

Local Governance and the Role of Associations in the Collective Management: The Case of the City of Agadir, Morocco

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Abstract: *During the recent few decades, the ideas, theories and practices related to the relationship between the state and civil society have changed. Now, it is necessary to strengthen the participation of the local population through associations in the management of local public affairs. This article examines the participation of associations -as part of local governance - in the collective management. With this intention, on the basis of an empirical study led within the city of Agadir, we will examine the potential role associations to improve the collective management of local public affairs.*

Keywords: Local governance, participation, associations, collective management

1. Introduction

The issue of 'local governance' has been the subject of a vast literature and a multitude of analyses for two decades. The increasing interest in governance opens up several theoretical reflections and empirical work in which different issues, problems or objectives are taken into account.

Furthermore, and despite the lack of a common approach to the notion of governance, all the proposed acceptance converge to a point which is to link the notion of governance to a certain effectiveness of the state in the management of the thing public. This efficiency cannot be realized without the redevelopment of all the reports of the State and citizens on the basis of principles such as participation of all citizens in local public action.

This paper seeks to explore the following question: How can the local governance contribute to territorial development? Thus, the hypothesis could be formulated as follows: local governance promoting territorial development can not be achieved without the participation of the population - through associative entities -dealing with the management of public affairs at the local level.

Indeed, nowadays, good governance depends crucially on the implementation of a participatory democratic process that challenges civil society associations and puts them in the forefront to represent the people. Based on a clear conceptual repertoire of theoretical and empirical literature, this work tries to highlight that the involvement of these associations is considered as, firstly, a governance flagship application and also a leading territorial development.

2. Interests and Objectives of the Study

Our work sheds light on a partial problem of various aspects of governance. This lighting is a primary interest of this research which has, in our opinion, other objectives that are also of paramount importance:

The first part relates the important role of governance in general to the local governance as a key determinant for a country to ensure sustainable development.

The second concerns the importance of the study of the relationship between local governance, participation of associations and effective collective management in the current context. The aim of this research is to provide a reflection on the interactions between local actors such as associations through certain characteristics related to coordination, cooperation and citizen participation process. It aims at understanding, in the context of local governance, how the involvement of associations can be both reconfiguration of public action, and also breathe new life into the local collective management.

To address this issue, we will try, at first, to briefly recall some definitions related to the issue addressed in order to show the importance of "participation" component. In a second step, we will try to identify the specificities of the participation of associations in the management of local public affairs. Finally, we shall have to check our remarks on a practical case taking as scope: the city of Agadir.

3. Research Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: any effective collective management is based on the involvement of local people in the management of their own territory.

Hypothesis 2: Effective local governance can not be achieved without the effective participation of the associations in the management of their territory.

a) Context

At this time of decentralization and significant changes in the legal environment in Morocco, the participatory approach has high stakes in terms of contribution to creating new relations between the administration and citizens. Indeed, the citizens demand more transparency in the

preparation and implementation of public policies and wish to become more involved in local life. This confirmation marks the strong will emerge a local participatory democracy. The attention paid to the role of citizen participation in public management is both new and old. Old by the interest given by the Moroccan government to develop a realistic participation process initiated several years ago and new because we are now witnessing more than ever a continuous movement of laws, programs and experiences connected with the participation and partnership between government services and civil society in Morocco.

Despite the abundance of literature produced on this subject, it is important to focus on the mechanisms of participation on much smaller scales. Reflecting this trend, new forms of relationships have emerged, focusing more on participatory democratic practices. The associations are a good example. This is a new form of participation and partnership between the government and the citizens. The associations have become a key player in any development process especially at the local level that no one can dispute. The flexibility of their structures predisposes them to develop projects that meet the real needs of people. Their outreach and knowledge of populations and territories, from which they arise, makes them more likely to encourage informed and vigorous citizen participation.

b) The concept of participation at the center of many conceptual issues

While it is often mentioned today, the term citizen participation is a concept widely contested on the ground. But in the scientific literature, it covers different realities and replaces other concepts such as consultation or participatory democracy.

Formally, the term "participation" has emerged during mass mobilizations and movements 'radical' US during the years 1960-1970 [Movement against the Vietnam War, civil rights advocates, urban social movements ... etc.]. The word has gained new momentum in the 1990s under the leadership of the World Bank, which seeks to condition foreign aid to democratic openings of the beneficiary countries.

In general, the term citizen participation refers to the involvement of ordinary citizens in decision making in environments, institutions and programs whose scope affects them directly. In view of the scientific literature, Allain (2001) and Claeys-Mekdadi (2001) notes that participation often refers to the power relationship between the different actors of territorial management and places the citizen at the heart of this process exchange and redistribution of power. Several authors (Arnstein, 1969; Joliveau et al, 2002; Wilcox, 1994) proposed to characterize participation, declining levels of power, depending on the degree of involvement and citizen control in the decision making process.

Table 1: Typology of eight levels of participation from a scale Arnstein (1969)

Levels of participation	Types of power
8. citizen control	C. Shared Power
7. Delegation of power	
6. Partnership	
5. Complaints and suggestions	B. Influential power
4. consultation	
3. Information	
2. Therapy	A. Lack of power
1. Manipulation	

c) Level and method of contribution of associations in the collective management

The activities of the associations are part of the line with the strategic thrusts of the National Initiative for Human Development (INDH). It aims to promote local governance. The establishment of their governing structures and operating under the basic principles of democracy. Participation in community life promotes social ascension - political leaders.

The grouping, organization and dynamics of associations activities strengthen social ties and the awakening of the communities in the development of their region.

Establishing an inventory of the role of "living" associations in a given territory in the process of collective management is a difficult task. However, governance has developed in a context which is marked by many changes (economic crisis, decentralization, globalization, growing power of civil society, development of the role of local authorities ...) leading to new challenges and strong mutations social and territorial. This context has profoundly altered the relationship between civil society represented by associations and public authorities. They are invited if not called to participate in the construction of the public response and ensure greater efficiency in the field.

Certainly, in empirical reality, things are more complex. It is now considered common in public policy that the participation of associations especially in the field of development of the territory is rewarding. This commitment reflects the awareness at the state level of the need to involve partner organizations to ensure democracy and build more respectful of citizens' project.

However, it is clear that the role of civil society-through associative entities- remains quite limited though strategically important. Despite the existence of a large number of associations distinguished by their professionalism, sense of organization and their results, they suffer from a lack of vision and strategy of intervention and real and effective involvement in the management of public affairs. Their work does not bear sufficient visibility. Indeed, the involvement of associations is usually done in an indirect way. This is so, especially when governments themselves organize consultation with associations and interest groups before making their choice or to adopt their public policy.

For its part, the government must be more demanding of associations by continuous and strict monitoring on the

identity, the real objectives, types of action, intervention procedures and results of the actions of these associations on territory.

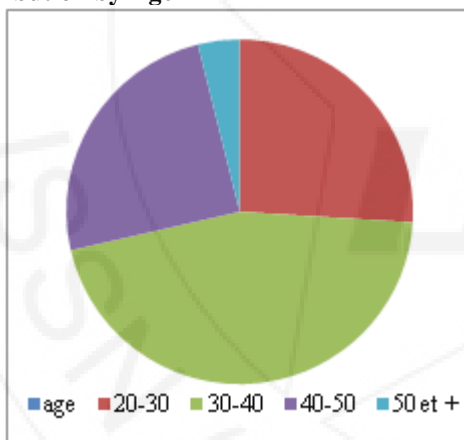
4. Working Methodology

In this section, we present the results of a study conducted during the month of March 2014. We conducted this investigation on development associations in the urban commune of Agadir. Thus, the technique of investigation we used was «door to door» by giving questionnaire to different groups of people who acted as informants. The questionnaire contains 47 closed-type questions, single or multiple response even open questions where we gave the respondent the opportunity to freely give their point of view. The data collected through the questionnaire were enriched by additional and meaningful information collected through a set of semi-structured interviews with leaders of association. Also, we have stripped the data collected using a statistical software, Sphinx. Which helped to achieve significant results in tables single entry or double entry.

Level associations, including Information was collected on the name, headquarters, the intervention areas, the number of members, the layers of beneficiary populations, areas of intervention, carried achievements, strategies intervention planning tools, challenges and proposed solutions.

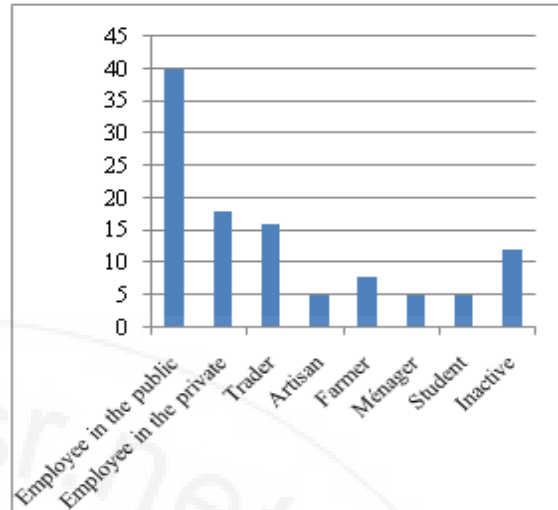
5. Analysis of Results

a) Distribution by Age



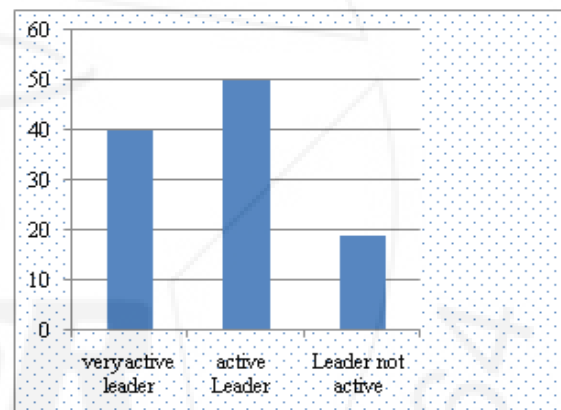
We find that an individual whose age is between 30 and 40 years account for nearly half of our sample is 45.8%. They are a very active social stratum and more aware of their own responsibilities in relation to other age groups. The participation of women in associational life is outstanding but still weak.

b) Breakdown by socio – professional



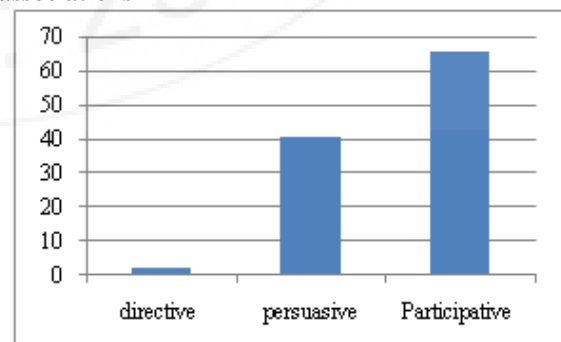
The graph showing the socio - professional of respondents shows that employees are more adherent associations compared to other socio-professional group. This is explained by the fact that our survey was conducted in an urban commune.

c) Distribution by level of participation in community action



Force is to notice the predominance of active leaders and very active leaders. It follows that members actually appropriate the activities of their associations. This bodes activism of their strong commitment to achieving the goals. They thus prove their highly developed desire to belong to the group and their sense of high responsibility. Under these conditions, strategic and tactical decisions can only be taken for the smooth running of the association.

d) Distribution by type of decision making in associations



This graph shows that decisions are taken together in a participatory manner. The other significant aspect is that 37.61% of decisions are taken by persuasive way. The results allow us to count up the areas of action of associations. Indeed, the activities of the associations cover several areas: Socially, the activities carried out are related to health, education, water, social action, etc. economically, associations operate in areas such as agriculture, livestock, handicrafts, income generating activities, etc.

6. Conclusion

Association participation in the management of public affairs for several years, would be at the heart of any governance process. The demand of civil society evolves. It is no longer participating in consultative bodies, but to be involved in decisions as part of a new governance. The associations recognized early the need to come together to exist in the public space. With this increase in participation, governance takes over the government of public action. The strong participation of associations determines the success of governance. Moreover, this participatory approach does not call into question the principles of representation that are the basis of our political organization. Power remains to the elected people and participation is essentially a right and duty of expression, discussion, to assist in the conduct of public business in informing policy before taking a decision.

Thus, the analysis of any local governance processes will lead to an awareness of the need to promote new approaches that will make the real effective local participation a priority and a preliminary basis for the establishment of democracy. In this context, the use of associations as a public action can be considered as a relay race that may put an end to all of the previous performances. These structures appear to offer new pathways that are necessary to change the territory to the desired objectives.

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