

PARTICIPATION AND SOCIAL CONTROL IN THE CONTEXT OF PREPARATION AND APPROVAL OF THE MUNICIPAL EDUCATION PLAN OF ALTO ARAGUAIA/MT (2015/2025)

PARTICIPAÇÃO E CONTROLE SOCIAL NO CONTEXTO DE ELABORAÇÃO E APROVAÇÃO DO PLANO MUNICIPAL DE EDUCAÇÃO DE ALTO ARAGUAIA/MT (2015/2025)

PARTICIPACIÓN Y CONTROL SOCIAL EN EL MARCO DE LA ELABORACIÓN Y APROBACIÓN DEL PLAN MUNICIPAL DE EDUCACIÓN DE ALTO ARAGUAIA/MT (2015/2025)

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ABSTRACT: Aiming to understand the possible democratic mechanisms used in the elaboration and approval of the Municipal Education Plan of Alto Araguaia-MT (2015/2025), based on the social and politically referenced quality of education, the article presents partial results of research developed in the Education Program. Graduate, Master in Education, UFG/Regional Jataí. The methodological corpus consisted of document analysis and empirical research. From the documents analyzed, we had access to those produced by the representative commission of the segments of civil society responsible for the elaboration of the MEP base document. The empirical research made use of a questionnaire through the Google Forms platform, with questions sent to 20 representatives of those segments participating in the reformulation and approval of the MEP. The analysis of the categories of participation and social control was based on the theoretical-methodological framework of historical and dialectical materialism. As partial results, it can be said that participation and social control were present in some way during the process of (re)formulation and approval of the MEP, including the three public hearings promoted; as for representativeness, this was configured by a pseudo-participation.

KEYWORDS: Municipal Education Plan. Participation. Social control. Educational public policy.

RESUMO: *Objetivando compreender os possíveis mecanismos democráticos utilizados na elaboração e aprovação do Plano Municipal de Educação de Alto Araguaia-MT (2015/2025), tendo como pressuposto a qualidade social e politicamente referenciada de educação, o artigo traz resultados parciais de pesquisa desenvolvida no Programa de Pós-Graduação, Mestrado em Educação, da UFG/Regional Jataí. O corpus metodológico constituiu-se por análise*

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documental e pesquisa empírica. Dos documentos analisados, teve-se acesso àqueles produzidos pela comissão representativa dos segmentos da sociedade civil incumbida da elaboração do documento base do PME. A pesquisa empírica fez uso de questionário mediante a plataforma Google Forms, com questões encaminhadas a 20 representantes daqueles segmentos participantes da reformulação e aprovação do PME. A análise das categorias participação e controle social teve como pressuposto o referencial teórico-metodológico do materialismo histórico e dialético. Como resultados parciais, pode-se afirmar que a participação e o controle social se fizeram presentes de alguma forma durante o processo de (re)formulação e aprovação do PME, considerando inclusive as três audiências públicas promovidas; quanto à representatividade, essa se configurou por uma pseudoparticipação.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Plano Municipal de Educação. Participação. Controle social. Política pública educacional.

RESUMEN: *Con el objetivo de comprender los posibles mecanismos democráticos utilizados en la elaboración y aprobación del Plan Municipal de Educación del Alto Araguaia-MT (2015/2025), teniendo como supuesto la calidad social y políticamente referenciada de la educación, el artículo trae resultados parciales de la investigación desarrollada en el Programa de Posgrado, Maestría en Educación, UFG/Regional Jataí. El corpus metodológico estuvo constituido por el análisis documental y la investigación empírica. De los documentos analizados, hemos tenido acceso a los elaborados por la comisión representativa de los segmentos de la sociedad civil encargada de preparar el documento base del PME. La investigación empírica hizo uso de un cuestionario utilizando la plataforma Google Forms, con preguntas enviadas a 20 representantes de los segmentos que participan en la reformulación y aprobación del PME. El análisis de las categorías participación y control social se basó en el marco teórico y metodológico del materialismo histórico y dialéctico. Como resultados parciales, se puede afirmar que la participación y el control social se hicieron presentes de alguna forma durante el proceso de reformulación y aprobación del PME, considerando inclusive las tres audiencias públicas promovidas; en cuanto a la representatividad, ésta se configuró por una seudoparticipación.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: Plan Municipal de Educación. Participación. Control social. Política pública de educación.

Introduction

The preparation of the Municipal Education Plans for the decade 2015/2025 is in line with the requirements of the National Education Plan, Law No. 13.005, of June 25, 2014 (BRASIL, 2014). This law established that each municipality should prepare or revise its Municipal Education Plan, henceforth PME, establishing goals and strategies, according to the PNE (2014-2024). Thus, it would be up to the municipalities, within one year, to create commissions or working groups to (re)elaborate their respective plans according to guidelines received from the MEC.

In this sense, the challenge for the municipalities would be, within the principle of democratic management, with the participation and collaboration of the various segments of organized civil society, to elaborate or review educational goals for the next decade. That is, to have the participation of managers, teachers, employees, family and students, social organizations and institutions for this challenge to design municipal education from an initial diagnosis and propose actions, goals and strategies for the social quality of municipal education.

In this context, the Municipal Education Councils (CME) would have the potential to have a salutary protagonism, since, in the MEC's perception, they are understood as mechanisms of opening to social participation: "one of the most important attributions of municipal councils is to charge and guide the preparation of the Municipal Education Plan, a policy that will govern the directions of the city's education for the next decade" (AGÊNCIA, 2014, p. 1).

According to the document '*PNE em Movimento*', "it becomes necessary that the Municipal Education Council (CME) and the Municipal Education Forum (FME) be participants of the commission, thus contributing to the mobilization and social participation in the process" (BRAZIL, 2016, p. 6).

The Secretariat of Articulation with Teaching Systems (SASE), during the process of preparation of municipal plans, had the function of guiding the Working Groups so that the participation of various sectors of society could be effective, leading the PME, from a mere bureaucratic formality, to be a document prepared by the community collective, pointing to social control, since, in addition to the construction of the plan, there would be the need for social monitoring for its effectiveness.

Considering the referral given by the MEC, the articulation of the SASE with the municipalities and the effectiveness of the PME in the form of municipal law, it was necessary to analyze the possible democratic mechanisms used in the (re)preparation and approval of the PME of Alto Araguaia-MT (2015/2025).

This article brings a cut of the documentary and empirical research, conducted with the participants of the working group that prepared the PME of Alto Araguaia/MT, developed in the Master's Program in Education at UFG/Regional Jataí. The central question that led the research was to question how and to what extent the participation of representatives of civil society contributed to the process of formulation and approval of the base document for the PME of Alto Araguaia - MT (2015-2025).

The theme of the investigation, Municipal Education Plan, is aligned with the ongoing inter-institutional research developed by GEP-CMEBr, Study and Research Group on

Municipal Councils of Education in Brazil, under the title "Implementation and social control of the PME: the performance of the CMEs in Brazil".

In the first part, the research procedures are outlined, followed by a discussion of the data collected.

The paths of research

The research was based on documental data collection procedures, followed by interviews, using a questionnaire approved by the Research Ethics Committee (CEP) n°. 25591019.3.0000.8155, Opinion n°. 3.979.092 and amendment Opinion n°. 4.304.003, with data analysis carried out in the light of the Historical-Dialectical Materialism (MHD).

The documental research consisted in the analysis of minutes, letters, summonses, decrees, communications, invitations, produced by the Organizing and Executing Commission of the Required Measures (COEME). In them, we observed how they were organized, to whom they were addressed, and at what time they were produced.

It is important to note that, in addition to the few documents made available by both the CME and the Municipal Secretariat of Education (SME), they were disorganized, making it necessary to select them by year of production (2013-2014-2015). Among the documents found, we highlight: composition of the Commissions and Work Groups (WG), laws (3), decrees (2), minutes (2), letters (3), emails (2). We also searched the media, city hall websites and local newspapers for data about the municipal conferences.

The empirical research selected 20 (twenty) individuals among municipal managers, CME representatives, union representatives, and civil society. The choice of these respondents was linked to the collaboration they had in the process of reformulating the PME and whose names were identified in the documentary research as participants of the working groups (WG). Those who were willing to answer the questionnaire after reading the Free and Informed Consent Form (ICF) participated. Due to the social isolation resulting from COVID-19, the questionnaire was submitted remotely, using Google Forms, by e-mail.

Of the total 20 individuals contacted, 16 completed the questionnaire. Nine women and seven men participated, all with complete higher education, mostly representatives of segments, according to the Municipal Decree No. 104/2013, which established the composition of the Commission for the appreciation and updating of the PME. The feedback of the questions was tabulated and analyzed, and the categories social participation, representativeness and social

control were evidenced. The respondents were identified by the letter R and numbered, i.e., R1, R2, R3, and so on. The answers were transcribed keeping their original format.

The data collected were analyzed, organized and understood in the movement of history and the facts that generated the different forms of production of ideas, from the beginning to the current form of the PME in force. Under the inspiration of the MHD, it is understood that the historicity of the studied phenomenon must be investigated under the historical-dialectical perspective, a method that indicates the principles on which the critical researcher must rely to understand the reality, unveiling the conflicts, contradictions, interests and ideologies present when the PME of Alto Araguaia/MT (2015/2025) was reformulated.

Results and discussion

The municipality of Alto Araguaia is located in the southeast of the state of Mato Grosso. It currently ranks forty-second among the most populous municipalities in the state; in relation to the Human Development Index (HDI), it points to a good result, with a high level compared to the state and national levels, and the schooling of children aged 6 to 14 years is 96.7% (IBGE, 2019). The educational scenario in the municipality encompasses public schools (state and municipal), private basic education institutions, public and private universities.

In observation of Educacenso data (INEP, 2019) regarding enrollments, the municipality is responsible for attending 42.45% of students enrolled in all levels of basic education. The data also show that the municipality is responsible for 91.5% of the demand with the daycare and preschool stage; 60.5% of the demand with the early years stage and only 31% of the demand with the final years of elementary education.

In terms of Higher Education, the municipality has the Mato Grosso State University (UNEMAT), which offers courses in Languages, Journalism and Computer Science, and, in the piecemeal modality, courses in Pedagogy and Law. There is also a branch of the Open University of Brazil (UAB), the University of the North of Paraná (UNOPAR) and Paulista University (UNIP), as well as the Industrial Learning Service (SENAI).

The municipality of Alto Araguaia has in its history the construction of two Municipal Education Plans, the first approved in 2006, by Law No. 2.116, and the second, after reformulation, approved by Municipal Law No. 3.636/2015. Both plans had as guiding documents the National Education Plans approved respectively in 2001 and 2014.

The municipality has a Municipal Education Council approved by Law 1.478/2003, but it does not exercise a normative function, since the municipality does not have its own education

system and is part of the State Education System, thus being subject to the State Education Council (CEE).

The PME reformulation process started with the Municipal Decree that instituted and appointed the relevant members of the Organizing and Executing Committee for the Required Measures (COEME). This commission developed the work of organizing the commissions divided into study axes, as well as the conferences that were held in the municipality.

Municipal Decree No. 104, of October 1, 2013, instituted by the executive and designating the relevant members of COEME for the appreciation and updating of the PME from the Plan in effect, established objectives, attributions, resources, and deadlines for its work, including the Municipal Education Conferences (CONFESME) (ALTO ARAGUAIA, 2013, p. 1).

This decree, in five pages and six articles, indicates the consultancy of a UNEMAT professor. It appoints and clarifies the obligations of the organizing commission and executor of the legal procedures, highlights the Public Ministry as guest of honor for all conferences. In addition to the Municipal Secretary as chairperson of the commission, it appoints a member of the Municipal Secretary of Education to act as secretary and answer for the pertinent questions. The description of the requirement for minutes of each meeting of the commission is included, as well as in Article 5 the determination, according to a schedule, of deadlines for the conduct and completion of the process, considering the call, the three public hearings, the final version of the base document for consideration and the monitoring, control and evaluation of the implementation of the PME (ALTO ARAGUAIA, 2013).

Also in this decree, article 2 describes the four members representing the executive branch, namely: municipal secretaries of Administration, Finance and Education, as president and vice member of the CME, and the Attorney or Legal Advisor; As members of other Public Bodies and the Organized Civil Society are represented the Pedagogical Advisor of the Mato Grosso State Education Secretary (SEDUC-MT), the president of the Public Education Workers Union of Mato Grosso (SINTEP-MT), representatives of the School Community Deliberative Councils (CDCE), being three from municipal schools and three from state schools; from the other segments of each level (municipal and state), they are: Parents (one) Teachers (one), Educando (one), in total six members, in addition to the President of the Municipal Council of the Rights of Children and Adolescents (ALTO ARAGUAIA, 2013).

From the decree in question, with the designated representations, one can deduce that there was a concern, at least on the ideal level, to establish a democratic management in the process of re-drafting and approval of the PME. On the other hand, it is necessary to analyze

the political and economic context in which this process is inserted in order to understand and investigate the choices made by the members of this COEME committee.

As for representativeness, there are two issues in the decree that need reflection. The first concerns the appointment of a consultant and/or advisor for the PME reformulation process, that is, how was the work of this consultant and/or advisor carried out?

No records were found that could clarify whether it was only a technical advisor for the methodological construction and systematization of the PME reformulation or whether an advisor for control by the executive branch was established, as a characteristic alien to a democratic construction.

Second question: The commission was appointed by a decree issued by the Executive. In this case, considering that it is the political parties that design and implement public policies, this involves the political conception of each ruler and his supporters, thus delineating the rationality present in the documents. It is noteworthy that, both in the preparation of the first PME, in 2006, and in the reformulation process in 2014, the same municipal mayor, linked to the then Republican Party (PR), now Liberal Party (PL), was in charge of the executive.

Thus, it can be seen that there were no changes in the political scenario. The maintenance or changes in the municipal scenario are located in the financial issue, that is, in financial rationality. We can see that the elaboration of plans and legal-normative acts are not neutral, since the political context is not separate from the socioeconomic context.

Despite the guidance of the MEC that mayors and education secretaries should have a prominent role in the process of preparation and/or reformulation of municipal plans, the fact that the executive instituted the reformulation process appears to be a hierarchical role, since it did not come from a democratic action and was not established by the Municipal Education Council, which should be a protagonist in this process.

The representativeness present in the decree needs to be tensioned, since the choice of representatives to make up the commission is not always made in a democratic way, i.e., choice by approval of their peers or of the groups they represent. According to the respondents of this research, they affirmed that their participation in this commission was based on invitation, indication, and even by summons.

In this way, a clash between the State and society is established in the reformulation of the PME, highlighting the limits and possibilities of building a democratic process in face of the unfavorable conditions presented by the political hegemony present in the municipality.

Defining the construction process of a plan as democratic depends on how the municipality goes about it. The limitations due to the lack of documents describing the process

made it impossible to have a broader knowledge to verify if the democratic principle occurred, as well as if debates and clashes took place along the way. The interviewees were asked to clarify, in their perception, if there was community participation, i.e., civil society participation, in the preparation of the base document of the PME.

In this matter, the respondents highlighted that: "There was discussion in the schools, studies with the working group, presentation of the document to all education professionals in the City Council, where the presentation was made and the vote was taken so that the document was forwarded to the mayor. Then to the City Council for voting. The document was voted on in its entirety and became law" (R 13). "Through meetings and discussions of the participants" (R 3). "The elaboration of the base document of the Municipal Education Plan of Alto Araguaia - MT happened through many meetings with the commission of coordinators and directors of municipal, state, and private schools. In order to carry out this process with the participation of the whole community, schools did not have classes on the day of the public hearing, and there was ample publicity on radio and television. Letters were sent to all the schools, UNEMAT and authorities of the executive and legislative branches of government" (R15). "The elaboration of the Municipal Education Plan occurred according to the constitutional principle of "democratic management of public education" (C.F. art. 206, item VI), democratic management of teaching and education, ensuring principles such as transparency and impersonality, autonomy and participation, leadership and collective work, representativeness and competence. In consonance with the norms defined in the National Education Plan established in Law # 10.172, of January 9, 2001" (R 14).

The answers made it evident that several meetings, debates in the schools, and participation in the hearings had in fact taken place. It can be understood that, because the PME is a municipal education document, it was debated by the fraction of the community that participated in the reformulation process.

As foreseen in the decree, the three conferences were held to present and approve the proposals presented by the WGs, in addition to stimulating the participation of society.

Respondent 8 states that the reformulation happened "according to all the guidelines, the Municipal Plan is based on the National and State Plan, respecting all the local, social and economic specificities", a fact that would demonstrate agreement with the MEC's "Guidelines Notebook", which considered, among different procedures, having knowledge of the local scenario and being aligned with the PNE and PEE as indispensable factors to be observed for the preparation of the PME. On the other hand, when analyzing the PME (2015/2025) on the goals related to teacher appreciation, this did not happen. The research revealed that the PME

lacked goals and strategies, especially goals 15, 16, 17, and 18, which refer to teacher appreciation, a fact that opposes this pairing with the PNE (2014/2024) and the PEE (2006/2016) (SANTOS, 2021).

In the municipality of Alto Araguaia, among the stages of reformulation of the PME, three conferences were organized. The 1st conference took place on February 26, 2014, in the City Council building, during the morning and afternoon periods. Invitations were sent to schools, institutions, the press, councilors, and members of the judiciary, and municipal classes were suspended.

According to data from this conference, minutes number 07/2014, the only one that was made available for the research, in the morning the president of the Union of Public Education Workers of Mato Grosso (SINTEP-MT) was invited, and in the afternoon there was the debate of the committees, and, according to the minutes, "all proposals were presented and approved unanimously. This participation is highlighted on the city hall news page, online, as it reads,

The meeting was marked by a series of discussions aimed at updating and improving the public educational policy for a period of 10 years. Besides the discussions, lectures and cultural presentations also marked the conference. Teachers and educators from all schools in urban and rural areas participated in the meeting (ALTO ARAGUAIA, 2014a).

The second conference took place a month and a half after the first, on April 11, 2014, and followed the same methodology of invitations sent to different segments of society: schools, institutions, press, city councilors, members of the judiciary; classes were also suspended that day. In the same way, the city government reported online:

For the second consecutive time, in less than 45 days, educators in the municipality of Alto Araguaia (southeastern Mato Grosso) met again. The goal was to open new avenues of discussion for reformulation of the Municipal Education Plan (PME) aimed at updating and improving public education policy for a period of 10 years. The meeting took place almost all day Friday (April 11) at the City Council Chamber. Because of the event, there were no classes in the municipal education system this Friday, since all the education professionals were involved in the discussions, which started even in the teaching units with studies and the presentation of proposals to the base document. The proposals, during the debates, may be additive, suppressive or substitutive (ALTO ARAGUAIA, 2014b).

The third and last conference was only held the following year, on April 29, 2015, in view of the approval and sanction of the new National Plan (Law 13.005/2014). The final version of the plan was delivered on June 3, 2015 for approval in the City Council and for

voting, being approved on July 17, 2015 and sanctioned by Municipal Law No. 3.636/2015 (ALTO ARAGUAIA, 2015).

Thus, the three conferences were held within the process of drafting and approval of the PNE. The respondents were asked what strategies were used to encourage the participation of the school, the family and other segments of society in the discussion of the Municipal Education Plan, in the municipal conferences, the following stand out: "All schools were instructed to send professionals from all segments to participate in the discussion of the PME, as well as invite students, parents and/or guardians to also participate" (R 3). "Summoning all members of the School Community, guidance on the importance of everyone's participation, distribution of tasks for both organization and presentation" (R 4). "The Commission of Articulation, Mobilization and Infrastructure, along with SEME, prepared and sent clarifying invitations about the importance of the presence of all segments of society for the improvement of Education" (R 14). "Each school unit had a representative who was responsible for informing the school community he or she was representing" (R 12). "There was great publicity on the radio and television, inviting parents, teachers, coordinators, the mayor, councilmen, and society in general, talking about the importance of their participation in the creation of the new Municipal Education Plan in this hearing" (R 16).

According to the respondents, there was a mobilization around the process of reformulation of the PME, with the participation of different actors in the conferences, a space that is configured as an opportunity for collective decision-making; according to Respondent 11: "The base document was sent to all schools (municipal, state and private, universities) to be read and discussed, and the respective managers should broaden the discussion by inviting the school's Deliberative Council to participate, since this council has representation from the segments of parents, employees, teachers and students. The Municipal Secretary of Education mobilized the press to publicize the work done by the PME working group. And on the day of the hearing there were no classes, everyone was invited to participate in the hearing.

However, the materiality of this data could not be verified due to the lack of minutes, reports and/or other documents describing how the whole reformulation process took place. In this sense, as Dagnino (2004) points out, there are common references at the discourse level, the same vocabulary, the same institutional procedures and mechanisms, which obscure the distinctions and divergences between a project of widening democracy and another project for the neoliberal ideology.

Another issue to be analyzed, from the perspective of social control, is that the call has to be effective in guaranteeing the quality of participation as a tool for the democratic process

of reformulating the Plan. However, when identifying documents with the attendance list signed by the education professionals on the dates of the first and second conferences, it became evident that the educators were not invited, but rather summoned. That is, in the sense that they were ordered to attend, since the fact that classes were released on the days of the conferences did not give them the choice of participating or not, since they had to confirm attendance.

This position goes against the respect and the principle of autonomy of these professionals and configures itself in a movement that, instead of ensuring the construction of an active and democratic participation, ends up oppressing and limiting. In this way, Gohn (2011, p. 356) observes that:

There are many challenges to be faced, it is necessary to change the political culture of our society (civil and political), still strongly marked by clientelism, physiologism, and various forms of corruption; to restructure the administrative culture of our public agencies, still structured on the pillars of bureaucracy and corporatism; to contribute to the strengthening of a citizen culture that respects the rights and duties of individuals and collectivities, because the predominant citizenship is restricted to voting and is still marked by the colonial legacies of subservience and conformism.

Active participation is that with decision-making power, regardless of what happens within the spaces of participation and manipulation by governing interests, which sometimes see active participation as an obstacle to their interests; it is a democratic participation, in which the organization favors decision-making mechanisms in a shared way.

Social and political participation should be that which enables different social actors (those who do not hold public positions) to elaborate, implement, and evaluate political decisions, making effective a democratic and participatory management, in which the fraction of individuals involved in the process can manifest their aspirations in an intentional and non-neutral way, as well as exercise power.

We conclude, from what was presented about the process of reformulation and participation of the PME, that one can question how democratically this process took place, since it came from a proposal from the Executive, showing that the movement can only be considered an act of the legislative instituted by a decree, with interest and systemic look by the administration, as one respondent puts it: "It was not changed because the construction of the plan was a joint work of education with the administration" (R 7).

The fact that this decree proposed the reformulation before the approval of the PME (2015/2025) that established the obligation of states and municipalities to prepare or revise their plans corroborates the understanding that the reformulation process was presented as a systemic

bill, which should only be updated and regularized in relation to previous legislation, since the municipality already had an PME approved in 2006.

Considering this position taken through the decree reformulating the PME, the municipality began to act as described by Lima (2011, p. 09), based on Saes (2011):

The state thus has the character of a (dominant) class and is far from defending the interests of the people, it is far from being an organization at the service of 'all the people' or 'all individuals'; it has a class character, whatever the complexity and seriousness of the ways of realizing this character.

The fact that teachers are "called" to participate in the municipal reformulation conferences goes against the expected autonomy, which should be of dialogue with the whole school space, in the sense of a collective participation in search of achievements. The conferences should take place with the active participation of everyone involved in municipal education, so that they can then strengthen the political formation of all social actors in the sense of influencing political decisions, in opposition to the bureaucratic and technical distancing present in public spaces and that are characteristics of managerial participation.

While the conferences are characterized as spaces that promote changes in public management and the possibility of establishing new relationships between the State and civil society, the coercive demand for teacher participation is established as a space of correlations of forces and limitations.

It is evident that party-political issues permeated the process of reformulating the PME in the municipality, because at the same time that guiding elements for the preparation and reformulation of the plans were outlined, the autonomy granted to the municipality was quite relative, a fact that corroborates the understanding that the reformulation process was linked to a bureaucratic requirement.

As pointed out by the respondents, there were points that aspired to a democratic construction of the plan, if it is understood that within the possibilities there was a mobilization in order to carry out a participatory process, that studies and debates were carried out in different environments and in different groups, and that three conferences were held to present and approve the PME.

However, the conferences can also be configured as spaces of dispute between government and civil society, acquiring other contours and intentionalities in view of the relationships established, especially to legitimize partial decisions as collective, placing them in a way that is not as democratic as apparently declared.

Thus put, the process of reformulation of the PME is presented in the democratic horizon because the base document has gone through the stages of discussion, which were started even in the teaching units, with the carrying out of studies and the presentation of proposals; there were the conferences and the approval by the fraction of the educational segments that participated in the process, also ensured by the forms of convocation and disclosure.

However, it is noteworthy that for the PME reformulation to take place, as a process that should be democratic, it was not enough just to follow the rules proposed as a conventional legislative process, because in addition to creating the PME, it would be necessary to pay attention to the fact that it was a municipal educational policy drawn up by the collective and focused on the needs and transformations for the next decade, constituting, furthermore, a State document and not a government one.

The hierarchical practice present in many relationships is dressed up as a pseudo-participation, since it reserves the centralization of power to the executive, limiting the democratic participation, keeping the society away from the decision-making processes of preparation, implementation and social control of municipal educational policies.

Lima (2011, p. 34) reinforces that education is a territory of dispute for societal projects where the "real social performance, in which social relations are vast, can occur experiences that contribute or not to the conservation or human emancipation".

The same author highlights that the State has a class character, which neglects to defend the interests of the population. In this sense, democracy is exercised only in the political aspect, becoming fragile and "excluding the perspective of equality, popular sovereignty and socialization of the means of production" (LIMA, 2011, p. 29).

Final considerations

The objective here was to problematize the reformulation and approval of the base document for the PME of Alto Araguaia - MT (2015/2025), having as a principle the participation and social control of civil society representatives and the possible democratic mechanisms used in this process.

It was verified that, in the ideal plan, there was the participation of several segments of civil and political society in the reformulation and approval of the PME: the three municipal conferences give evidence for this participation and social control. On the other hand, according to the theoretical option guiding this research, it can also be stated that the State is not a neutral

entity, free of conflicts, but rather divided by the contradictions between social classes, serving the interests of the dominant classes.

It is noteworthy that the elaboration of the PME, based on neoliberal principles, has its implementation as a space for social regulation, in which, through similar discourses, it uses it as a strategy for the bourgeois domination of education.

Considering the participation of civil society representatives in the process of formulation and approval of the base document for the PME of Alto Araguaia - MT, we can infer, from the research results, a contradictory process. This means that if social and political participation should be a democratic process, in which the choice of COEME representatives was made through elections, this did not actually happen. Thus, the representation did not really happen from the base, but was a directed participation, a pseudo-participation. Therefore, those who were supposedly there as representatives lacked autonomy, a prerequisite for social and political participation, a fundamental principle of a democratic educational management.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: To the Municipal Board of Education and the Municipal Secretary of Education of Alto Araguaia/MT.

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How to reference this article

RAIMANN, E. G.; SANTOS, S. R. H. Participation and social control in the context of preparation and approval of the municipal education plan of Alto Araguaia/MT (2015/2025). **Revista Ibero-Americana de Estudos em Educação**, Araraquara, v. 17, n. 1, p. 0516-0531, Jan./Mar. 2022. e-ISSN: 1982-5587. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21723/riaee.v17i1.15537>

Submitted: 21/09/2021

Revisions required: 02/11/2021

Approved: 17/12/2021

Published: 02/01/2022

Management of translations and versions: Editora Ibero-Americana de Educação

Translator: Thiago Faquim Bittencourt

Translation reviewer: Alexander Vinícius Leite da Silva