



Year V, v.2 2025 | Submission: November 29, 2025 | Accepted: December 1, 2025 | Publication: December 3, 2025

Democratic Management: Elections of Principals in Municipal Public Schools in the municipality of Ariquemes-RO

Democratic Management: Elections of Directors in Municipal Public Schools in the municipality of Ariquemes-RO

Jailson Ferreira – Estácio de Sá University

Karine Vichielt Morgan – Estácio de Sá University

Summary

Democratic management is a fundamental principle of Brazilian education, highlighting the importance of the participation of the entire school community in planning and decision-making. This study analyzes the election process for principals in municipal public schools in Ariquemes, Rondônia, with the aim of evaluating its contribution to the implementation of democratic management in the educational context. Direct elections for principals are one of the mechanisms that seek to guarantee greater transparency, representativeness, and involvement of students, parents, teachers, and staff. The research uses a documentary and bibliographic analysis, based on legislation, official documents, and specialized literature such as books and articles that address democratic management and electoral processes in educational environments. Among the expected results are the identification of good practices and challenges in the electoral process, as well as proposals to strengthen the participation of the school community and improve democratic management in schools. It is concluded that, despite representing a significant advance in the democratization of educational management, direct elections require adjustments in criteria, procedures, and engagement policies to maximize their effectiveness as an instrument of inclusion and transparency in school decisions. These insights may contribute to the formulation of more effective educational management strategies in Ariquemes-RO.

Keywords: Democratic Management. School Elections. Public Education. Community Participation.

Abstract

Democratic management is a fundamental principle of Brazilian education, highlighting the importance of the participation of the entire school community in planning and decision-making. This study analyzes the process of elections for principals in municipal public schools in Ariquemes, Rondônia, with the aim of evaluating its contribution to the implementation of democratic management in the educational context. Direct elections for principals are one of the mechanisms that seek to ensure greater transparency, representation, and involvement of students, parents, teachers, and staff. The research uses a documentary and bibliographical analysis, based on legislation, official documents, and specialized literature such as books and articles that address democratic management and electoral processes in educational environments. Among the expected results are the identification of good practices and challenges in the electoral process, as well as proposals to strengthen the participation of the school community and improve democratic management in schools. It is concluded that, despite representing a significant advance in the democratization of educational management, direct elections have deactivated adjustments in criteria, procedures, and engagement policies to maximize their effectiveness as an instrument of inclusion and transparency in school decisions. These insights may contribute to the formulation of more effective educational management strategies in Ariquemes-RO.

Keywords: Democratic Management; School Elections; Public Education; Community Participation.

1. INTRODUCTION

Democratic governance in Brazil is a principle guaranteed by the 1988 Federal Constitution and regulated by the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education (LDB), which establishes the Participation of the school and local community in the decision-making processes of educational institutions. This The model seeks to ensure that school leaders are chosen in a participatory manner, based on... in the dialogue between the various segments of the school community composed of students, teachers, and parents and staff, promoting greater transparency and legitimacy in educational management (PARO, 2022).

In the Northern region, practices related to democratic governance face specific challenges. Due to cultural and geographical diversity, strategies adapted to local realities are required. In Rondônia, state and municipal legislation plays a crucial role in regulating elections. for principals, varying according to each municipality and the guidelines of the education networks. In some localities, direct elections are adopted as a way to guarantee the representativeness of the population. school community, while in others, the nomination is still predominant (BARBOZA, 2024).

In the municipality of Ariquemes, democratic governance also seeks to strengthen the participation of... different actors are involved in the selection of school principals. However, its implementation depends on specific regulations and the active participation of civil society, unions and associations teachers, who are fighting to consolidate more democratic and inclusive practices. According to Veiga (2013), these processes reflect the struggle for an education that meets local needs, respects Cultural diversity and the importance of shared responsibility among administrators, educators, students, and families are paramount.

In this sense, the elections for school principals in municipal public schools in The municipality of Ariquemes, Rondônia, represents an opportunity for the effective implementation of Democratic practices. However, the success of this initiative depends on the existence of clear criteria, well-defined procedures, and the engagement of school stakeholders. It is essential to analyze the The impact of this process on building participatory management, which promotes not only administrative efficiency, but also the appreciation of collectivity and transparency (HARVEY, 1992).

The main objective of this study was to conduct a documentary analysis of the electoral process. for principals in municipal public schools in Ariquemes, seeking to understand to what extent These elections contribute to democratic governance. To that end, the criteria and... will be investigated. procedures adopted in the electoral process, focusing on identifying its potential and limitations. Furthermore, the challenges and advantages of direct elections as a mechanism will be analyzed. of democratization, as well as the effective participation of the school community.



2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 An Approach to General Management from Different Theoretical Perspectives

Management, as a field of study and practice, has been extensively explored by theorists such as Frederick Taylor (1911), Henry Ford (1922), and Max Weber (1947), each offering contributions. distinct. Taylor, through scientific management, focused on operational efficiency, proposing the Standardization of tasks and specialization of labor (Taylor, 1911). Ford expanded these ideas by Introducing mass production and the assembly line concept, optimizing time and resources. in the factory environment (Ford, 1922). Weber, in turn, highlighted bureaucracy as a rational form of organizing institutions, emphasizing clear rules, defined hierarchies, and impartiality in administrative processes (Weber, 1947).

These approaches, although distinct, have significantly influenced modern management. Democracy, in its broadest sense, is characterized by the equal participation of individuals. in decisions that affect them. Derived from ancient Greece, this form of government has evolved to include not only the choice of leaders, but also the guarantee of fundamental rights and the pursuit of justice. social (Dahl, 1989). According to Bobbio (1987), modern democracy is supported by three pillars: representation, transparency and active participation, being applied not only in politics, but also in social and educational organizations.

Although the management models proposed by Taylor and Weber are more rigid and structured, It is possible to establish a dialogue between its foundations and democratic principles. Rationality. Weberian thought, by emphasizing the need for clear and well-defined rules, contributes to transparency. which is one of the fundamental pillars of democracy (WEBER, 1999). Similarly, the search for Efficiency in the Taylorist model can be adapted to a participatory context, in which the community... The school collaborates in the decision-making process, promoting the integration of objectives. collective and operational (TAYLOR, 1995).

Elections represent one of the most emblematic tools of democracy, allowing that citizens choose their representatives and directly influence the direction of institutions. According to Schumpeter (1942), modern electoral democracy goes beyond the simple choice of leaders, representing a mechanism for legitimizing power and a way to ensure alternation. in leadership positions. In an educational or corporate context, electoral processes can be adapted to include participatory principles, strengthening the legitimacy of decisions. administrative.



2.1.1 Theoretical Perspectives on Management

The evolution of management as a field of study has been marked by different approaches. Theoretical perspectives that seek to explain and optimize the functioning of organizations. These perspectives reflect the diverse challenges faced by managers and the need for constant adaptation to organizational and market changes. The classical view of administration had its development occurred between the 19th and 20th centuries and is associated with the studies of Frederick Taylor and Henri Fayol.

Taylor (1911) proposed Scientific Management, emphasizing the standardization of processes, productive, the specialization of labor and the pursuit of operational efficiency. Fayol (1916), for his turn, he developed the Classical Theory of Administration, which structured the fundamental principles of administration, including planning, organization, direction and control.

In contrast to the mechanistic approach of classical administration, the Theory of Public Relations The Human Genetics study, developed by Elton Mayo in the 1930s, highlighted the importance of these factors. Psychological and social factors in the workplace. The Hawthorne experiments demonstrated that Aspects such as motivation, employee satisfaction, and interpersonal relationships influence directly impacts organizational productivity (MAYO, 1933).

The systems approach emerged in the 1950s as a response to the need for Understanding organizations in an integrated way. Inspired by Ludwig's General Systems Theory. von Bertalanffy (1950), this approach views organizations as systems composed of different interdependent subsystems that interact with each other and with the external environment. In this way, decision-making must consider the organization's overall context and not just its individual characteristics. isolated elements.

Contingency Theory, developed in the 1960s by authors such as Lawrence and Lorsch (1967) and Woodward (1958) argue that there is no single correct way to manage a organization. Instead, the effectiveness of management depends on contextual variables, such as the environment. external factors include the organizational structure and the technology used. This approach highlights the need for Flexibility in management to adapt to the specific conditions of each organization.

Competency-based management gained relevance starting in the 1990s, with the The increasing value placed on human capital as a competitive advantage, according to Prahalad and Hamel. (1990), the core competencies of an organization are knowledge, skills and attitudes that provide a strategic advantage. This approach emphasizes the continuous development of Employees and knowledge management as critical factors for business success.

Strategic and competitive management focuses on analyzing the external and internal environment to Formulating strategies that ensure the sustainability and growth of organizations.



Year V, v.2 2025 | Submission: November 29, 2025 | Accepted: December 1, 2025 | Publication: December 3, 2025

Michael Porter (1980) was one of the main theorists of this approach, proposing models such as...

five competitive forces and the generic strategies of differentiation, cost leadership, and focus.

Strategic management seeks to anticipate market trends, optimize resources, and establish competitive advantages. sustainable competitiveness.

Nowadays, these theoretical perspectives are not mutually exclusive, but complementary.

Successful organizations are those that combine different approaches, adapting to...

Changes in the business environment and stakeholder needs. The interconnection between these

Theories also demonstrate the evolution of administrative thought, which has moved from one focus...

From a mechanistic perspective to a more flexible and adaptive one. Thus, understanding the different perspectives.

Management is essential so that managers and business leaders can make more effective decisions and sustainable.

Given this scenario, the study of management continues to evolve, incorporating new approaches.

and technologies that impact how organizations operate. The increasing complexity of

Markets and the dynamism of the business environment make understanding essential.

Different theoretical perspectives for efficient and innovative management.

2.1.2 Management from the Perspective of Efficiency and Productivity

Organizational management has as one of its main objectives to guarantee efficiency and

Productivity in business operations. Efficiency refers to the optimized use of resources for...

Performance of activities, while productivity is related to the ability to produce more.

with fewer inputs (Drucker, 1999). In this context, several theories and approaches were

Developed to improve management processes and maximize organizational results.

Scientific Management, proposed by Frederick Taylor at the beginning of the 20th century, is one of the

Early approaches focused on efficiency and productivity. Taylor (1911) emphasized analysis.

The systematic organization of tasks, the standardization of processes, and the division of labor, seeking to eliminate

Eliminate waste and increase production. Its principles have profoundly influenced modern management.

being applied to this day in various industries. Max Weber's theory of bureaucracy also

contributed to improving organizational efficiency. Weber (1947) proposed a model

administrative structure based on formal hierarchy, rules and standardized procedures, with the objective

to ensure predictability and control over operations.

Although efficient, this model can generate excessive rigidity, reducing the ability to...

Innovation and adaptation of companies. With the advancement of research in management, the systemic approach

It emerged as a more flexible alternative in the pursuit of productivity. The General Theory of

Bertalanffy's (1950) Systems considers organizations as interdependent systems, in



Year V, v.2 2025 | Submission: November 29, 2025 | Accepted: December 1, 2025 | Publication: December 3, 2025

Efficiency results from the harmony between its subsystems. This approach highlights the need Effective integration and communication are essential for optimizing organizational performance. Management of Total Quality Management (TQM) is another essential perspective for improving Efficiency and productivity. Deming (1986) and Juran (1992) were pioneers in disseminating... practices focused on quality, emphasizing continuous improvement, customer satisfaction and... Employee involvement.

The implementation of quality programs has had a positive impact on efficiency. productive of various organizations around the world. In the context of strategic management, Michael Porter (1980) proposed approaches to increase the productivity and competitiveness of organizations. Their generic strategies include cost leadership, differentiation, and focus, all geared towards... Gaining sustainable competitive advantages. The effective implementation of these strategies can Maximize operational efficiency and improve company performance in the market.

The adoption of advanced technologies has also been a critical factor in the increase of Efficiency and productivity. Automation systems, artificial intelligence, and big data analytics. They allow for more precise management of organizational resources and processes (Brynjolfsson & McAfee, 2014). Digitization has transformed the way organizations operate, reducing Cost control and production optimization. Competency-based management also plays a role. fundamental in improving productivity.

Prahalad and Hamel (1990), the development of core competencies within companies It is crucial for maintaining operational efficiency and competitive advantage. Training and Employee development thus becomes a central strategy for business success. Finally, innovation management has become a key differentiator for companies seeking to increase their... Efficiency and productivity.

According to Christensen (1997), disruptive innovation can generate new market opportunities and Transforming traditional business models. The ability to continuously innovate ensures... Sustainability and long-term organizational growth. Given this scenario, it becomes clear... that managing efficiency and productivity is a dynamic and multifaceted field. Different Theoretical approaches contribute to optimizing organizational performance, and the combination These perspectives can yield significant results. The ability of organizations to... Adapting to change and implementing innovative strategies will be crucial for success. Business in the future.



2.1.3 Management and Organizational Behavior

Management and organizational behavior are interconnected areas that influence Organizational behavior directly impacts organizational performance. Organizational behavior refers to the study... of the attitudes, emotions, and interactions of individuals within the work environment, being a factor critical for the formulation of effective management strategies (ROBBINS & JUDGE, 2019). One of The first approaches to organizational behavior emerged with the Human Relations Theory. Humanities, a concept proposed by Elton Mayo in the 1930s.

His studies, known as the Hawthorne Experiments, demonstrated that factors Psychological and social factors directly impact worker productivity, suggesting that... Job satisfaction is as important as material incentives (MAYO, 1933). Motivation It is one of the main factors influencing organizational behavior and has been widely discussed. studied by different theorists. Maslow (1943) proposed the Hierarchy of Needs, which suggests that individuals only feel motivated for professional growth when their needs Basic requirements are met. McGregor (1960) presented Theories X and Y, indicating that the manager's vision The way one interacts with their subordinates directly influences the leadership style adopted and, consequently, the organizational behavior.

Organizational culture also plays a crucial role in how individuals... They behave within organizations. According to Schein (1985), organizational culture is formed based on shared values, beliefs, and assumptions, which shape the work environment and They impact how employees interact and make decisions. A culture A strong organizational structure can increase employee engagement and satisfaction, improving... The overall performance of the organization. The leader plays a key role in managing behavior. organizational.

According to Bass (1990), transformational leadership is a management style that inspires and motivates. Employees achieve high performance through engagement and a shared vision. This type of leadership creates an environment conducive to innovation, professional development, and... Job satisfaction. Organizational communication is also essential for effective management of Organizational behavior. According to Argyris (1993), clear and transparent communication Within organizations, it strengthens trust and minimizes conflict, promoting a positive environment. More collaborative and productive work.

A lack of effective communication can generate organizational noise and have a negative impact. Employee motivation. Another important factor is conflict management. According to Thomas and Kilmann (1974) states that conflicts within organizations can be positive or negative, depending on... ...and how they are managed. Effective mediation and conflict resolution strategies can...



Transforming differences into opportunities for organizational growth. Diversity and

Inclusion is also a fundamental aspect of modern organizational behavior.

2.1.4 General Management in the New Digital Age and Innovation

Digital transformation has significantly impacted organizational management, requiring New approaches and strategies to maintain competitiveness in the market. The digitalization of Administrative and production processes enable greater efficiency, automation, and decision-making based on data (Brynjolfsson & McAfee, 2014).

In this context, innovation plays a key role in adapting companies to... The new technological reality. The Industry 4.0 revolution has brought advancements such as artificial intelligence. (AI), the Internet of Things (IoT), and big data have profoundly changed business management. Companies that adopt these technologies can improve their operational efficiency, reduce costs, and... to offer more personalized products and services to customers (Schwab, 2016).

Therefore, the integration between innovation and digital management has become essential for success. Organizational. Automation and the use of artificial intelligence are optimizing management processes. and productive. According to Davenport and Ronanki (2018), AI can be applied to predictive analytics, Improving customer experience and automating repetitive tasks, allowing managers Focus on strategic activities. Data-driven decision-making becomes more agile and... This is necessary, reducing risks and increasing competitiveness. Beyond automation, the transformation... Digital transformation also demands changes in the leadership model.

Digital leadership must be adaptable, innovative, and focused on continuous learning. (Westerman *et al.*, 2014). Managers need to develop technological skills and foster a Organizational culture focused on innovation, encouraging experimentation and creativity among... The employees. A culture of innovation is a key factor for success in the digital age. According to Christensen (1997), disruptive innovation can create new markets and challenge existing models. traditional businesses.

Companies like Uber and Airbnb have demonstrated how the adoption of digital platforms can... transforming entire industries, highlighting the need for organizations to adapt to new trends. Technological trends. Remote work and hybrid work models have gained prominence with The advancement of digitization. Tools like Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and Slack have enabled... companies continued to operate efficiently, even with geographically dispersed teams. (Spreitzer *et al.*, 2017). Flexibility in the workplace has become a differentiating factor. competitive, increasing productivity and employee satisfaction. Cybersecurity also It has become a critical aspect of digital management. With the increase in the volume of data and...



Year V, v.2 2025 | Submission: November 29, 2025 | Accepted: December 1, 2025 | Publication: December 3, 2025

In the context of interconnectivity, ensuring the protection of business information is fundamental to avoid fraud and data leaks (Von Solms & Van Niekerk, 2013).

The implementation of cybersecurity protocols and the training of employees.

These are essential measures to minimize vulnerabilities. The customer experience has been...

Enhanced through the use of digital technology. Strategies based on customer experience (CX).

They use AI and data analytics to personalize service and offer tailored solutions for

consumers (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016). Companies that prioritize the digital customer experience.

They are able to increase customer loyalty and stand out in the market. Sustainability and responsibility

Social roles are also being redefined in the digital age. Technologies like blockchain enable greater...

Transparency in supply chains, while big data analytics helps optimize usage.

of natural resources (Elkington, 1997).

2.2 Democratic Management in Education

Democratic management is understood as a model of educational administration that

It values collective participation, transparency, and shared responsibility of the entire school community.

in the planning and execution of pedagogical and administrative actions. This model, according to Paro

(2016), seeks to break with traditional hierarchical structures, promoting greater interaction between

managers, teachers, students, parents and other community agents. The LDB (Law No. 9.394/96)

This complements that view by emphasizing that school management should involve the participation of different stakeholders.

segments of the educational community, whether through councils, boards, or direct election.

of school administrators (Costa, 2015).

Democratic Management in Brazilian Education is a concept that has been consolidated since...

The redemocratization of the country, representing a milestone in the involvement of society in decision-making.

educational. During the period of the military dictatorship (1964-1985), education in Brazil was

characterized by an authoritarian and centralized model, where decisions were imposed from the top down.

low, without the participation of the school community.

In this context, social and academic movements emerged that began to question the

the current model, advocating for greater school autonomy and the democratization of the process.

educational (Gaspaelo, 2022). With redemocratization and the promulgation of the Federal Constitution of

In 1988, the principle of democratic management was incorporated as one of the pillars of the educational system.

Brazilian. The Constitution established in its Article 206, item VI, the right to democratic governance of

public education, recognizing the need for involvement from the school community and society.

in the planning and execution of educational policies. This historical milestone reinforced the idea that

Education should be a space for citizen participation and social control.



Year V, v.2 2025 | Submission: November 29, 2025 | Accepted: December 1, 2025 | Publication: December 3, 2025

The advancement of this concept was consolidated with the publication of the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education Law (LDB) in 1996. Article 14 of the LDB stipulates that the education systems They must ensure democratic management, promoting the participation of education professionals and of the school community in defining pedagogical and administrative priorities and strategies. The law It also encourages practices such as the creation of school councils, the election of principals, and the development of... collective action on the Political-Pedagogical Project (PPP), strengthening the autonomy and participation of schools.

The National Education Plans (PNE), especially from 2001 onwards, have given greater emphasis. to the implementation of democratic management in public schools. These plans established goals that They include expanding community participation in decision-making processes and promoting a More inclusive and transparent management. This approach seeks to consolidate schools as spaces democratic and participatory, capable of responding to the demands of local society and its challenges. national educational institutions.

Despite normative and legal advances in the field of democratic governance, its implementation in Public schools still face several practical obstacles. Among the main challenges are... scarcity of financial and material resources, lack of continuing education for managers and school counselors and the persistence of a poorly participatory organizational culture. According to As Santos and Souza (2022) point out, the absence of adequate structure limits the performance of managers. while a lack of training hinders the implementation of truly democratic practices in the school environment.

Furthermore, there is cultural resistance to the participation of the school community in the processes. decision-making continues to be a significant barrier. As Almeida and Farias (2023) state, many Parents, teachers, and students still do not feel like an active part of school management, which reflects a Historical misinformation about the principles and practices of democratic governance. Another aggravating factor is The political and economic instability that frequently affects public education systems. This Instability generates discontinuity in public policies and weakens actions aimed at... Democratization of the school.

2.3 Elections for School Principals in Brazil

Elections for school principals in Brazil are an important component of school management. democratic education, establishing a model of shared leadership and strengthening the participation of the school community. They became mandatory as of the Federal Constitution of 1988, which ensured the democratic management of public education. The Law of Guidelines and Bases of Education. The National Law (LDB), enacted in 1996, also contributed significantly to this change.

Article 14 of the LDB (Brazilian Law of Education) stipulates that school systems must promote democratic management.



Year V, v.2 2025 | Submission: November 29, 2025 | Accepted: December 1, 2025 | Publication: December 3, 2025

This practice has been consolidated over time, with the creation of state and municipal regulations that They regulate the direct or indirect election of principals. The election of school principals represents an important strategy for decentralizing power in educational management, giving to The school community plays a more prominent role in decisions that directly impact the quality of education. teaching.

In this context, democratic management is realized as a continuous process of Participation, dialogue, and shared responsibility. Holding elections to choose leaders. The school reform breaks with the centralizing logic, removing the prerogative of appointment from the executive branch. directors based on political-partisan interests. In their place, a more dynamic is established. transparent and legitimate, in which the selection criteria take into account involvement, competence and commitment to the school's pedagogical project. It is worth highlighting that the management Democratic democracy is not limited to the act of voting, but is built permanently through practices. participatory daily activities at school.

According to Gatti (2009), elections for directors "represent a significant advance in The process of democratizing schools, allowing for greater societal participation in their choices. and in the construction of educational policies." By involving the entire community, the practice seeks to guarantee that managers are more aligned with local needs, favoring the adaptation of policies. and school practices adapted to the specificities of each context. However, the implementation of elections for The directors' career was not without its challenges.

Resolution No. 40/2009 of the National Education Council (CNE), for example, highlights that The selection of directors should be based on technical criteria, in addition to democratic election. This raises a debate about the balance between competence and popular participation. The presence of Technical requirements and ongoing training for candidates are aspects that aim to to ensure that directors are not chosen solely based on the electoral process, but also with adequate preparation for school management. Another important point is the relationship between management democratic practices and school management.

In their research on school leadership, Lima Junior *et al* (2021) observe that the figure of The role of school principal in Brazil has transformed over the years, shifting from an authoritarian leader to... A more collaborative and participatory leader. Direct or indirect elections have the potential to transform the way school leadership is exercised, causing the principal to act as a facilitator of participation of all members of the school community, and not just as an executor of decisions coming from higher instances (Paro, 2015).

In many Brazilian states, the election of school principals has become an annual event. or biennial, involving the participation of teachers, staff, parents, and students. Census data School surveys from 2022 reveal that 31.9% of principals in state schools and 12.9% in municipal schools were



Year V, v.2 2025 | Submission: November 29, 2025 | Accepted: December 1, 2025 | Publication: December 3, 2025

chosen through elections with the participation of the school community (INEP, 2022).

Furthermore, research published in 2024 indicates an increase in the adoption of processes. selective processes and elections for the selection of directors in the state network, with a growth of 12.7% in from 2019 to 26.1% in 2023 (Agência Brasil, 2024). In parallel, there was a reduction in hiring. of directors appointed exclusively by nomination, decreasing from 24% in 2019 to 20% in 2023. The composition of the electoral boards responsible for these elections seeks to guarantee a equitable representation of all segments of the school community, including teachers, employees, parents, and students. According to Gohn (2011), this active participation is essential to consolidate a model of democratic management, as it allows for the policies and practices adopted by schools. They are aligned with the interests and needs of the entire community.

Including the community in the selection of managers strengthens the collective commitment to the Quality of education and transparency in institutional decisions. This creates an environment for debate. about the priorities and needs of the school, allowing parents, teachers and students to... directly involved in the selection of the school leader. Saviani (2003) observes that democratic management It seeks to break with the logic of hierarchical imposition, transforming the director into a leader who "It engages in dialogue with all stakeholders in the school, seeking the collective construction of an education of..." quality".

However, this practice has generated criticism and tension. One of the main criticisms is that, in In many cases, the director's technical competence can be compromised by pressure from vested interests. local politicians. According to Tardif and Lessard (2005), elections for principals can create "a "political environment within schools," especially in contexts where candidacies are influenced by political parties or movements, which would compromise impartiality and focus. in the pedagogical needs of the school. Furthermore, the implementation of direct elections for The number of principals in schools is not uniform across the country. Although many state and municipal networks... Although they have adopted the practice of direct elections for school principals, there is still a significant portion which opts for indirect models.

In 2022, according to data from the National Institute of Educational Studies and Research Anísio Teixeira (INEP), Teixeira (INEP), 31.9% of the directors of state schools and 12.9% of the directors of municipal schools were chosen through elections with the participation of the school community, while the remainder were selected by nomination or restricted internal processes (INEP, 2022). The diversity of practices reflects the Regional differences and resistance to change vary according to the local context. In some In the federative units, the process of choosing the director is still carried out exclusively by teachers and administrative staff, which restricts the participation of parents and students in decision-making. decision.

According to research conducted by the National Council of Education Secretaries



Year V, v.2 2025 | Submission: November 29, 2025 | Accepted: December 1, 2025 | Publication: December 3, 2025

(CONSED) in 2023, approximately 45% of state networks adopt mixed criteria for the selection of school administrators, while 30% still maintain direct appointment by the state government or municipal (Consed, 2023). This disparity in the implementation of democratic management reflects both cultural as well as structural issues.

According to Gohn (2011), resistance to expanding participation in the selection of directors This often stems from a centralized view of public administration, which fears the loss of... control over educational policies. Furthermore, factors such as lack of regulation The specific nature of the situation and the fear of political interference in the electoral process contribute to its maintenance. of more restrictive selection models. Despite these difficulties, there is a gradual increase in Adoption of direct elections, especially in the state network.

Data from Agência Brasil (2024) shows that, between 2019 and 2023, the percentage of states that The percentage of those holding elections for school principals increased from 12.7% to 26.1%, showing progress. in the democratization of school management (Agência Brasil, 2024). This movement reinforces the importance community participation in the selection of managers, ensuring greater transparency and commitment to local demands. Antunes (2015) emphasizes that the "heterogeneity of Experiences with electing school principals in Brazil reveal the complexity of the democratization process. "of education." Another relevant aspect is the impact of elections on the quality of education.

Santos (2010) argues that the democratic selection of the director can be a factor in This brings about a positive transformation in schools, as it creates a more transparent and participatory environment, which... In turn, this can lead to greater accountability from school management regarding results. educational. However, for elections to result in effective improvements, it is necessary that there be adequate training for directors, in addition to participatory and collaborative management that Involve all stakeholders in the school community.

Furthermore, it is important to highlight that, although elections for school principals in Brazil Although considerable progress has been made since the 1988 Constitution, the implementation of effective management... A truly democratic system still faces significant challenges. This reality highlights that, despite the Despite the growth of direct elections, there are still barriers to overcome. According to the Council According to the National Council of Education Secretaries (CONSED), approximately 30% of state school systems still use [the current system]. purely indicative processes, without the participation of the school community, which may limit Transparency and legitimacy of management (Consed, 2023).

3. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The proposed research has a qualitative approach, based on a document analysis.
A detailed account of the election processes for principals in the municipal public schools of Ariquemes.



Year V, v.2 2025 | Submission: November 29, 2025 | Accepted: December 1, 2025 | Publication: December 3, 2025

The methodology adopted seeks to examine the criteria and procedures of the electoral process, to identify The challenges and advantages of direct elections as a mechanism for democratic governance, evaluating the participation of the school community and proposing strategies to strengthen democratic management in schools. Documentary research offers a robust approach to understanding the criteria and Procedures adopted in the electoral process, allowing for the identification of good practices and shortcomings. existing.

3.1 Type of Research

This research is characterized as qualitative research, since it aims to... to understand, interpret, and analyze social phenomena from a subjective perspective, focused for the meanings attributed by the subjects involved in the studied context. Minayo (2014) states that by adopting this approach, the aim is to achieve a deep immersion in the object of study, considering the particularities and complexity of social, historical, and cultural processes. The research Qualitative analysis allows data to be explored in its descriptive richness, not being restricted to... statistical measurements or generalizations, but prioritizing the understanding of meanings, values and interpretations (Mazzotti, 2001).

Within this qualitative approach, the documentary research method is also adopted, which This involves the analysis of existing documents that were not specifically created for scientific research purposes (ANDRÉ, 2005). These documents may be of a public nature. or private, include legislation, institutional reports, minutes, lesson plans, records administrative, digital files, among others (Cellard, 2008). The central objective of the research Documentary analysis involves extracting relevant information from these materials, considering their context. production, its function, and the meanings it expresses.

3.2 Data Collection

Data collection was carried out through the analysis of official documents from the municipality of Ariquemes, such as: • Laws and regulations related to the process of electing school principals (for example, resolutions, decrees and normative opinions).

- Public notices and administrative acts that regulate and organize the electoral process.
- Reports and minutes from meetings and results of previous elections.
- Questionnaires and forms for participation from the school community (if available).
- These documents were accessed through the Municipal Departments of Education, School administrations and other competent bodies, as well as public databases or



4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data collected were subjected to a qualitative analysis, based on...
Document review. To this end, analytical tools aimed at identifying were employed.
Recurring themes and significant patterns were identified in the examined records. The interpretation of the results...
The study was conducted in light of specialized literature on democratic management and electoral processes within the scope of...
educational.

4.1 Analysis of Electoral Criteria and Procedures

The documentary research focused on identifying the normative criteria and
Procedural aspects that regulate the election of school principals were examined.
related to the eligibility requirements of candidates, including academic background,
professional experience and other established conditions; to the stages of the electoral process,
including registration, campaigning, voting, and taking office; and the mechanisms for participation in
The school community, encompassing students, teachers, parents, and staff, was also observed.
conformity of these elements with current legal regulations, as well as their contribution to
promoting transparent and democratic governance.

4.2 Identifying the Challenges and Advantages of Direct Elections

Based on document analysis, supplemented by records and process reports.
In previous elections, the main challenges and benefits associated with direct elections were identified.
of principals. Among the challenges, the difficulty of engaging the school community stood out,
The limited understanding of electoral procedures, the restriction of access to information, and resistance.
from certain groups to the direct election model.

Regarding the advantages, the increased representation and transparency were highlighted,
Strengthening the relationship between school and community and increasing the commitment of administrators.
with collective demands. The information analyzed was derived primarily from electoral reports,
Opinions from the Municipal Department of Education and related documents.



4.3 Evaluation of School Community Participation

The analysis of school community participation was based on an investigation of the level of involvement of different segments — students, teachers, parents and staff — in the process electoral, as well as in identifying perceptions about democratic governance. The following were used institutional reports, meeting minutes, and records of debates held in schools, which They made it possible to understand how the community evaluates direct elections and the transparency of the process. This qualitative approach allowed for a comprehensive view of the actors' level of engagement. educational concepts and their conceptions about the principles of democratic management in the school context.

5. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

5.1 An Approach to General Management from Different Theoretical Perspectives

Management, as a field of study and practice, has been extensively explored by theorists such as Frederick Taylor, Henry Ford, and Max Weber, each offering distinct contributions. Taylor, for example. Through scientific management, he focused on operational efficiency, proposing the standardization of tasks. and the specialization of labor (Taylor, 1911). Ford expanded on these ideas by introducing production in mass production and the assembly line concept, optimizing time and resources in the factory environment (Ford, (1922). Weber, in turn, highlighted bureaucracy as a rational way of organizing institutions, emphasizing clear rules, defined hierarchies, and impartiality in administrative processes. (Weber, 1947). These approaches, although distinct, significantly influenced management. modern.

Democracy, in its broadest sense, is characterized by the equal participation of... Individuals in decisions that affect them. Derived from ancient Greece, this form of government evolved into to include not only the choice of leaders, but also the guarantee of fundamental rights and the pursuit of... by social justice (Dahl, 1989). According to Bobbio (1987), modern democracy is supported by three pillars: representation, transparency and active participation, being applied not only in politics, but also in social and educational organizations.

Although Taylor and Weber's management models were more rigid and structured, their Foundations can engage in dialogue with democratic principles. Weberian rationality, for example, when... Requiring clear rules contributes to transparency, one of the pillars of democracy. On the other hand, the Taylor's pursuit of efficiency can be adapted to a participatory context, where the community... collaborates in decision-making, aligning collective and operational objectives.

Elections are one of the most emblematic tools of democracy, allowing...



Year V, v.2 2025 | Submission: November 29, 2025 | Accepted: December 1, 2025 | Publication: December 3, 2025

Citizens choose their representatives and directly influence the direction of institutions.

According to Schumpeter (1942), modern electoral democracy goes beyond the simple choice of leaders, representing a mechanism for legitimizing power and a way to ensure alternation in leadership positions. In an educational or corporate context, electoral processes can be adapted to include participatory principles, strengthening the legitimacy of decisions administrative.

The integration of governance and democracy through elections strengthens the commitment to... Transparency, accountability, and inclusion. In organizational environments, this manifests itself in... adoption of participatory governance models, which respect both the hierarchical structure and the rights of those involved. According to Drucker (1993), an efficient management model needs to be Flexible enough to incorporate democratic values, ensuring collaboration and engagement from all stakeholders.

5.2 Democratic Management in Education

Democratic management is understood as a model of educational administration that It values collective participation, transparency, and shared responsibility of the entire school community in the planning and execution of pedagogical and administrative actions. This model, according to Paro (2016), seeks to break with traditional hierarchical structures, promoting greater interaction between managers, teachers, students, parents and other community agents.

In the Brazilian context, democratic governance gained prominence with the Federal Constitution of 1988, which establishes the democratization of public management as an essential principle for the social development. The LDB (Law No. 9.394/96) complements this view by emphasizing that management The school should involve the participation of different segments of the educational community, whether by through councils, boards or the direct choice of school managers (Costa, 2015).

Democratic Management in Brazilian Education is a concept that has been consolidated since... The redemocratization of the country, representing a milestone in the involvement of society in decision-making educational. During the period of the military dictatorship (1964-1985), education in Brazil was characterized by an authoritarian and centralized model, where decisions were imposed from the top down low, without the participation of the school community. In this context, social movements emerged and academics who began to question the current model, advocating for greater autonomy for schools and the democratization of the educational process (GASPAELO, 2022).

With the return to democracy and the promulgation of the 1988 Federal Constitution, the principle of Democratic management has been incorporated as one of the pillars of the Brazilian educational system. The Constitution established in its Article 206, item VI, the right to democratic management of education.



Year V, v.2 2025 | Submission: November 29, 2025 | Accepted: December 1, 2025 | Publication: December 3, 2025

public, recognizing the need for involvement of the school community and society in

planning and execution of educational policies. This historical milestone reinforced the idea that the

Education should be a space for citizen participation and social control.

The advancement of this concept was consolidated with the publication of the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education Law (LDB) in 1996. Article 14 of the LDB stipulates that the education systems They must ensure democratic management, promoting the participation of education professionals and of the school community in defining pedagogical and administrative priorities and strategies. The law It also encourages practices such as the creation of school councils, the election of principals, and the development of... collective action on the Political-Pedagogical Project (PPP), strengthening the autonomy and participation of schools.

The National Education Plans (PNE), especially from 2001 onwards, have given greater emphasis. to the implementation of democratic management in public schools. These plans established goals that They include expanding community participation in decision-making processes and promoting a More inclusive and transparent management. This approach seeks to consolidate schools as spaces democratic and participatory, capable of responding to the demands of local society and its challenges. national educational institutions.

Despite the progress, the implementation of democratic governance faces practical challenges. In many schools, lack of resources, absence of adequate training for school administrators and counselors. Cultural resistance hinders the full implementation of this model. Furthermore, contexts of Political and economic instability often undermines the continuity and strengthening of Educational policies aimed at democratizing management.

Conceptually, democratic management in education implies a governance model. based on collective participation, transparency, and school autonomy. It values the role of The school community – including teachers, students, parents, and administrators – in the decision-making process. promoting inclusion and shared responsibility. The Political-Pedagogical Project (PPP) is a This tool is essential in this process, as it defines the pedagogical and administrative guidelines in a way that... collaborative, aligning the school's goals with the needs of the community (Gerth, 1982).

Therefore, democratic management represents not only an administrative model, but also An ethical and political commitment to citizenship, equity, and social inclusion. Although there are still... Despite significant obstacles to its full realization, it remains a fundamental element for the construction of a fairer, more participatory education system aligned with the principles

democratic principles established by the 1988 Constitution and the LDB (Brazilian Law of Directives and Bases of National Education).

5.3 Elections for School Principals in Brazil

Elections for school principals in Brazil are an important component of school management.



Year V, v.2 2025 | Submission: November 29, 2025 | Accepted: December 1, 2025 | Publication: December 3, 2025

democratic education, establishing a model of shared leadership and strengthening the participation of the school community. They became mandatory as of the Federal Constitution of 1988, which ensured the democratic management of public education.

Article 206 of the Constitution, in section VI, guarantees that education will be organized in a way that... to allow the participation of different segments of the school community, including the choice of directors. This legal milestone was crucial in breaking with the centralized and authoritarian model that This system prevailed during the military dictatorship, allowing greater autonomy to schools.

The Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education (LDB), sanctioned in 1996, also contributed significantly to this change. Article 14 of the LDB (Brazilian Education Law) stipulates that the networks of Educational institutions should promote democratic governance, which includes the election of principals by the communities. This practice has been consolidated over time, with the creation of state regulations and municipal regulations governing the direct or indirect election of school principals. In many states, this The election has become an annual or biennial event, and in some cases, involves the participation of both teachers and staff, as well as parents and students.

The election of school principals is seen as a way to decentralize power in management. educational and provide greater control to the school community over decisions that affect it. quality of education. According to Gatti (2009), elections for principals "represent progress significant in the process of democratizing the school, allowing for greater participation of "Society in the choices and construction of educational policies." By involving the entire community, The practice aims to ensure that managers are more aligned with local needs, thus promoting... Adapting school policies and practices to the specific characteristics of each context.

However, the implementation of elections for directors was not without challenges. The Resolution Resolution No. 40/2009 of the National Education Council (CNE), for example, highlights that the choice of The selection of directors should be based on technical criteria, in addition to democratic election. This raises a... debate on the balance between competence and popular participation. The presence of technical requirements. and the provision of ongoing training for candidates are aspects that aim to ensure that Directors should not be chosen solely based on the electoral process, but also through proper preparation. Suitable for school management.

Another important point is the relationship between democratic management and school management practices. In their research on school leadership, Lima Junior *et al* (2021) observe that the figure of the principal The school system in Brazil has transformed over the years, shifting from an authoritarian leader to a... A more collaborative and participatory leader. Direct or indirect elections have the potential to transform... The way school leadership is exercised, causing the principal to act as a facilitator of... participation of all members of the school community, and not just as an executor of decisions coming from higher instances (Paro, 2015).



Year V, v.2 2025 | Submission: November 29, 2025 | Accepted: December 1, 2025 | Publication: December 3, 2025

In many states and municipalities, elections for school principals involve a process of candidacy and campaign, where candidates present their proposals to the school community. It creates an environment for debate about the priorities and needs of the school, allowing parents, Teachers and students are directly involved in choosing the school leader. Saviani (2003) notes that Democratic management seeks to break with the logic of hierarchical imposition, transforming the director. in a leader who "engages in dialogue with all stakeholders in the school, seeking the collective construction of a "quality education".

However, this practice has generated criticism and tension. One of the main criticisms is that, in In many cases, the director's technical competence can be compromised by pressure from vested interests. local politicians. According to Tardif and Lessard (2005), elections for principals can create "a "political environment within schools," especially in contexts where candidacies are influenced by political parties or movements, which would compromise impartiality and focus. in the pedagogical needs of the school.

Furthermore, the implementation of direct elections for school principals is not uniform across the board. throughout the country. Although many state and municipal networks have adopted the practice, some still... They opt for indirect models, in which only teachers and staff choose the principal. The diversity of practices reflects regional differences and resistance to change, which may be more... or less profound in each local context. Antunes (2015) emphasizes that the "heterogeneity of Experiences with electing school principals in Brazil reveal the complexity of the democratization process. of education.

Another relevant aspect is the impact of elections on educational quality. Santos (2010) He argues that the democratic selection of the principal can be a factor for positive transformation in schools. because it creates a more transparent and participatory environment, which, in turn, can lead to greater The responsibility of school management in relation to educational outcomes. However, for that to happen... For elections to result in real improvements, adequate training is necessary for the directors, in addition to participatory and collaborative management that involves all community stakeholders. school.

Finally, it is important to highlight that, although elections for school principals in Brazil Although considerable progress has been made since the 1988 Constitution, the implementation of effective management... Democratic governance in practice still faces challenges. Paro (2007) points out that "the path to a management A truly democratic school system requires more than simply electing principals; it demands... a cultural transformation that involves all members of the school community in processes "decision-making processes, from the development of the political-pedagogical project to the evaluation of management." Therefore, the The election of directors is just one of the many tools that make up the broader process of Democratization of education in Brazil.



Year V, v.2 2025 | Submission: November 29, 2025 | Accepted: December 1, 2025 | Publication: December 3, 2025

In short, elections for school principals represent a milestone in the pursuit of effective management. Democratic education in Brazil. They allow for greater participation from the school community. but they also require overcoming challenges related to competence, politicization and training of managers. The success of these elections depends on building a school culture in which everyone Community members feel involved and responsible for the educational process, so that Democratic management can effectively contribute to improving the quality of education in the country.

REFERENCES

- BOBBIO, N. *The future of democracy*. São Paulo: Paz e Terra, 1987.
- BRAZIL. Constitution of the Federative Republic of Brazil. Brasília: Federal Senate, 1988.
- BRAZIL. Law No. 9,394, of December 20, 1996. *Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education*. Brasília: Official Gazette of the Union, 1996.
- CANDIAN, Juliana Frizzoni; REZENDE, Wagner Silveira. The normative context of the school climate and student performance: implications for the debate on school management. **Research and Debate in Education**, v. 3, n. 2, p. 25-41, 2013.
- CELLARD, A. Document analysis. In: POUPART, J. et al. *Qualitative research: epistemological and methodological approaches*. Petrópolis: Vozes, 2008.
- COSTA, Jorge Adelino; CASTANHEIRA, Patrícia. Leadership in school management: contributions from organizational analysis. **Brazilian Journal of Educational Policy and Administration**, v. 31, n. 1, p. 13-44, 2015.
- DAHL, R. *Democracy and its critics*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989.
- DOURADO, LF Democratic management and quality of public education: advances, limits and perspectives. *Education & Society*, v. 36, n. 132, 2015.
- DRABACH, Neila Pedrotti. From the first writings on school administration in Brazil to writings on school management: changes and continuities. 2009.
- DRUCKER, PF *The practice of management*. New York: Harper Business, 1993.
- FORD, H. *My Philosophy of Industry*. São Paulo: Ed. Nacional, 1922.
- FREIRE, P. *Pedagogy of Autonomy: Essential Knowledge for Educational Practice*. São Paulo: Paz e Terra, 1996.
- FRIGOTTO, Gaudêncio. Education as human capital: a theory that maintains common sense. **Brazilian Journal of Educational Administration (RBAE)**, v. 2, n. 1, p. 10-37, 1984.
- GADOTTI, M. *Education and power: An introduction to the pedagogy of conflict*. São Paulo: Cortez, 2000.
- GASPARELO, Rayane Regina Scheidt. **The election of principals and the possibilities and limits of democratization of public schools in the Paraná state education system – 2016 to 2020**. 2022.



Year V, v.2 2025 | Submission: November 29, 2025 | Accepted: December 1, 2025 | Publication: December 3, 2025

Doctoral thesis. [sn].

GERTH, Hans Heinrich; MILLS, C. Wright. Max Weber: Essays in Sociology. **Rio de Janeiro: Guanabara**, 1982

HARVEY, David. **The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change**. Loyola Editions, 1992.

LIBÂNEO, JC. *School organization and management: theory and practice*. São Paulo: Edições Loyola, 2013.

LIMA JÚNIOR, Dário Xavier de et al. Managerial competencies of the municipal school manager: histories, trajectories and sustainability actions from the perspective of educational leadership. 2021.

LIMA, Naira da Costa Muiyaert. School principals: street-level or middle-level bureaucrats?. **Revista Contemporânea de Educação**, v. 14, n. 31, p. 84-103, 2019.

LIPSKY, Michael. Street-level bureaucracy: individual dilemmas in public services. 2019.

LÜCK, H. *School management and quality of education*. Petrópolis: Vozes, 2009.

MENDONÇA, AP; FRANCO, CA Democratic management in public schools: limits and possibilities. *Education Notebooks*, v. 55, 2018.

MOCARZEL, Marcelo; NAJJAR, Jorge. Quality in/of education as a benchmark for educational policies and practices: a multidimensional approach. **Em Aberto**, v. 33, n. 109, 2020.

MORGAN, Karine Vichiatt. Privatist conceptions in the state public sphere: An analysis of the "National Common Matrix of Competencies of the School Director". **Education Policy Analysis Archives**, v. 31, 2023.

MORO, Adriano; VINHA, Telma Pileggi; MORAIS, Alessandra de. Evaluation of school climate: construction and validation of measurement instruments. **Cadernos de Pesquisa**, v. 49, p. 312-334, 2019.

PALM, Lia. **Diagnosis of weaknesses in São Paulo's educational management with a view to improvement**. 2012.

PARO, VH. *Democratic management of public schools*. São Paulo: Ática, 2016.

PARO, Vitor Henrique. School administration: a critical introduction. Cortez Editora, 2022.

PARO, Vitor Henrique. **School principal: educator or manager**. Cortez Editora, 2015.

SANTOS FILHO, Raimundo José dos. Closure of rural schools in the Jamari Valley in the context of the advance of agribusiness in Rondônia. 2022.

SAVIANI, D. *School and democracy*. Campinas: Autores Associados, 2013.

SCHUMPETER, JA *Capitalism, socialism and democracy*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1942.

SOUZA, MA *et al*. Democratic management and school elections in Ariquemes: a critical analysis. *Journal of Public Policy and Education*, v. 8, n. 2, 2020.

Year V, v.2 2025 | Submission: November 29, 2025 | Accepted: December 1, 2025 | Publication: December 3, 2025

TARDIF, M.; ZOURHAL, A. Dissemination of educational research among teaching professionals and academic circles. *Cadernos de Pesquisa*, São Paulo, v. 35, n. 125, p. 13-35, May/Aug. 2005.

TAYLOR, FW. *Principles of Scientific Management*. São Paulo: Atlas, 1911.

VASCONCELLOS, CS. *Construction of the political-pedagogical project: Advances and challenges*. São Paulo: Libertad, 2002.

VEIGA, IPA *Democratic management in public schools*. Campinas: Papirus, 2012.

WEBER, M. *Economy and society*. Brasília: Ed. UnB, 1947.