


LOCAL PRODUCTIVE ARRANGEMENT (APL): A STUDY OF THE CRAFT BEER APL IN THE MICROREGION OF JUIZ DE FORA – MG**ARRANJO PRODUTIVO LOCAL (APL): UM ESTUDO DO APL DA CERVEJA ARTESANAL DA MICRORREGIÃO DE JUIZ DE FORA – MG****ARREGLO PRODUCTIVO LOCAL (APL): UN ESTUDIO DEL APL DE LA CERVEZA ARTESANAL EN LA MICROREGIÓN DE JUIZ DE FORA – MG** <https://doi.org/10.56238/sevened2025.029-020>**Victor Miranda de Oliveira¹, Tatiana Dornelas de Oliveira Mendes²****ABSTRACT**

This study aims to investigate the structuring process of the Local Productive Arrangement (LPA) of Craft Beer in the Microregion of Juiz de Fora, Minas Gerais, with an emphasis on analyzing the participatory and decision-making mechanisms that compose its governance. A qualitative approach was adopted, based on a literature review supported by relevant authors in the field, as well as a semi-structured interview conducted with an institutional representative linked to the LPA. The results indicate that, although official recognition by the state government of Minas Gerais occurred only in 2017, the arrangement had already been functioning since the early 2000s, driven by the endogenous mobilization of local actors. The study also revealed that the LPA has promoted important advances for the sector, particularly in strengthening regional tourism and cultural identity. However, it still faces challenges regarding governance restructuring and the broader inclusion of workers in decision-making and operational processes — an essential condition for the effective implementation of Social Management principles.

Keywords: Social Management. Clusters. Local Productive Arrangements. Craft Beer.

RESUMO

Este estudo tem como objetivo investigar o processo de estruturação do Arranjo Produtivo Local (APL) da Cerveja Artesanal da Microrregião de Juiz de Fora – MG, com ênfase na análise dos mecanismos participativos e decisórios que compõem sua governança. Para tanto, foi adotada uma abordagem qualitativa, com base em pesquisa bibliográfica fundamentada em autores relevantes da área e na realização de uma entrevista semiestruturada com um representante institucional vinculado ao APL. Os resultados evidenciam que, embora o reconhecimento oficial pelo governo de Minas Gerais tenha ocorrido apenas em 2017, o arranjo já se encontrava em funcionamento desde o início dos anos 2000, impulsionado pela mobilização endógena de atores locais. Constatou-se ainda que o APL tem promovido avanços importantes para o setor, especialmente no fortalecimento do turismo e da identidade regional. No entanto, enfrenta desafios no que diz respeito à reestruturação da governança e à ampliação da participação de trabalhadores nos

¹Dr. in Science, Innovation and Technology in Agriculture. UniAcademia/Universidade Federal de Juiz de Fora. E-mail: victor91jf@yahoo.com.br Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7447-4482>
Lattes: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/2111359061557565>

²Dr. in Administration. Universidade Federal de Juiz de Fora. E-mail: tatiana.dornelas@ufjf.br Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7592-8581>
Lattes: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/5855816642809805>

processos decisórios e operacionais, condição essencial para a efetiva implementação dos princípios da Gestão Social.

Palavras-chave: Gestão Social. Aglomerações. Arranjos Produtivos Locais. Cerveja Artesanal.

RESUMEN

Este estudio tiene como objetivo investigar el proceso de estructuración del Arreglo Productivo Local (APL) de Cerveza Artesanal en la Microrregión de Juiz de Fora - MG, con énfasis en el análisis de los mecanismos participativos y de decisión que componen su gobernanza. Para ello, se adoptó un enfoque cualitativo, basado en la investigación bibliográfica con autores relevantes en el área y en una entrevista semiestructurada a un representante institucional vinculado al APL. Los resultados muestran que, aunque el reconocimiento oficial por parte del gobierno de Minas Gerais recién ocurrió en 2017, el mecanismo ya estaba en funcionamiento desde inicios de la década de 2000, impulsado por la movilización endógena de actores locales. También se constató que el APL ha impulsado avances importantes para el sector, especialmente en el fortalecimiento del turismo y la identidad regional. Sin embargo, enfrenta desafíos en cuanto a la reestructuración de la gobernanza y la ampliación de la participación de los trabajadores en los procesos de decisión y operativos, condición esencial para la efectiva implementación de los principios de la Gestión Social.

Palabras clave: Gestión Social. Multitudes. Arreglos Productivos Locales. Cerveza Artesanal.

1 INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, organizational management has been strongly influenced by strategic models arising from a competitive and hierarchical logic, widely associated with the advancement of neoliberal ideas. In this context, traditional Strategic Management has consolidated itself as the main reference for public, private and third sector organizations. Based on principles such as efficiency, competitiveness, centralization of decision-making, and focus on results, this approach tends to favor instrumental rationality and the search for sustainable competitive advantages, often disregarding sociocultural, territorial, and participatory aspects.

However, the growing complexity of contemporary challenges, especially with regard to social inclusion, territorial development and sustainability, has highlighted the limitation of traditional models to deal with diverse and dynamic realities. In this sense, theoretical and practical alternatives emerge that seek to rethink management modes, based on principles such as participation, dialogue, co-responsibility and appreciation of local knowledge. Social Management, in this scenario, emerges as a critical and purposeful approach, opposing the strictly managerialist logic and presenting itself as a theoretical and practical field aimed at promoting more democratic and inclusive decision-making processes.

Social Management proposes the construction of spaces for collective deliberation, in which multiple social actors participate in the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of actions that directly or indirectly impact their territories. Thus, it is assumed that management should not be only an instrument of control and performance, but a means of collective construction of meanings, priorities and solutions, in line with the interests and values of an extended community of stakeholders.

It is in this horizon that the Local Productive Arrangements (APLs) are inserted, understood as territorial agglomerations of companies and other institutions that maintain links of articulation, cooperation and mutual learning. APLs are often recognized as instruments for fostering regional economic development, with the potential to generate innovation, employment and income. However, its effectiveness depends, to a large extent, on the quality of participatory processes and the governance that sustains its organizational dynamics. The presence of Social Management practices in LPAs, although not always explicit or consolidated, can represent a significant differential in the construction of a more equitable and rooted development logic.

In view of this panorama, the present study aims to investigate how the process of structuring the APL of Craft Beer in the Microregion of Juiz de Fora (MG) took place, with special attention to the way in which the participatory and decision-making processes have been conceived and operationalized within the scope of this arrangement. The choice of this

object of study is justified by the growing relevance of the craft beer sector in the regional economy, as well as by the potential that this type of arrangement has to articulate local knowledge, cooperation networks and territorial development strategies based on cultural identity and innovation.

The research developed was qualitative in nature, divided into two main stages. Initially, a literature review was carried out in order to deepen the theoretical concepts of Social Management and Local Productive Arrangements. Subsequently, an empirical investigation was undertaken through a semi-structured interview with the representative of one of the institutions linked to the APL in question, according to the methodological guidelines of Vergara (2019).

As for the structure of the present work, after this introduction, the study presents a theoretical framework that discusses in depth the central themes, followed by a detailed description of the methodology adopted. Then, the empirical data collected are presented and analyzed and, finally, the final considerations are elaborated, based on the main findings and reflections developed throughout the research.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 SOCIAL MANAGEMENT

The complete understanding of the concept of social management, aiming at the conception of a current analysis, intends to present a management model that is often not easily understood by authors and entrepreneurs who have a unique logic based on pragmatic strategic management and neoliberalism. Thus, it is worth demystifying, a priori, that Social Management does not precede a decrease in productivity, but rather aims at a "dialogical management in which the decision-making authority is shared among the participants of the action (action that can occur in any type of social system – public, private or non-governmental organizations)" (Tenório, 2005, p. 2).

In this line of thought, some terminologies become crucial for the understanding of this concept, since social management lacks collective decision-making, accessible language, dialogue, transparency and, finally, the achievement of the emancipation of the agents involved in the relationship (Cançado; Tenório; Pereira, 2011). From these dimensions, it is considered, in the understanding of Tenório (2013, p. 20) that:

Social management is participatory in its essence. The actors involved in a given governance discuss their projects and define their common objectives. According to these objectives, the involvement of actors in social management is citizen. Those involved are co-responsible for the actions, in this case, they must be aware of the needs of the community and the common good.

In order to establish an even more explicit and easy-to-understand definition, it is necessary to understand that there are consistent differences between the proposals recommended by traditional Strategic Management and Social Management. From this perspective, the work of Cançado, Villela and Sausen (2016) contribute by pointing out some differences between these theoretical perspectives, as shown in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1

Comparison between Strategic Management and Social Management

Dimensão	Gestão Estratégica	Gestão Social
Ponto de Partida	Melhoria do Desempenho	Participação/Bem-viver
Racionalidade	Utilitária/Formal/Instrumental/Monológica	Comunicativa/ Dialógica
Tomada de Decisão	Baseada em planejamento e num sistema de alinhamento organizacional a partir dos objetivos da organização	Tomada de decisão coletiva, balizada pelo interesse bem compreendido/bem comum
Transparência	Informações constantes nos relatórios técnicos e nas avaliações sistemáticas com acesso limitado	Informações disponíveis, baseadas na intersubjetividade, tornando possível a dialogicidade
Espaço	Esfera privada	Esfera pública
Finalidade da Gestão	Minimização de custos e maximização de resultados, (Minimax)	Interesse Bem-Compreendido/Bem Comum
Método	Positivismo lógico	Teoria crítica
Concepção de Estrutura organizacional	Hierarquia/Heterogestão	Heterarquia
Premissas teóricas	Individualismo metodológico	Socialização
<i>Modus Operandi</i>	Competitividade	Cooperação
Benefícios	Lucros e resultados empresariais	Melhoria na qualidade de vida
Dimensão temporal	Preferencialmente curto prazo; médio e longo prazos baseados em planejamento	Sustentabilidade – longo prazo
Amplitude da Ação	Preocupação apenas com o que lhe é concernente	Preocupação geral com o contexto
Visão	Linear/Objetiva	Complexidade/intersubjetividade
Foco	Mercadocêntrico	Sociocêntrico
Consequências	Reificação	Emancipação
Relação	Mundo do trabalho	Mundo da vida

Source: Cançado, Villela and Sausen (2016, p. 11)

Based on the differences elucidated by the aforementioned authors, it is important to detail the differences between some dimensions in more detail. As for the starting point, Strategic Management has a focus on gain, aimed at a liberal vision of the market, while in Social Management the focus is on participation and the search for the common good of the actors involved. Also, in Strategic Management, the aspect of transparency has a formal direction, aimed at informing the members of the process about certain circumstances, and in many cases the information process is hierarchical and unidirectional. In Social Management, on the other hand, transparency, regardless of the type of information, is the primary subsidy for the effectiveness of this management model, since it must happen collectively.

Finally, as Cançado, Villela and Sausen (2016) argue, there is a significant distinction in the *modus operandi* between Strategic Management and Social Management. While the first focuses on intensifying competitiveness, supported by technological advances and the globalization process, the second prioritizes cooperation and the strengthening of social relations, with a focus on improving the quality of life of the actors involved.

In view of this, it is essential to reflect, in the light of contemporary transformations on a global scale, on new models of collective articulation between social actors around common objectives. These models are presented as concrete alternatives for strengthening practices based on Social Management, capable of promoting fairer, more inclusive and territorially rooted development.

2.2 LOCAL PRODUCTIVE ARRANGEMENTS (LPAS)

From the conception of Social Management, presented in the first chapter, the APLs emerge as agglomerations in which this type of management is necessary, considering that in praxis there is a need for a dialogical basis, in which the actors involved in the business groups can solve problems in a participatory and efficient way.

With regard to an effort at conceptualization, Da Costa (2010) helps us to understand that:

More generally, an APL can be understood as a group of agents "orchestrated" by a degree of institutionalization, explicit or implicit to the agglomeration, which they seek as their purpose, harmony, interaction and cooperation [...]. [...]the term refers to the concentration of any similar or interdependent activities in space, regardless of the size of the companies, nor the nature of the economic activity developed, which may belong to the primary, secondary or even tertiary sector, ranging from artisanal structures with little dynamism, to arrangements that include a large division of labor between companies and products with high technological content (Da Costa, 2010, p. 126).

In this sense, it is also reiterated that the APL are not always structured in a previously studied and planned way, on the contrary, many agglomerations start based on common ideas and initiatives, starting from a historical process, in which the structuring of the groups is shown to be fundamental for the very survival of the actors involved (Tenório, 2013).

From the moment that the APLs are organized and structured, there are considerable advantages to those involved, when it is understood that some processes are facilitated when they are developed jointly and it is possible to carry out "joint actions, such as: shopping centers, fairs, consortiums and share operational costs such as innovations, acquisition of machinery, logistics of production distribution, among others [...]" (Vellela, 2015, p. 7).

Also, in the understanding of Da Costa (2010), in agglomerations the division of labor is a primordial aspect, considering that this teamwork allows flexibility and gains in effectiveness for those involved. There is also a considerable improvement for the entire production chain of the sector, since suppliers, for example, are able to offer machinery, equipment, parts and financial resources in a more appropriate way.

In order to demonstrate that agglomerations are viable and that Social Management permeates this process, the work organized by Tenório (2013) presents a collection of practical studies involving Local Productive Arrangements in the state of Rio de Janeiro, and in these works, in addition to verifying the viability of the agglomerations involved, the opportunities for improvements to consolidate this management model are also highlighted.

3 METHODOLOGY

The research methodology adopted in this study follows the assumptions of qualitative research, as outlined by Creswell (2021), who defines it as a naturalistic and interpretative process of inquiry, aimed at understanding social phenomena from the perspective of the participants and the context in which they are inserted. This approach allows the researcher to explore in depth meanings, interactions and social processes, an essential aspect for the study of Local Productive Arrangements from the perspective of Social Management.

In addition, Gil (2010) conceptualizes methodology as a set of rational and systematic procedures used in order to find answers to a research problem. In this work, the methodological structure follows the classification proposed by Vergara (2019), being analyzed under two dimensions: in terms of ends and means.

With regard to the ends, the research is classified as descriptive, with the central objective of characterizing a phenomenon, without necessarily seeking causal explanations — although it can offer subsidies for later interpretative analyses. This nature is compatible with the objective of understanding how the APL of Craft Beer in the Microregion of Juiz de Fora (MG) is structured, based on the practices of participation and collective decision.

As for the means, the research was conducted in two stages. Initially, a bibliographic review was carried out, with the aim of theoretically substantiating the concepts of Social Management and Local Productive Arrangements, using works by renowned authors. In a second moment, a semi-structured interview was conducted with Mr. Alexandre Chandretti Vicente Vaz (Vaz, 2021), representative of the APL studied.

The interview took place remotely, through the *Microsoft Teams* platform, in September 2021. Following the procedures recommended by McCracken (1988), the interview was recorded, with consent, and later transcribed for analysis. The interview script

was built based on field studies carried out by Tenório (2013), focused on Local Productive Arrangements, which gave greater theoretical density and direction to the questions formulated.

The choice of the qualitative approach, inspired by Creswell (2021), is justified by the complexity of the object of study and the need to apprehend subjective aspects, such as values, perceptions, and social practices shared by the actors involved in the APL, which could hardly be captured through quantitative methods.

4 DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The work developed by Simoncini et al. (2019) is important in highlighting the scenario of beer culture in Brazil, with emphasis on the municipality of Juiz de Fora, in which the APL focus of this analysis is located. In the study it is verified that the culture and beer production in the aforementioned municipality date back to the eighteenth century and is marked by important moments that make the city have a memory around this theme.

In this sense, as recommended by Tenório (2013), the APL of Craft Beer in Juiz de Fora – MG, emerged in an unstructured and/or planned way, but is related to a historical process already existing in the city. According to an interview given by Vaz (2021), this productive arrangement converged from the beginning of the two thousands, driven by the environment itself, as well as by the threats and opportunities imposed by the business scenario of the time, largely due to the difficulties that entrepreneurs encountered in managing their still incipient businesses.

Thus, there was a gathering of collective efforts in order to resume the culture of craft beer in the city, and for this purpose several events were held, in addition the companies supported each other with training, purchase of inputs and equipment, and from the year 2008 there was support from the Brazilian Service of Support to Micro and Small Enterprises (SEBRAE) in order to assist in this structuring and in the development of missions that promoted learning for those involved in the process (Vaz, 2021).

It should be noted that although the municipality of Juiz de Fora has agglomerations around other productive sectors, the APL of Craft Beer in the Microregion of Juiz de Fora is the only one recognized by the government of the State of Minas Gerais, and on the festive occasion of the recognition, in 2017, the speech of the then secretary Wadson Ribeiro is relevant when he highlights that:

An APL is not created, it is recognized (emphasis added). Juiz de Fora has historical ties with beer, it was here that the first brewery in Minas Gerais was founded, back in the nineteenth century, and German colonization helped to propagate the culture and

consumption of beer. In addition, the production chain is highly structured." According to the secretary, with the recognition of the arrangement, it is possible to seek mechanisms for training, discussion of technology, investments in equipment and contribute to the activity. "This is the next step." (Tribuna de Minas, P. s/p, 2017).

At the APL recognition event, the then mayor of the city of Juiz de Fora, Bruno de Freitas Siqueira, stressed that: "It is an important certification of the work of each one inserted in the production chain. [...] With this, we can attract people from all over the country to enjoy this product, strengthening the economy and tourism." (Tribuna de Minas, p. s/p, 2017).

Vaz (2021) informs that after the recognition of the APL by the government of the State of Minas Gerais, the movement began to have monthly meetings with the governance of the APL, which was attended by representatives of the Municipality of Juiz de Fora (PJF), through the Department of Development, SEBRAE, brewers and the Brazilian Association of Bars and Restaurants (ABRASEL). However, after a few months the meetings were not continued, largely due to the fact that the government of Minas Gerais had not made the investments promised at the time of the recognition of the APL, a fact that ended up demobilizing those involved. Another important factor, in the view of Vaz (2021) for this demobilization was the retraction of the sector due to the containment measures imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

In this sense, the interviewee informed that there is a governance meeting scheduled for October 6, 2021, with the objective of resuming all the steps, and all those involved were invited and the new brewers received a telephone call as a means of communicating this invitation.

Regarding the leadership process, the interviewee says that his representation came organically, that there was no specific vote, but a consensus was reached within the group. The interviewee reports that the common macro objective of the APL is the improvement of the city's craft beer culture, and this fact has developments that are relevant to all those involved in the process and, in this way, in his understanding there is a meeting of several interests around this common objective.

Regarding the communication process, Vaz (2021) reports that today information is basically transmitted by two WhatsApp groups, one that has only the brewers and the other with the governance of the APL. The interviewee also points out that communication has always flowed very well in the numerous craft beer events that were held in the city, however, such events were interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, but there is a desire to resume them soon. Also, regarding communication, it was informed that in this resumption of the governance of the APL there is a desire to develop new information channels, such as: website and social networks.

Regarding the execution of activities, Vaz (2021) informed that the governance of the APL has always worked with a structured planning (5W2H), in which everyone involved has their actions to be developed, so he considers that there is a sharing of management, and sometimes, depending on the situation, an agent needs to take the lead in the process for it to occur effectively. He informed that even without constant meetings, the process continues to take place through WhatsApp.

In the view of Vaz (2021), the APL has already contributed effectively to local development, with regard to: promotion of qualified jobs for the area, resumption of the culture and memory of beer for the municipality, enrichment of the city, among other actions. Effectively, for example, the APL contributed directly to the enactment of LAW No. 13,675, of March 21, 2018, which established the Minas Gerais Craft Beer Day, to be celebrated annually on May 27 (Juiz de Fora, 2018), in addition to having already obtained financial support for entrepreneurs in the sector through development agencies.

Finally, it is clear that the participation process, especially the APL's decision, is restricted to entrepreneurs in the area, and employees are not involved in this process, except in events that took place routinely before the pandemic and will soon be resumed (Vaz, 2021).

5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The present study aimed to analyze the process of structuring the Local Productive Arrangement (LPA) of craft beer in the micro-region of Juiz de Fora (MG), with emphasis on participatory mechanisms and the decision-making dynamics adopted by the actors involved. From a qualitative approach, based on a literature review and semi-structured interview, it was possible to understand that the APL has an endogenous origin and is structured from an articulation between cultural identity, territorial valorization and productive cooperation.

It was observed that, although there are important advances — such as the existence of a governance instance and the strengthening of collaborative links between entrepreneurs — there are still challenges related to the expansion of social participation and the transparency of communication processes. The effectiveness of Social Management in the context of the APL requires the strengthening of deliberative spaces, the active inclusion of workers and the adoption of practices that promote co-responsibility in decision-making.

The positive impacts of the APL are evident, especially in stimulating tourism, generating employment and qualified income, and promoting local development. The future perspectives signaled by the governance of the arrangement — such as the mapping of craft breweries and the road signs of the beer route — point to the consolidation of Juiz de Fora as a regional reference center in the segment.

However, this research has some limitations. Data collection was restricted to a single interview, which does not allow a broader analysis of the multiplicity of actors and views existing in the APL. In addition, the study is restricted to a specific time and territory frame, which prevents generalizations. It is also emphasized that, as it is a qualitative and exploratory approach, the results must be understood within their interpretative limits.

Based on these limitations, it is recommended that future investigations expand the number of interviewees, incorporating different profiles and functions within the APL, such as workers, consumers, institutional representatives, and public managers. Comparative studies between LPAs from different sectors or regions can also contribute to understanding the variations in the adoption of Social Management practices. Finally, longitudinal research could follow the evolution of governance and the consolidation of social participation over time, allowing the evaluation of the degree of institutionalization of a participatory and collaborative logic.

It is concluded, therefore, that the APL of craft beer in Juiz de Fora is configured as a relevant experience of local development, which, although it still faces obstacles in relation to the inclusion and democratization of processes, has significant potential to deepen practices aligned with the principles of Social Management.

REFERENCES

- Cançado, A. C., Tenório, F. G., & Pereira, J. R. (2011). Gestão social: Reflexões teóricas e conceituais. *Cadernos EBAPE.BR*, 9(4), 1031–1044.
- Cançado, A. C., Villela, L. E., & Sausen, J. O. (2016). Gestão social e gestão estratégica: Reflexões sobre as diferenças e aproximações de conceitos. *Revista de Gestão Social e Ambiental*, 10(3), 69–84. <https://doi.org/10.24857/rgsa.v10i3>
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2021). *Projeto de pesquisa: Métodos qualitativo, quantitativo e misto* (5th ed.). Penso.
- da Costa, E. J. M. (2010). *Arranjos produtivos locais, políticas públicas e desenvolvimento regional*. Mais Gráfica Editora.
- Gil, A. C. (2010). *Como elaborar projetos de pesquisa* (3rd ed.). Atlas.
- Juiz de Fora. (2018). Lei n.º 13.675, de 21 de março de 2018. Institui o Dia da Cerveja Artesanal Mineira, no âmbito do Município de Juiz de Fora, e a inclusão no Calendário Oficial do evento que menciona. *Diário Oficial Eletrônico do Município de Juiz de Fora*. https://www.pjf.mg.gov.br/e_atos/e_atos_vis.php?id=60108
- McCracken, G. D. (1988). *The long interview*. Sage Publications.
- Simoncini, J. B. V. B. S., & et al. (2020). História, memória e inovação tecnológica das cervejarias em Juiz de Fora-MG. *Analecta-Centro Universitário Academia*, 5(5), 1–15.

Tenório, F. G. (Ed.). (2013). Gestão social e gestão estratégica: Experiências em desenvolvimento territorial. FGV.

Tribuna de Minas. (2017, May 26). Polo cervejeiro de JF é reconhecido como Arranjo Produtivo Local pelo Estado. <https://tribunademinas.com.br/noticias/economia/26-05-2017/polo-cervejeiro-de-jf-e-reconhecido-como-arranjo-produtivo-local-pelo-estado.html>

Vergara, S. C. (2019). Projetos e relatórios de pesquisa em administração (16th ed.). Atlas.

World Health Organization. (2020, March 11). WHO Director-General's opening remarks at the media briefing on COVID-19. <https://www.who.int/director-general/speeches/detail/who-director-general-s-opening-remarks-at-the-media-briefing-on-covid-19---11-march-2020>