

School Management in Feira de Santana: analysis of official texts

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ABSTRACT – School Management in Feira de Santana: analysis of official texts. In the 21st century, the need for regulation of the manager's role is incorporated into the discourse of school management. The documental research carried out included the analysis of official documents from Feira de Santana – Bahia, Brazil between 1990 and 2015, applying the Policy Cycle as the methodological approach. The results showed that the predominant management model emerges from the interrelationships between school, local authorities, national context and production of official documents. The election of principals, in order to provide the management function, revealed evidence for the understanding of the democratic management model in Feira de Santana, influenced by the participation of both teaching movements and the local population.

Keywords: School Management. Policy Cycle. Local Context. Feira de Santana.

RESUMO – Gestão Escolar em Feira de Santana: análise dos textos oficiais. No século XXI incorpora-se ao discurso da gestão escolar a necessidade de regulamentação da função do gestor. A pesquisa documental aqui realizada contou com a análise de documentos oficiais do município de Feira de Santana, Bahia, entre os anos de 1990 e 2015, usando o Ciclo de Políticas como abordagem de análise. Os resultados evidenciaram que o modelo de gestão predominante emerge das inter-relações entre escola, poder local, contexto nacional e produção de documentos oficiais. A eleição de diretores, como forma de provimento da função gestora, revelou indícios para a compreensão do modelo de gestão democrática em Feira de Santana, influenciado pela participação dos movimentos docentes e da população local. **Palavras-chave: Gestão escolar. Ciclo de Políticas. Contexto local. Feira de Santana.**

Introduction

Currently, the school management has had a major role in the processes of democratization, as well as the attainment of public education quality in Brazil. This is so because management goes beyond the concept of management, being understood as the conception and practice of a collective process that is based on the principles of democracy and participation, aiming at guaranteeing the right to learn, promoting human and social emancipation.

The political-educational debate on the school management that marked the claims of the 1980s was supported by discourses aimed at overcoming the bureaucratic-hierarchical model that prevailed in education and schools, as well as to fulfil the needs of implementing and qualifying school actions according to a trend of social participation. The educational agenda was aligned with political projects and, in this sense, according to Sander (2009), the effervescence around the re-democratization has risen from the social mobilization toward democratization and political amnesty, influencing a new paradigm of school management. This is no longer centered on the modes of business administration, but reflects the democratic ideal of the period, characterized by the strengthening of aspects linked to learning and social criticism.

In the 1990s, in the context of transition of educational policies formulations regarding the school management, it was noticed the influence of a discourse that proposed social participation and the expansion of decision-making spaces in the school, with the appreciation of teachers, whilst the influence of a political conception highlighting the discourse of productive restructuring, the regulation of external evaluations and the education funding (Oliveira; Duarte; Clementino, 2017), adding to the management aspects related to educational managerialism.

At the beginning of the 21st century, the demand for regulating the function, technical and academic training for the managers was incorporated into the school management aspects. Also, the concepts of autonomy and participation current in the clashes of Education were reconsidered. Therefore, according to Oliveira (2015), it was observed a dissemination of aspects linked to the rationalization of public management, demonstrated in practices based on business management, such as management focused on results and performance evaluation. In contrast to the management model implemented in this century, Oliveira, Duarte and Clementino (2017) indicate real advances in the field of education in Brazil, such as the welcoming and inclusion of groups previously excluded from the right to education, arising from participation and social mobilization.

Nowadays the issue of school management has surpassed the school physical limits, having been introduced in the educational policies studies and establishing a noteworthy status in teacher training courses, whether in teaching, extension or research. Furthermore, the

Universidade Estadual de Feira de Santana (UEFS), which is described as a remarkable teachers training center with high influence at *Território de Identidade do Portal do Sertão* (TIPS), through the *Núcleo de Estudos e Pesquisas sobre Formação de Professores* (NUFOP), recognizes the need to investigate school management regarding to its regulation based on a detailed analysis of official documents (grants, booklets, guidelines, and national and local legislation, as well as documents produced within the municipalities) published from 1990 to 2015.

Hence, this study discussed the school management in Feira de Santana, Bahia, presenting, through a document research, the conceptions and characteristics that emerge from the process of producing official documents using as a source of information the legislation issued by Feira de Santana's public power, both executive and legislative.

The presents, initially, the methodological foundations of the research and next, it contextualizes the process of establishing school management in Feira de Santana; lastly, it indicates its final remarks.

Policy Cycle in the Interpretation of School Management in Feira de Santana

Stephen Ball and Richard Bowe's (1992) approach to the Policy Cycle proposes a policy analysis articulated at both macro and micro aspects through a continuous cycle organized in three interrelated contexts: the context of influence, text production and practice.

The context of influence is related to the production of politics, ideas, principle, discourse and intentions produced by the voices of various social groups, such as media, unions, governments, legislators, churches, among others, that are part of this process. On the other hand, the context of text production refers to the result of ideological disputes emerged from political construction and materialized in official documents. Whereas, the practice context is where policies take place and where they materialize themselves as well. Regarding to this context, Mainardes (2006) mentioned that professionals reinterpret and acquaint the policy implementation process.

Interpreting information in terms of Policy Cycle assumes understanding politics not as something linear, previously well-defined and completely deadlocked, but as a dialectical movement that considers the established interrelationship between micro and macro contexts, as well as recognizes the various stages or contexts of policy making. One of the contexts of Policy Cycle that supported this research was the text production, in which the created documents are described as a political representation that highlights "[...] the language of the most general public interest" (Mainardes, 2007, p. 29) and presents the social demands, which are not always internally consistent or clear. Regarding to management of municipal schools, the official documents produced in Feira de Santana eventually show contradictions, internal conflicts, and intermittently consensus, which might be understood only under critical reading.

The identification of the conceptions that emerge from the official documents could only be performed when time and place of the production of these documents were taken into consideration, allowing a contextual comprehension of the historical and sociocultural outlook of school management in Feira de Santana.

Regarding the timeline of the study, from 1990 to 2015, it was selected considering that 1990 was the year when the Organic Law was approved, being the first local legislation promulgated after the Federal Constitution of 1988. In Brazil, the 1990s were noteworthy by “[...] the requirement of social movements for greater participation in political life, movements that have traditionally been defending the expansion of the right to a democratic, free of charge and high-quality public education” (Oliveira, 2015, p. 631). The national mobilization was also expressed in Feira de Santana by the active participation of the city’s teachers’ union in order to discuss on educational policies which might be implemented (Silva, 2001).

Hereby, the documents considered as official were those produced by the executive and legislative powers in the municipality from 1990 to 2015, which are showed in the table below.

Table 1 – Official documents related to school management in Feira de Santana from 1990

Document	Year	Purpose
Organic Law 037	1990	Organic Law
Law 1778	1994	Regulates election for school principals
Law 2229	2001	Amends Law 1778/94
Amendment to the Organic Law	2006	Amends the Organic Law
Law 3392	2013	Revokes Law 1778/94 and regulates the elections for school principals

Source: Authors’ elaboration from the data collected in the research.

The analysis of the documents took into account the historical-educational context in which they were established. This concept was based on the argument by Sá-Silva, Almeida and Guindani (2009), that reveals the conceptions, regulations and orientations contained therein. Mainardes (2006) argues that the analysis of a text must consider the time and place of its production. Therefore, it was necessary to examine the periods, historical times and local conditions highlighting aspects related to the legal text construction about school management in Feira de Santana, Bahia.

Feira de Santana is a municipality located in the *Território do Portal do Sertão*¹, situated 107 kilometers from Salvador (the capital of the state). Currently, the city’s population is approximately 750,000, turning into the second largest city in the state in terms of population. The presence of urban and rural areas identifies the geographical division of the municipality, formed by eight districts, as shown in Figure 1.

Graph 2 – INEP projected and achieved by Feira de Santana municipal schools – 9th grade



Source: INEP (2018).

Regarding to institutional evaluation and according to IDEB, Feira de Santana has not reached the levels set by the Ministry of Education.

This study emerged from a project developed under the research line of Public Policies and Teachers Training of the *Núcleo de Estudos e Pesquisas sobre a Formação do Professor* (NUFOP) of Universidade Estadual de Feira de Santana (UEFS), which has been displaying an important role in the municipality and surrounding areas implementing teaching, research and extension actions focused on initial and continuing teacher training. The research consists of the acquaintanceship between researchers during routine practices and school principals from the course Supervised Internship in Teaching Management.

Considering that the school management is an educational policy, thereby the analysis of the historical and political characteristics contained in the official documents that regulate it in several municipalities is crucial and might be carried out as recommended by Mainardes (2006), namely from the articulation of macro and micro processes that subsidize and influence this policy. Therefore, this research has social, pedagogical and scientific relevance, since is dealing with an issue that reflects the reality of the policy of regulation and implementation of school management in Feira de Santana, yet considering that there is no previous study revealing the local and educational dimension of the matter in question.

School Management in Feira de Santana: understanding the local context

Educational reforms based on the liberal model and the meritocratic perspective, as well as external evaluations and the public education funding policy, have been outlining which challenges must be faced in this decade in order to establish a genuinely democratic school, which requires changes in conception, henceforth may directly interfere in both organization and administration of schools. That direc-

tion reveals the need to create a culture of participation for all school segments that seek “[...] the creation of democratic spaces as a way of overcoming the new market logic in the current politics” (Castro, 2007, p. 141).

The complexity present in education management, which has been expressed in the clash between social demands and market logic, assumes such a wide political and sociocultural dimension that it interferes with intra-school conditions and the real importance of its social role, pointing to the need to look for new ways of managing schools in facing this reality.

This knowledge brings to school managers considerable demands, as they are expected to enable the conditions in order to perform the pedagogical process competently, dealing creatively with the increasingly complex issues that arise in everyday life. Such issues entail sharing the attendance initiatives of different actors in school and local communities (such as managers, coordinators, teachers, parents) in the decision-making processes and assignment of responsibilities.

Thereby, the school management develops from a set of political actions, resources and procedures enabling to implement processes of both participation and decision in this instance, guided by the redemption of social right to education and school, the implementation of autonomy in these social zone and encouraging the broad involvement of organized civil society (Dourado, 2007).

Although schools generally follow the determinations emanating from educational policies, such as the guidelines established by the Education Law (National Educational Bases and Guidelines Law [LDB], National Education Plan, National Curricular Guidelines), the forms of the system organization and the didactic-pedagogical actions in the classroom (Libiliar; Oliveira; Toschi, 2003) seldom meet what the legal determinations advocate, as observed on the implementation of democratic management established by the Brazilian legislation. This is due to the fact that social and political determinations affect the regulatory character of the state and society within education and school.

Thus, knowledge about school management from the analysis of the aspects present in official documents, leads us to investigate the legislation that aims to regulate actions previously defined through structures. However, Lima (1996) highlights the existence of a certain risk using as a reference the management model based on the priority definition of formal structural aspects formally defined. The documents also reveal guiding principles, as may be seen from LDB 9394/96, in which the principle of democratic management is already established at its inception in art. 3, item VIII: “[...] democratic management of public education, according to this law and the legislation of education systems” (Brasil, 1996).

When thinking about democratic management of education, the characteristics that are anchored in the democracy principle must be considered as a complex political system, in which plurality, competi-

tion and antagonism lies together conducting to a basis system that fosters evolution through vitality and conflict of ideas and opinions, while relying on the democratic rules governing these antagonisms to ensure that ordinary struggles are transformed into struggles of ideas.

Regarding the discussions on the policy for democratic school management, Cunha (1981), Saviani (2008) and Paro (2011) claim that several academic-scientific movements such as the National Education Association (ANDE), the Studies Center Education and Society (CEDES) and the National Association for Research and Postgraduate Studies in Education (ANPEd), the students movement, the trade unions movement and the grassroots movement were responsible for proposing discussions in order to introduce such policy in the national educational landscape.

In the second half of the 1980s, in Feira de Santana, grassroots movements campaigned for democratic school management and acquired prominence with the trade union movement headed by the Feira de Santana Teachers Association (APROFS) and, subsequently, by the Workers' Union in Education of the State of Bahia (APLB), which represented the contribution of an ideological perspective different from the hitherto existing, which claimed the place of mobilization and social participation in school management processes. In this regard, Silva (2001) states:

[...] in 1987, the direct election to provide positions as principal and deputy principal was instituted in the *Estatuto do Magistério dos Professores da Rede Municipal de Ensino de Feira de Santana*, Law 1044/87, and, subsequently, [was] ratified by the Organic Law of 1990 (Silva, 2001, p. 48).

Therefore, the Feira de Santana's schools originally establish a dialogical process, in which consensus and conflict would complement each other, permeated by the demand for direct participation in the decisions and choice of managers, indicating a significant influence of teachers movement's performance in regulating Feira de Santana's school's management from the perspective of democratic management. Thus, it becomes important to use as an analysis reference the methods proposed by the election of school principals, as well as the authorized voters, present in local legislations since 1990, in order to implement explanatory arguments upon the management process and the knowledge related to the participation in the official documents of Feira de Santana. This overview is detailed in Table 2.

Table 2 – Local Legislation and Voters for Electing School Principals

LEGISLATION	ABOUT THE VOTERS
Organic Law 037/1990	Direct and secret election for municipal school's Principal and Deputy Principal for a two-year term, ensuring the participation of students, parents, staff and municipal teachers, as provided by law.
Law 1778/94, which regulated the election for school principals	Article 7 – The following are the voters of the selection process of principals and deputy principals: I – all teachers who, in teaching activities, are assigned to the school unit; II – all municipal employees in the school unit; III – one student for each class enrolled; IV – one representative of the parent-teacher association, if any, for each class of students on morning and afternoon shifts; V – a student union representative, if any.
Law No. 2229/2001, which amended Law 1778/94	No claim
Amendment to the Organic Law – 26/04/2006	No claim
Law 3392/2013, which revoked Law 1778/94 and regulated elections for school principals	I – all effective teachers and specialists in education who, in teaching, are assigned to the school unit; II – all effective municipal servants in the school unit; III – one student for each class enrolled in elementary school; IV – one parent representative for each class of students on morning and afternoon shifts.

Source: Authors' elaboration from data collected in the research.

In the Organic Law there is the presentation of the segments represented as voting in the process of direct election for principals and deputy principals of municipal schools, without effectively establishing the quantity of each representation. On the other hand, Law No. 1778/94 details the amount for each representation and delegates the responsibility for choosing the representations to an electoral board formed by each school unit, according to Art. 10, sole paragraph: "The Electoral Board is responsible for promoting the election for the choice of voters, provided in Article 7, III and IV, the disclosure of the list provided for in Art. 7, second paragraph, the polling station preparation, the receipt of votes and the subsequent appraisal of results" (Feira de Santana, 1994).

Law 2229/2011 does not make reference to voters or their numbers, prevailing deliberations issued by Law 1778/94. The Amendment to the Organic Law of 26 April 2006 makes no reference to who should be the possible voters for principals and deputy principals of municipal schools. Moreover, the text makes no reference to the electoral process of school principals. Thus, the election in 2006 remains regulated by Law 1778/94.

Even being considered the most current and effective one, Law 3392/2013 has only proposed a few changes regarding the text formatting related to the law from 1994. Despite that, the law provides to teach-

ers and education specialists decision-making in defining the electoral process, establishing voting rights to all teachers, also including a new professional category in the election process: the education specialist, who is still a teacher due to his/her formal education. On the other hand, the law diminishes the student voting, as only one elementary school students per class can vote, excluding students from preschool classes. Additionally, the student union representation was excluded, which removes the possibility of one additional student vote.

Notwithstanding the reference of this legislation to a democratic conception of education, which uses the election of principals as a representative strategy, what might be observed is that the law denies the student organization as a form of participation. According to Ball (1994), this highlights the incompleteness and inconsistency of the democratic school management policy and the non-incorporation of all voices in the regulation of the election of principals.

In turn, Barroso (2002, p. 175) emphasizes that the educational management should be supported on a triple alliance that considers the needs and “[...] the different roles and functions of the state, teachers and parents of students and remaining community and the balance of their intervention”. Therefore, this process must be permanently demonstrated in the collective action of educational actors, who participate in important policy decisions. Regarding to that, Paro (2011) claims the existence of three types of measures aimed at the participation of educational actors in the school organization:

[...] the ones related to collective mechanisms of participation [...]; the ones related to the democratic choice of school leaders; and those concerning initiatives that encourage and facilitate, through other means, greater involvement of students, teachers and parents in school activities (Paro, 2011, p. 15).

Therefore, these measures involve the community in the decision-making about the school pedagogical proceeding by their opinion, expectations and interests, in order to improve both the school for itself and a greater population participation in its context, which promote decentralization of the decision processes (Paro, 2011).

However, defining the election process for school principals guarantee no democratic school. In this sense, Castro (2007) indicates that:

[...] the public school empowerment entails creating a culture of participation for all and the improvement of its conditions. This is the challenge showed to educators who believe in the possibility of creating democratic spaces to overcome the new market-based system present in the current educational policy (Castro, 2007, p. 141).

Therefore, the school must be able to provide decision-making and responsibility sharing among teachers, parents, students, staff and management, demanding new organizational configuration capable of making emerge a new school within the community (Mello, 1992).

A school focused on learning and teaching, where there are contradictions, mutual respect engagement, autonomous and critical thinking, independence and a sense of justice.

The models and conceptions of school management represented in a discursive or symbolic manner and explained in the context of the legislation can be understood not only from its execution, but also according to the philosophical, historical, social, political and power points of view. Based on the legislation, municipal schools in Feira de Santana must underline the definition and understanding of which management model, principle and conception as prerequisites for management. The conception of management to be developed by the schools, presented by the extract of the text of the Organic Law, art. 136, sole paragraph, item VII, was noticed in the analyzed legal texts referring to the “[...] democratic management of public education” (Feira de Santana, 1990), article replaced with the 2006 Amendment to the Organic Law.

Table 3 – Prerequisites defined in the legal provisions for the role of school principal in Feira de Santana

Law No. 1778/94	Law No. 2229/2001	Law No. 3392/2013
Art. 5 – The following may be eligible for elections for principal and deputy principal: the servers occupying the positions of teacher, in the exercise of class conduction, coordination, supervision and direction of school that offer only 1st grade, level I, or degree, for the school units offering 1st grade, level II.	Article 5 – The following may be eligible for elections for principal and deputy principal: the employees occupying the positions of Teacher or Education Specialist, who have been teaching for at least two years, since they fulfill the following requirements: I – for school units offering only early childhood education and elementary school up to the 4th grade, teaching qualification; II – for school units that offer elementary school from 5th to 8th grade, qualification in Licentiate; III – for all School Management Qualification Certificates; valid, obtained by the ongoing approval offered, directly or not, by the Municipal Department of Education with a minimum workload of forty hours.	Article 6 – The following may be eligible for elections for principal and deputy principal: the employees occupying the positions of Teacher or Education Specialist, who have been teaching for at least three years, since they fulfill the following requirements: I – Being a teacher or education specialist with a degree in Pedagogy or Degree with specialization in School Management.

Source: Authors' elaboration from data collected in the research.

An important aspect identified in the three legislations highlights that one of the prerequisites to be a principal or deputy principal of the school is to be an effective teacher of the municipality, which greatly

contributes to enhance the teaching career and recognizes management as an exercise of the teaching profession. The municipal laws 2229/2001 and 3392/2013 accurately introduce the teaching qualification requirements at academic level for acting as a manager. Law 3392/2013, which is currently in effect, specifically meets the requirements of LDB No. 9394/96, art. 64, which addresses the training requirement for school administration. Therefore, the criteria listed by the educational legislation of Feira de Santana ratify Paro's ideas (2011), who argues that the election to choose principals is the most appropriate way to provide the function of school manager, since it prevents political dependence and electoral patronage, strengthening relations between the local community and the school community.

The challenges imposed on the school have required a management professional who thinks about their practice, produces knowledge and has autonomy to tackle behavioral change, attitudes, practices and currently social needs. This justifies the concern of situating this research within a dynamic of knowledge production analysis from the legal documents that regulate the school management in Feira de Santana. In the analyzed legal documents, the attributes of the school manager were not identified, which represents a gap regarding the direction and purpose of their actuation, which might be defined by the principal him/herself in agreement or not with the school community or by the local government at each moment.

In this sense, the manager, who needs to assume the position of school organizer, actively performing the implementation of the right to learn and the mobilization and social participation in the school context, needs legal guidance for the exercise of his/her role, since school management is concretized from the "[...] encounter between the State and the civil society at school" (Krawczyk, 1999, p. 160), meeting legal and contextual demands.

Final Remarks

The results presented in this text are part of a larger study called *Conceptions and characteristics of school management in the municipalities of the Território do Portal do Sertão*, which aims to contribute to the survey of educational information and the mapping of conceptions and characteristics of school management in the municipalities that comprise the *Território de Identidade do Portal do Sertão*. Initially, this work sought to contribute to the survey and mapping of Feira de Santana, which may support the development of other studies focused on the educational conditions present in the context analyzed.

In the specific case of the research in question, the analysis focused on the context of the texts production, referring to the interpretation of the educational, political and social scenarios in which they were produced, as well as the characteristics and conceptions that emerge from them.

Regarding management, when directed from different orientations (external and internal), it is possible to understand that the production of legal texts directly depends on the school organization and the local and global systems, since the management model exists according to interrelationships that are established between school, local power and national context, always in the process of creation and recreation.

Based on the development of the research, the official documents which deal with school management in Feira de Santana since 1990, highlighting intertwined aspects between the political-educational context and the production of official documents were possible to be listed. Noteworthy, in the process of regulating school management, the election of principals by the community is a way of providing the managerial function, revealing evidence to understand the democratic management model in Feira de Santana. Such achievement can be assigned, above all, to the participation and influence of the teaching movements and the local population itself.

The research results contribute to the field of educational policies, school management and local education, allowing the scientific record of the text production context on school management in Feira de Santana, Bahia.

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Note

- 1 From 2007, the state government of Bahia began to acknowledge the existence of 27 Territories of Identity, based on the specificity of each region. Its methodology was developed based on the feeling of belonging, having the communities being invited to express their opinions by means of their representatives.

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