizing democratic management for an inclusive curriculum

DEMOCRATIZAÇÃO DOS SISTEMAS EDUCACIONAIS: elementos estruturantes de um plano de ação mobilizador da gestão democrática para um currículo inclusivo

DEMOCRATIZACIÓN DE LOS SISTEMAS EDUCATIVOS: elementos estructurantes de un plan de acción para movilizar la gestión democrática en favor de un currículo inclusivo

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ABSTRACT:

The article looks at the management of educational systems, highlighting the conceptions of managerial and democratic-participatory administration. As a starting point, it problematizes the tension between managerialism and the democratization of educational systems and schools and its impact on Municipal Education Systems (SME). The aim, based on the problematization in question, was to identify the aspects - strategic-managerial or democratic-participatory - that underpin the management process of EMSs, in general, and as an illustration of the study, the repercussions for the educational system of Lagoa da Confusão/Tocantins in institutional perception. The result of the study was the understanding that: educational systems are in the process of being set up and, consequently, the EMSs are also in the process of being institutionalized and managed; the management of the EMSs in question encounters various obstacles to its implementation from a democratic perspective that can contribute to the development and implementation of an educational process that provides quality teaching. In view of the obstacles presented, an action plan was drawn up illustrating the educational system in Lagoa da Confusão, with the aim of effectively contributing to the democratization of EMS management in Tocantins.

KEYWORDS: Educational System; Democratic Management; SME of Lagoa da Confusão/Tocantins; Democratic-Participatory Action Plan; Curriculum and Quality Teaching.

Introduction

This article results from and is part of a study carried out by the authors in 2022 as part of the Professional Postgraduate Program in Education at the Federal University of

Tocantins (UFT). The text cuts out and deepens the aforementioned study and, as an illustration, highlights the theoretical and practical aspects that underpin the management process of the Municipal Education System (SME) of Lagoa da Confusão/TO, while at the same time indicating a concrete framework of dimensions and indicators for drawing up an action plan necessary to make democratic management effective.

In these terms, we sought to learn about the historical situation and functioning of municipal education systems, explaining the tension between managerial and democratic perspectives. Next, we analyzed the existing documents on the institutionalization of the Lagoa da Confusão EMS, with emphasis on the Municipal Education Council (CME), the Municipal Education Plan (PME) and the School Pedagogical Political Project (PPP).

The aim of the study is to identify the theoretical and practical aspects - strategic-managerial or democratic-participatory - that underpin the EMS management process in general and, as a concrete illustration, the repercussions for the educational system in Lagoa da Confusão, Tocantins, in terms of institutional perception.

In this sense, the study focused on the axes of struggle surrounding the management of educational systems without losing sight of national legislation and a set of concrete guidelines and indicators for drawing up a democratic-participatory action plan as part of the strategies for democratizing the management of the EMS that are conducive to the realization of a robust and inclusive curriculum and a dialogical teaching-learning process in municipal education.

Relationship between the National Education System and Municipal Education Systems

Reflecting on the unity needed to make Brazilian education effective, Saviani (1996), when discussing the National Education System (SNE) in conjunction with the National Education Plan (PNE), initially conceptualizes the system broadly. According to the author, a system is

product of systematized action, that is, of the human capacity to act intentionally according to previously formulated objectives", "ways of proceeding, of organizing, of arranging the elements of a whole, which refers to the aspect of method" and "the unity of various elements intentionally brought together to form a coherent and operative whole (Saviani, 1996, p. 19).

In the author's line of reasoning, we understand the complexity of a system, in general, to explain the sense of unity that expresses the multiple diversity of systems, as

is the case with education systems. Unity does not have the meaning of integrative standardization, but rather the inclusion of diversity with its own organically articulated characteristics.

Considering the intrinsic relationship between the capitalist social system and educational systems, Saviani (2010, p. 381) explains some of the obstacles preventing the construction of the National Education System:

a) [the] economic obstacles resulting from the historical resistance to maintaining public education in Brazil; b) the political obstacles characterized by discontinuity in public education policies; c) the philosophical-ideological obstacles, that is, the prevalence of pedagogical ideas or mentalities refractory to the organization of education in the form of a national system; d) the legal obstacles materialized in the resistance to incorporating the idea of a National System into our educational legislation.

Taking the general understanding of systems as a starting point, Saviani (2010, p. 381) defines SNE as "the unity of the various educational aspects or services mobilized by a given country, intentionally brought together to form a coherent whole that operates effectively in the process of educating the population of that country". The same author also reiterates that

he system is not a monolithic, undifferentiated unit, but a unity of diversity, a whole that articulates a variety of elements which, when integrated into the whole, do not for this reason lose their own identity; on the contrary, they participate in the whole, integrate the system in the form of their respective specificities (Saviani, 2010, p. 3).

In this way of understanding, as a system, education is regulated by laws, decrees, among other devices that give it systematization. Considering the aforementioned regulations, the SNE is broad and complex and the articulation between the federal, state and municipal spheres is a major challenge to be overcome by educational policies within the municipal education systems.

Regarding the understanding of unity in diversity, Saviani (2010) states that the best way to respect the diversity of different places and regions is to articulate it as part of a historical totality. This understanding makes it possible to defend a Brazilian SNE that enables the theoretical-practical unity that articulates the ideal and material conditions for realization by the municipal, state and federal federated entities.

Giving unity to an SNE requires a set of normative elements, an understanding of a public system, as well as spaces and mechanisms for effective participation; in other words, a system must include the articulation of federated entities and unity in

educational content. In this regard, Saviani (2010, p. 384-387) discusses five positions that must be established for the SNE to come into being:

a) It is a question of building a true National Education System, that is, a unified whole that articulates all aspects of education throughout the country, with common standards valid for the entire national territory and with common procedures aimed at ensuring education with the same standard of quality for the entire population of the country (p. 384).

b) The system can only be public. Therefore, there is no need to compromise on the supposed rights of private individuals to educate; this is about families, associations, congregations, companies and other types of entities, emphasizing the importance of their contribution. Private institutions, in their various forms, will be part of the system precisely as private individuals, and it is in this condition that they will make their specific contribution to the development of Brazilian education (p. 385).

c) The normative and deliberative body of the system will be exercised by a specific body, which today corresponds to the National Education Council (CNE). [...] This is a State body and not a government body. It should therefore enjoy financial and administrative autonomy, as the Legislative and Judiciary powers do (p. 386).

d) In building the National Education System, an architecture must be put in place based on the reference point of the system of collaboration between the Union, the states, the Federal District and the municipalities, all geared towards the same goal of providing education with the same standard of quality for the entire population. Thus, the basic rules that will regulate the functioning of the System will be the responsibility of the Union, embodied in the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education and in the National Education Plan translated and specified by the measures specified within the scope of the National Education Council (p. 386).

e) Finally, one must consider the problem of the content of education to be developed within the whole system. According to the legal documents, starting with the Federal Constitution and the LDB, the purpose of education is the full development of the person, preparation for the exercise of citizenship and qualification for work (p. 387).

The system is therefore the product of systematizing activity and the educational system is the result of a systematized education that needs ideal, human, material, social, political and management conditions from a democratic-participatory perspective for its robust and full realization.

Establishment of the Lagoa da Confusão Municipal Education System

Based on the understanding of the system discussed above, for Oliveira (2008, p. 64) "... new forms of organization and control of the education system have resulted in changes in the working relationships at school ..." in line with the transformations in the world of production in capitalist society, which have had implications for educational policies in general.

From this perspective, the 1988 Federal Constitution (Brazil, 1988) granted municipalities the status of federation entities on a par with the states, the Federal District and the Union, with equal autonomy. As a result, the Constitution established a new model for the federative relationship in the area of education by determining that municipalities must also organize their own education systems in a collaborative manner, as set out in Article 18 of the Constitution.

The equal autonomy guaranteed to the federal entities by the 1988 Constitution implies the replacement of hierarchical relations with horizontal relations between the Union and the sub-national governments. Thus, what used to be a function of the federal government alone, such as planning and deciding, with only the execution being passed on to the states and municipalities, since the 1988 Constitution, has had to take into account solidarity between the federated entities, considering their shared and competing responsibilities within the scope of public policies in the area of education (CNM¹, 2012).

In this context, it must be guaranteed that states and municipalities participate in the formulation and definition of educational policies right from their conception, so that they can overcome the condition of mere spectators and contribute to the construction of new public management proposals, which highlights the importance of the collaboration regime as a guideline for the relationship between the three spheres. Until 1988, municipal education networks and systems were necessarily part of state education systems, which coexisted with the federal system, without constitutional authorization for the organization of municipal systems. Subsequently, this option was expanded and, from the 1990s onwards, municipalities were also authorized to set up their own EMSs.

In accordance with the constitutional text, the 1996 LDB includes among the responsibilities of municipalities the duty to "... organize, maintain and develop the official bodies and institutions of their education systems, integrating them with the educational policies and plans of the Union and the States" (Art. 11, Law No. 9.394/1996). At the same time, the 1996 LDB gives municipalities the option of keeping their network of schools integrated with the respective state education system or composing a single basic education system with the state.

Thus, the municipality that began to organize its own education system, while still assuming shared responsibility for the educational process and being a participant in the system of collaboration between the three levels of government, had greater advantages as a federated entity by assuming its own responsibilities. In theory, by setting up their

¹ CNM - National Confederation of Municipalities: <https://www.cnm.org.br/index.php>.

own education system, municipalities take on numerous responsibilities, but they also build their autonomy. In theory, there are some advantages to the municipal education system:

- ✓ greater autonomy in the management of municipal education, respecting the needs and characteristics of the municipality.
- ✓ speeding up the authorization and accreditation processes of establishments that are part of its education system.
- ✓ expanding the possibilities for discussion, formulation and implementation of educational policies, on an equal footing with the other federated entities.
- ✓ strengthening of local power, enabling proximity to reality, in which community and local dimensions are taken into account when deciding on educational matters.
- ✓ creation of norms that are more appropriate to the socio-cultural context of the municipality, aimed at the curricular and institutional organization of the schools and bodies that make up the education system (CNM, 2012, p. 22).

With this new management configuration, ensured by the regulation of the LDB - Law 9394/1996 - the municipality of Lagoa da Confusão, the empirical base of the study that illustrates this text, tried to standardize its EMS. The municipality in question was emancipated in 1991 and, with its first government installed in 1993, at the time it had a municipal education network made up of 12 schools, whose system was linked to the Tocantins state education system. It then took 19 years for Lagoa da Confusão to set up its own education system.

The municipality in question expressed its desire to organize, formalize and affirm its autonomy, as granted by the 1988 Federal Constitution (Brasil, 1988) and by LDB 9394/1996 (Brasil, 1996), which guarantee them the freedom to define their own rules, in line with the aforementioned federal laws. Thus, the EMS of Lagoa da Confusão/TO was created through Municipal Law No. 447/2007 (Lagoa da Confusão, 2007). This law was first amended in 2008 and replaced by Law No. 461/2008 of March 31, 2008 (Lagoa da Confusão, 2008), which was later repealed by Law No. 584/2012 of December 10, 2012, and finally replaced by Municipal Law No. 770/2017 of November 24, 2017, currently in force (Lagoa da Confusão, 2017).

Democratization of the Lagoa da Confusão EMS: participation in councils, decentralization, autonomy and democratic management

The study covered in this text made it possible to present elements of the Lagoa da Confusão municipal system relating to participation, decentralization, autonomy and democratic management. We began the discussion by returning to the question of what

is a system? With regard to this concern, as mentioned earlier, Saviani (2010, p. 381) points out that a system as a unity of diversity is intentional and, in order to be effective, it needs to articulate ideal and material elements.

In this line of argument, for Bordignon,

Nowadays, the term system has acquired such elasticity that it can cover almost anything. It can refer to the organization of principles and ideas that cover a certain field of knowledge. References to the Cartesian philosophical system and many others of the same categorization have this connotation. But its use is more frequent and pertinent to the Social Sciences, in the objective field of social organization. In this field, we find: political system, judicial system, electoral system, party system, economic system, educational system and others, covering all areas of state action (2009, p. 24).

As a result of this understanding and the creation of the Lagoa da Confusão municipal system, education management assumes the principles, values and techniques expressed in the law that defines the system in question.

According to Law No. 770/2017 (Lagoa da Confusão, 2017), which governs the Lagoa da Confusão EMS, the management of this system must act autonomously and democratically, as well as collaboratively:

§Paragraph 2 The municipality of Lagoa da Confusão, in order to develop education, will act within the scope of its competence, in an autonomous and democratic manner; and will also act in collaboration with the State and the Union, in the development of those actions that, due to their nature and purposes, require such collaboration (Lagoa da Confusão, 2017).

According to Bordignon (2009), the creation of the EMS is part of the process of democratic education management. Municipalization brings the government closer to the citizen, to the place where they live, making it possible to exercise citizenship more actively. It is a decentralization strategy that increases the opportunities for citizens to participate in government decisions and enables more effective social control. The same author states that the EMS must synergistically articulate the various educational bodies and units in the municipality, with their levels of responsibility and competence, in a coherent manner and focused on the purpose of education.

Albuquerque (2011), in refining the categories that express and explain the clashes that shape the construction of educational/school autonomy, names these categories as axes of struggle that constitute the interests, conceptions and practices specific to the subfield of democratic educational management.

Below, we highlight the axes of struggle around democratic management and the concepts and practices developed in the Lagoa da Confusão EMS (2017):

- Participation in school councils;
- Centralization and/or decentralization of financial resources;
- Autonomy and democratic management of the Lagoa da Confusão EMS: inferences made from the PNE and PME and PPP;
- Pedagogical Political Project.

The implementation of democratic educational management takes place through the way in which educational and pedagogical practices are conducted and instituted in the teaching process. According to Bordignon (2009), in democratic management the conflicts inherent in social diversity are constructive facts when they are disputed and mediated with a view to the common goal of education as an articulated whole.

It is therefore important to identify the aforementioned axes as experiences carried out through the practices of school councils, the centralization and decentralization of decision-making (not only financial) and administrative autonomy.

In addition to the aspects mentioned above, various elements need to be considered in order for an EMS to be democratic. Thus, it is necessary to know, among other things: 1) whether the system has a democratic management law defining the election of managers; 2) who manages education resources in the municipality; 3) whether the municipality caters for all students in the public sector (elementary school, nursery school, pre-school); 4) whether the municipality has a plan for the positions, careers and training of education workers; 5) what the situation is for education workers; 6) whether the municipality has a plan for the positions, careers and training of education workers.⁴ whether the municipality has a job, career and salary plan for education workers; what the training situation is for education workers; how education professionals are recruited; 5) whether the municipality has a PME; 6) how the aforementioned goals appear in the PME, including how the systems are managed?²

In order to address all the issues mentioned above, the EMS in Lagoa da Confusão has the challenge of effectively implementing some essential elements, such as: 1) participation in the education council and schools; 2) decentralization of financial resources and their management; 3) the development and implementation of the schools' Pedagogical Political Project as a mobilizing element of the EMS; and 4) the autonomy and democratic management of the EMS and schools. According to the research carried out, formally, the Lagoa da Confusão EMS has managed to address the first three elements, although in the practice of municipal education management, the

² For a more in-depth look at this set of concerns about education policy and management in Brazil and Tocantins, see the studies by: Carvalho (2004, 2009, 2011); Lagares (2008, 2014); Nascimento (2008); Lagares; Oliveira and Rocha (2015); Brito (2019); Nunes; Carvalho; Vizolli (2020); Lagares; Carvalho; Oliveira (2020); and Lagares; Carvalho; Brito; Cury (2021); Souza (2022).

evidence shows that there is still a long way to go before they can be effectively achieved. Even further away is the formalization and practice of the autonomy and democratic management of the EMS and schools, which can create difficulties in achieving inclusive education and an effective teaching-learning process.

Autonomy and democratic management of the Lagoa da Confusão EMS: inferences from the Municipal Education Plan

Although school management is an integral part of EMS management, it is not the same as EMS management, although both are guided by the principles of democratic management. According to Bordignon (2009, p. 39),

the creation of the Municipal Education System (SME) is part of the process of democratic education management. Municipalization brings the government closer to the citizen, to the place where they live, enabling them to exercise their citizenship more actively. Municipalization is a decentralization strategy that increases the opportunities for citizens to participate in government decisions and enables more effective social control.

When analyzing educational administration in Brazil historically, it becomes clear that one of its main characteristics is the attempts to import theoretical perspectives and analytical models from abroad, elaborated and implemented culturally according to political interests that differ from those of Brazilian society. From this perspective,

the widespread adoption of the principles and practices of the classical school of industrial engineers and the behavioral school of social psychologists in educational administration since the beginning of the 20th century was based on the assumption that these general principles and practices were automatically applicable to the management of any institution, regardless of its nature, its objectives and its political and cultural content. It is in this sense that the aims of education and the specific objectives of schools and universities have often been superseded by organizational technologies and administrative practices aligned with the cult of economic efficiency and institutional effectiveness as fundamental principles, with little attention paid to ethical values, political aspirations and the human dimension of educational management (Sander, 2007, pp. 13-14 *apud* Carvalho, 2011).

Given its centrality to the concept of the right to education, the democratic management of education became the subject of dispute in the constituent process that preceded the 1988 Constitution. While, on the one hand, one group defended public schools and the democratic management of education, on the other, privatist groups fought to maintain their absolute power.

Arroyo (2008) evaluates the banner of democratic management among the banners of the social movements of the 1980s and considers it the most tense and contradictory, covering several decades of politicized, progressive, radical, participatory, tutored, regulated and even conservative and anti-democratic experiences.

Contributing to this discussion, Lagares (2008, p. 143) states that

Municipal autonomy in education, understood as the possibility of collectively discussing and indicating the best way to achieve common objectives for education and its population, is based on a complex of structures, procedures and functions. This is a task that the municipal government alone cannot effectively fulfill.

In this sense, the documentary analysis of the EMS of the municipality of Lagoa da Confusão shows that the PME was also instituted, a very important instrument for advancing the democratic management and autonomy of public schools.

Let's remember, however, that since 1962, discussions around a PNE - a point of interest in the struggles of the pioneers of education - have guided the educational debate. However, such a plan was only formally structured in 2001, instituted by Law No. 10,127, of January 9, 2001, which was in force from 2001 to 2011. The plan's main objectives were: to raise the level of schooling; to improve the quality of education in all segments; to reduce social and regional inequalities, guaranteeing access and permanence of students in school; and to democratize public education.

The second PNE, for the period 2014-2024, currently in force, was instituted by Law No. 13.005, of June 2014, and defines as its main objectives: the democratic management of education; the investment of resources for public education; the eradication of illiteracy; the valorization of education professionals; and the improvement in the quality of education (Brasil, 2014).

Law No. 13.005/2014 provides important instruments to enable joint actions in collaboration and continuous monitoring of the PNE implementation process. Article 5 defines the bodies responsible for continuous monitoring and periodic evaluations of the implementation of the PNE, namely: The Ministry of Education, the Education Commission of the Chamber of Deputies and the Federal Senate, the National Education Council and the National Education Forum (Brasil, 2014).

Article 7 of the PNE 2014-2024 establishes that the Union, the states, the Federal District and the municipalities will work collaboratively to achieve the goals and implement the strategies set out in this Plan:

§ Paragraph 1. It will be up to federal, state, municipal and Federal District managers to adopt the government measures necessary to achieve the goals set out in this PNE.

§ Paragraph 2 The strategies defined in the annex to this law do not preclude the adoption of additional measures at local level or legal instruments formalizing cooperation between federal entities, and may be complemented by national and local mechanisms for coordination and reciprocal collaboration.

§ Paragraph 3 The education systems of the states, the Federal District and the municipalities shall create mechanisms for local monitoring of the achievement of the goals of this PNE and the plans provided for in Article 8.

§ Paragraph 4 There will be a specific collaboration regime for the implementation of school education modalities that need to consider ethnic-educational territories and the use of strategies that take into account the sociocultural and linguistic identities and specificities of each community involved, ensuring prior and informed consultation with that community.

§ Paragraph 5 will create a permanent body for negotiation and cooperation between the Union, the states, the Federal District and the municipalities.

§ Paragraph 6 Strengthening the collaboration system between the states and their respective municipalities will include setting up permanent negotiation, cooperation and agreement bodies in each state.

§ Paragraph 7 Strengthening the system of collaboration between municipalities will also take place through the adoption of education development arrangements.

Based on the provisions of Law 13.005/2014, the municipality, as a federated entity, is jointly responsible for meeting the goals of the PNE in such a way as to enable its planning to be in line with national planning, as explained in Article 8 of the aforementioned Law:

States, the Federal District and municipalities must draw up their corresponding education plans, or adapt the plans already approved by law, in line with the guidelines, goals and strategies set out in this PNE, within one year of the publication of this law (Brazil, 2014).

Regarding the subject under study, democratic management of education, the PNE 2014-2024, through goal 19 and supported by goal 20, comes - to some extent - to meet the desires of society that is fighting for participation in public educational policies, participation that is translated into the form of principles and goals to be met in compliance with the 1988 Federal Constitution. Albuquerque (2011) uses Tavares (1990, p. 49) to state that "... no one, at that time, had the audacity to deny democratic management as a principle, perhaps because the very process of drafting the new Constitution represented the yearning for democracy in the country". Even with the reticence about the concept of democratic management, we highlight goals 19 and 20 (Chart 1) as important for thinking about the democratization of EMS.

TABLE 1 - National Education Plan: goals 19 and 20	
THEME	GOALS
Democratic management of education	19 - Ensure conditions, within two years, for the implementation of the democratic management of education, associated with technical criteria of merit and performance and public consultation with the school community, within the scope of public schools, providing resources and technical support from the Union for this purpose.
Public investment in public education	20 - Increase public investment in public education so that it reaches at least seven percent of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the fifth year of this law's validity, and at least the equivalent of ten percent of GDP by the end of the decade.

Source: PNE 2014-2024.

In line with the PNE 2014-2024, the municipality of Lagoa da Confusão has established its PME for 2015-2024, with a major commitment to promoting political-educational changes that generate significant advances in the teaching and learning process and, as a result, improve the quality of life of the municipality's citizens.

In this context, as determined by LDB 9.394/96 in its Articles 9 and 87, which deal with the elaboration of a plan with guidelines and goals - for ten years - of the Union, states and municipalities - and, "in line with the World Declaration on Education for All" - the PME of Lagoa da Confusão was instituted by Law No. 688/2015, of June 15, 2015 (Lagoa da Confusão, 2015b). As the text states:

The Mayor makes it known that the Municipal Council of Lagoa da Confusão, Tocantins, decrees and I sanction the following Law:
 Art. 1 The Municipal Education Plan (Plano Municipal de Educação - PME) is hereby approved, valid for 10 years from the publication of this Law, in the form of the annex, with a view to complying with the provisions of Art. 214 of the Federal Constitution of 1988.

Article 2 of Law No. 688/2015, mentioned above, sets out the guidelines for the PME, which are the same as the guidelines for the PNE/2014-2024. The difference is that they will be worked out within the framework of municipal planning, based on the diagnosis of the municipality and the definition of priorities based on the demands and financial possibilities of the municipality.

Art. 2 The guidelines of the PME are:
 I) Eradication of illiteracy;
 II) Universalization of school attendance;
 III) Overcoming educational inequalities, with an emphasis on promoting citizenship and eradicating all forms of discrimination;
 IV) Improving the quality of education;
 V) Training for work and citizenship, with an emphasis on the moral and ethical values on which society is based;

- VI) Promoting the principle of democratic management of public education;
- VII) Humanistic, scientific, cultural and technological promotion of the country;
- VIII) Establishment of a target for the application of public resources in education as a proportion of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), which ensures that expansion needs are met, with standards of quality and equity;
- IX) Valuing education professionals;
- X) Promoting the principles of respect for human rights, diversity and socio-environmental sustainability.

The goals and objectives defined in Lagoa da Confusão's PME/2015 correspond to the PNE/2014-2024, but in conjunction with local peculiarities and the municipality's multi-year plan, through which investments will be made in strategic management programs.

From the PME/2015 of Lagoa da Confusão (Lagoa da Confusão, 2015b), we highlight the difficulties in implementing what was planned in Goals 1, 2, 6, 9, 11 and 12 - whose themes have to do with the guiding management of the municipality - with few results achieved in the teaching-learning process. In other words, according to the study, the municipality in question drew up a set of guidelines in search of autonomy and democratic management of the EMS and schools, but these have not been converted into concrete reality with regard to public management (Goal 12); Early Childhood Education (Goal 1); Primary Education (Goal 2); Teacher Training (Goal 9); and Valuing Basic Education Professionals (Goal 11).

Based on the arguments expressed in this study, it can be seen that the Lagoa da Confusão EMS has partially complied with the PME, which does not make it any different from most other municipalities in Tocantins or even other states and the union. According to the author, many strategies have not been implemented, even though they are extremely important for meeting the goals and objectives of the PME. It is clear, then, that some of the proposals are very bold in the face of the Brazilian educational situation, but despite the efforts, they will still take some time to be achieved.

We understand that the PME/2015 (Lagoa da Confusão, 2015b) is a resumption of what the LDB/96 already required of municipalities and that it was a big step towards planning the future of education in the municipality, which is an important achievement. However, it is not enough to have a system and a plan. Like any other political sphere, it is necessary to be willing to critically discuss effective participation in the administrative, social, educational and cultural actions of the municipality in question, with a view to making them a reality.

According to the data collected in the research that underpins this text, there are several points that are favorable to the management of the EMS analyzed. Among the most important are the existence of:

- 1) Municipal Education System;
- 2) Municipal Education Plan;
- 3) Municipal Education Council;
- 4) 97% of education professionals have a degree in their field;
- 5) The municipality's high economic potential; and
- 6) Job, Career and Allowance Plan for Education Professionals.

Thus, it was possible to identify the devices established in the EMS, whose management mechanisms underpin education in the municipality of Lagoa da Confusão/TO. Beyond the above, however, it is necessary to seek to consolidate the autonomy of the EMS through not only access to education, but by guaranteeing the quality of education and democratic, plural and transparent participation in the management of the system. With this in mind, an action plan of a democratic-participatory nature was drawn up, seeking to contribute to the democratization of education management in the municipality of Lagoa da Confusão, with possible repercussions for other municipalities.

Democratic-participatory action plan for the institutionalization and management of EMSs

We understand education as a process of broad training, of fighting for rights and social freedom, of preparing for the responsibility of collectively building and developing the social, economic, cultural and political dimensions of the community. In this sense, by analyzing and identifying the theoretical and practical elements that underpin the management process of the Lagoa da Confusão/TO EMS, we can infer that the management of municipal education needs to conceive and execute its planning in the broadest and most democratic way possible.

However, the actions relating to this participation and the promotion of the population's representativeness for the conception of democratic-participatory management still need to advance in the municipality studied. We are talking about the absence of an organic participation mechanism organized on a democratic basis - with decentralized decision-making and execution processes - which would be the institution of the Permanent Municipal Education Forum, as established by the PME/2015 itself.

The Municipal Education Forum is the highest decision-making body responsible for the municipality's policy on defining guidelines and priorities for the PME and on

budget implementation, since it is made up of a broad representation of social sectors. Alongside the Forum, the Municipal Education Council is equally important, as long as it is deliberative in nature and ensures that its composition is equitably distributed in such a way as to value education workers.

We found from all the research findings that the management of the Lagoa da Confusão EMS is largely based on the idea of management that is at odds with that of a democratic-participatory nature. In this sense, the PME/2015 (Lagoa da Confusão/ 2015a) reveals itself to be a technical instrument, which must be instituted as required by law. However, democratic management, also regulated by the same law, must be prioritized by guaranteeing the participation of the local community, school community and representative entities in the process of planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating the educational process in this municipality.

In addition to implementing the proposals in the PME, the importance of the debate with the community implies a multidimensional management process that goes beyond the instrumental management of the system and seeks to alter the educational perspective with a focus on changing mentality, the training paradigm, in other words, the transformation of individuals through education and collective actions. In this sense, it is important and necessary to systematize a democratic-participatory action plan for the implementation of EMSs, such as the one illustrated in Lagoa da Confusão/TO.

Democratic-participatory management requires an organic set of dimensions and criteria articulated from the perspective of totality. Based on Sander (1995), who deals with education in Latin America, Carvalho (2011) explains four dimensions - economic, pedagogical, political and cultural - of the management process which, from a multidimensional perspective, are identified with the criteria of educational efficiency, efficacy, effectiveness and relevance. Based on the same author, Carvalho (2011) argues that multidimensional management encompasses the four aforementioned dimensions from a dialectical perspective and is based on four basic assumptions that are important for guiding actions related to democratic management that values effective participation in educational systems and schools:

Firstly, education and administration are conceived as global realities which, for analytical purposes, can be constructed by multiple dimensions that are dialectically articulated with each other. Secondly, in the educational system there are substantive or ideological concerns, of a cultural and political nature, and instrumental or technical concerns, of a pedagogical and economic nature. Thirdly, in the educational system there are internal concerns, of an anthropological and pedagogical nature, and external concerns related to the economy and wider society. Fourthly, the human being, as an individual and social subject historically responsible for the construction of society and

its organizations, in a set of historical opportunities, constitutes the *raison d'être* for the existence of the educational system (Sander, 1995, p. 55-56 *apud* Carvalho, 2011).

The multidimensional management perspective links the economic-administrative dimension (concerning the instrumental material and human aspects); the pedagogical dimension (concerning the instrumental means needed to achieve the educational objectives); and the political and cultural dimensions (concerning the substantive aspects of the educational process, participatory effectiveness and the relevance of the training provided). Based on this reasoning, the Lagoa da Confusão/TO Action Plan was designed with suggestions for activities that could - from the perspective of formative praxis - contribute to greater participation by civil society in general: the local community, the school community and organizations representing the school and educational community. This proposal, as Carvalho (2011) discusses, is based on the interactionist tradition, a perspective that emphasizes the effective participation of the agents that make up the segments of a given social institution or education system, such as the EMS in the municipality studied.

In Table 2 below, we present the theoretical-practical structure that underpins the reference framework (Brito, Sousa & Carvalho, 2021) drawn up from the educational perspective advocated in this study and which expresses the indicators/evidence and criteria of the management process that can contribute to the democratization of EMS, illustrated by Lagoa da Confusão.

Chart 2: Indicators/evidence and criteria of the management process for the democratization of EMS with Lagoa da Confusão as an illustration		
TRAINING PERSPECTIVES	CRITERIA	INDICATORS/EVIDENCE
Instrumental	Efficiency	1) Amount of financial resources invested; 2) Number of professionals involved; 3) Number of events held; 4) Number of schools; 5) Number of students trained or assisted.
	Effectiveness	1) SME/PPP carried out; 2) Teaching materials produced; 3) Training provided; 4) Evaluations carried out; 5) Objectives in terms of learning the objects according to the planning carried out.
Substantive	Effectiveness	1) Repercussion of the EMS institutionalization process: a) the participation of the school community; b) in the management of the municipal system; c) in school management; d) in the management of the teaching and learning process; e) at municipal level;

	Relevance	1) Repercussion of the EMS institutionalization process in relation to its practice: a) changing the attitudes of the school community; b) the cultural change of the EMS; c) changing values in school management; d) changing the values of the management of the teaching and learning process; e) the change in values at municipal level.
OBSERVATIONS - In relation to the indicators, check the main objectives and values that guide democratic management: Expanded training; Education as a social practice; Right to education; Emancipatory teaching and learning; Articulated education system; Autonomy; Democratic management; Effective participation; SME, illustrated with the Lagoa da Confusão education system.		

Source: prepared by the author based on Sander (1995), Carvalho (2011, 2016), Brito, Sousa & Carvalho (2021).

This framework summarizes the general foundations needed to draw up the action plan, as described and discussed in the study. This frame of reference can help to reflect on and reorganize education management in municipal education in order to effectively achieve the goals of the PNE in terms of democratic management.

The proposal in question was designed to organize the practice of democratic management of the EMSs illustrated by the municipality of Lagoa da Confusão, seeking, in a systematized way and from the perspective of the philosophy of praxis (Gramsci, 1991, 2006), to energize the economic-administrative, pedagogical, political and cultural forces in search of overcoming the gaps and difficulties of the system in the implementation of democratic management, according to LDB 9394/1996 (Brazil, 1996); the PNE (2014-2024) and the PME of Lagoa da Confusão (2015).

As a starting point, the proposed action plan is structured around the instrumental and substantive axes of education/training. The instrumental axis will comprise: actions of an economic and technical-administrative nature, whose verification criteria were designed to measure the efficiency of the EMSs illustrated by the municipality of Lagoa da Confusão, and actions of a pedagogical nature, verified through the system's effectiveness in achieving the educational objectives planned in the PME/2015.

The substantive axis, in turn, will cover: a set of actions with a political dimension that will seek to give participatory effectiveness in relation to the subjects that make up the educational process within the scope of municipal education; practices relating to the culture of the EMS and schools will be verified by the criteria of cultural relevance of the system, by changing the collective and individual behavior of the school community, in particular, and of society, in general.

Chart 3 - Action Plan/Instrumental and Substantive Axes

Axes Instrumental	Metrified actions	What to do	How to do it	When to do it	Indicators of democratic management			
					P	A	PL	T
Technical/adminis- trative efficiency								
Pedagogical/ efficiency								
Axes Nouns	Metrified actions	What to do	How to do it	When to do it	Indicators of democratic management			
					P	A	PL	T
Political/ effectiveness								
Cultural/ relevant								
LEGEND: Participation (P); Autonomy (A); Pluralism (PL); and Transparency (T).								
SOURCE: Table summarized by the authors based on the study carried out in 2022.								

Seeking, in an imbricated way, to articulate the criteria of efficiency, efficacy, effectiveness and relevance of municipal education in the training process of a non-unilateral and transformative nature, for each of the axes and dimensions a set of: metric actions; objectives; methodological procedures; deadlines; and indicators of democratic management can be predicted. With this proposal we hope to contribute to the movement to institutionalize EMSs and schools from the perspective of democratic-participatory management.

Final considerations

In the study that led to this article, we explained, as an illustration, the management concept of the EMS in Lagoa da Confusão/TO, which shows a strategic-managerial approach that is in tension with the democratic-participatory approach.

With reference to the democratic perspective and understanding the challenges posed by contemporary times, we drew up the draft Action Plan set out in the previous section with the aim of contributing to the implementation of practices from a multidimensional management perspective, without losing sight of the founding principles of democratic management. In this sense, the Plan proposes actions that make it possible to implement the principles of democratic management: participation, autonomy, pluralism and transparency. We are aware that we live in a society in which the production and reproduction of life, in general, moves in the direction of limited participation, and to a large extent, hierarchical and authoritarian participation. This logic

is based on corporate and non-plural interest groups and is guided by the concealment of social processes, so that democratization in the participatory, autonomous, plural and transparent sense poses a contradiction in the field of the struggle against the hegemonic or predominant form of management.

From this perspective, although we may have as our north and utopia the participation and democratic-participatory management of a multidimensional nature that articulates the criteria of efficiency, efficacy, effectiveness and social/educational relevance, what has taken place is a strategic-managerial management based, to a large extent, on economic-market efficiency (Carvalho, 2011, p. 102).

Also according to Carvalho (2011), the strategic-managerial perspective apparently does not mobilize the participation of the community that makes up educational institutions, even in formal deliberation spaces, particularly the segments of teachers, administrative staff and students.

The EMS study illustrated by Lagoa da Confusão, including the Democratic-Participatory Action Plan, is situated in the field of struggle and dispute over a democratic management process, bearing in mind that, according to Carvalho (2011, p. 106), "... participating does not always mean freeing oneself, gaining autonomy or emancipating oneself. It can even mean all of these things, but also their opposite. Understanding this logic is essential if we want to make the meaning of participation clearer, with a view to elucidating the meaning of effective participation in society in general".

We stress, however, that we are under no illusion that, by means of an action plan, we will definitively resolve the democratization process of an EMS, such as the one in Lagoa da Confusão. However, we understand that it is a constituent part, and can be a constituent part, of the set of other actions in the democratic field that puts pressure on the logic of management, in general, from the perspective of maintaining and reproducing capitalist society. We understand that this logic impacts and has repercussions on the way in which the Brazilian state manages the state apparatus in the planning of public policies such as those of a social nature, like education.

In relation to the planning of public education policies, Souza et al (2017), from a critical perspective of the current PNE 2014-2024, point to elements that confirm an education model geared towards the determinations of the capitalist market. We can see from the reflections of the aforementioned authors that the management carried out by the state apparatus, in general, is strongly aligned with the interests of capital, valued by the work of the working class, which has repercussions for the planning and management

of Brazilian education and occurs through the implementation of managerial and anti-democratic management practices.

Faced with this social reality, carrying out the process of democratizing society and education requires the construction of an SNE and the drafting - through participation in meetings, forums and education conferences - of the PNE and PMEs. The institutionalization and management of SMEs takes place through various forms of planning, such as the democratic-participatory Action Plan discussed in this text. This process needs to be thought of in terms of articulating the structural and conjunctural aspects from the historical perspective and the contradictory social totality (Frigotto, 2011).

As discussed in section two of this article, in relation to the process of institutionalizing national, state and municipal education systems, planning and micro and macro-social management of education, there are many obstacles to its realization. In this regard, Saviani (2009) points out some of these economic obstacles that have hindered the organization of the SNE and the planning of educational policies. We believe that understanding these obstacles is important in the institutionalization and management of EMSs, as illustrated by the municipality of Lagoa da Confusão in Tocantins.

For Saviani (2009), the economic, political, philosophical, ideological and legal obstacles stem from the historical resistance to maintaining public education in Brazil. The author, when analyzing the Education Yearbook published in 2020 by the Todos pela Educação organization, points out that "the annual public spending per student in the public network in the average of the countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development is more than double that of Brazil, both in Early Childhood Education and Elementary and Secondary Education" (Saviani, 2009, p. 391). In this respect, Saviani reiterated in 2009 that special attention should be paid to

in the PNE to the issue of funding, not because it is a guarantee that the goals will be achieved, but because it is an indispensable, albeit not sufficient, condition for their fulfillment. In the light of what is proclaimed to be the "knowledge society", it is important to consider education as the axis of the country's own development project. As such, huge resources will be allocated to fully equip the National Education System (Saviani, 2009, p. 391).

Another obstacle pointed out by Saviani (2009) is the political one, which is characterized by the discontinuity of public education policies and which represents a

major delay in the construction of the SNE. These are manifested in various ways, but most visibly in the abundance of reforms that make up the history of Brazilian education.

With regard to philosophical-ideological obstacles, the prevalence of pedagogical ideas or mentalities that were against the organization of education in the form of a national system stands out. In this sense, according to Saviani (2009), in addition to material and political limitations, pedagogical thinking is also considered, which is directly linked to the general conception of man, the world, life and society, with the Brazilian educational issue, to a large extent, carried out from a dualistic perspective and in line with the hegemonic social logic.

For Saviani (2009), the legal obstacles are materialized in the resistance to incorporating the idea of a National System into educational legislation. This resistance can be seen in the (limited) advances and setbacks in the understanding and practices for organizing and institutionalizing a SNE, with its consequent repercussions for state and municipal education systems.

In relation to the management of the Lagoa da Confusão EMS, we were able to see, in general, these obstacles, which were considered and highlighted in the preparation of the proposal for a democratic-participatory action plan, discussed in the previous section of this article.

From the reflections made in this article, we retain the understanding that management in contemporary capitalist society, in general, is a form of state management of public policies aligned with the logic of capital. When we think about the democratic-participatory management of EMSs, as illustrated by the Lagoa da Confusão EMS, in this social context we are, in fact, disputing, as a counter-hegemony, another concept of management that also requires other more horizontal, participatory, autonomous, plural and transparent practices. These practices are expressed, in the case of this reflection, in the proposal for a democratic-participatory action plan as part of the actions of the movement to institutionalize and manage EMSs. Our theoretical-practical intentions, without ufanistic pretensions and based on Gramscian thinking, are intended to contribute to the organization of trenches in the space of struggle and dispute in defence of education as a social praxis that promotes omnilateral education that overcomes strictly unilateral, instrumental and fragmented education.

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RESUMO:

O artigo aborda a gestão dos sistemas educacionais destacando as concepções de administração gerencial e democrático-participativa. Como indagação de partida problematiza a tensão entre o gerencialismo e a democratização dos sistemas educacionais e escolas e seus impactos para os Sistemas Municipais de Educação (SME). O objetivo, a partir da problematização em pauta, consistiu em identificar os aspectos – estratégico-gerencial ou democrático-participativo – que sustentam o processo de gestão dos SME, em geral, e como ilustração do estudo, a repercussão para o sistema educacional de Lagoa da Confusão/Tocantins na percepção institucional. Resultou do estudo o entendimento de que: os sistemas educacionais estão em processo de constituição e, por conseguinte, os SME também se encontram em movimento de institucionalização e gestão; a gestão dos SME em pauta encontra obstáculos diversos para sua efetivação na perspectiva democrática que possa contribuir com a elaboração e implementação de um processo educativo proporcionador de ensino de qualidade. Frente aos obstáculos apresentados foi elaborado um plano de ação ilustrado com o sistema educacional de Lagoa da Confusão buscando contribuir efetivamente com a democratização da gestão dos SME do Tocantins.

KEYWORDS: Sistema educacional; Gestão Democrática; SME de Lagoa da Confusão/Tocantins; Plano de Ação Democrático-Participativo; Currículo e Ensino de Qualidade.

RESUMEN:

El artículo aborda la gestión de los sistemas educativos, destacando las concepciones de administración gerencial y democrático-participativa. Como punto de partida, problematiza la tensión entre gerencialismo y democratización de los sistemas educativos y de las escuelas y su impacto en los Sistemas Educativos Municipales (SME). El objetivo, a partir de la problematización en cuestión, fue identificar los aspectos - estratégico-gerencial o democrático-participativo - que sustentan el proceso de gestión de los SME en general, y como ilustración del estudio, las repercusiones para el sistema educativo de Lagoa da Confusão/Tocantins en la percepción institucional. El resultado del estudio fue la comprensión de que: los sistemas educativos están en proceso de constitución y, consecuentemente, los SME también están en proceso de institucionalización y gestión; la gestión de los SME en cuestión encuentra diversos obstáculos para su implementación desde una perspectiva democrática que pueda contribuir al desarrollo e implementación de un proceso educativo que proporcione una enseñanza de calidad. Frente a los obstáculos presentados, se elaboró un plan de acción ilustrativo del sistema educativo de Lagoa da Confusão, con el objetivo de contribuir efectivamente a la democratización de la gestión de los SME en Tocantins.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Sistema Educativo; Gestión Democrática; SME de Lagoa da Confusão/Tocantins; Plan de Acción Democrático-Participativo; Currículo y Calidad de la Enseñanza.