

PARTICIPATIVE MANAGEMENT IN PEDAGOGICAL SPACES: An Analysis of a Professional and Technological Education Institution in the North Region of Brazil

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ABSTRACT

The present study sought to analyze whether the strategies implemented in one of the pedagogical spaces of a professional and technological education institution in Northern Brazil can be considered participatory. The methodological path consisted of data collection made through a semi-structured interview script with the participants to formulate and implement strategies for conducting a mini-course on the Moodle platform, the studied pedagogical space. The data were organized, analyzed, and interpreted using semantic and content analysis techniques. The results showed that a) the respondents have different perceptions about the objectives of the course, b) presented different views about the stages of the project's execution, c) there was a harmony of their perceptions about the benefits of the project, and d) the respondents were unanimous in considering that there were many setbacks for the practice of participatory management. The conclusion shows no full participation in the formulation and execution of the analyzed pedagogical space strategies.

Keywords: Participative management; educational strategies; pedagogical space; organizational strategies.

GESTÃO PARTICIPATIVA EM ESPAÇOS PEDAGÓGICOS: ANÁLISE DE UMA INSTITUIÇÃO DE EDUCAÇÃO PROFISSIONAL E TECNOLÓGICA DO NORTE DO BRASIL

RESUMO

O presente estudo procurou analisar se as estratégias realizadas em um dos espaços pedagógicos de uma instituição de educação profissional e tecnológica do Norte do Brasil podem ser consideradas participativas. Para isso, o percurso metodológico consistiu no levantamento de dados feito por meio de um roteiro de entrevista semiestruturada, tendo como respondentes os participantes da formulação e execução das estratégias para a realização de um minicurso na plataforma *Moodle*, espaço pedagógico estudado; os dados foram organizados, analisados e interpretados com o uso de técnicas de análise semântica e de conteúdo. Os resultados mostraram que: a) os respondentes tiveram percepções diferentes sobre os objetivos do curso; b) apresentaram visões distintas sobre as etapas de execução do projeto; c) houve sintonia das suas percepções sobre os benefícios do projeto; e d) os respondentes foram unânimes em considerar que houve muitos contratempos para a prática da gestão participativa. A conclusão mostra que não houve participação plena na formulação e execução das estratégias no espaço pedagógico analisado.

Palavras-chave: Gestão participativa; estratégias educacionais; espaço pedagógico; estratégias organizacionais.

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INTRODUCTION

Strategies are the paths that organizations choose to follow to achieve their intended objectives (BEAVER, 2007; NASCIMENTO-E-SILVA, 2017). Elaborating strategies is the second major challenge of the planning process (SILVA *et al.*, 2019a). The choice of objectives is the first, so planning defines the desired future situation (destination to be reached, metaphorically speaking) and chooses how that situation will be reached (design of the path or roadmap to be taken). The challenge facing contemporary organizations is to find a way to increase the human quantity in all stages of the planning process, which implies the need to make the strategy-making phase also participatory.

What is behind this imperative participatory need is the realization that participating brings countless benefits that solitary and centralized management cannot obtain. In addition to involving people in execution, participatory decisions can significantly improve people's organizational climate and motivation, making the organizational environment more favorable for new and daring challenges. However, this is still not perceived or felt in Brazilian pedagogical environments, given the extreme lack of studies with this focus.

In this sense, this study aims to analyze whether organizational strategies are managed in a participatory manner in the pedagogical space of an institution of professional and technological education in Brazil's Northern Region. The analysis focused on how each stage of the management process is applied in this pedagogical space (decision, execution, and accountability). The greater the number of individuals to decide, execute, and take responsibility through decisions and actions, the greater its management's participatory character.

This study's contribution to the area of pedagogical spaces management is providing a theoretical-empirical scheme capable of making the management process of pedagogical spaces comprehensible. As this scheme is continually changing, by mastering these models' systematic construction, managers will continuously transform and adapt it to their needs.

PARTICIPATIVE MANAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGIES

The study by Fernandes *et al.* (2017) associates organizational strategies with an efficient decision system, taken as a team, which follows a determined course of plans and actions branched out at the tactical and operational levels. In this way, individuals begin to guide themselves within this tactical structure of the organization. Decisions are transformed into behavioral actions carried out in each member of the group's action and thinking and are made together. Thus, in these actions, each subject's knowledge and individual learning are valued to gauge collaborative strategies according to the objectives they aim to achieve. The strategies, therefore, are mechanisms of knowledge acquisition.

In Lopes and Miranda's (2017) conception, strategies are the foundation of the organization guided by competitiveness, referring the concept of strategy to the economic field. In this competitive view, the maximum expansion of efficiency and organizational profitability is sought, aiming at better performance concerning competitors through

plans, actions, and goals focused on strengthening the competitive market's organization. Thus, according to these authors, organizational strategies are geared towards serving and inserting themselves into a market system, seeking to maximize profitability and efficiency. Strategies, in this conception, are instruments aimed at guaranteeing competitiveness.

However, Wilhelm and Zanelli (2014) defend a vision of organizational strategies aimed at the humanist field, valuing the subject through actions and decisions that ensure pleasant work environments and healthy personal interactions. Changes are necessary within the organizational context to establish an interactive environment, especially organizational structure, working conditions, and interpersonal relationships. In this perspective, there is an effort to achieve changes in humanistic aspects through joint actions within the organization, which may favor individuals' productivity, performance, and health. The strategy here is a humanization resource.

Slack, Chambers, and Johnston (2002) consider the strategy in three aspects: global pattern of decisions and actions, positioning of the organization, and long-term vision. The first aspect can be understood as the alignment of decisions and actions for the entire organization; the second refers to its positioning in its environment. At the same time, the third relates to the objective to be reached in the long term. In the interpretation of Silveira *et al.* (2017), these aspects represent the defense that the organizational strategy is the decision or action that has a comprehensive effect on the organization, defining its position in the environment and its long-term approach objectives.

In this sense, organizational strategies can be defined as a set of actions and decisions supported by a system of plans and standards to follow. This system aims to guide the organization to achieve the desired results in the long term, aimed at meeting a specific performance standard efficiently. In their decisions and actions, organizational strategies aim to provide an environment conducive and appropriate to human interaction patterns, knowledge, and work. And this is done in different ways.

Wilhelm and Zanelli (2014) point out two types of strategies: one focused on the problem and one focused on emotion. For the authors, the first strategy is centered on problem-solving, providing the subject with autonomy and stimuli to adjust, change and solve problems; with this, the individual develops new skills as he develops his plans and actions to solve the existing problems. On the other hand, the second strategy is centered on emotion, which concerns support in the environment and people, which can be both material and affective aid offered by a person or group of people to seek cooperation, comfort, and help resolve the problem.

The studies by Araújo *et al.* (2018) and Dias, Oliveira e Machado (2014) explain that strategies can be characterized as deliberate (D) or emergent (E). The emerging ones are directly related to the difficulty of control, and the deliberate ones are directly linked to organizational learning difficulty. Thus, the more deliberate the strategies, the greater the difficulty of organizational learning, to the point that the more emergent, the greater the difficulty of control. Within this context, the types of strategies are unfolded: Planned strategy (D); Entrepreneurial strategy (D); Ideological strategy (D); Umbrella strategy (E), Process strategy (E), Disconnected strategy (D), Consensus strategy (E); and Imposed strategy (E) (ARAÚJO *et al.*, 2018).

For Lopes and Miranda (2017), the types of strategies must be adopted according to the environmental and structural context in which the organization is inserted, always considering the new market trends. In this view, strategies are essential for organizations' decision-making process and serve as guides for their future actions. Here, four types are highlighted, each with a specific action characteristic, they are: Defensive Strategy, with centralized control and focus on profit and efficiency in operations; Prospecting Strategy, which seeks to innovate products and processes; Analytical Strategy, with defensive and offensive conduct, seeks to offer new products; and Reactive Strategy, which has an ineffective and introverted strategy (DIAS; OLIVEIRA; MACHADO 2014; LOPES; MIRANDA, 2017).

What can be seen from the literature is that strategies are positions, means, resources, or paths that organizations use to achieve objectives. Consequently, they are part of the planning function, whose purpose, at this stage of the management process, is to point out the most appropriate ways of reaching the intended destination, often represented in what is called the future organizational vision, in the case of strategic objectives. When strategies are linked to sectoral plans, they represent how strategic objectives are to be operationalized. Finally, if they are linked to operational objectives, strategies are simply the procedures that are used to achieve a specific objective. Chart 1 summarizes these three conceptions of organizational strategies.

Chart 1 – Theoretical-empirical conceptions of organizational strategies

Linking the strategy	Empirical evidence
Strategic objectives	Comprehensive logical outline of how the organization achieves its vision
Tactical objectives	Translation of strategic objectives into sectoral goals
Operational objectives	Roadmap to be followed to achieve a specific goal

Source: Prepared by the authors.

The organizational strategy has long-term and impacts all its members. Tactical strategies have from one to three years and impact only individuals linked to this sector in a median time horizon. Operational strategies impact a sector and its individuals, with a short-term horizon, usually less than one year. From a management point of view, individuals can participate to a greater or lesser degree at these three levels, which constitutes the three consequent types of participatory management, as will be seen later. Instead, it is necessary to understand the essence of the phenomenon of participation in organizations.

Kudo, Pereira e Silva (2016) associate participation with governance. Governance can be understood as the power of government, characterized by the exercise of authority. In this way, participation stands out for its ability to formulate, plan and enforce tasks, thus making participation correspond to every act of decision, execution, and accountability of actions by members of the organization. In turn, Malta (2015) considers participation to be a social action in which members can perform actions and decisions to produce benefits for society. Social action represents active intervention through decisions and the execution of those decisions.

In the conception of Fernandes (2015), participation is compared to action or effect. In the sense of accountability for the action taken. The action or effect results from the exercise of the ability to act, impacting others positively and negatively. Thus, participation refers to the action and the effect of participating, which may involve the decision-maker in receiving an unwanted situation, thus establishing a cause-and-effect two-way relationship. Here the agents bear the burden and the bonus of their participation.

According to Lousão (2009), participation is directed towards political employment; that is, it is related to the cause-effect established by the power exercised. Political employment has its object of study the relationship between the elements in power (Government) and the population's desires. In this context, participation fits into a political environment established by the power to influence, a power that represents the exercise of freedom in actions and decisions.

Goulart, Terci, and Otero (2015) highlight that participation can take deliberative forms within political and social bargaining. These deliberative forms can be understood as the need to justify the decisions taken by citizens and their representatives in a democratic manner. Thus, deliberative participation favors society by positively exercising its rights, as citizens and associations can actively express themselves on any subject.

Participation is considered the process of deliberating and executing decisions by the members of a given organization. It includes the ends of their accountability, which are the consequences of the action. An organization is the grouping of two or more people who join forces to achieve a particular purpose and build a certain future. Participation is not imposed by a deliberative and an executive instance but necessarily carried out by the same members. Both in a deliberative and executive and accountability instance exercised differently.

Nichols (2018) highlights the types of participation characterized as conventional and unconventional. These characteristics fit into a representative and contradictory logic, in which a traditional structure characterizes the conventional and unconventional participation in spaces outside, beyond, the traditional arena.

The study by Sabioni, Ferreira e Reis (2018), on ways in which the population of a municipality acts, classified the stages of the participation process into six stages: a) receiving complaints of irregularities; b) verification of the integrity of the information; c) seeking legal advice; d) collecting evidence of fraud; e) opening of action in the Public Ministry; f) monitoring the process in the sessions of the City Council. In all stages, there were different possibilities for the participation of the citizens of that studied municipality. Therefore, this example suggests that forms of participation in management are also very diverse. They depend on the nature of the challenge to be faced.

The research carried out by Caixeta and Fabricio (2018) present as stages of the participation process: a) initiation (detection of the need for participation); b) preparation (definition of the participation strategy); c) participation (production of materials, events, and application of participation methods); and d) continuation (development of defined proposals, projects or programs). Here, these researchers' interest was aimed at the target audience of residents and real estate consumers. However, it is still possible to perceive the logical scheme that begins in a type of situational analysis and

culminates in the continuity of the members who monitor the results achieved. The differences found are found in the intermediate phases. For this study, the following phases of the process of participation in the management of organizational strategies are considered: a) diagnosis, b) formulation of strategies, c) negotiation of strategies, d) execution of strategies, and e) monitoring the execution of strategies.

Table 2 – Steps for managing operational strategies

Management process step	Forms of participation		
	Decision	Execution	Accountability
Diagnosis			
Strategy formulation			
Negotiation			
Execution			
Monitoring			
Predominance			

Source: Prepared by the authors.

In this study, the participation process in an operational strategy will be analyzed, which means that a pedagogical space project's management process will be analyzed. It is intended to investigate each member's degree of participation in each of the stages of the implemented organizational strategy's management process, following Table 2.

METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

The study aims to ascertain whether a professional and technological education institution's organizational strategies in the Northern Region of Brazil are managed in a participatory manner. Therefore, the following guiding question was established for the present study: What is the significance of the formulation of strategies for the efficient management of pedagogical spaces? For the methodological design, the guidelines of Nascimento-e-Silva (2020), Silva *et al.* (2020), and Limas, Santiago e Nascimento-e-Silva (2020).

This study is characterized by being of a qualitative type (KRYPTON, 2018). The survey method was used, whose intended purpose was to design the explanation for a given population by studying a selected sample. For selecting study participants, the following criteria were adopted: a) accepting to contribute to the research voluntarily; b) be a servant of the analyzed institution and; c) have followed all the stages of establishing the short course analyzed in this study. The unit of analysis investigated was of the individual type. We sought to understand the perception of three subjects working in the pedagogical space of a professional and technological education institution in the North of Brazil.

The perspective of analysis used in this study was of the synchronous type. (NASCIMENTO-E-SILVA *et al.*, 2013). The term synchronic means at the same time, which in other words means that the study was developed from a specific reality, like a photograph. It differs from the so-called diachronic analyzes, which consider the study's investigated object (SILVA *et al.*, 2019b). The pedagogical space (NASCIMENTO-E-SILVA *et al.*, 2019) analyzed was the virtual learning environment Moodle of an institution of pro-

professional and technological education in Brazil's Northern Region. It is a learning space used by teachers, students, tutors, course coordinators, tutor coordinators, and general distance education coordinator. Within this virtual learning environment, a short course entitled "Moodle in Practice" was developed, developed during the Academic Week of the environment in which the research took place.

Students and teachers from the Computer Science Degree, Computer Maintenance and Support Technician, and Workplace Safety Technician courses were present among the mini-course participants. Teachers and coordinators of these courses organized the mini-course. Among the teachers, three were selected (A, B, and C) to answer participation questions in the short course strategies.

The study population consisted of 3 respondents who followed the project developed within the studied pedagogical environment, with all study participants being teachers from the analyzed institution. The pedagogical space analyzed in this construct was the Moodle virtual learning environment (Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment) of a professional and technological education institution in the North of Brazil. The interview subjects' main characteristic is this: having participated in the project in the studied environment. The project in question is called "Moodle in practice" and was developed during the Academic Week, 2018.

Each participant was identified with a letter of the alphabet, mentioned here as A, B, and C, respectively. There was an invitation to each individual to participate in the study. Each professor was interviewed with the help of a script, sent via e-mail so that each professor could respond accurately to the questions asked. The subjects were asked about a) course objectives, b) course strategy, c) results achieved by the course, and d) setbacks.

After the collection phase, all data obtained were transferred to an electronic spreadsheet in Microsoft Excel. It allowed, for the same question, four different answer blocks to be established. This procedure was possible to identify the similarities and differences present in each statement collected to assess whether the management of the researched institution's strategies is or is not participatory.

In summary, analyzing means "breaking into parts" an existing whole to facilitate its understanding (NASCIMENTO-E-SILVA, 2012). In this sense, the data were analyzed from the literal content of each response obtained. Each statement collected was interpreted to understand the context, the positive points, and points for improving the analyzed project.

This phase of the study's results was initially analyzed globally by comparing each answer collected with what the question asked. Then, there was a confrontation between the logic present in each statement with the precepts present in the study's theoretical framework. It enabled a theoretical-empirical understanding of the issues in question in the present construct.

This study has a limitation, which does not invalidate the results from its performance. The number of interviewed participants does not allow generalizations to be made regarding the results achieved. Although the responses collected allowed a clear

perception of the level of participation in the strategies of that institution of professional and technological education, they still cannot be considered as applicable to other similar fields of study as occurs in studies of an inductive nature (RIBAS; OLIVO, 2016).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the results obtained. These results are organized around the guiding questions used (SILVA *et al.*, 2020) and followed the following logic of presentation: first, the empirical results are described, and then they are discussed in the light of the theoretical framework that structured this investigation.

Choice of course objectives

In collecting data on the mini-course “Moodle in Practice,” different perceptions were found about the mini-courses objective, as shown in table 3. Participant A explains how the mini-courses main objective is to empower a community around the institution. Students used learning acquired at that time to create a course aimed at communities close to the institute. Participant B presents the handling of tools as the main objective of the mini-course. It should be noted that the preparation for using the Virtual environment should start from the teaching base. Participant C starts from the idea that the mini-courses objective is to spread the Moodle environment’s use to cover the knowledge on this platform to the largest possible audience.

Table 3 – Objectives of the project

Participants	Objectives
Participant A	Empower the community around the institution
Participant B	Handling of Moodle tools
Participant C	Spread the use of the Moodle environment

Source: Data collected by the authors.

For participant A, the largest number of participants in the mini-course were students in the Computer Science course. These sought subsidies in the mini-course content created another project, “a course” for a community close to the organization. However, participant A argues that this was not the sole purpose of the short course. He points out that all participants in the course “were contemplated as an overview of how the teaching environment works.” (Participant A).

Participant B states that the short course was initially aimed at the public with a Computer Science degree. But then it was rethought to embrace a larger audience. In this way, the audience was expanded to “other students and teachers of the institution” (Participant B), and an attempt was made to extend knowledge about the Moodle environment. In this perspective, the mini-course seeks to materialize the training subsidies, “with a future intention of handling the tools of the Moodle platform” and, thus, try to alleviate a visible problem that is currently the “difficulty in use by both teachers and students” (Participant B).

On the other hand, Participant C argues that the mini-course was aimed at Higher Education students, as it was part of the Academic Week program. In this argument, the participant refers to Students in the Computer Science Degree course, as they were the only public with a higher level enrolled in the mini-course “Moodle in Practice.” And Participant C continues to highlight the intention of the mini-course as being to expand the “use of the Moodle Environment with the academic community of the institution.” (Participant C).

Given the above, it is correct to state that the choice of objectives is an imperative activity in the planning process, directly linked to the definition of strategies (NASCIMENTO-E-SILVA, 2017; SILVA *et al.*, 2109a). For the objectives to be established assertively, there must be participation in the decision-making process. This participation is relevant since when not all the subjects involved in a given process demonstrate active participation in participation phases, it can automatically be said that this process is not participatory. Oliveira and Nascimento-e-Silva (2020) show an example. They evaluated the management of resources in a professional and technological education institution in Brazil’s Northern Region. Their results showed that the tasks related to the management of resources at the research site could not be seen as participatory since not all respondents participated in deliberative actions.

Suppose there is participation by all members of a particular nucleus. In that case, it suggests that everyone is aware of the situation to be resolved and shows an agreement concerning the decisions made. This unity in the decision-making process is necessary for participants to be materialized in pedagogical spaces. There is no convergence of interests and views on the same subject, which shows divergences in the deliberative process (CARVALHO, 2011).

Such a situation is caused by the lack of dialogue between members of the same community, which suggests the existence of conflicts that prove to be barriers to the realization of participation in the pedagogical spaces and other activity fields. The lack of dialogue can trigger other problems, such as verbal violence between members of the same nucleus, prejudice, discrimination, and disunity (TELES; TELES, 2017). These are situations that raise the degree of difficulty in implementing participation and demonstrate a notable lack of trust among members who live in the same context (D’ÁVILA, 2016).

Course execution

When asked the participants about how the mini-course was carried out, each participant pointed out a different view of the project stages, as shown in table 4. Participant A sequenced the steps as a) introduction to distance education, b) overview about Moodle, and c) practice in the virtual environment. Mini-course started with the context of distance education, followed with the presentation of Moodle, and ended with the practice of its functionality. In the view of participant B, the steps were a) registration of activities, b) description of the general context of distance education, and c) description of the practice in the environment, which is similar to the view of participant A. The difference occurred in the initial stage (registration of participants on the

platform). Finally, participant C presented the short course execution in two stages: a) registration on the platform and b) description of the functioning of the virtual learning environment.

Table 4 – Stages of the project

Participants	Stages of the project
Participant A	Introduction to distance learning teaching Moodle overview Tool practice
Participant B	Registration of participants Distance learning in the general context and the institution Moodle environment practice
Participant C	Registration of participants Operation of the virtual learning environment

Source: Data collected by the authors.

For participant A, the mini-course stages began with an introduction to Distance Education in Brazil and the institution. Then he addressed the Moodle platform, the organization's virtual learning environment. The last step was shown in a practical way how to use the tools within the Moodle platform. Participants B and C stated that the execution steps started with registering the participating public within the referred platform. In the following steps, respondent B pointed to the introduction to distance education in Brazil and the institute's reality. At that time, Moodle was also conceptualized, and, in the last stage, practical activities were carried out in the environment. In respondent C's design, the steps continued with demonstrating the functioning of the virtual environment (Moodle).

The respondents exchange similar views about the last stage of project execution. They point out how the practice was developed within the virtual learning environment, in this case, Moodle. In this stage, the participants emphasize that the Moodle platform's tools were demonstrated and used with the teacher and student profiles. Thus, according to the respondents' responses, we have that the short course stages were: registration on the platform, introduction to distance learning, and Moodle and the practice performed in the virtual environment.

It is inferred that the execution of projects in the pedagogical spaces also represents a vital participation stage. It is supported by the binomial decision-execution (FERNANDES, 2015; MALTA, 2015). The very idea of projects already suggests a temporary effort to fulfill a specific purpose (PMI, 2017). The projects have an undoubted magnitude for organizations since they include, since the establishment of strategies, the project's adaptations to meet the changes in the course of its execution and its subsequent completion (BLASKOVICS, 2020).

As much as the execution of a project foresees the realization of different activities, they must dialogue with each other. Also, the performance of each task must be measured through the control instruments. Administrative norms, budgets, and performance indicators are instruments that can increase the degree of assertiveness in carrying out projects (BLASKOVICS, 2020).

In addition to harmony and balance between tasks, another major factor in project execution's success is the convergence of efforts. It can be constructed through dialogue between members of the same department or organization (NASCIMENTO-E-SILVA, 2011). Dialogues in participatory processes can generate the engagement and energy necessary for the desired goals to be successfully achieved.

Course Benefits

In the question about the benefits of the short course, the respondents presented different views on the benefits and beneficiaries, as described in Table 5. Participant A pointed out as a benefit the facilitation of the teaching-learning process in distance learning, through the use of his tools in Moodle, with the academic community as a benefited public. Respondent B brought as benefits the demystification of the opposing view on distance learning. They sought the teaching process and highlighted as beneficiaries: teachers and students. Participant C showed Moodle's access facilities as a benefit, highlighting the ease and difficulty of studying in distance learning, and presented the institution's students as beneficiaries.

Table 5 – Project benefits

Participants	Benefícios do projeto
Participant A	Contemplated the community about teaching distance education
Participant B	Demystified the opposing view on distance education
Participant C	Showed the facilities of Moodle

Source: Data collected by the authors.

In the view of participant A, the short course came to benefit the academic community with a teaching-learning process that facilitates distance education. In this process, it was sought as a teaching facilitation mechanism to use Moodle's tools, thus opening a league for teaching-learning in distance education. For participant B, "the benefit of the short course is to demystify the negative view that is passed on to distance education." In this sense, the participant exposes the need for teacher training since its essence on distance education, to guide teachers and students regarding handling the virtual environment's tools. Participant C points to facilitating access to Moodle as a benefit for students since it can be accessed at any time and day, systematically identifying the facilities and difficulties encountered by users.

The three research participants agree on the need to disseminate distance education to the academic society. It is a teaching modality that is in evidence today, making it of great value for teaching. For the survey respondents, the mini-course brought a conception that distance education should be demystified, valued, facilitated, and included in the educational context. Thus, in the respondents' view, the short course benefits are a) to contemplate the community with the teaching of distance education; b) demystifying the opposing view on distance education; c) show Moodle facilities. These results indicate three different ways of describing the same objective. Therefore, there is perceptual convergence.

The achievement of the objectives means that the execution of the projects was successful. The control instruments, such as, for example, the performance indicators, can attest whether the achievement of the objectives was materialized in a manner consistent with the expectations generated (BLASKOVICS, 2020; NASCIMENTO-E-SILVA, 2017). One of the reasons that justify the execution of the projects is the benefits resulting from their implementation. These benefits must be maximized, while any negative impacts need to be minimized or avoided. Meeting this condition contributes to the projects' durability and credibility (VANCLAY *et al.*, 2015).

Concerning pedagogical spaces, the benefits of implemented projects can be reflected in improvements in learning. Every project is executed to achieve a specific purpose. Improving learning is an objective that needs to be continuously pursued since it is a critical issue for the consolidation of pedagogical spaces, especially concerning the aspect of its quality (SLACK; CHAMBERS; JOHNSTON, 2009).

Course execution failures

In the question about what did not go well in the mini-course, all respondents share the same idea: the delay in the start of the mini-course, as shown in table 6. The reason given for this was the delay in registering the subscribers on the Moodle platform. For participant A, the delay in starting the mini-course was because the participants were not previously inserted in the virtual learning environment. Participant B points out the delay in registering registrants on the platform as a reason for delaying the event, which could have been avoided if their names had been sent in advance to the team responsible for registering. Participant C justifies the delay of the event because the registration and rental of registrants in the Moodle environment were not performed in advance.

Table 6 – Project failures

Participants	Project failures
Participant A	Subscribers were not previously entered into the platform
Participant B	Delays in the registration of subscribers on the platform
Participant C	Registration and rental in the environment was not done previously

Source: Data collected by the authors.

Participant A says that the short course's delay occurred due to a failure of the organization because, "for the execution of the course previously, all those enrolled in the platform should be inserted" (Participant A). The participant holds those responsible for organizing the mini-course responsible for the mishap at the beginning of the same. Thus, the participant argues that the organizing team should have previously delivered the registrants' documentation to those responsible for registering on the platform.

Respondent B starts from the same conception as participant A, reporting on the reason that caused the short course to be delayed: "What hampered the short course was the delay, due to the delay in registering subscribers on the platform" (Participant B). The respondent confirms that the delay could have been avoided had the documen-

tation been delivered promptly to the team responsible for the registration. Like participant A, it is perceived, implicitly, that respondent B also holds the event responsible for the delay.

Finally, participant C agrees with the other research participants on the reason that led to the delay of the mini-course: “The registration in the system and location in the Moodle environment was done on the spot, causing us to lose time” (Participant C). This respondent argues that if he had received the list with the registrants’ data previously, he would have registered them, which would avoid the setback of the event. Respondent C also switches, implicitly, with the other participants about the setback’s responsibilities being the event coordinator.

Failures in executing a given objective can be detected using the management process control function (NASCIMENTO-E-SILVA *et al.*, 2013; SILVA *et al.*, 2019a). The detection of the reasons that led to a deficient performance in executing an objective is necessary to understand the causes that culminated in the project’s failure (NASCIMENTO-E-SILVA, 2017). No project is immune to failure. However, the adoption of management principles in the conduct of projects can substantially reduce inaccuracies that compromise the achievement of the desired objectives, which suggests a less improvised and more professional administration (ROMME, 2016).

Failures are important events in achieving objectives for two reasons. The first is to highlight the project’s points that need to be reinforced and that therefore need to be corrected. The second reason is a continuous improvement: with the repair of the project’s deficit points, the probability of success in its execution rises considerably (GRABAN, 2013; NASCIMENTO-E-SILVA *et al.*, 2013; PARASCHIVESCU; COTÎRLET, 2015; SILVA, 2019).

The management of the process of materializing the objectives needs to realize two sub-items of the control process: the evaluation and the redesign. To evaluate means comparing two variables: what was planned versus what was delivered. There must be fidelity between the idealized expectation and the real result. When comparing these two topics of analysis shows the existence of deviations that culminate in failure to achieve the objectives, it becomes imperative to adopt replanning. In summary, this subphase of control provides for the repair of project items whose result was below what was planned (ALBUQUERQUE *et al.*, 2018; BRITO *et al.*, 2016; NASCIMENTO-E-SILVA *et al.*, 2013; SILVA, 2019).

The present study demonstrated that despite the effort made at the research site to promote a mini-course focused on the correct handling of the Moodle platform, the setbacks that occurred in the project’s execution compromised the achievement of the intended intentions. Regarding the objectives, the three participants did not demonstrate the necessary congruence regarding the understanding of what was intended to be achieved with completing the mini-course. Participants B and C expressed a similar understanding of Moodle’s diffusion, while participant A understood that the mini-course was a training tool for the external community (ABMES, 2018).

Regarding the project’s execution, the same lack of attunement in the participants’ response was noticed. Although participants A, B, and C demonstrate agreement regarding the registration of participants and the use of the referred virtual learning

environment tools, in some topics, the participants' responses differ. It demonstrates that each individual questioned in this study had a different interpretation regarding the mini-course execution. As Oliveira and Nascimento-e-Silva (2020) observed, the three individuals' level of participation in this topic of analysis can be considered as partial since not all demonstrate in their responses the necessary convergence for configuring this process as participatory.

Regarding the benefits of the project, as seen in the two items previously analyzed, each subject pointed out a benefit achieved with the completion of the short course. Although the responses are dissonant, they demonstrate that the project has generated benefits for its target audience. It is a preponderant factor for any project: realizing the benefits followed by the reduction or complete reduction of any negative impacts arising from fulfilling the objectives aimed at the project (BLASKOVICS, 2020).

Regarding the project's failures, all participants agree that the short course not fully achieving the purposes that justified its creation was the delay in registering the participants. Design failures are undesirable events. However, when they are confirmed in practice, the organization can do an exercise of self-assessment, detect the items that need correction and proceed with the necessary replanning to be successful (NASCIMENTO-E-SILVA *et al.*, 2013; SILVA, 2019).

The execution of a project has as main objective the improvement of a particular situation or the desired situation's achievement. It is emphasized that participation is one of the supports for the projects to achieve the desired triumph. When the steps concerning the project's objectives, execution, benefits, and failures are managed based on participation, the reach of the long-dreamed-of continuous improvement becomes enhanced (GRABAN, 2013; PARASCHIVESCU; COTÎRLET, 2015). Thus, projects can fulfill their purposes, which generates the expected benefits and reduces the incidence of failures during their execution.

CONCLUSION

This study showed that the organizational strategies, in the pedagogical space of the studied institution, in this case, the virtual learning environment (Moodle), are not managed in a participatory way. This analysis was found in the research participants' speech, mainly questioning the failure detected in the event. The three research participants were unanimous in coordinating the event responsible for the delay at the beginning of the mini-course.

The analysis of the results verified that the investigated ones did not assume responsibility for the short course setback, which is one of the fundamental steps for participative management. Thus, for a participatory managerial process to occur, the stages considered fundamental must be: decision, execution, and accountability. Thus, the importance of establishing participative management is verified since this management model generates several benefits such as motivation and improvement of the organizational climate.

On the other hand, if the organizational strategies were from the institution in which the study was carried out were of a participatory type, everyone involved in carrying out the project would know with precision the progress of each activity. Among the decision-making collegiate members, one of them could be responsible for registering students in the virtual learning environment. It would help the institution comply with its scheduled activities schedule and carry out the mini-course without significant problems.

This study found that dialogue is an essential part of participatory processes. Through the practice of dialogue, everyone involved in the decision-making process can understand the dimension of each existing problem and thereby propose and establish appropriate solutions for each adverse situation. Thus, it can be inferred that the participatory process needs to stand out for being dialogical. This dialogism refers to the idea of communication, which, together with leadership and motivation, makes up the direction stage, a stage whose relevance for the execution of projects is undeniable.

In the pedagogical spaces, the dialogue is essential for teachers, educators, coordinators, administrative staff, deans, and senior management to exchange information and democratically establish the objectives and the strategies that, when carried out successfully, facilitate its implementation. The absence of this dialogue sets a precedent for the existence of conflicts. In addition to contaminating the organizational climate, conflicts hinder the execution of projects assertively.

Thus, the dialogue is a sine qua non of participatory processes. All subjects involved in the participation processes must establish an interface to make decisions and carry out the work necessary to achieve the intended intentions. For future studies, the same investigation with other approaches is suggested, among them evaluating higher education or the programming of interdisciplinary activities in integrated high school.

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