

**GENERAL OMBUDSMAN OF THE STATE OF PERNAMBUCO: ANALYSIS OF THE MANAGEMENT REPORTS REGARDING THE STATE SECRETARIAT OF EDUCATION (2015-2019)**

***OUVIDORIA-GERAL DO ESTADO DE PERNAMBUCO: ANÁLISE DOS RELATÓRIOS DE GESTÃO DA SECRETARIA ESTADUAL DE EDUCAÇÃO (2015-2019)***

***DEFENSORÍA GENERAL DEL ESTADO DE PERNAMBUCO: ANÁLISIS DE LOS INFORMES DE GESTIÓN DE LA OFICINA DE EDUCACIÓN (2015-2019)***

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**ABSTRACT:** This present study aims to analyze the management reports of the General Ombudsman from the State of Pernambuco (OGE), that contemplate data of the Secretariat of Education (SEE-PE) between 2015-2019, focusing on the nature of the manifestations and how they are organized and presented. The study had as methodological basis the search for documents and bibliographic readings (BORDENAVE, 1994; DEMO, 1993; GOHN, 2019; LAVALLE, 2015). The results demonstrated the possibilities of the public ombudsmen as a space of participation, although they demand expanded actions, among others, of active transparency and organization on the information available.

**KEYWORDS:** Ombudsman. Education. Participation.

**RESUMO:** O presente trabalho tem como objetivo analisar os relatórios de gestão da Ouvidoria-Geral do Estado de Pernambuco (OGE) que contemplam dados da Secretaria de Educação (SEE-PE) entre o período de 2015-2019 tendo como foco a natureza das manifestações e como estas são organizadas e apresentadas. Teve como base metodológica pesquisa dos documentos e leituras bibliográficas (BORDENAVE, 1994; DEMO, 1993; GOHN, 2019; LAVALLE, 2015). Os resultados mostraram as possibilidades das ouvidorias públicas como um espaço de participação, todavia, demandam ações ampliadas, entre outras, de transparência ativa e organização das informações disponibilizadas.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Ouvidoria. Educação. Participação.

**RESUMEN:** Este trabajo tiene por objeto analizar los informes de gestión de la Oficina del Defensoría General del Estado de Pernambuco (DGE que incluyen datos da Secretaría de Educación (SEE-PE) entre el período de 2015-2019, centrándose en la naturaleza de las

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*manifestaciones y cómo se organizan y presentan las informaciones. Tuvo como base metodológica la investigación de los documentos y lecturas bibliográficas (BORDENAVE, 1994; DEMO, 1993; GOHN, 2019; LAVALLE, 2015). Los resultados mostraron las posibilidades de las defensorías públicas como espacio de participación, sin embargo, exigen acciones ampliadas, entre otras, de transparencia activa y organización de las informaciones puestas a disposición.*

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** Defensorías. Educación. Participación.

## Introduction

Developing theoretical and delimited reflections on public ombudsman is not easy, as it is a theme that involves broad and dense categories. Lavalle (2011, p. 36, our translation) highlights that “there is now a strong mismatch between the wealth of participatory experiences in the country and the precariousness of our knowledge about their effects”.

The National School of Public Administration (ENAP) defines public ombudsmen as an instrument of participation in the service of democracy; more specifically, ombudsmen find in democracy the necessary field for their expansion and strengthening, since they should be understood as plural spaces, open to mediation and resolution of citizens' demands (ENAP, 2017). In fact, Gomes (1996, p. 124, our translation) highlights that the public ombudsman's objective is to make possible the “necessary space for the full exercise of the right of evaluation and control of public administration, an indispensable requirement for the consolidation of our democracy”.

One of the peculiarities of public ombudsmen are the categories of manifestations, that is, the classification of content demanded by citizens. Through instruction n. 01/2014 of the Office of the General Ombudsmen of the Union (OGU, Portuguese initials), linked to the Office of Comptroller General (CGU, Portuguese initials), the ombudsman offices of the federal Executive Branch adopt five types of manifestation: **complaints**, which have as their particularity the communication of the dissatisfaction with the public service; the **denunciations**, that is, the communication of an unlawful act; **suggestions**, the indicative of proposals for improvements in policies and services provided by the administration; **praise**, the demonstration of satisfaction with the services received; and **requests**, which are information requirements. The Pernambuco Department of Education (SEE-PE) adopts the five types of manifestations in its ombudsman, in line with the General Ombudsman of the State of Pernambuco (OGE).

The article analyzes the management reports of the General Ombudsman of the State of Pernambuco (OGE, Portuguese initials) that include data from the Pernambuco Secretariat of Education (SEE/PE) from 2015 to 2019, seeking to understand the nature of the manifestations and how they are organized and presented to society. The theoretical basis will be in two general categories: Public Ombudsman and Participation. The debate on participation is wide, so the bibliographic selection for basic apprehension will be with authors such as Bordenave (1994, Demo (1993) Gohn (2007; 2019), Lavalley (2015): Vaz and Pires (2010), Pinto (2009) and Cortes (2015), in addition to the legal indications, matters and guidebooks present on the website of the General Ombudsman of the State of Pernambuco (OGE/PE) and of the Office of the Comptroller General (CGU) and materials available by the National School of Public Administration (ENAP).

The production of an exploratory nature allows the researcher, according to Gil (2002, p. 41, our translation), to improve ideas or discover intuitions. Its planning is, therefore, quite flexible, so that “it makes possible the consideration of the most varied aspects related to the studied fact”. In the context of exploratory research (regarding its objectives), more specifically the nature of the sources, we will have the stage defined as bibliographic research. Also, documentary research will be present, as Severino (2007, p. 122, our translation) points out, “the source is documents in the broad sense, that is, not only printed documents, but above all other types of documents, such as newspapers, photos, films, recordings, legal documents”.

### **For a definition of Public Ombudsman**

For Cortes (2015), there are four basic types of Participatory Institutions (PIs) in Brazilian municipalities; among them are the ombudsmen, which are “the **channels for the individual expression of preferences** such as satisfaction surveys, services that receive demands, suggestions or complaints by telephone or via the internet, **ombudsmen**; lecturer processes; participatory budgets (PB); and public policy and rights councils” (CORTES, 2015, p. 81, authors’ highlights, our translation). For this author, Participatory Institutions (PIs) are institutions created by law, constitutional amendments, resolutions or government administrative norms that enable the regular and continued involvement of citizens with the public administration, more specifically:

They are institutions because they are not episodic or occasional experiences of participation in government projects or programs or civil society

organizations or the market. On the contrary, they are established as characteristic elements of Brazilian public management. They differ from the modes of electoral participation typical of liberal democracies, by allowing the representation of interests and the expression of preferences throughout legislatures, between electoral periods (CORTES, 2015, p. 139, our translation).

Thus, it is possible to define public ombudsmen as a type of Participatory Institution (PI), being a preferred individual expression channel. As highlighted by Nascimento (2012, p. 71, authors' highlights, our translation), "the ombudsman, in this context, as a mechanism for enforcing the right, seeks to ensure the community, **through the individual search of the citizen**, the effective and effective fulfillment of their guaranteed rights by the State".

One of the peculiarities of public ombudsmen is that they are often taken, as highlighted by Neto and Durán (2016), only as receivers of complaints from society. However, the authors understand the legitimacy of public ombudsmen "as protagonists in the promotion of citizenship, that is, a proactive posture in which ombudsmen are taken as instruments of participatory democracy intended to fulfill mediation functions between society and public power" (NETO; DURÁN, 2016, p. 71, our translation).

That said, although the legal presence attests to the need for instruments of participation between citizens and the State in Public Administration, the problem of participatory institutions such as public ombudsmen is that "studies that aim to assess whether and how such participatory institutions produce impacts on the performance of governments, that is, on public management and on the production of public policies" (VAZ; PIRES, 2011, p. 5, our translation). Thus, one of the challenges (and absences) of studies on public ombudsmen are their impacts on Public Management as an instrument of participation.

It is important to highlight that we understand ombudsmen as a State action that involves different political actors in a historical and social context. Or rather, we understand them, as highlighted by Jardim, Silva and Nharreluga (2009), as an informational public policy, that is, as a set of decisions and actions produced by the State and inserted in government agendas in the name of the social interest that includes several aspects (administrative, legal, scientific, cultural, technological, etc.) relating to the production, use and preservation of public and private information. Public policies are understood here, based on Hofling (2001, p. 31, our translation), as the responsibility of the State in terms of implementation and maintenance, "from a decision-making process that involves public bodies and different agencies and agents of the society related to the implemented policy".

## **General Ombudsman of the State of Pernambuco (OGE)**

In Pernambuco, a strong managerial management model was adopted, mainly in the state governments of Jarbas Vasconcelos and José Mendonça Filho, who promoted a major reform in the state, through Decree n. 22,730, of 18 October 2000, in which it was instituted the Program for the Modernization of Public Management of Pernambuco (PROGESTÃO, Portuguese initials), with the purpose of promoting the management modernization of public institutions of direct and indirect administration in the state.

As stated by Lima (2008), referring to the ombudsman, the government at the time proposed the implementation of ombudsman units in the public service in all 40 institutions as a way to maintain the dialogue channel and the focus of attention on the citizen-user, target of actions in the public service. In November of the same year, State Law n. 12,452, of 5 November 2003, which refers to the protection and defense of the user of public services provided by the state of Pernambuco, in its paragraph 1 of art. 8, highlighted that, to assure the citizen the adequate control of the service, it authorizes the institution of ombudsmen in all agencies and entities providing public services in the State of Pernambuco. Thus, in December 2004, a Plan for the Implementation of Ombudsman Offices was then prepared by the PROGESTÃO team:

For the preparation of this plan, the services of AXON Tecnologia da Informação e Gestão were contracted through contract 0018/2006. This contract was signed with the Quality Education Program - EDUQ, within the Administrative and Managerial Modernization Program of the Government of Pernambuco, specifically in the Department of Education through the component of Modernization of the Education, Culture and Sports System, which had the objective of developing and implementing the administrative and managerial reform and modernization process in the Secretariat. **This was one of the works financed by the World Bank and intended to use this experience as a model to develop and disseminate new management technologies throughout the state's public administration.** Within this context, the effectiveness of the Ombudsman was one of the programmatic lines of action to be developed by the Secretariat of Education, Culture and Sports – SEDUC and the Secretariat of Administration and State Reform – SARE. In relation to the financing, Mr. Jader Toscano, who until the end of 2006 was the Ombudsman of the Department of Finance and today is the Ombudsman of the Department of Education, highlighted that this financing would be destined to the implementation of a model of Ombudsman at the Department of Education to be replicated throughout the State (LIMA, 2008, p. 71, authors' highlights, our translation).

From this, we can make important reflections. As stated by Castro (2008), managerialism is characterized by the search for efficiency, the reduction and control of

public spending, the demand for better quality of public services, performance evaluation models, “by its new ways of controlling the budget and public services and administrative decentralization, which gives greater autonomy to agencies and departments” (p. 391, our translation).

Therefore, in the expansive genesis of ombudsmen in Pernambuco, the context of the discourse of modernization of management demanded the hiring of a private company and the focus on decentralization. Thus, one of the characteristics of the restructuring of the capitalist system is “the search for efficiency and productivity [which] led those responsible for public administration to seek, in the private sector, a new form of organization and management for public services” (CASTRO, 2008, p. 390, our translation). That said, it is possible to observe similarities with this movement, including the fact that it is a work financed by the World Bank, which, as stated by Soares (1996), exerted “a profound influence on the direction of world development. Its importance today is due not only to the volume of its loans, but also to the strategic character it has been playing in the neoliberal restructuring process” (SOARES, 1996, p. 15, our translation). Therefore, the interrelations show the movements of a hegemonic process of managerialism in the State aligned with neoliberal assumptions; however, all research needs to consider local particularities.

In line with the implementation of the local ombudsman, in November 2006, the final report of AXON Consulting was delivered to the government, contemplating the Conceptual Model to be implemented in the ombudsmen of state secretariats and related bodies. The model presented by the company established the “reference bases for the design and operation of the Ombudsman System within the State Government” (LIMA, 2008, p. 72, our translation). As for the internal organization, the report presented a lean structure, which could have an ombudsman, attendants, assistants or secretary. The AXON document also highlighted the importance of “securing the access channels to the Ombudsman in a distributed manner, whether through voicemail, free telephone lines, websites, or other ways, thus ensuring ease of contact” (AXON, 2003, p. 18 *apud* LIMA, 2008, our translation).

According to information available on the institution's website, the General Ombudsman of the State of Pernambuco (OGE) aims to strengthen citizenship, bring citizens closer to the state's public management and contribute to the continuous improvement of public services provided to society. The Ombudsman is linked to the State Comptroller General Secretariat (SCGE) and is responsible for receiving, examining and forwarding suggestions, compliments, requests, complaints and complaints to the bodies and entities responsible for taking the appropriate measures, being described as an important device of



social control. Its mission is: to be a channel for the manifestation and representation of citizens' interests, regarding public administration and the search for its improvement.

### **Ombudsman: a possibility of participation?**

Having understood the important elements of public ombudsmen in their historical, conceptual and local movements, the point that refers to participation follows. As pointed out by Gohn (2019), the theme is broad and can be observed both from the point of view of effective civil practices and from the point of view of studies and research by analysts from different areas. The author points out that participation is one of the most used words in the political, scientific and popular vocabulary, "depending on the time and the historical situation, it appears associated with other terms such as democracy, representation, rights, organization, awareness, citizenship, solidarity, exclusion etc. There were several theorists who substantiated the meaning attributed to participation" (GOHN, 2019, p. 64, our translation).

Through the conceptual field, Gohn (2007) presents the understanding of participation through various perspectives, such as the liberal one, which defines participation as the strengthening of civil society to avoid State interference, based on the principle that all members of the society are equal; authoritarian, which understands participation as an integration process and as social control of society and politics; the revolutionary, in which collectives are organized to fight against domination relations and for the division of political power, with emphasis and importance for party systems; democratic, in which participation is developed in civil society and in formal political institutions (e.g., representative systems via electoral processes); and, finally, the radical democratic, which, according to Gohn (2007, p. 19, our translation):

It strengthens civil society to build paths that point to a new social reality, without injustices, exclusions, inequalities, discriminations etc. Pluralism is the hallmark of this conception. Political parties are no more important than social movements, and the agents for organizing social participation are multiple. A wide range of associative experiences is also considered relevant in the participatory process, such as groups of young people, elderly people, neighborhood dwellers, etc. The main entities that make up the participatory processes are seen as "social subjects". It is not, therefore, about isolated individuals or individuals who are members of a given social class. Participation has a plural character. In processes involving popular participation, individuals are considered "citizens". In this conception, participation is articulated with the theme of citizenship [...] Participation also involves struggles for the division of responsibilities within the

government. These struggles have several fronts, such as the constitution of a democratic language that does not exclude existing or created participatory spaces, citizens' access to all types of information that concern them, and encouragement to the creation and development of democratic means of communication.

We agree with the author and understand, as an example, that ombudsmen are one of the democratic means of communication, considering that the information generated by citizens can be used to improve public services, request changes, but always articulated with other strategies, in several fronts, including the unions.

Another definition, as highlighted by Lavalle (2011), is that participation can be understood as a native category of the political practice of social actors; a theoretical category of democracy, with varying weights according to theoretical strands and authors; and an institutionalized procedure, with functions delimited by laws and regulations. The author also highlights the multidimensionality or polysemy of practical, theoretical and institutional meanings that make participation a fleeting concept not only because the measurement of effects "is a known complex operation, but due to the fact that there is no consensus on the expected effects of participation, or, worse, as to the relevance of evaluating it by its effects" (LAVALLE, 2011, p. 33, our translation).

Milani (2008) highlights that participation is an integral part of social reality, where social relationships are based on structures. For the author, "its action is relational; it is the construction of/in social transformation. Participatory practices and their social bases evolve, varying according to social, historical and geographic contexts" (p. 560, our translation).

Another author, Pedro Demo (1993), understands participation as a process, as a constant coming-to-be, where spaces for participation need to be conquered and that all deep participatory processes tend to be slow. For him, "participation is essentially self-promotion and exists as a processual achievement. There is not enough and finished participation. Participation that imagines itself complete, begins to regress in this" (DEMO, 1993, p. 18, our translation). Defending participation as a process, the author highlights that:

Participation cannot be understood as a gift, as a concession, as something that already exists. It cannot be understood as a gift, because it would not be the product of conquest, nor would it carry out the fundamental phenomenon of self-promotion; it would be, in any case, a protected and effective participation in the measure of the donor's good graces, which delimits the permitted space. It cannot be understood as a concession because it is not a residual or secondary phenomenon of social policy, but one of its fundamental axes; it would only be an expedient to cloud the character of the conquest, or to hide, on the side of the dominants, the need to yield. It cannot be understood as something preexisting, because the space for participation



does not fall from in one's lap by carelessness, nor is it the first step (DEMO, 1993, p. 18, our translation).

Bordenave (1994) points out that participation, given the different meanings attributed to it, has as its ultimate goal “self-management”, that is, an autonomy of organized popular groups in relation to the powers of the State and the ruling classes, “implies the increase the degree of political awareness of the citizens, the reinforcement of popular control over authority and the strengthening of the degree of legitimacy of the public power when it responds to the real needs of the population” (BORDENAVE, 1994, p. 21, our translation). For the author, when the population participates in the inspection of public services, they tend to improve their quality.

However, it is important to be careful with the simple idea of inspection, given that, as highlighted by Shiroma, Garcia and Campos (2011), there was a shift in the notion of participation in the context of “democratic management”: as a product of the struggles of the years 1980 for the idea of “participatory management”, used as an accountability strategy in which no mention is made of participation as power sharing. It is precisely one of the precautions that must be taken when we think about participation, specifically, when we talk about public ombudsmen, which shows the contradictions of having it, since, for many, it is like a complaints desk.

The accountability debate is extensive and involves several theoretical and historical perspectives, which is clear when we remember the changes in the 90's, but that these issues should not be deepened in this work, as they do not fit the objective. Still, it is a movement that must be considered, as it is also a phenomenon of managerialism, which is therefore a product of neoliberalism. They are interrelations and one does not exclude the other.

### **Analysis of management reports between 2015-2019**

After the debates, entering the objects of study, which are the management reports of the General Ombudsman of Pernambuco. The main difficulties were related to the organization of the information in these reports and the lack of standardization of the contents of the documents, which involve graphs and tables. We understand that the quality of these documents is an important element for participation in any space, considering that, if people do not have access or are unaware of the information, it is difficult for them to make decisions on any public issue. Another problem observed was the lack of a standard in the periodicity of each report, which also made it impossible to better monitor qualitatively and quantitatively.

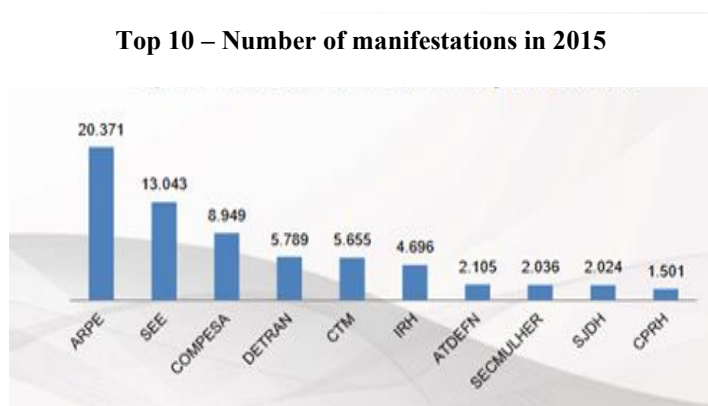
On this issue, the Access to Information Law (LAI) or Law 12,527, of 8 November 2011, mentions in its article 8 that "it is the duty of public bodies and entities to promote, regardless of requirements, the disclosure in an easy access place, within the scope of their competences, of information of collective or general interest produced or held by them" (BRASIL, 2011, our translation), which is called in Public Management active transparency. The Law also specifies in its requirements that "IV – disclose in detail the formats used to structure the information; V - guarantee the authenticity and integrity of the information available for access" (BRASIL, 2011, our translation). So, there are these two important elements, in addition to the way the information is presented and the advance notice before it is requested.

Regarding the 2015 report, it is possible to find information for the month from January to December, in addition to a report on Requests for Access to Information (PAI, Portuguese initials), which is presented separately, but with little information subject to more concrete analysis, as it is presented. more quantitative data.

As a sign, the Request for Access to Information (PAI), as it is present in the Procedures Manual of the Ombudsman Network of the Executive Branch of Pernambuco, is a request addressed to public bodies or entities, made by any individual or legal entity (such as companies or civil associations) whose object is public data or information, while the **request** is a request for actions, procedures and projects to the Public Administration and a request for instruction, guidance or communication regarding the services provided by the State.

On SEE-PE's direct website, it is possible to verify that there are two different forms, the one for manifestation (complaint, suggestion, praise, request, denunciation) and the one for request, related to the PAI. The problem is that the Secretariat does not clarify whether there are errors in the categorization of users or what are the internal procedures adopted to systematize this information. By the terms themselves, it is easy to infer that users may consider PAI and the request synonymous, and it is not clear how this information is handled.

**Figure 1 – Consolidated from January to December 2015**

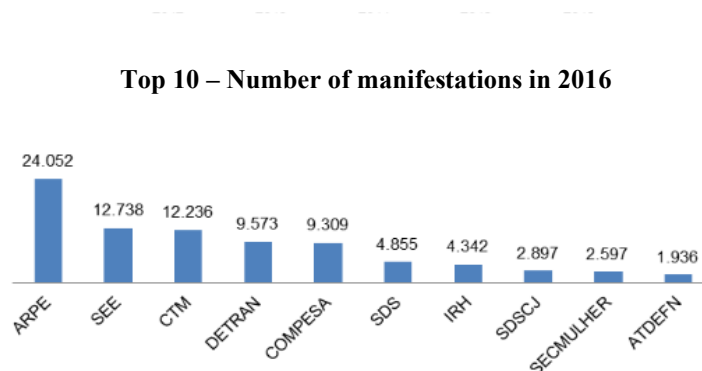


Source: Pernambuco (2015)

The specific report on the Department of Education indicates that the number of manifestations was: information (4,982); requests (2,160); denunciations (706); complaints (3,782); praise (87); suggestions (71). Therefore, there are again doubts about the semantic understanding of information and requests, which are precisely the biggest demands. Complaints, soon after, appear with the greatest number, followed by complaints.

The 2016 report is similar to the next one, in 2017, the difference is in the presence, in the first document of the **Statistical Report Rede de Ouvidorias and SIC January to December 2016, the Statistical Report Rede de Ouvidorias and SIC – December 2016 and the Statistical Report Quarterly LAI**, which, as they are consolidated, present general information by Secretariat, not the type of demand. The next image shows the consolidated for the year 2016. Qualitative analyzes are also not present in the reports, what we have are the number of denunciations (813); complaints (3,315); praise (108); suggestions (75); information (3,389) and requests (5,038).

**Figure 2 – Consolidated 2016**

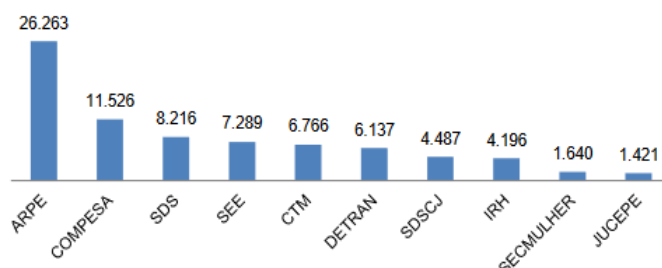


Source: Pernambuco (2016)

Regarding the 2017 management report, the way in which the information is presented is different from the previous (2016) and the next (2018). First, because it does not present a consolidated report and, second, because there is no specific report on the PAI. Initially, the proposal was to make an evolution of demands per year (2015-2019), however, with the lack of standard and clearer explanation of quantitative methodologies, it was decided to carry out an analysis only as a unit, not as a set.

**Figure 3 – Consolidated of December 2017**

**Top 10 – Number of manifestations in 2017**



Source: Pernambuco (2017)

An information that appears in the report as a footnote is that "the manifestations previously registered as information began to have their records as requests from the 2017 exercise, in compliance with the recommendation of the National Ombudsman Network" (PERNAMBUCO, 2017, p. 2, our translation). That is, the problem pointed out in the previous report was foreseen as an issue in 2017, yet the internal categorization procedures were not clarified in manuals or booklets. On the direct website of the Ombudsman of SEE-PE, there are still two fields (PAI and manifestations) and it is not clear how the General Ombudsman handles information from each agency.

The 2018 report presents the main forms of contact, showing the internet as the most used. Data from the 2018 report show that 3,812 users used the internet on the ways to contact the Ombudsman; 1,726 of them, the free lines; 268, the e-mail; 168, 162; 59 were in person; 4 used the hotline; 3 wrote letters; 1 used the "Reclame aqui"; and 1, the app. It is not clear in the report how the process of forwarding contact through the last four channels was carried out. It is possible to infer that, if the internet is the main source of contact, it is also likely to be the main source of information consultation, where the issue of active transparency focuses. The most requested types of information were: complaint, with 2,673 demands;

request, with 2,105; denunciation, 856; request for access to information, 295; praise, 72; and suggestion, 41.

The report also presents an analysis of recurrent and/or relevant manifestations, as consolidated in Table 1. The problem is that it is not possible, through the reports, to define, for example, in the School Management field, whether it is a quantitative result of which manifestation, that is, if they are complaints, compliments, suggestions or others. Assuming that the issue is interconnected with the field of complaints, we then have several situations, the doubt that remains refers to the actions taken with the information produced by the ombudsman. Are they used as sources for components in the training of these professionals? Are they presented through consolidated to school managers? How are they handled as feedback? It is then possible to perceive a space for research, for knowledge management in the SEE-PE network, however, it remains to be seen how it happens in practice, since the information is generic in the reports themselves.

As for the other manifestations, such as enrollment and school records, the following question appears, how is the issue of document management in school spaces and on the website of the Department of Education in practice? As you can see, here we have a relationship with what was seen as active transparency, that is, it authorizes access regardless of external demand, but for that, the information must be available. In addition, we can also question users' communication and access difficulties.

**Table 1 – Summary of recurrent and/or relevant manifestations (2018)**

Theme	Object/Content	Measures adopted
School Management	School community records about situations that occur in school management and in the daily life of the school environment.	The manifestations are forwarded to the Regional Education Management and General Management of Integral and Professional, for investigation and inspection in schools. After proper investigation and verification of the information, the answer is forwarded to the Ombudsman for final forwarding to the citizen
Request to access information	Records carried out in accordance with the Access to Information Law, where citizens request data relating to public information from the Department of Education	Requests are registered with the Ombudsman and forwarded to the competent Authorities designated by the Law on Access to Information, to gather information from the responsible sectors. After checking and analysis, the final answer is forwarded to the Ombudsman, for referral to the citizen, in accordance with the Law.
Contest/ Selection/ Contract	Records of citizens who wish to act as professionals contact the Department of Education about information and questions about selections in general and competitions, closed or in progress or that have already been closed, published on the Department's website	The citizen is initially communicated that general information can be found in the selection notice. If the citizen remains in doubt, his question will be registered and forwarded to the appropriate sectors, for later sending the response to the individual
Enrollment	Questions about the enrollment registration process and situations of vacancies in schools in the State Network of Pernambuco	The manifestations regarding the school enrollment process are forwarded to the Regional Education Managements and to the management of the Secretariat responsible for enrollment, for urgent measures, according to the enrollment deadline.

Students – Selections, internships and projects	Registration of students who wish to participate in internships and selections related to programs offered by the Department of Education. Example: PE on Campus, Win the World Program	The Ombudsman team reiterates the information disclosed in the notice and on the website of the Department of Education. If the student remains in doubt, the requests are registered and forwarded to the areas responsible for resolving the doubts, for later sending the response to the citizen
School records	Records of students and alumni regarding the delivery of school records in schools that have already been closed or schools that are in operation	Attendance records are reviewed to verify that all necessary information exists, such as student name, school name, and municipality name. Information is required to confirm whether the school has closed or is still in business. After checking, the information is forwarded so measures can be taken and then the document is delivered by the responsible sector

Source: Pernambuco (2018)

On the other hand, the Annual Management report in the Ombudsman Network (2019), compared to the others from previous years, as will be seen, can be considered the most advanced in consolidating information and organizing it. It starts with the presentation of a consolidated of all the general data of the ombudsmen, with an annual comparison between 2015-2019, the types of manifestations and forms of contacts. As the document highlights, “data by Organ/Institution are presented in the following order: I. Manifestations by type; II. Manifestations by form of contact; III. Recurring and/or relevant manifestations and measures taken” (PERNAMBUCO, 2019, our translation).

The data point to the fact that: 3,449 (42%) were requests; 3,019 (36%), complaints; 1,326 (16%), denunciations; 363 (4%), access to information; 91 (1%) suggestions; 47 (1%), compliments. The main forms of contact were via the internet (4274) and free lines (3548); followed by e-mail (293); suggestion/OGE box (80); in person (58). As you can see, hotline, letter, “*Reclame aqui*” and application had no contact record or were not presented by the quantitative. Then, a table with Recurring and/or Relevant Manifestations and Measures Adopted is presented, as in the 2018 report.

The first recurrent subject is about management/school, signaled as “records of the school community, teachers, students, parents etc., about situations that generate conflicts in the school, according to the decisions taken by the school management and that impact on the school day-to-day” (PERNAMBUCO, 2019, p. 167, our translation). The measures taken are:

Matters relating to situations that occur with the school's management are forwarded to the Regional Education Administrations responsible for schools within their jurisdiction or to the Executive Secretariat for Integral and Professional Education, for analysis and investigation of the facts reported in the manifestation. After due investigation by the areas responsible for the matter in question, the final response is sent to the Ombudsman, which after analyzing the response with the appropriate parameters of impersonality and cordiality, is completed for final referral to the citizen (PERNAMBUCO, 2019, p. 67, our translation).



As you can see, it is the same logic for the flow of actions, without further details in the 2018 report. Another item that was not present in the previous report and figured in the year 2019 was **Teacher Performance and Behavior**, where the objective is the content is “issues related to situations that occur in the classroom between teachers and students. They result from the behavior and attitudes of teachers, as well as the conflicts existing in everyday life, which are registered by students and school professionals” (PERNAMBUCO, 2019, p. 67, our translation). Still, the content boils down to further research to assess teacher behavior and performance and whether it is being further categorized as a complaint or denunciation. The measures taken were:

The manifestations received are duly forwarded to the responsible area to verify the veracity of the information, so that after being aware of the school management, the situation can be resolved with those involved. After due investigation, the conclusion of the demand is sent to the Ombudsman for submission to the citizen (PERNAMBUCO, 2019, p. 67, our translation).

Enrollment, which was in the previous one, and with the same questions about the registration process and about the availability of places in the schools of the State Education Network of Pernambuco, has as a record of the measures adopted more detailed information, more agile actions, it is not too generalist as the previous report. Another highlight are the records on “contests and selections that took place during the year at the Secretariat. These are questions from professionals who wish to obtain information about the results of selections that have already been closed, are in progress, and published on the website of the Department of Education and Sports” (PERNAMBUCO, 2019, p. 68, our translation). This point was also present in the 2018 report, and the actions were the same described in 2019.

The issue of Distance Education was not previously present, but appears in the 2019 report on professional education, citing "students' records on difficulties in accessing the system and the website, to complete their tasks" (PERNAMBUCO, 2019, p. 68, our translation).

Therefore, after the apprehension of the contents and organization of the reports, it is possible to observe that, from 2015 to 2017, the concern was to present more statistical information, without greater qualitative apprehensions. In 2018 and 2019, efforts for consolidation and more qualitative analysis are visible, but without further development, with only the information and how the data are being used to improve education in the state, whether as a source for training or for decision-making in local public policies.

## Final considerations

The biggest question that remains at the end of this work is exactly what is done with the information produced. As expected, the article proposed to analyze the management reports of the General Ombudsman of the State of Pernambuco (OGE). Only in a more laborious research process, with interviews and monitoring of internal documents and internal flows, would it be possible to capture the issues raised more densely.

Regarding the treatment of manifestations in the reports, it was possible to observe a large amount of information and requests, but the question that arose during the research, given the similarity of the terms, was how these data were categorized from the requests of users, since the way in which information is treated can directly interfere with the quantitative and qualitative data presented.

Regarding the organization of information, it is clear that there are still limits, but internal advances can be seen in the categorization of more elaborate reports, especially in the 2018 and 2019 reports. However, due to the demands presented, it is understood that it is a two-way movement, in which active transparency needs to be a general objective, together with the analysis and systematization of information produced by citizens, guaranteeing an active and receptive participation.

Another important point is the fact that the reports do not present minimal information on how the data generated by the SEE-PE ombudsman are contributing to better Public Management through citizen records, that is, as an instrument of participation. As previously presented by Vaz and Pires (2011), how do these data impact government performance?

Finally, we understand that, in fact, with the authors studied, it is difficult to assess the effects of participation, in any channel or space, but the organization and definition of information flows is part of the process. We conclude, therefore, in agreement with Gohn (2007) that citizens must have access to information that concerns them. Encouraging the creation and development of democratic means of communication is important and we understand the ombudsman as one of them. Thus, ombudsmen, as a space for participation, need to be conquered and we are still far away, but they are the first step as a theoretical debate.

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