Reflections on the limits and possibilities of democratic management in High Schools in a City in Ceará

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Abstract

This paper discusses Education Management in the context of Public Policies. The objective is to understand the limits and possibilities of a Democratic Management in High Schools in a municipality of the State of Ceará. The qualitative research used the methodological strategy of multiple case study, collecting data through document analysis and interviews with members of the core management of two high schools. The results indicated that democratic management is made possible by means of similar mechanisms between the schools, but obtains different results due to educational conditions, related to workload, curricular components, and physical facilities. It was possible to discuss the potential of democratic management and the actions that favor collectivity, while there are limits, such as bureaucratic obstacles, considered challenging for collective decision-making.

Keywords: Public Policies; Democratic Management; High School;

1. Introduction

Public Policy deals with a specific branch of Politics, which derives from the Greek Politikós, referring to the city, the civil, the public. Public derives from the Latin Publicus, which refers to the people, open to the community. The agglutination of the terms generates the expression Public Policy, which, in theory, would be the policies aimed at the public interest. In this interrelation with society, Public Policy, therefore, can "[...] be understood as a set of procedures that expresses power relations," having as reference the action of the State (Dias & Matos, 2012, p. 3).

The field of Public Policies focused on Education, in particular, Education Management, presents itself as very fruitful, considering that the public administrator in his professional daily life encounters numerous demands. We understand that Public Policies are related to the governmental directives that advocate the relationship between the State and society, and that Educational Management Policies are part of a set of actions in the area of Education, with the purpose of favoring democratic conditions of access, permanence, and learning, with quality, at school.

In the Brazilian context, once the period of military repression was over, the dream of freedom was born, that is, people would be able to express their thoughts and ideas as a fundamental condition for the principle of democracy. The 1980s were marked by the re-democratization of Brazil, with the promulgation of the Constitution of the Federative Republic of Brazil, on October 5, 1988. Among other aspects, the Federal Constitution (1988) established, in item VI of Article 206, that the "democratic management of public education, according to the law". The incorporation of the principle of Democratic Management in the 1988 Constitution meets the demands of social movements and educators for a public education with socially recognized quality based on the democratic participation of diverse subjects.

The 1990s were marked by numerous global transformations that had a direct impact on the direction of education, including in Brazil. In this sense, we highlight the current Law of Directives and Bases for National Education (LDB nº 9.394/96), which on December 20th 1996 established the directives and bases for national education.

Subsection VIII of Article 3 of that LDB asserts that education will be provided based on the principle of "democratic management of public education, in the form of this law and the legislation of the education systems" (Brasil, 2013). The democratic school management supported by legislation seeks to ensure in the school processes of collective construction, with effective participation and decision-making power of the various segments that compose it, as detailed in LDB No. 9.394/96:

Art. 14. The teaching systems will definition the rules of democratic management of public teaching in basic education, according to their peculiarities and according to the following principles:
I - participation of education profissionals in the preparation of the school's pedagogical project;
II - participation of school and local communities in school councils or equivalents (Brazil, 2013, p. 15):

The aforementioned article brings important mechanisms for the development of democratic management in schools, namely: the Political-Pedagogical Project the School Council and the collegiate bodies, such as Student Guild, Parent-Teacher Association, to name a few. Law No. 13.005/2014, the National Education Plan Law 2014-2024, establishes in its Article 2 the guidelines of the PNE, with emphasis on VI, which sets the "promotion of the principle of democratic management of public education" to be met by 2024. (Brazil, 2014). The democratic management regulated in legal devices as an important action for Brazilian education, which is also expressed in goal 19 of the mentioned PNE when stipulating that for the theme Democratic management of education should

Ensure conditions, within two years, for the implementation of democratic management of education, associated with technical criteria of merit and performance and public consultation with the school community, within the public schools, providing resources and technical support from the Union for this purpose (Brasil, 2014, p. 34).

Democratic school management is in the focus of the legal documents of education, as well as in several studies conducted nationally and internationally, such as Lima (2014), Peroni (2012), Dourado (2007), Cury (2002), Paro (2002), Lück (2000), evidencing the relevance of the theme. In this sense, we justify the research about the democratic school management in two high school institutions in a city of the state of Ceará. The objective of this article is to understand the limits and possibilities of democratic management in high schools.

2. The field of Public Policies and democratic School Management

Public Policy comprises several cycles, since the assembly of the agenda, its formulation, decision-making, implementation and evaluation, as well as the resumption of this whole process in order to improve the policy based on social impacts from the objectives by solving the problems inherent to society (Howlett, Ramesh & Perl, 2013).

In an attempt to build a working definition of Public Policy we resorted to the concepts developed by some authors, among them, the best known definition, i.e., that of Thomas Dye. In his formulation, the author describes public policy as "everything that a government decides to do or not to

do" (Dye, 1972, p. 2). Continuing, we bring the concept of Jenkis (1978), who understands public policy as a set of decisions taken individually or collectively by political actors and dealing with objectives and the means to achieve them. Finally, we present the thought of Lasswell (1971), who defines public policy as a "political-administrative cycle" permeated by seven stages: 1) Information; 2) Promotion; 3) Prescription; 4) Innovation; 5) Implementation; 6) Termination, and 7) Evaluation, without losing sight of the focus on decision making.

Democratic management has been inserted in the educational context, entering the schools by means of policies that favor the principles of participation by those responsible for the educational community. As an example of such policies, we have the elections of school leaders, the constitution of student councils, parent-teacher associations, among other participatory management mechanisms.

Public policies and educational management are at the center of the Brazilian governmental agenda, as well as being configured in an orchestrated way in the official governmental discourse. They are framed between the social issue and the State's tutelage with the support of the churches, the business community, and philanthropic entities. Initially, it is necessary to point out that public policy is linked to a government analysis of the major issues of public interest. We can also add that it is part of governmental decision making in favor of social welfare. These decisions will affect the citizens starting from what a government prioritizes or does not prioritize for a certain population.

Howlett, Ramesh and Perl (2013) assert that in order to obtain success in public policies, effective processes are necessary for their effectiveness. These researchers defend the hypothesis that governments, once they ensure the processes in an efficient way, need to ensure, concomitantly, the condition that are peculiar to them to achieve the objectives. To this end, governments must accommodate and reconcile the conflicting demands, offering training to the technical personnel who will work on its implementation, with special attention to managers and specialists, because they are ahead of the policies in the management of the institutions. Besides this care, it is also necessary to worry about the social actors and beneficiaries, the structures, the beneficiary institutions, and the set of ideas that will define the functionality of the public policy, as well as the political management.

Nowadays, education has not reached the qualitative formative level. This problem has compromised educational quality, plastered management, and implied the perpetuation of social class inequality as people are framed. The son of the worker will possibly envision the place of the factory as the space of his profession. The descendants of workers tend to be workers, the descendants of doctors may follow the training in medicine and be guided by the steps of the professionalism of their social class. In this way, people from the economically less favored class will hardly be able to circumvent the general rule and establish themselves in a position of social ascension. The cases that manage to circumvent this rule are considered exceptions or come from meritocratic proposals.

In consonance with this thought, we observe the family profile, the socioeconomic conditions, the worker's perspectives as to job opportunities and income in the capitalist context. The dimension of exploitation erodes the possibilities of ascension, leading the worker to conflicting situations in the competition for employability. In this way, the worker can go from dream to nightmare according to the pressures suffered in worker employability (Burnier et al, 2007).

Nowadays, what we experience are reforms and more reforms of managers as the only

proponent subjects. At each change of management a new cycle begins, and so does the continuous implementation of new policies. We live an intense sensation of an eternal new beginning. The inert population, oblivious to the goals of the policies, defenseless to the changes, keeps on counting losses and setbacks inherent to social rights and achievements. There is a lack of knowledge about the policies, especially about the objectives in order to understand their real intentions. In this sense, the directions that society is prone to are obscure, a tortuous path that does not match the educational and social reality. "The mark of the current discontinuity is present in the postponement of educational goals" (Saviani, 2007).

The educational policy needs to be constituted as a public policy and not a policy of government leaders. The practice of discontinuity of public policies has been growing progressively and has caused damage to the population, which is socially vulnerable. Governors have included actions and investments, plans and proposals in the educational system, but these measures have not been sufficient and effective in overcoming the current challenges. Duality and fragmentation are still present in the educational proposal and are becoming a concern beyond educational policies. This duality exposes a secular structure of advances and setbacks of the societal path that divided society into castes (Ciavatta & Ramos, 2011).

The recent discussion about the Common National Curricular Base (BNCC) has raised the debate for another educational dispute focused on Brazilian high school education. The Base claims to be necessary and complementary to the Curricular Guidelines, but in practice, it may "neutralize" the potential of the guidelines. It is possible that the BNCC implies in curricular diversity, in the diversification of theorization and in the foundation of didactic and pedagogical practice. The implementation of the BNCC will determine how schools should work after it becomes effective, i.e., starting in 2018. To this end, it will determine the uniformity of content in the Brazilian regions, without specifying the regional differences and specificities. This principle could undermine the flexibility of curriculum development. The BNCC postulates itself as a management tool, but does not allow for curricular diversity. It ensures the construction of school curricula for Basic Education, especially for Brazilian High School in the level of standardization.

This condition, according to Franzoi and Silva (2014), puts teachers against the articulation of diverse knowledge in the development of classroom practices. Thus, the implementation of the BNCC may bring new challenges to Brazilian teachers. The Base should possibly be articulated to national control through large-scale assessments, which will further ensure the distancing of Brazilian regional diversity, even unifying the proposals contained in its bases.

According to the BNCC proposal, four core policies will be required: National Teacher Education Policy; National School Infrastructure Policy; National Basic Education Evaluation Policy and National Policy on Educational Materials and Technologies. The BNCC does not present the clarity of the directions that education may take after its implementation. This concern should be outlined in the long term, when the base should be evaluated and its results correspond or not with the curriculum proposal compatible with the formation of a fully citizen society.

Edited by the Provisional Measure 746/2016, the high school reform instituted the Policy for Encouraging the Implementation of Full-Time High Schools, amended the Law of Basic Directives nº

9.394/96 and the Law 11.494/2007 of regulation of the Fund for Maintenance and Development of Basic Education and Valorization of Education Professionals (Brasil, 2016).

Based on MP 746/2016 and information from the Ministry of Education's website, the reform provides for gradual changes in the high school curriculum for young Brazilians, expanding the annual workload from 800 class hours (ha) to 1,400 ha and determines the mandatory teaching of Portuguese, mathematics and English language in the three years of high school. The subjects of art and physical education are no longer compulsory, and are now optional. The Ministry of Education - MEC also determined that the curriculum of high school should be determined by the Common National Curricular Base, with specific educational options, with emphasis on the areas of languages, mathematics, natural sciences, humanities, and technical and professional training (Brasil, 2016). With these determinations, the limitation of cognitive horizons will affect several aspects: the possibility of emancipation in the face of oppression; the possibility of breaking a societal project historically maintained from the dominant conception. In these ways, we understand that there is no need for universalization of the quality standard of basic education (Frigotto, 2007).

The Base demonstrates limitations with the removal of subjects considered essential to a full and questioning education. It highlights the weakening of critical capacity by denying fundamental knowledge to the formation of young Brazilians. Leite (2015) shows that Brazilian high school has weaknesses in several situations, which has compromised the quality of the current education. The current offer of High School has not offered an attractive to young people, because it develops in a propaedeutic way, offering equal treatment to clientele with an eminently different profile.

2.1 Ceará's High School Policy: principles of Democratic Management

The educational policy of Ceará has made advances in the provision of professional education, as well as in the experimentation of shared management. According to Vidal and Vieira (2016), Ceará stands out from other Brazilian states when analyzed from the perspective of better regularity in the school trajectory in the provision of high school, with an average of 76.3% of students from 1st to 3rd grade. Regarding the conditions of access, it shows a growth of 12%. In relation to the failure rate, there was a decrease of 16.9%, with a dropout rate of 45.7%. This improvement in the indicators is a reflection of the investment policy of the last government administrations, especially related to the offer of professional education with the creation in 2008.

Currently there are 115 Professional Education Schools in operation in Ceará, offering full high school education, offering 53 courses grouped in 12 axes: Nursing, Aesthetics, Massotherapy, Environment, Nutrition and Dietetics, Oral Health; Industrial Automation, Electromechanics, Electrotechnics, Automotive Maintenance, Mechanics; Libras Instruction - experimental, School Secretary, Translation and Interpretation of Libras; Administration, Commerce, Accounting, Finance, Logistics, Secretariat, Real Estate Transactions; Computing, Computer Networks; Surveying, Civil Construction Design, Buildings, Ports; Agroindustry; Interior Design, Cultural Management - experimental, Clothing Patterns, Multimedia, Landscaping, Audio and Video Production, Fashion Production, Regency; Biotechnology, Mechanical Manufacturing, Furniture, Oil and Gas, Chemistry, Textiles, Clothing; Agriculture (Floriculture), Agribusiness, Agribusiness, Aquaculture, Fruits, Mining;

Occupational Safety and Events, Tourism Guide, Accommodation. (SEDUC/COEDEP, 2017). The education system in Cearás hows expressivity in investments in the professional education network. We do not evidence the same financial growth in the regular high school network, which characterizes duality in the supply of high school considering it is the same network.

In our research, we also found that in recent years there have been advances in technical cooperation between the State and the Municipalities towards better use of the network and its physical-administrative facilities. Of a total of 8,196 physical facilities, 5,846 are municipal, 691 are state, 1,634 are private, and 25 are federal (Vidal & Vieira, 2016). The survey also points out that the municipal network has 55.9% of its facilities located in rural areas. This information becomes a challenge for managers to act in the coming fiscal years. The conditions of the facilities are unsatisfactory in relation to the schools built for the professional education offered to students in the state network. This situation shows the duality of the offer with the unequal services rendered to the students. The Ceará education policy is developed by the State Education Secretary - SEDUC, through the Regional Education Coordinators (Coordenadorias Regionais de Educação - CREDE) who work directly with the schools, whether they are regular or professional schools. SEDUC highlights among the policies, the Pact for Strengthening High School, the Innovative High School Program, the Continuing Education for High School Teachers, and the Literate Brazil Program, both developed in partnership with the federal government. Besides these programs there are projects and actions developed through partnerships with municipal entities, non-governmental organizations and the private sector. Among the projects in Ceará, the following stand out: the Class Director Teacher Project, present in all state schools with 7,178 classes; the Young People of the Future Project in partnership with the Unibanco Institute, which aims to guide the young people after finishing high school; the Learn for Real Program; First, Learn and the Apprentice Teacher, among others (Vidal & Vieira, 2016).

Moving on to the management experience in Ceará, the research analyzes the years 1980, 1990 to the present day. It analyzes the management model adopted by the state of Ceará, which emerges from the management policy through results. According to the authors, this model incorporated political and ideological transformations. In this sense, the model reflects the socioeconomic context and the neoliberalist policy, inherent not only in the state of Ceará, but also in the country's education. This model is characteristic of developing countries and discusses management from the perspective of its results. The case of Ceará was based on the Socio-Educational Entrepreneurial Technology - TESE for the construction of a new school model, including the model for professional education schools.

Vidal and Vieira (2016) bring the profile and leadership styles of the Ceará experience, highlighting the management's way of monitoring the teaching and learning processes. Thus, they highlight the community's respect for the management's actions, as well as the management planning system. They affirm that the educational institutions have created their own identity in conducting democratic management. The model of the policy of results contributed to imprint in the state schools of Ceará their management specificities in face of the problems to be faced and solved. This analysis of management also extends to the work of teachers in classroom management. The research also highlighted a differentiated follow-up in relation to state schools, that is, professional schools have better follow-up than regular schools.

The state of Ceará stands out in the establishment of partnerships with the federated entities and has advanced in participatory management. In the state schools, we found organizations that foster participatory management, such as student councils, associations of parents and education professionals, participatory management initiative projects, and the process of electing unit principals. Dourado (2007) and Peroni (2012) have shown some advances in the initiatives of democratic management developed within public educational institutions in Brazilian states. The authors recognize a low level of teacher autonomy and some controversies in the proposal to strengthen the collective participation of the community. However, they acknowledge that there have been some advances in democratic management when they analyze the National Program for Strengthening School Councils instituted in Brazil with LDB Nº9394/96 as the legal parameter.

The researchers investigated management in five Brazilian states (São Paulo, Rio Grande do Sul, Mato Grosso do Sul, Pará and Piauí), as well as in Porto Alegre and one of the state networks of Rio Grande do Sul and Mato Grosso do Sul (Adrião & Peroni, 2007, p. 254-267). The respective authors reached the conclusion that there are principles of democratic management, but these advances almost always follow an induction of management policies, whose emphasis is on technical and operational guidelines defined by control agencies, whether municipal, state or federal.

In summary, there is recognition of advances in leadership principles and in the strengthening of consensus and dissensus initiatives in institutions. Vidal and Vieira (2016) highlighted visible actions in the management dynamics as parameters of successful initiative, which makes Ceará a model with its own characteristics even considering that it is guided by the competencies model and the policy that institutes results management. Such findings evidenced changes in the school culture and organization in Ceará as from attitudes and behaviors in the school community, both at the municipal and state levels. According to the responses of the interviewed principals, 60 to 80% of the Political and Pedagogical Projects meet the expectations of young people in relation to the leadership profile that schools institute in their respective training policies. Leadership seems to be associated with the level of student performance, favoring a harmonious climate inside the schools, an important factor for the achievement of satisfactory learning. The research highlighted as an action favoring individualized student attendance and favoring the exercise of leadership the Class Director Teacher Project, specifically in state schools.

3. The Methodological Path

This study is based on a qualitative approach, which is directly concerned with aspects that cannot be quantified. Thus, this approach works "[...] with the universe of meanings, motives, aspirations, beliefs, values and attitudes, which corresponds to a deeper space of relationships, processes and phenomena" (Minayo, 1994, p. 21-22).

We understand, therefore, that qualitative research prioritizes the analysis of subjectivity according to the research participants (Bogdan & Biklen, 1994). Thus, "researchers who adopt the qualitative approach oppose the assumption that advocates a single research model for all sciences, since the social sciences have their specificity, which presupposes their own methodology" (Silveira & Córdova, 2009, p. 31). In thissense, it is possible to infer that qualitative research is directed to the "understanding and

description of the phenomena considered globally, as well as the dynamics between reality and the researched subjects. This modality honors the interpretive or hermeneutic treatment of data and does not require statistical treatment" (Polak & Diniz, 2011, p. 72).

Despite the challenges for conducting a multiple case study, we judge this methodological strategy to be the most appropriate for the object of the proposed study. According to Yin (2005) multiple case studies are more consistent, better validated, demand greater reliability, are more convincing, and allow generalizations, but it is necessary to have a rigorous planning, because they require time and are financially expensive. To this end, we seek to follow the step-by-step guidelines found in the literature by perceiving the nuances that are most appropriate to the methodological path of research feasibility. Potential multiple case examples may contain more than a single case. One of the examples cited by Yin (2005, p. 67) "is the study of innovations made in a school (with open classrooms, out-of-class assistance by teachers, or new technologies) in which independent innovations occur in different areas." From the author's perspective, each space cited may become an individual case study and the whole of this study may correspond to a multiple case study.

The municipality of the study has three high schools, two in the urban area and one in the rural area. Thus, we chose to develop the research in the two educational institutions located in the city center; one of them is in the Center and the other one is in the Solon Lima Verde Group. We made an exploratory contact with the school managers of the two schools and were well received by both, who readily agreed to conduct the research in the institutions. To reach the objectives of this project, we will use data collection strategies by means of the following instruments: interviews with school managers and document analysis based on the political-pedagogical projects of the aforementioned educational institutions. The semi-structured interview was composed of two parts. The first one sought to outline a profile of the school managers with data about their life, education, and profession. The second part, based on five topics, aimed at reflecting on the experience of democratic school management in high school. In order to maintain the anonymity of the subjects, they will be identified as follows: Principal - D1 and Pedagogical Coordinator - P1.

According to the assumptions of Gil (2007), the documental analysis uses sources that have not yet received analytical treatment, such as the political-pedagogical projects of the researched institutions, which allowed us to unveil important elements allied to the interviews and the theoretical framework.

We analyzed the data, starting from a systematic and qualitative organization, considering the sources of evidence from the interview transcripts and the document analysis.

4. Democratic Management in Secondary Education

The concept of democratic management defined by the regular school is "one where everyone participates in school management decisions, students, teachers and Family" (P1). Such conception is in dialogue with Paro (2001) when dealing with the importance of community participation, especially the family, in the democratic management of the school, which supposes a continuity of the services offered. As for the conception of democratic management in the School of Professional Education, the

management idealizes as a process that involves the "participation of everyone from the janitor to the director, discussing and finding solutions to problems" (D1). With this, it is important to problematize, with Lima (2018), the challenges inherent to the effective implementation of a democratic management, especially in face of the social and political context experienced in the country in the last decade. There are many and diverse conceptions that support the idea of democratic management, as a concept and its relationship as a practice in everyday school life.

These challenges lead us to think about the mechanisms to develop democratic management. As to this, it is worth pointing out the dimension of the School Council and the Student Council "This is not an easy task, because people, although they participate in these bodies, are not used to acting effectively in the development of the actions that the school offers" (P1).

To develop democratic management in the school once again the student guilds and the school council are highlighted. "The participation of the school council, the student council, and the class leaders and vice leaders are fundamental for the development of democratic management" (D1). Discussing democratic management requires considering the dimension of participation in the pedagogical, educational, and decision-making processes that move the operation of a school. However, there are several modes of participation. There is manipulated, symbolic and decorative participation (Costa, 2007). Here we want to refer to effective participation, synonymous with protagonism and action, a participation that effectively considers the different ways of thinking and conceiving the decisions and processes that are developed in the school space (Silva, 2014).

We need to lay the foundations of democratic management with the insertion of social participation through the creation of effective channels that favor collective decision making, having education as a social practice. Otherwise, we will incur in rhetorical convergences of ideology for representativeness. The contradictions found in the realization of the entrepreneurial policies of democratic management are born out of "hybrid" contexts. The possibility of hybridization can grant diverse logics within a given policy and thus produce diverse contours and contradictions (Dourado, 2007).

Among the possibilities, the potential for school community participation was "students and family members, the right to speak and express their opinions and even to participate in the daily life of the school" (P1). This type of participation that we defend here requires problematizing about what strategies the school creates and promotes to enable the participation of these students and family members. This occurs through meetings or moments, marked by speeches that are spaces destined to this public or in fact, along with this, are parallel strategies to approach the reality of these families and students thought?

Another fact that emerged in the study was about the limits of democratic management in High School, because "they come up against bureaucratic problems, besides the daily routine of the school. There are many actions, sometimes requiring immediate answers, not allowing time to gather the group to be consulted" (P1). Going into the High School Reform, the manager revealed little knowledge about the discussion:

I confess that I have read little about it, but from what I have heard others commenting, I believe that once again

it will be a good idea, but that the operationalization will not be within the standards of equity for all. As always very pretty on paper, but in effectiveness, the less favored students will be harmed (P1).

Even with the difficulties encountered in the daily routine of the school, there is a concern with the participation of student and community segments, but we see challenges beyond the conditions of materialization of full management. The daily challenges are not many and they hinder the fully shared management. The answers from the administrators showed that the actions taken inside the units demand the beginning of an emancipating project, on the way to a democratic management in the perspective of a transforming educational practice for the full exercise of citizenship. Still with regard to the limits of democratic management, the following were highlighted: "The limits begin with the school bylaws, where the rights and duties are clearly established, what can and cannot be done at school" (D1)

Thus, schools have not been able to deal with the complexity of educational formation with a view to the full exercise of citizenship. An emancipating educational project requires a bold proposal for education beyond the existing policies. Otherwise, due to the conditions of poverty, the less favored population will continue under the yoke of the nobility. The denial of a quality formation makes a transformative project unfeasible; the possibility of ascending social condition weakens the condition of resistance of social struggle and immobilizes the exercise of participation in political decisions (Carvalho, 2002).

According to Peroni (2012), this situation has been happening because of the capitalist context; this system reorganized the educational processes from the market logic. The capitalist system implemented the public/private relationship, which brought direct implications to the democratic management of education. One of the consequences was the change in the concept of property for society. This circumstance directly influenced the relationships in the educational institutions. From this perspective, public schools are governed by private logic, influencing public management through partnerships, making educational management policy a historical movement of the current capitalist period.

As it was possible to analyze in the subjects' speeches, the current times reveal a management of managerial nature, due to the rush in the daily school life. There are countless programs and projects that arrive at the schools to be executed by the managers and teachers of public schools, which hinders collective decision making, stimulating hurried decisions in an isolated context.

The possibilities of democratic management are left to collectivity. Every action that provides for collective action is seen as a potential for democratic management. "The more people thinking together, the more possibilities for success" (D1). Finally, he approached the current reform of secondary education with a certain lack of confidence: "We don't believe in the practice of what is being thought, because the school today does not have the structure to meet all the specificities pointed out in this reform" (D1).

The position taken by the subjects regarding the high school reform is worrisome. The fact of the managers' discredit reveals the imposing character of the reform; sincethere was no dialog with the main interested parties. Thus, these female managers did not participate in the discussion about the

elaboration or any form of participation in the reform. Thus, the female managers express their indifference about what can go right or what can go wrong. It is worrisome to carry out a reform that does not have the support of the professionals who will carry it out.

In general, reforms throughout history have been characterized as programs of political leaders, not of government. It begins and ends with the mandate of the public manager, causing enormous damage to the teaching process, as well as the discontinuity of policies aimed at education. This form of management has contributed to the discrediting of managers who propose public policies, especially on the part of teachers and teaching professionals, and, as a consequence, reaching civil society. (Domingues, Toschi & Oliveira, 2000).

Lima (2014) points out three basic and common factors to all experiences directly associated with democratic school management. It refers to election, collegiality, and participation in decision making. These elements form an existing combination in the democratic management of educational institutions. The author adds that this combination may result in hits and conceptions of various orders, since the subjects are dynamic, interact, and the combination takes place in different contexts. This can result in the experiences of self-management, in democratic management, in shared management, and even in the possible rise of a gestationary post-democracy.

We observed approximations among management mechanisms, but in the practice observed and in the written records of such mechanisms there are some divergences in the way each school does things. This was evidenced in loco during the observations and in the statements of the subjects. Even though they share similar mechanisms, that is, common to both schools. The way of conducting the school differs according to the clientele and the ideals of the managers' way of managing. Lima (2014) says that this occurs because educational political projects are a social construction, inserted in an analysis of contexts, suffering forces and correlations beyond the theoretical, organizational, and governmental dimension subordinated to education systems. Thus, it calls attention to the political symbolism of democratic management, in its revolutionary genealogy, it alludes to the principles of democracy, but in the political clash the practical achievements are transported to the rhetorical field. This situation is essentialist and legalistic, characterized merely as ideological, procedural, and removers of teaching autonomy.

The union as a macro organ of actions, programs, and policies imposes a discourse aimed at decentralizing teaching, management, and schools, without, however, showing the interference of schools in education systems. The subjects' answers revealed total exclusion from the high school reform, confirming the existence of the discourse in force about the acceptance of the political reform that will revolutionize high school education to advance quality. In practice, executors, managers, and teachers show a certain lack of confidence in the current reform. They see it as another policy that could bring mistakes to the teaching processes of young Brazilians. In this sense, the quality of education seems to be lower than expected in the current proposal of another reform, without the engagement of professionals and a proposal that reformulates in a deep way the high school structures, it becomes a vain proposal discredited by the educational community once,(...) the quality of education is a complex, comprehensive phenomenon that involves multiple dimensions, and cannot be understood only by a recognition of the variety and minimum quantities of inputs considered indispensable to the

development of the teaching-learning process, much less without such inputs (...). Thus, the quality of education is defined involving the relationship between material and human resources, as well as from the relationship that occurs in the school and in the classroom (...). (Oliveira & Santos, 2007, p. 9).

The proposal of a training policy for teachers would possibly influence the training processes in basic education. Possibly, it would be one of the steps towards the educational quality desired by the community and by those who carry out the educational processes. While there is no project to revolutionize the entrenched attitudes of the current high school offer, without opportunities, the young Brazilians have been kept with scarce employability opportunities, increasing their condition of social vulnerability.

A standard of access, permanence and democratic management in basic education requires policies that point to a new learning environment. In this way, a flexible, creative and dynamic education would be offered, with autonomy for individual and collective decisions. We would have an education capable of dealing with the world of uncertainties and incompleteness, guided by teamwork, based on the theoretical-methodological-scientific triad. With this, the school would truly train for life according to democratic principles and citizenship.

5. Conclusion

The research revealed similarities, differences and common points in relation to the practice of democratic management. The school managers share the same mechanisms, differing only in the number of students, the length of time student's stay at school during the day (one or two shifts), the pedagogical proposal and the physical facilities. The political-pedagogical projects approach conceptions of man, society, and education and are also similar, differing in the offer of education because one of the schools has courses aimed at students in the professional area. In relation to the workload, they are completely different. While regular school students study only one period of time, professional school students, in addition to their regular education, participate in complementary education during the extra-curriculum. This condition allows more time at school and a greater possibility of contact with the mechanisms of democratic management. We noticed a duality in the supply of high school education, considering that it is in the same network. The duality is present in several aspects: in the supply of teaching, in the operational conditions of the physical facilities, in the pedagogical time of the formation, among other forms.

The conclusions point to an offer of education based on the principles of democratic management, considering the mechanisms and their functionality in the scope of the two schools. The subjects highlighted as potentialities of democratic management the training that favors collectivity, the participation of all, and the mechanisms of participation. This position was common to all the answers.

The limits pointed out different opinions: the regular school management points out the daily rush, the bureaucratic issues as impediments to collective decision-making. The management of the professional school, on the other hand, only uses the operational dimension to maintain order, citing the School Rules and Regulations. The high school reform is seen as a great fallacy, because there was no dialogue with the education professionals. It was something totally imposed, and it was revealed by the

subjects that not even the school administrators participated.

      The mechanisms used to make democratic management effective reveal the importance of focusing on the development of an education with social commitment and public ethics. We believe that, in this way, schools will be able to constitute themselves as democratic spaces of continuous learning, with resoluteness of actions from a management with social inclusion.

6. References

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