Extended Abstract


This master's thesis intends to promote a debate about the importance of social participation in formulating urban policies, by promoting inclusive and effective actions, because the civil society participation changes paradigmatically the logical of collective way of living.

In February 1999's, the economist Joseph Stiglitz have already spoken about the social participation role:

The central argument of this paper has been that open, transparent, and participatory processes are important ingredients in the development transformation - important both for sustainable economic development and for social development that should be viewed as an end in itself and as a means to more rapid economic growth (STIGLITZ, 2002, p. 175).

By the end of the 1990's, it was already possible to realize the necessity of defining public policies directed to the poverty alleviation, such as employment, housing, or education politics that needed to be implemented. In that way, it was comprehensive that the improvement of life quality should be the main goal to a healthier environment. In the Brazilian context, according to Maricato (2016), the Brazilian society has urbanized mostly in the twentieth century, starting with only 10% of the population living in the cities and finishing with impressive 91% living in urban areas. The perception of lack of urban planning in the development of most of the Brazilian cities can be emphasized with the lack of participatory processes and the social participation in urban management.

The problems related to the demographic growth in Brazilian cities and its consequences are defined by the sustainability in the urban environment, or the Urban Sustainability. This term was determined by Henri Acselrad (1999) and explained as the capacity of urban policies to be adapted to service offers and social assistance, attending to numerous demands of the population basic rights and others investments.
The present year of 2016, remarkable by the impeachment of the president Dilma Roussef and the doubt about its legitimacy, created the concern of going backward in many important achievements related to the fight for the social movements and in favor of the vulnerable population.

Besides that, the interest in realizing studies in the area of social participation in urban questions that I have been accomplished during the residence program in Planning and Urban Management in association with the Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism in the University of São Paulo and the Municipal Secretariat of Urban Development in the city of São Paulo. In this time, it was possible to take action directly in the Regional Plans reviews, being perceptible the great importance of the participatory phase in all the process, where the presence of the Participatory Councils of the town as a representation of the civil society was very important, and became the case study of this thesis.

Making part of the residence program allowed the residents to have both theoretical lessons and practical activities and being able to experience the public management in the city of São Paulo, specially related to the participatory processes. Some of the obstacles to conduce a better participatory meeting and the high absence between the councils brought us interest in understanding what could be occurring. Besides the great achievement of the creation of the Participatory Councils to represent the civil society, the practice of the social participation and, consequently, the social control, was not happening in an effectively way.

The research started with the study of the conception of the social participation aiming to comprehend the relevance and the difference between participatory processes and its evolution in Brazil, in which moment there was more attention for this instrument, and how is it still necessary to keep evolving to be able to guarantee even more the effectiveness in the participatory processes.

In the second chapter, the chronology of the social participation in Brazil was analyzed since the 1960's, reinforcing the importance of the promulgation of the Federal Constitution in 1988, coming through others legislations that succeed, as the Statute of the City, the creation of the City Ministry in 2003, the implementation of the Cities National Conference, the Urban Development National Plan, and a range of other decrees and provisional measures related to the subject, in the sense of fundamentating the logic and the importance of the
social participation as an essential tool in the process of social control and a better access of the population to the city.

In the third chapter, it was made an attempt to introduce the concept of the social participation and the democracy, analyzing the different participatory processes, the importance of the civil society engagement and the methods to create more effective actions, besides explaining the importance of these activities in the formulation of urban policies. Thereafter, it was realized studies of the modeling approach of the social participation in the municipality of São Paulo since the occurrence of the regional administrations in 1965, focusing in the administrations that gave priority to the decentralization and the development of participatory processes in the city of São Paulo, passing by Luiza Erundina's government in 1989, Marta Suplicy's in 2001 until Fernando Haddad's government, closing the cycle in 2016. Therefore, we used to enlighten important questions related to the social participation approach in the different governments, since the decentralization of the city administration, until questions of the most recent Master and Regional Plans, which allowed to reflect above the participatory processes in practice and how this phases had been underestimated, not only by the public authorities, but also by the population that is not used to practice your ability to influence the formulation of urban policies, although in São Paulo, it has been settled a range of participatory instruments, such as the Municipal Participatory Councils.

The fourth chapter was dedicated to argue and analyze the results of the study, the living experience in the participatory councils through observation and survey application with the counselors of the thirty two Sub-City Halls, which allowed the result of 315 questionnaires answered. The intention of the field research had the main goal to generate answer to a series of questions related to the representativeness in the councils, who are the participants, the civil society agents in case, how does occur the process of mutual interest development and if there are conflicts related to individual interests, besides looking for ways to promote models of participatory processes in which the population really feel comfortable to expose their opinions without being induced by facilitating agents, and consequently, by the public power.

It was developed an extensive questionnaire with twenty eight questions, with written and selective answers, whose purpose was to understand the
actuation of the participatory counselors and the social participation in the urban policies. We also sought to survey who are these counselors, whose motivations and what connections they have, and how they involve with the activities.

The applied methodology was a qualitative and quantitative survey and a method of participative observation, where through the Municipal Participatory Councils meetings it was possible to experience the dynamic of their actions. The self appliance was important to allow the counselor being more comfortable to answer the questions, without feeling compromised, since they could do it anonymously. Besides, it was not able to attend in all the thirty two councils personally and some other residents helped delivering part of the questionnaires, allowing that the research could be concluded with success. Therefore, it was essential that the survey could be realized independently, without any interference that could bring different interpretations or answers inhibition. This way, it was possible to open a dialogue by an expressive sample of the questionnaires, aiming to achieve the participatory councils in all of the Sub-City Halls, with an average group of at least 20% of the counselors in each of them. At the end of the research, it was possible to realize visits in the thirty two counselors, involving a total of 315 questionnaires applied.

Besides the field research, some documental and bibliographical survey was also made, involving analyzes of articles, doctoral thesis and books, from authors as Ana Cláudia Teixeira, Evelina Dagnino, Leonardo Avritzer, Lígia Lüchmann, Luciana Tatagiba, and others, aiming to understand the actual performance of the different councils and social participation instruments, trying to understand what are the established rules between them and the existent similarity relations, with the intention to comprehend the possibility to allow the formulation of politics that could attend all over the city.

To understand the survey sample, it is important to clarify that in the actual mandate, it was elected 1.113 counselors and more 35 for the immigrants. From this amount, we achieve in our approach the percentage of 27,44% of the counselors consulted, during two months of research field, what we consider an successful outcome, having in mind that the average of presence in the councils, hardly achieve more than 50%, and besides, we could overcome our goal of listen to 20% of the counselors.
The analyses gave the opportunity to reflect over the theme in its practical applicability, both in the public power and the civil society backgrounds. In the end, we raised the question of effectiveness of the practical participation being a propelling action of the social sustainability, having in mind that the implication of society in formulating the public policies, specially the urban ones, should interfere in restructuring the cities, aligning social, economical, cultural, environmental, and other questions, that aims to provide better life conditions for the population, as well as better planned cities.

According to the results pointed in the study, the thesis make final considerations for the necessity of constructing new ways in the search of rethinking the processes so far realized, raising some criticisms about the urban planning that has been produced and aiming to make possible the effectiveness relates to the participatory management in formulating the public urban policies. It is understood that it is needed to be based not only in the technical knowledge and economical and political decisions, but also by the understanding of the active participation of the civil society in the decision making, creating in the population the interest in interact and realize changes.

It is indispensable a collaboration between all the agents involved in the process, including the civil society and the public power, embracing a partnership between the responsible people for these interventions and those who will, in the future, enjoy from the benefits of an active social participation, which means the civil society that sets on the urban areas. The mutual interest is essential for the quality and effectiveness in the participatory processes.

That way, it is even more crucial to know how to learn and respect someone else's opinion that make part of the civil society, aiming for them to be attended and to have a bigger return for a more immediate resolution of its different problems. Guarantee participatory instruments, such as the Municipal Participatory Councils, means keeping constructing a more democratic culture in the Brazilian society, confronting the elitist conceptions and contributing to actions more inclusive and transparent, in way to recognize the citizen as a bearer of rights.

By reaffirming the importance of thinking about urban policies tied to participatory processes, it is necessary to reflect in the complexity of the cities, as a heterogeneous web, according to Guattari (1999), in which is needed to see
through the "boundaries" and watch out for social, ideological, anthropological, and other aspects. Besides that, is it essential that the civil society inform itself and know its rights, to make achievable the realization of the necessary changes, to create sustainable regions that face economical, social and environmental issues to improve the urban life quality of our population and the Brazilian cities, aiming to ensure the effectiveness of the participatory spaces, even though they are legitimized or not, as an important and indispensable tool for the future of our country.

**Keywords**

Urban planning; participatory councils; civil society.