



THE STRUCTURAL PROFILE OF THE LEGISLATIVE SCHOOLS LOCATED IN THE SOUTHERN REGION OF MINAS GERAIS

Robson Souza de Almeida¹
Elisa Maria Andrade Brisola²
Maria Auxiliadora Ávila³

Abstract: This paper presents how the Legislative Schools in the South of Minas region are structured, to understand their characteristics and resources spent on the work, since there are forty of them instituted in the region, of which twenty-six are active. Thus, structural aspects are considered, human resources, budget, planning and control tools, political-pedagogical plan, scientific production, and publications, as well as the use of electronic sites and social networks. This quantitative-qualitative study was carried out between March and May 2021, through the application of questionnaires and interviews with four leaders of Legislative Schools in the South of Minas region. The results are divided into eight topics and indicate how structures are preponderant for the work developed by these schools but demonstrate that the Legislative Schools can evolve their work by improving their structures.

Keywords: Legislative School; South of Minas; structure; education.

1 Introduction

A Legislative School is, essentially, “a school inserted in the field of action of the Legislative, either within the classic function of self-deliberation that every autonomous power has, or as part of a review of the role and importance of the Legislature in our society” (COSSON, 2008, p. 47). It is also a School of Government, considering its role of continuing education for civil servants in the legislature. It is a place of production and dissemination of knowledge about the Legislative Branch. It is also considered a “citizenship school,” understood as a place dedicated to the education of different audiences about the Parliament, legitimizing the actions of the Legislative Branch.

Since the second half of the 2000s, the Legislative Schools have been widely disseminated throughout the national territory and they are presented as an instrument both for the training of public agents and the promotion and knowledge of the Legislative Branch, of democracy, and of citizenship, whether in the municipal, state, or federal level (COSSON, 2008). According to Associação Brasileira das Escolas do Legislativo e de Contas (ABEL), it is estimated that in Brazil

¹ Master's student in Management and Regional Development at Centro Universitário do Sul de Minas - UNIS/MG. Graduate degree in Public Administration by Centro Universitário de Lavras - Unilavras. Graduate degree in Foreign Trade and International Business by Fundação Getúlio Vargas - FGV. Bachelor's degree in Administration with training in Foreign Trade by Centro Universitário do Sul de Minas - UNIS/ MG. Secretary-general at the City Council of Varginha/MG. ORCID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-2753-7516>. Email: robsonsa@gmail.com

² Permanent professor of the Master's in Management and Regional Development by Centro Universitário do Sul de Minas - UNIS/MG. ORCID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-9571-0923>. Email: elisa.brisola@professor.unis.edu.br

³ Permanent professor of the Master's in Management and Regional Development by Centro Universitário do Sul de Minas - UNIS/MG. ORCID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-4670-4735>. Email: maria.avila@professor.unis.edu.br

there are more than 200 Legislative Schools (ABEL, 2020).

In a survey carried out in 2020 by the Rede Mineira de Escolas do Legislativo (BUTORI *et al.*, 2021), in the State of Minas Gerais there are 95 Legislative Schools established in City Councils, of which 40 are located in the southern region of Minas Gerais, according to Chart 1, which represents an expressive number, both in the State of Minas Gerais and at the national level.

Chart 1 – Legislative Schools established in the southern region of Minas Gerais

	Municipality	Estimated population in 2020	Institution act
1	Albertina	3,011	Resolution no. 2/2017
2	Andradas	41,396	Resolution no. 138/2014
3	CambuÍ	29,814	Resolution no. 455/2016
4	Carvalhópolis	3,597	Resolution no. 5/2014
5	Caxambu	21,610	Resolution no. 184/2017
6	Cachoeira de Minas	11,579	Resolution no. 7/2019
7	Conceição do Rio Verde	13,684	Resolution no. 58/2015
8	Conceição dos Ouros	11,748	Resolution no. 3/2017
9	Congonhal	12,082	Resolution no. 3/2014
10	Córrego do Bom Jesus	3,694	Resolution no. 2/2018
11	Extrema	36,951	Resolution no. 184/2016
12	Guaxupé	52,078	Resolution no. 783/2014
13	Itajubá	97,334	Resolution no. 946/2013
14	Itanhandu	15,423	Resolution no. 1/2017
15	Itaú de Minas	16,199	Resolution no. 2/2019
16	Itutinga	3,768	Resolution no. 1/2018
17	Lavras	104,783	Resolution no. 74/2013
18	Machado	42,413	Resolution no. 305/2014
19	Maria da Fé	14,056	Resolution no. 2/2017
20	Marmelópolis	2,728	Resolution no. 4/2017
21	Monte São	24,029	Resolution no. 438/2013
22	Muzambinho	20,545	Resolution no. 2/2009
23	Nepomuceno	26,826	Resolution no. 11/2018
24	Ouro Fino	33,791	Resolution no. 7/2014
25	Paraguaçu	21,605	Resolution no. 2/2013
26	Paraisópolis	21,221	Resolution no. 350/2017
27	Perdões	21,485	Resolution no. 1066/2019
28	Poço Fundo	16,846	Resolution no. 141/2019
29	Poços de Caldas	168,641	Resolution no. 739/2008
30	Pouso Alto	5,900	Resolution no. 12/2019
31	Pouso Alegre	152,549	Resolution no. 1,061/2008
32	São Gonçalo do Sapucaí	25,561	Resolution no. 1/2018
33	Santa Rita de Caldas	8,924	Resolution no. 314/2013
34	Santana da Vargem	7,073	Resolution no. 2/2015
35	São Lourenço	46,202	Resolution no. 334/2015
36	São Sebastião do Paraíso	71,445	Resolution no. 941/2016

37	Três Corações	80,032	Resolution no. 5/2009
38	Três Pontas	56,940	Resolution no. 6/2014
39	Turvolândia	5,070	Law 1,164/2020
40	Varginha	136,602	Resolution no. 2/2015

Source: Developed by the author with data from IBGE (2020) and City Council sites.

This high number of Legislative Schools implanted in the State of Minas Gerais, and especially in the southern region of Minas Gerais, has led us to the need to understand if this number of schools translates into actions carried out by City Councils, aiming at the development of legislative activities, proximity with citizens, and strengthening of democracy and the Legislative Branch, and not just a political phenomenon that has been spread throughout the region.

Therefore, knowing how these schools are structured, especially human and budgetary resources, use of planning and control tools, structuring of a political-pedagogical plan, scientific production and publications, as well as the use of electronic sites and social networks, allows to understand their degree of development, but also to understand what are the main virtues and greatest needs for the Legislative Schools' work development.

The article is part of the research carried out for the masters dissertation, entitled "Escolas do Legislativo instituídas nos municípios da região Sul de Minas: constituição, resultados e significados" (Legislative Schools Institution in the Municipalities of the South of Minas Gerais: Constitution, Results and Meanings), whose purpose was to understand how the development process of the Legislative Schools took place in the southern region of Minas.

This study is part of the scope of action of the Legislative Schools, established in the municipalities that make up the South of Minas Planning Region, located in the State of Minas Gerais, as defined by the Fundação João Pinheiro (FJP) for the State Government in 1992 (DINIZ; BATELLA, 2006).

The South of Minas Planning Region is composed of 155 municipalities (MINAS GERAIS, 2021), has a total area of 53,054 km², an estimated population in 2019 of 2,778,916.00 and a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) recorded in 2018 of 81,938,700.18 thousand reais (FUNDAÇÃO JOÃO PINHEIRO, 2021). The largest municipality in area is Delfinópolis, with 1,403 km²; the municipality with the largest population is Poços de Caldas, with 168,641 inhabitants in 2020 (IBGE, 2020); and the municipality with the highest GDP is Extrema, with 9,523,321.08 thousand reais (FUNDAÇÃO JOÃO PINHEIRO, 2021).

This investigation of quantitative-qualitative approach articulated two instruments, namely: Interview and questionnaire with directors of the Legislative Schools of the South of Minas Gerais.

The research was authorized by the Research Ethics Committee of the Centro Universitário do Sul de Minas (CEP – UNIS/MG) under Opinion No. 4,592,480 - CAAE 43442621.3.0000.511.

The questionnaire was applied to public servants of the 40 (forty) City Councils that

established Legislative Schools through a legal instrument in the Southern Region of Minas Gerais, and 36 (thirty-six) of them participated, of which 26 (twenty and six) responded that the Legislative School of their City Council is active, data that will be demonstrated in this article. Data from the Legislative Schools that are inactive were disregarded. The 26 respondents were directors of Legislative Schools in their respective municipalities and 4 (four) were selected to carry out semi-structured interviews. Interview participants were intentionally chosen.

The narrators were named, sequentially, from Director 1 (D1) to Director 4 (D4). The interviews were digitally recorded using the *Google Meet* application and, subsequently, transcribed. After the construction of the documental *corpus*, an analytical stage was established, which consisted of theoretical reflections on the material constructed and a possible dialogue with other sources and bibliography.

For data analysis, the methods triangulation was used. This technique refers to the interpretation of qualitative data and favors the process of inductive analysis of the collected elements. Furthermore, it allows the researcher to make use of three techniques in order to expand the informational universe around the research object (MARCONDES; BRISOLA, 2014).

The protocol followed was: Empirical data was collected, consigned to the narratives of the speeches of the interviewed Legislative Schools directors, in addition to the data obtained in questionnaires that aim to dimension all the Legislative Schools in the studied region.

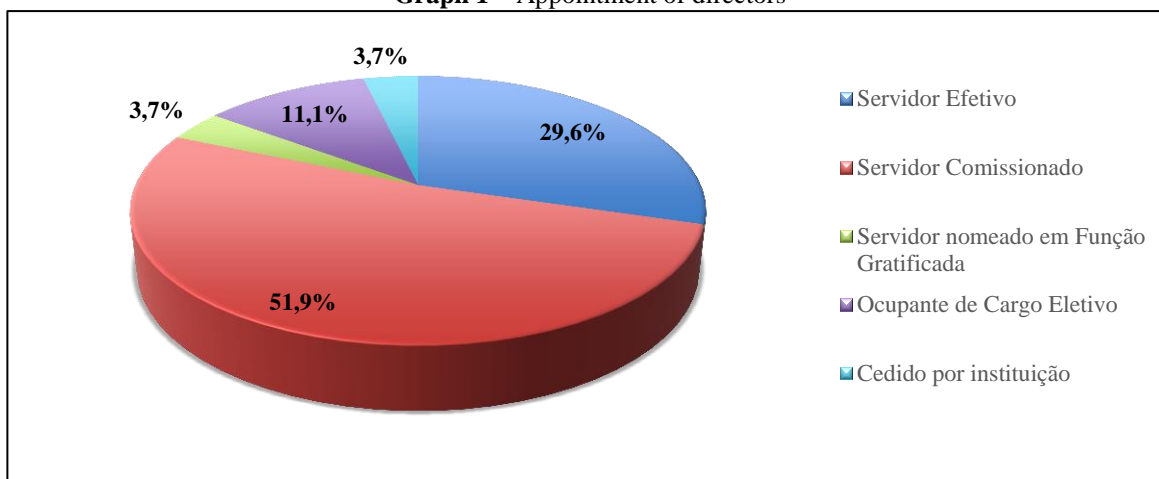
2 Human Resources

A Legislative School is composed of structural, legal, and budgetary aspects, but what makes this structure work are the agents who occupy the positions in them (COSSON, 2008) and, regarding the agents, important differences can be observed in relation to their provision, academic training, performance, and work teams.

In this study, the person who coordinates, directs, or is in charge of the work of the Legislative School is considered a director.

Regarding the differences found in relation to the structure, the provision stands out: in Graph 1, 51.9% of the directors of the Legislative Schools in the South of Minas are in commission positions, known as positions commissioners or positions of trust; 29.6% of the directors are effective appointed; 11.1% hold elective positions, that is, councilors, and 3.7% hold positions appointed for a rewarded position or assigned by other institutions, respectively.

Graph 1 – Appointment of directors



Source: Prepared by the author, 2021.

Note: Effective appointed; Commission position; Appointed for a rewarded position; Elective position; Assigned by other institution.

The large number of commissioned servants occupying the directions of the Legislative Schools, on the one hand, can be understood as an advantage given to the agility in filling the function. However, such a practice constitutes a risk for the continuity of activities, since the director may be exonerated, with no quick filling or even a qualified person to assume the function. Director 4, in his narrative, exposes this concern:

Convenience is when you have a server in the Council that really wants to dedicate to this. Most councils have a commissioned public servant at the head of the schools that, when the presidency changes, are exonerated, and then whoever takes over, whoever enters the place, does not want to play, does not know, does not care, and that is why the school also ends up stopping its work, because of that (D4).

Strictly speaking, the fact that the activities of a Legislative School are discontinued, in most cases, is not related to the fact that the civil servant is commissioned or not, but to the organization of the Legislative School, because if there is strategic planning, elaboration of activities report, and political-pedagogical project, the new director will be able to continue the activities, guaranteeing an adequate transition.

The problem refers to the moment when this director, when leaving the school, takes all the information with them, leaving no memories or records for continuity. In this sense, it is understood that succession does not only refer to the political order, but also to the administrative one.

On the other hand, an ideal scenario refers to the moment when the direction of the school is exercised by effective servants, as there is administrative continuity, long-term planning, and the school's actions are built as a space belonging to Parliament, not to parliamentarians (COSSON, 2008).

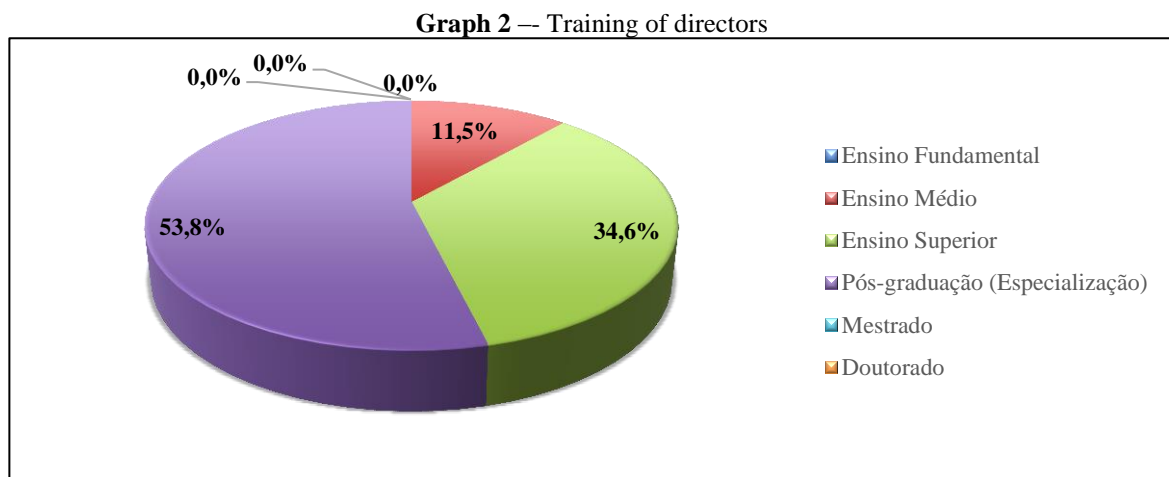
Director 4, in turn, recalls that, in some situations, the direction of the Legislative School is directly exercised by a councilor and, thus, the project may no longer have an institutional character of the City Council, taking on a personal political project. In the survey among directors, 11.1% of the directors of the Legislative Schools are councilors.

we have some municipalities, for example, where you see the school not in the hands of an employee of the Council, but of a councilor [...] then it turns out that the school has the face and profile of that councilor and not the institution of the Council (D4).

This model has the advantages of better interlocution with the Board of Directors and the direct inclusion of parliamentarians in the life of the school, but there is a risk that the activities are directed towards strengthening the person of the parliamentarian, as well as their discontinuity in the face of the succession of parliamentarians in charge (COSSON, 2008). Also, according to the profile of the parliamentarian, he/she can make it more or less active (BERNARDES JÚNIOR, 2018).

In relation to this aspect, the incidence of personalism in Brazilian public institutions is also highlighted as a consequence of the precarious sense of Brazilian collective interest, which dictates and guides national political conduct (VIANNA, 1987), that is, personalism as a constitutive practice of political culture in Brazil.

Another element of the human resources structure of the Legislative Schools in the South of Minas Gerais refers to academic training. We found that 53.8% of the directors of the Legislative Schools have a graduate degree at a specialization level, 34.6% are at the undergraduate level, and 11.5% at high school level. No director has only Elementary Education, and *stricto sensu* graduate courses, as shown in Graph 2.



Source: Prepared by the author, 2021.

Note: Elementary School; High School; Undergraduate degree; Graduate degree (specialization); Master's degree; PhD.

When asked about their training, the interviewed directors presented the following narratives:

[...] I am an advertising professional by training (D1).

Look, I have a Portuguese language degree, I graduated a long time ago, after I passed the public tender in the City Council, I took a course in Technological Legislative Administration at [UNIVERSITY] and did three graduate courses in Public Administration, Public Management, and Administration in the Legislative, by the [INSTITUTION] (D2).

Well, my background is, I have a bachelor's degree in Social Communication with an emphasis on Journalism (D3).

I have a bachelor's degree in Tourism, a graduate degree in business communication and public management. And now I am enrolled in the Pedagogy course, precisely because of the education work (D4).

None of the interviewed directors have training related to education or human resources, although Director 4 has stated that he is in training. Therefore, the directors of the Legislative Schools have different training than those expected to act as directors of a sector related to education and professional training. When asked whether this training helps or not the performance in the Legislative Schools, the following narratives were verified:

look, I think so, everything helps, I'm not going to tell you that I like reading, watching movies, drawing, *You Tube*, I really like searching. I think it enriched me, but it was this search for myself rather than the course itself (D2, emphasis added).

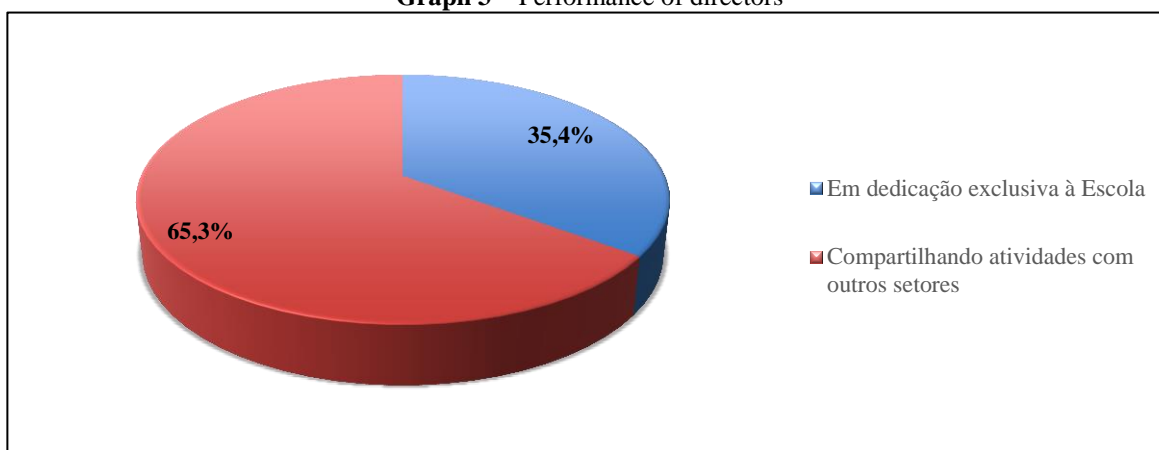
with my training as a journalist and social communication, I already had the opportunity to be inside a class teaching Portuguese language to some high school students at the State Department of Education. I worked for two years teaching Portuguese to high school and elementary school students and in a way, it brings up this issue of having a little bit of that flexibility to work with students (D3, emphasis added).

look, it did not help! It was really a work, as I say, of inspiration. Because I work in a public agency and enjoy working with it, I think I was inspired by projects that I researched to be able to do my job, but my training didn't really help. [...] Without any guidance, without any teacher, without visiting another school, because I didn't have this experience at the beginning of visiting other schools to find out how it worked, it was just practice (D4, emphasis added).

Previous experiences, such as Director 2, as well as inspiration and the search for knowledge independently, as explained by Directors 3 and 4, are defined as training to carry out these activities, overlapping the academic training that each director has.

Finally, regarding the performance as a director, we questioned whether they worked exclusively at the Legislative School or shared activities with other sectors in the City Council. We found that 65.3% of the directors share activities with other sectors of their City Councils, as shown in Graph 3.

Graph 3 – Performance of directors



Source: Prepared by the author, 2021.

Note: Exclusively dedicated to the School; Share activities with other sectors.

The dual activity can be a great risk to the quality of the work carried out by the directors of the Legislative Schools, as this sharing of activities can imply that school-related activities are left in the background. Many directors understand the Legislative School as a secondary function in the City Council, according to Director 4.

I am today as Director-General in the Council; my position is that and as Director of the Legislative School. (D4)

A risk that this dual role can cause refers to the accumulation of activities that can overload the server, harming their occupational health, discouraging them from continuing to lead the Legislative School, as well as preventing actions to expand the activities of these Schools. In the narrative of Director 2, a similar situation is observed:

I'm really a fool, I remember when I worked, I used to run there from the Secretariat to call the boys, preparing classes, Junior Council, Youth Council, Gymkhana. I remember that the [SERVER] who worked with me said, "wow, you are a silly, you do not earn a penny more, you work like a madwoman, you take work home," because I did not have time during work hours to do both things, but it is a personal satisfaction (D2).

This concern with the accumulation of activities by the directors of the Legislative Schools was portrayed by Butori (2014), who explains that many of the servants who work in the Minas Gerais Legislative Schools are in functional deviation, often accumulate functions and do not have any financial incentive to perform this function.

Cosson (2008) discusses the work overload in which many servers need extra time to prepare course and lecture activities. Thus, they do not occupy the activities of the Legislative School. And, in addition, there is the risk of damage to the main activities. The non-payment of civil servants' activities can also constitute a demotivating element in relation to the school's own activities.

On the other hand, the work at the head of the Legislative School can be a “showcase” for the civil servant in their professional development in the City Council where they work, according to the narrative of Director 1.

I confess, what led to my rehiring was much more work within the Legislative School, than actually communication advice (D1).

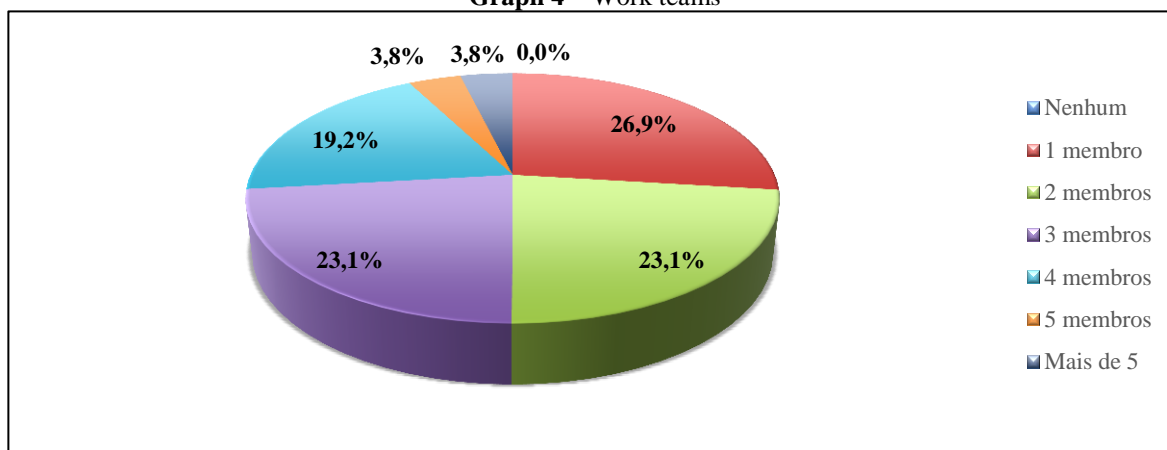
The work of the Legislative Schools is planned, coordinated, and directed in the City Councils by their directors, as portrayed. However, a factor observed in the narratives of the directors refers to the importance for the composition of a work team within the structure of the Legislative Schools, a factor that sometimes presented itself as a facilitator, sometimes as a hindrance.

So, he had it here, he also took me there to present the school's work, ask questions. People were a little scared, you know? There is, but how do you create a school? What does the school do? Does it need to have an employee? So, as I always said, we just look at this area of education, but any server can do it (D2, emphasis added).

But many councils want to have their schools, that is difficult, and there is no official who wants to be in charge of it, there is no server, which ideally should be a server, because every four years the legislature changes, the councilors often leave [...] and then if you do not have a server who knows what has already happened, who has this monitoring by the school, that is lost. (D4, emphasis added)

Regarding the teams, 26.9% of the Schools are composed of one person — the director — while 23.1% have teams with two components, that is, more than half of the Legislative Schools are composed of a team of up to two people, as shown in Graph 4. As explained above, the Legislative Schools in the South of Minas Gerais are composed of different structures, budgets, and human resources, which are crucial aspects, among others, for their effectiveness.

Graph 4 – Work teams



Source: Prepared by the author, 2021.

Note: None; 1 member; 2 members; 3 members; 4 members; 5 members; More than 5.

As previously pointed out, the accumulation of functions and overload can be harmful to the director of the Legislative School. This concern is resumed in Director 3's narrative regarding the need for larger work teams:

[...] it is the “I, as a team” issue, that we work a lot alone at the Legislative School as director. So, we have to have the idea and put it into practice [...], but this issue of the “team” sometimes gets a little, because then there are times when things end up in a whirlwind of things in our heads, have to do this, have to do that, have this to put into practice, have this, but only me, I'll have to get support here, something else there. So, I think that makes it difficult, I think that if we had a school with almost six years that we have, I think the time has come for us to think about the school and have a team. In terms of a director, having a teacher, someone who can work on this more pedagogical issue of the school, so that we could share this work a little bit, which I believe that, then, we would have an even greater effectiveness in these works that are developed by the school. (D3, emphasis added).

In the aforementioned narrative, we can observe the difficulty in carrying out the work of the Legislative School insofar as the director is alone and is responsible for both the administrative and pedagogical dimensions. In this direction, we can deduce that the Legislative Schools in the South of Minas Gerais are composed, for the most part, by commissioned civil servants, who share activities with another sector and have, for the most part, teams composed of one or two people.

The fact that these teams are composed of commissioned civil servants allows us to reflect on the problems of continuity of the Legislative Schools, as such positions are subject to political injunctions. Therefore, it is understood the importance of schools being directed or having public servants in their teams, not subject to constant changes with the discontinuity of projects.

On the other hand, Director 3 presents her work team — composed of five members — and as this work team evolved along with the development of the activities in the Legislative Schools, we can observe a division of tasks:

there are five of us here: I'm the director, [SERVER A] is the school's institutional advisor, I have [SERVER B], who is a public official, [SERVER A], is commissioned, I'm a public servant, [SERVER B], he is an administrative agent, he worked in the other sector and when the school started to grow, he went to help us there, we have an intern who is [SERVER C] who works with us today, who is [SERVER C], and as of last year, he was an outsourced contractor also hired for the school, who does journalism that takes care more of the *Facebook* disclosure part (D3, emphasis added).

Director 1 presents his work team emphasizing the structuring of the Legislative School carried out in 2018, with the inclusion of an effective position of pedagogue, which, according to him, “opened the doors” for the work of the School.

[...] in 2018, a structure of its own was created, a board of its own, with the position of effective pedagogue, which in this case is today a pedagogue, which is occupied by [SERVIDOR A] and from then on, they began to open the doors, not only from the Youth Parliament, but from other school activities. [...] and it

was very good for you to say that the school has a team, that people are watching the interview that is not exclusive to you. There is [SERVIDOR A], who is the School's pedagogue, there is [SERVIDOR B], who is our communication analyst, he helps me both in the school plays and in the preparation of projects, there is [SERVIDOR C], the director from the School of the Legislature (D1).

The work team composed of civil servants who have more time to dedicate to the Legislative School, or even exclusive dedication, demonstrates a maturity of the City Council, which guarantees greater possibility of the continuity of the school, and makes possible the progress in the institutionalization processes. Thus, the school is no longer a bet or merely a project and is seen as a structured sector within the organizational structure of the City Council.

3 Budget

The existence of its own budget is fundamental for the survival of a Legislative School, because, once installed and in operation, the school will have greater security in carrying out its activities if there is control over its finances (COSSON, 2008).

Maldonado (2020) exemplifies how the availability of financial resources can be applied to carry out the activities of the Legislative Schools:

for their regular functioning, government or management schools increasingly depend on regular resources intended for their functioning, without which they tend to become unfeasible. There are real demands that can greatly affect the functioning of schools: The acquisition or rental and maintenance of equipment, platforms, programs and materials, both permanent and consumable, for the effectiveness of activities and courses; maintenance of the school's headquarters; hiring courses and external instructors; the remuneration of institutional partnerships; and, the remuneration of the teaching staff and of training and continuing education multipliers, particularly if they are servants or permanent servants (MALDONADO, 2020, p. 222).

In the narrative of Director 3, the provision of its own or sectoral budget for the Legislative School is presented, which favors security and autonomy for carrying out the work.

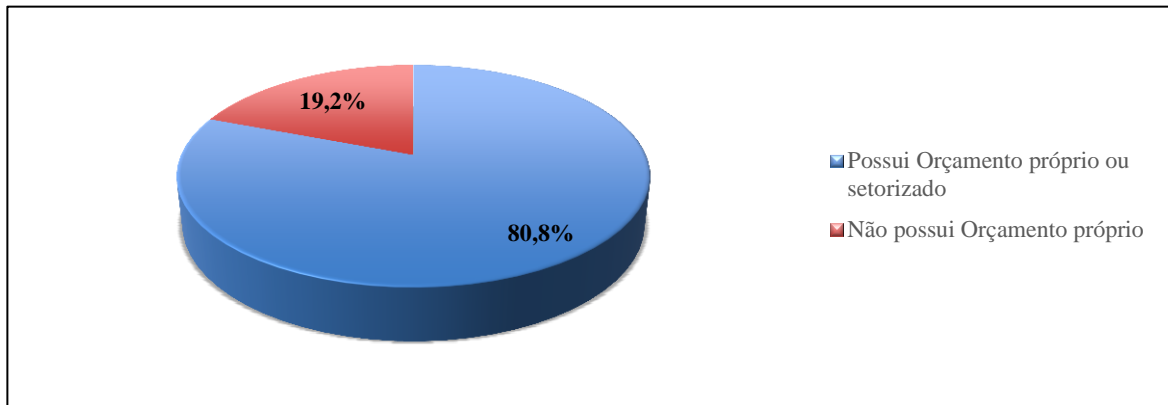
As I said, it is an independent school, here we at the [MUNICIPALITY] City Council have this autonomy, we even have financial autonomy. We have our own resources, but it is still the [MUNICIPALITY] City Council School. So, I believe that school and councils can walk together, because the school plays an important role for the [MUNICIPALITY] City Council (D3, emphasis added).

According to the survey carried out with the directors, 80.8% of the Legislative Schools have their own budget or sectoral budget. 19.2% of these still do not have this allocation in the budget of the City Council, as shown in Graph 5.

It is important to emphasize that “not having a budget, therefore, does not necessarily mean that the school has difficulty financing its activities” (COSSON, 2008, p. 24). However, in contrast to Director 3's narrative, the absence of a budget can be harmful to the work and autonomy of the

Legislative School.

Graph 5 – Own budget



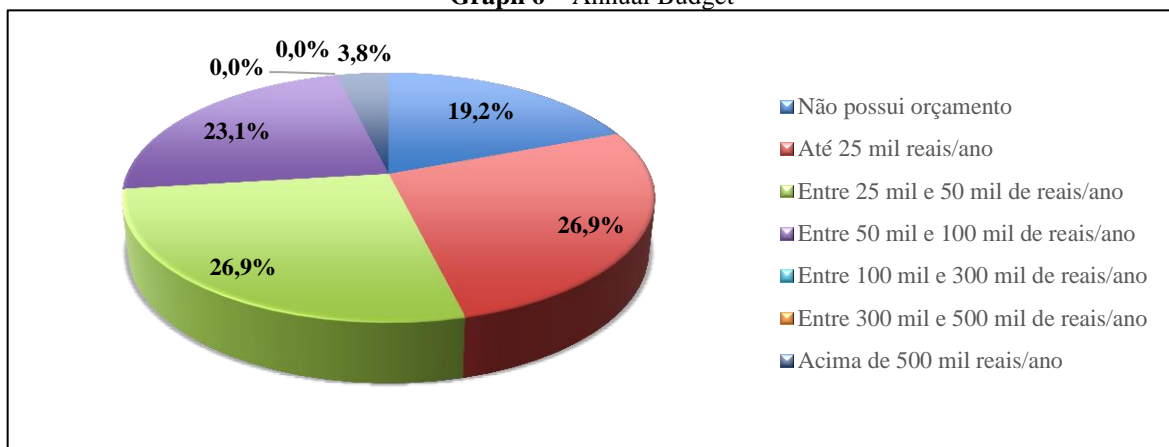
Source: Prepared by the author, 2021.

Note: Has own budget; Does not have own budget.

According to the narrative of Director 2, financial availability can be an obstacle to the creation and maintenance of a Legislative School. The term “they” refers to the councilors and presidents of city councils, who understand that the implementation of a Legislative School can cause a great expenditure of resources by the City Legislative Branch.

It means that it is not the thing that needs to be, that they (councilors) imagine that it needs to have a structure, and a lot of money, we are breaking this a little bit, which is not quite like that, it is just for us to know that within the Council, there is still a little look at education (D2, emphasis added).

Graph 6 – Annual Budget



Source: Prepared by the author, 2021.

Note: No budget; Up to BRL 25,000/year; BRL 25,000-50,000/year; BRL 50,000-100,000/year; BRL 100,000-300,000/year; BRL 300,000-500,000/year; Above BRL 500,000/year.

In Graph 6, the amounts allocated in the budgets of the City Councils for the Legislative Schools are presented, according to information provided by their directors. 26.9% of the Legislative Schools have a budget of up to BRL 25,000/year, while 26.9% have a budget of BRL

25,000 to BRL 50,000/year. A Legislative School (3.8%) has a budget of over BRL 500,000 per year, ten times the budget of 57.8% of schools in the region. It is also noteworthy that the studied region is composed mostly, as shown in Table 1, of small municipalities, which may explain the low budget allocation for schools.

The allocation of resources in the City Council's budget to the Legislative School is not a guarantee that the resource will be used in its entirety, and the Legislative House may use less or even no resources spent for such action. This happens because the Annual Budget is authorizing and not imposing, that is, the public manager is exempt from executing all the resources authorized in the Annual Budget Law.

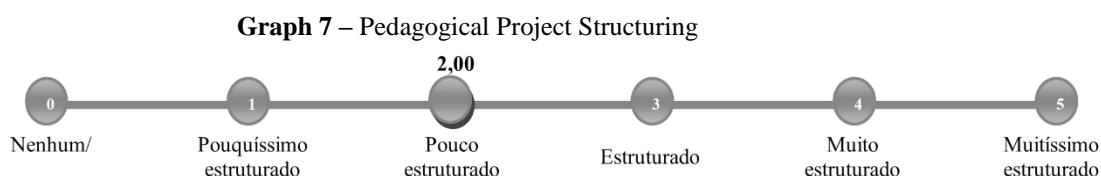
4 Political-pedagogical project

The political-pedagogical project is the document that directs the way in which the school will achieve its goals together with the community, so that it adapts its needs according to its execution (SOUSA, 2020).

In this sense, we emphasize the potential of the Schools of the Legislature to carry out training that address relevant topics for the exercise of citizenship and democracy, such as: Democratic regime, public policies, political parties, sustainable development, virtual democracy, social movements, and human rights, in addition to favoring the development of skills important to democratic coexistence, such as dialoguing, debating, arguing, cooperating, and managing conflicts. It also favors the development of attitudes such as tolerance, solidarity, respect for differences and commitment (LUDWIG, 2019).

In this way, the political-pedagogical plan can be understood as the overall plan of the institution, which is carried out in a systematic way, but not in a definitive way, in a participatory way, and defines the educational actions that are intended to be carried out based on positioning as to its intentionality and I understand the lived reality.

Regarding the structuring of the schools' political-pedagogical project, the directors of active Legislative Schools indicate an average response of 2.00 points, as shown in Graph 7, which indicates that, in general, these schools have poorly structured Pedagogical Projects.



Source: Prepared by the author, 2021.

Note: None/non-existent; Very little structured; Little structured; Structured; Very structured; Very much structured.

Cosson (2008) demonstrates this concern with the structuring of a political-pedagogical plan for a Legislative School by explaining that they tend to prioritize administrative functioning and have difficulties in defining educational assumptions and pedagogical issues, so that Legislative Schools work more like human resources bodies, for example, than an educational institution.

5 Strategic planning

The environment of a Legislative School, for not being a formal school environment, but a sector of a City Council, can be limited to the strategic planning of the Legislative House where it is inserted. However, as already analyzed in this study, many of these Councils lack management and many schools suffer from their internal organization, with management deficiencies.

Lück (2000), when portraying Strategic Planning in the school context, reports situations that are similar to the management of many Legislative Schools:

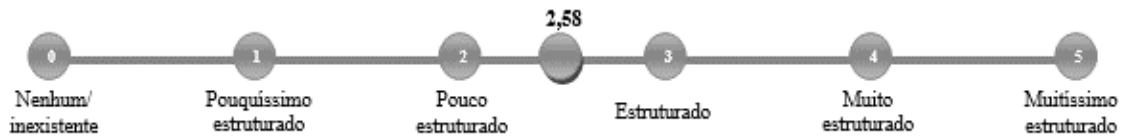
[...] not so rarely, managers and professionals, in general, who complain that they are working as if they are “putting out fires,” that is, of being “always chasing losses” and being led by the varied situations of daily life, by the unexpected demands, having to respond quickly to them and in such a way that “they don't have time to think, let alone to plan.” This form of managing by crisis is stimulated and guided by occasional and spontaneous discoveries, of an immediate nature, by a common-sense and reactive view of reality and, therefore, limited in its scope, very influenced by the tendency to act via trial and error. In this case, events determine the action of school directors, instead of, as it would be proper, the directors, through competent action, influence events and reality. (LÜCK, 2000, p.2, emphasis added).

Strategic planning aims to establish objectives and define the way to achieve them (CHIAVENATO, 2010). Strategic planning allows such monitoring, making schools stop being passive and become protagonists of their own success. This planning, according to Perfeito (2007),

implies a commitment to action. Planning is only meaningful when it is implemented and evaluated according to the achievement of its objectives; otherwise, it will be reduced to a collection of intentions that do not bring real benefits to the organization. One of the great challenges in the management of educational institutions is to develop a greater capacity to respond to external demands. For this, its managers must be able to use different planning approaches, so that institutions can achieve their goals and fulfill their mission (PERFEITO, 2007, p.53).

According to the directors' responses to the applied questionnaire, the average response regarding the implementation of strategic planning was 2.58 points, that is, it is between "little structured" and "structured," which may indicate the non-existence of a planning culture in the Legislative Schools in the region, as shown in Graph 8.

Graph 8 – Strategic Planning



Source: Prepared by the author, 2021.

Note: None/non-existent; Very little structured; Little structured; Structured; Very structured; Very much structured

This level of development of strategic planning can harm the performance of activities such as the lack of budget size to be used, ignorance of the difficulties of the school itself, growth difficulties, execution merely dependent on contingency situations, making them more sensitive to issues and political interference.

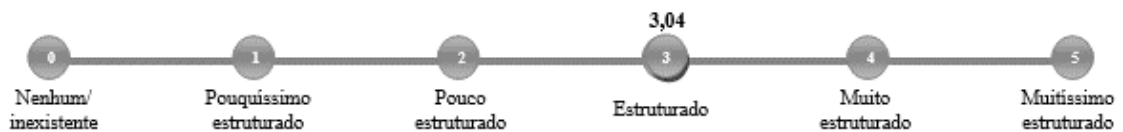
In this sense, in Brazil, despite many organizations claiming that they use the strategic planning methodology, there are contradictions about what it really constitutes and how it should be formulated. The difference between the use and benefit of strategic planning is related to the constant need to reassess and readjust it due to changes in the environment in which the institutions are inserted (CHIAVENATO, 2010).

The institutional mission for Cochran, David and Gibson (2008) constitutes the definition of the mission facilitated in decision making, planning, creation of effective strategies, and in the formulation of short- and long-term policies. Furthermore, it provides a clear sense of direction that guides the organization's executives, managers, and employees towards the achievement of mutual goals, assisting in the definition of priorities, plans and the allocation of resources for this purpose.

The mission is the first step to be defined in relation to strategic planning, as, according to Pereira (2010), it must be designed to focus efforts, establish responsibilities, and reduce risks in order to prepare the organization for the future.

In this way, the importance of the organizational mission is to present an idea of the reason for its existence, guiding the definition of its objectives, which must unfold into management practices that will effectively materialize and translate its mission (SOUZA *et al.*, 2013).

Graph 9 – Institutional Mission



Source: Prepared by the author, 2021.

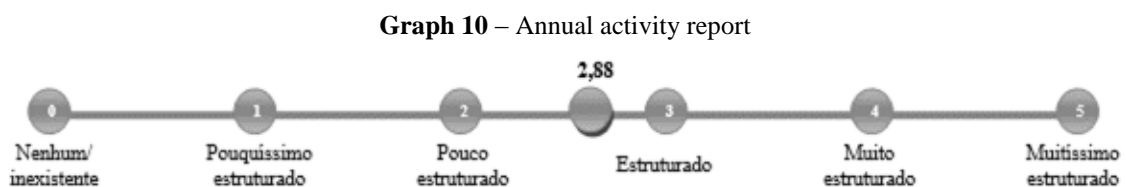
Note: None/non-existent; Very little structured; Little structured; Structured; Very structured; Very much structured

According to the directors, the Legislative Schools have an institutional mission structured, according to the obtained average of 3.04, as shown in Graph 9. As it is the first step of strategic planning, according to Pereira (2010), it is understood that some schools may have started the process of defining the mission. However, many directors pointed out the existence of an institutional mission, confusing it with the mission of a Legislative School in the broad sense, according to the objectives of the Legislative Schools explained by Cosson (2008).

6 Control tools

Next, an evaluation of some tools to control the activities of a Legislative School is presented, such as the elaboration of the annual activity report, evaluation of courses and activities, and certification of participants. These tools allow the quantitative and qualitative evaluation of the activities carried out by the schools, so that they can confront the objectives and guidelines established in the political-pedagogical planning and execution.

The annual activity report is an instrument that can list all the activities carried out by a Legislative School during a year, exposing the number of participants, audiences served, professors, participating speakers, and costs incurred to carry them out. It is an important instrument of accountability for the activities and functioning of a Legislative School, an issue clarified in Graph 10.



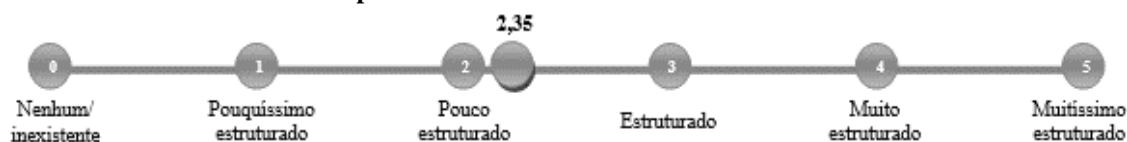
Source: Prepared by the author, 2021.

Note: None/non-existent; Very little structured; Little structured; Structured; Very structured; Very much structured

The directors' average response was 2.88 points, a value close to the “structured” category, which may indicate that the Legislative Schools catalog and survey the activities carried out during the year. The number below the average may indicate that some schools ignore or do not carry out this survey.

As previously stated, the evaluation of courses and activities is an important instrument that can indicate the quality of activities and courses offered to the public served by the school, in addition to being an instrument that can subsidize control actions and the realization of strategic planning to the future activities of the Legislative School.

Graph 11 – Evaluation of courses and activities

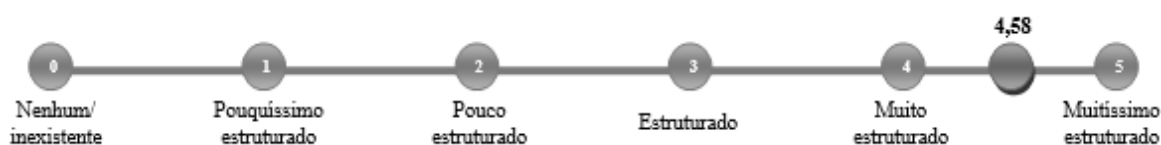


Source: Prepared by the author, 2021.

Note: None/non-existent; Very little structured; Little structured; Structured; Very structured; Very much structured

As shown in Graph 11, the average response given by the directors was 2.35 points, a value close to the “little structured” category, which may indicate that schools perform poorly or are not performing this assessment instrument. This may indicate that the evaluation is composed, merely, by verbal means or that the directors, in general, neglect the activity participants' opinion.

Graph 12 – Certification of participants



Source: Prepared by the author, 2021.

Note: None/non-existent; Very little structured; Little structured; Structured; Very structured; Very much structured

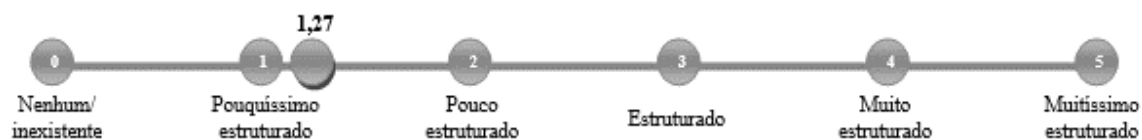
The issuance of a certificate is an instrument that attests to the participation of the student or participant in the activities of the Legislative School, precisely because of the importance it represents for them in terms of validating their qualifications in the labor market or for other purposes. As shown in Graph 12, when asked whether the Legislative School issues a certificate, the average response of the directors was 4.58 points, that is, the average between the categories “very structured” and “very much structured,” which can show that almost all schools seek to certify their students and participants, and with good frequency, not just in occasional situations.

7 Scientific production and publications

One of the main functions of the Legislative School is to disseminate the knowledge produced on the themes of citizenship, democracy and social participation, in addition to those that pertain to this power. This dissemination of knowledge can occur through booklets, books, scientific journals or didactic-pedagogical materials contemplating such issues.

When asked whether the Legislative School encourages scientific production, the average response obtained by the directors was 1.27 points, on average. This means that this incentive is close to “very little structured,” according to Graph 13.

Graph 13 – Incentive to scientific production

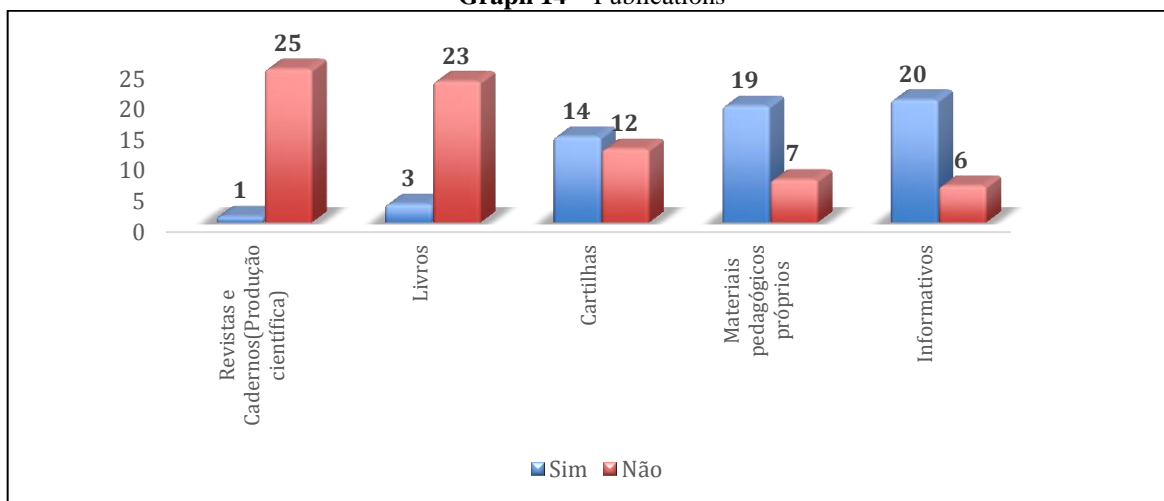


Source: Prepared by the author, 2021.

Note: None/non-existent; Very little structured; Little structured; Structured; Very structured; Very much structured

This lack of interest in research and scientific production occurs for reasons such as lack of demand and institutional interest in research. Generally, if any, they are in the personal interest of the server. A second reason refers to the lack of financial incentives and counterparts for evolution in career plans, and, finally, the research is not linked to other activities related to the school, such as teaching, which offer more effective results, in addition to a mere publication (COSSON, 2008).

Graph 14 – Publications



Source: Prepared by the author, 2021.

Note: Journals and papers (scientific production); Books; Booklets; Pedagogical materials; Newsletters.

According to Graph 14, only one Legislative School in the region carried out some type of publication in scientific journals. It was found that only three Legislative Schools published books, nineteen developed their own teaching materials and twenty launched informative materials.

For Cosson (2008 p. 40), publications are ways of “making information available to the population about actions and projects of the legislative house, in addition to books and booklets containing comprehensive or simplified legislation.” Some schools also have publications of information about the activities of the school or the Legislative House. In most cases, teaching materials are produced by schools for their projects or distributed in guided tours (COSSON, 2008).

The materials produced by the Legislative Schools in the South of Minas Gerais can be

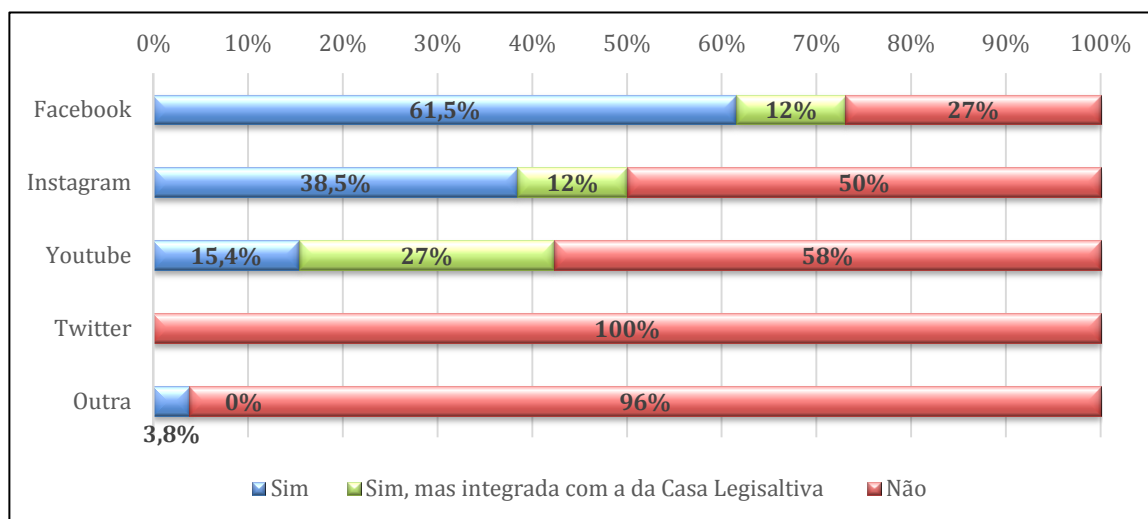
considered simple, such as newsletters and booklets, demand evolution towards more elaborate materials, which can be made through partnerships; however, the record of this production is important, as it materializes the Legislative School production of knowledge.

8 Use of websites and social networks

According to the directors who answered the questionnaire, regarding media and social networks, the most used network for the disclosure of research is Facebook, with 61.5%, followed by Instagram, with 38.5%, and YouTube, with 15.4%, as shown in Graph 15.

Some Schools publicize their actions in the same media or page as the Legislative House. It is visible that many schools do not explore social networks to publicize their research and activities. Regarding the three most cited networks, 27% do not use Facebook; while 50% do not use Instagram, and 58% do not use YouTube.

Graph 15 – Disclosure on social networks



Source: Prepared by the author, 2021.

Note: Facebook; Instagram; YouTube; Twitter; Other. Yes; Yes, but integrated with the Legislative House; No.

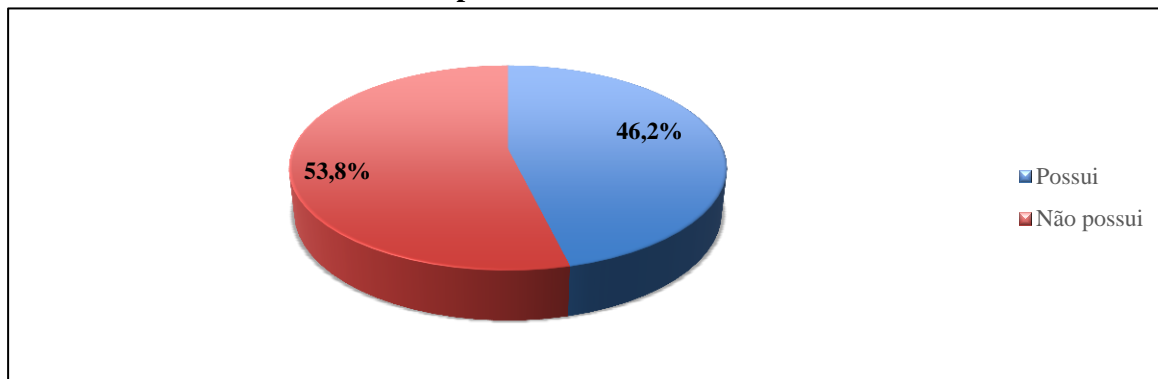
Director 3 points out, in his narrative, that the use of social networks had to be boosted due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This need to use technologies to maintain the work may indicate that the Legislative Schools in the region will be able to increase the use of networks.

within the municipality, we seek this interaction through social media. In these last two years, we sought to capture participants in the work, in the school events, we sought this within the dissemination in the media and more in social networks (D3).

The directors pointed out that 46.2% of the Legislative Schools in the region have their own page, electronic site, or director on the page of the City Councils that are constituted, as shown

in Graph 16. The presence of the Legislative Schools of the South of Minas Gerais region in social networks and on the internet can be low or reasonable, considering the communication potential that these tools can bring to these schools.

Graph 16 – Electronic website



Source: Prepared by the author, 2021.

Note: Existent; Nonexistent.

The publics most served by the Legislative Schools in the South of Minas Gerais are children, adolescents, and young people. Therefore, this presence on social networks is essential to become a space for the dissemination of actions and information about the Legislative Branch, becoming another tool for the formation of young leaders.

This digital leading role is important for new generations, as young activists emerge from there, such as the Pakistani Malala Yousafzai and the Swedish Greta Thunberg, who gained worldwide prominence through social networks, with claims, using the networks as spaces for organizing movements that seek to actions by governments around the world. However, while networks have the potential for political organization, they have been used as a space for the dissemination of false information (LAMARI; THIMOTEO, 2019).

9 Conclusions

The Legislative Schools are extremely relevant in the training, both of public agents and the population in general, regarding citizenship and democracy. And, in order to fulfill their goals, they demand structure.

The research findings indicate that there are not always qualified human resources and budget allocated to the Schools generating a solution for continuity, which can compromise the visibility and recognition of their importance for the strengthening of democracy and citizenship.

Human resources constitute one of the strategic points for the effectiveness of educational actions in schools, as they depend on the political directions given by the boards of directors of city councils and parliamentarians. However, despite the injunctions and discontinuities suffered, the

schools studied were successful.

In relation to public servants who direct the Legislative Schools in the South of Minas Gerais, we verified that, for the most part, they are commission servers, who have a degree or specialization as their education and who share the Legislative School activities with other sectors of the City Council, and usually have work teams of up to two people.

In the organizational-pedagogical field, we identified the biggest deficiencies of the Schools and, at the same time, points of evolution for an effective institutionalization and professionalization of the work. We observed that the application of concepts such as strategic planning, implementation of political-pedagogical plans, and definition of institutional mission, are not common practices and can be considered between “little structured” and “structured.”

Regarding the implementation of control activities, the reality presented by the Legislative Schools of the South of Minas Gerais was not different from the pedagogical organizational field. Creating annual reports of activities, course activities, and unstructured activities can make improvements and progress in the work unfeasible, due to the fact that there are few or no data on the performance and perception of the school. Only the participants' certification of the activities, which is practiced by most schools, differs from the previous ones.

The Legislative Schools have great difficulty in structuring, administering, and carrying out the planning of their activities. Thinking of more advanced stages for their activities can still be considered more of a wish than a reality.

The most widespread teaching materials are materials such as booklets, pedagogical and informative materials about the City Council or the school itself and its activities. Few schools produced books or articles in scientific journals or were characters in these publications. At the same time, the presence on the Internet on City Council websites and social networks requires greater efforts, both to approach its target audiences and to ensure the transparency of its work.

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