

# Social management and community development: the power of informal organization in social interest housing projects

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## Abstract

This study aims to qualify a social management process based on community development attributes revealed in social work carried out by an informal group of beneficiaries of a venture financed by the National Social Interest Housing System, located in the municipality of São Gonçalo do Amarante (RN). The research focuses on the case of a local informal collective called Lambe Sal Association. The lexicometric analysis of the data collected via a focus' group with members of the association shows that the community's engagement has relevant functions in the venture. This reveals a social management practice characterized by interdependence and solidary principles that contribute to solidarity, bringing people together through volunteering, linking them through services such as cleaning common areas, and promoting leisure events. The quality of the dialogue and intersubjective relations contribute to point out emancipatory initiatives and reveal communitarian life improvements that exceed the original functions and interests of the group.

**Keywords:** Social management. Informal organization. Community development. Community organization. Social interest housing.

## *Gestão social e desenvolvimento comunitário: o poder da organização informal em empreendimentos habitacionais de interesse social*

### Resumo

Este estudo tem como objetivo qualificar o processo de gestão social baseado em atributos de desenvolvimento comunitário revelados pelo trabalho social realizado por um grupo informal de beneficiários de um empreendimento financiado pelo Sistema Nacional de Habitação de Interesse Social, localizado no município de São Gonçalo do Amarante (RN). A pesquisa se concentra no caso de um coletivo local informalmente constituído sob a denominação de Associação Lambe Sal. A análise lexicométrica dos dados coletados, por meio do grupo focal com membros desse coletivo, evidencia que o envolvimento da comunidade tem funções relevantes no empreendimento, revelando uma prática de gestão social caracterizada pela interdependência e baseada em princípios solidários que contribuem para a solidariedade e une as pessoas pelo trabalho voluntário, vinculando-as por serviços como limpar áreas comuns e promover eventos de lazer. A qualidade do diálogo e das relações intersubjetivas contribuem para apontar iniciativas emancipatórias e revelar melhorias na vida comunitária, que excedem as funções e os interesses originários do grupo.

**Palavras-chave:** Gestão social. Organização informal. Desenvolvimento comunitário. Organização comunitária. Habitação de interesse social.

## *Gestión social y desarrollo comunitario: el poder de la organización informal en proyectos de viviendas de interés social*

### Resumen

Este estudio tiene como objetivo calificar el proceso de gestión social a partir de los atributos de desarrollo comunitario presentes en el trabajo social realizado por un grupo informal compuesto por beneficiarios de un emprendimiento financiado por el Sistema Nacional de Habitación de Interés Social. La investigación se centra en el caso de un colectivo local constituido informalmente bajo el nombre de Asociación Lambe Sal. El análisis lexicométrico de los datos recopilados –a través de un grupo focal de miembros de dicho colectivo– evidencia que la participación de la comunidad cumple funciones relevantes en el emprendimiento, lo que revela una práctica de gestión social caracterizada por la interdependencia y fundamentada en principios que contribuyen a la solidaridad y unen a las personas por el trabajo voluntario, vinculándolas por medio de faenas tales como limpiar áreas comunes y promover eventos de ocio. La calidad del diálogo y de las relaciones intersubjetivas contribuye a señalar iniciativas emancipadoras y revelar mejoras en la vida comunitaria que exceden las funciones y los intereses originales del grupo.

**Palabras clave:** Gestión social. Organización informal. Desarrollo comunitario. Organización comunitaria. Habitación de interés social.

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## INTRODUCTION

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Studies on Brazilian housing programs link housing unit deficits to a structure that generates and reproduces socio-spatial inequalities in such a way that social housing has not yet been established as a continuous policy in the country (Valadares & Cunha, 2018). The different housing program configurations, the reproduction of standards of leadership from the entrepreneurial sector and the socio-spatial segregation of cities (Balbim & Krause, 2014; Bonduki, 2009; Cardoso & Aragão, 2013; Fix & Arantes, 2009; Grazia & Melo, 2017; Nisida, Vannuchi, Rossi, Borrelli & Lopes, 2015) have caused social movements and civil society organizations to call for the exercise of social control (Valadares & Cunha, 2018) and the ideal of fair and sustainable cities (Grazia & Melo, 2017) from government officials. Demands of this type explain the initiative of incorporating instruments of participation and control in the management of social housing projects, encapsulated in the format of a Social and Technical Work Project (PTTS). Caixa Econômica Federal (CEF), as the operating agent of the National Social Housing Fund (FNHIS), under the terms of article 16 of Law nº 11.124, dated June 16, 2005 (Lei nº 11.124, de 16 de junho de 2005), is responsible for defining and implementing the operational procedures required for the application of FNHIS resources.

Operationalizing FNHIS, in the Social and Technical Orientation Document (COTS) (CEF, 2013), CEF includes the bases to prepare, introduce and evaluate PTTS, highlighting the objective of promoting community participation and guaranteeing that society, particularly the families that have directly benefited, is involved in the social management of community demands. CEF (2013) envisages the beneficiaries' participation from the PTTS design phase, during the construction period, and until the stage following completion of the works, and handover of the properties – following occupation. The PTTS, in COTS (CEF, 2013), requires a team of professionals with a specialized background, whose size depends on the volume and resources available, which can be implemented both by the public official taking out the loan, or third parties.

The PTTS has acquired “distinctive contents in accordance with the historic circumstances that have passed through conservative, sanitary and social urban and housing policies since the 1950s, which became concepts that contributed towards the construction of citizenship” (Grazia & Melo, 2017, pp. 353-354). It should be noted that social work in housing developments contributes towards the construction of citizenship, in addition to ties of proximity and trust between residents. However, it is equally valid to question the quality of the content and results, and how social work actions are conducted in housing developments, which is the subject of this article.

Our trajectory dispenses with an analysis of PTTS, considering that the experience presented here is a counterpoint for the actions financed by the São Gonçalo do Amarante city council (Rio Grande do Norte), at the Residencial Ruy Pereira dos Santos, a development constructed under the Minha Casa, Minha Vida Program, with a total of 1,800 housing units. However, a reference to PTTS is pertinent as an analytical counterpoint, since it is the only government instrument which has the objective of guiding community development in social housing developments. Therefore, this can be described as an “informal PTTS”, created and implemented by residents in the post-occupation phase.

We have adopted the objective of qualifying social management processes based on attributes of community development present in social work implemented by an informal group made up of beneficiaries of the development, financed by the National System of Social Interest Housing (SNHIS) (Lei nº 11.124, de 16 de junho de 2005). The central question is: how do social work actions, conducted autonomously, and executed by residents in a social housing development, reconcile with analytical categories, validating social management processes?

Residencial Ruy Pereira dos Santos is a development located in the municipality of São Gonçalo do Amarante (Rio Grande do Norte). The research is relevant since it exposes weaknesses in public-interest projects which, once forged by a specialized technical team with the objective of promoting community development, limit the reach and quality of the results desired. On the other hand, as Silva (2017) put forward in a thesis produced on the doctorate course in administration at the Federal University of Bahia (UFBA), university extension, from the perspective of territorial development anchored in social management processes, contributes towards qualifying social work in social housing developments. For this reason, we understand that this paper, in line with the above-mentioned author, provides contributions to organizational studies and the universe of academic practice.

Considering that community mobilization and organization, environmental education and the generation of work and income are the structuring axes of the PTTS (CEF, 2013), this research takes the premise that social management references are useful to explain the failures of the public authorities in social work, in contrast with the successes of community self-organization. We have taken social participation as the foundation, specifically in reference to the 1988 Federal Constitution and, consequently, Jürgen Habermas` concept of deliberative citizenship, introduced in Brazil by Tenório (1998), highlighted by Salgado, Santos, Resende and Souza (2019). Thus, the following topic addresses these concepts, with the objective of extracting attributes of social management, in order to interpret the results of field research. The methodological procedures are introduced in the following topic. The text continues with a discussion of the results, based on interlocations between selected theoretical attributes of social management and empirical categories generated by the free data analysis software, Iramuteq. The text closes with the conclusion, which focuses on highlighting gaps, suggesting future studies on the topic and provides a summary of the research contributions for feedback on social work in social housing developments.

## THE INTERACTIONAL NATURE OF SOCIAL MANAGEMENT

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Peres and Pereira (2014) conducted a bibliometric survey of the frequent use of social management in Brazil, revealing that the Portuguese sociologist Boaventura de Sousa Santos is cited in all of the approaches, particularly the publication *Democratizar a democracia: os caminhos da democracia participativa* (2002). The authors conclude that there is a prominence of concepts, such as participation, dialogue and the pursuit of the common good, to determine a national conception of social management. They highlight two areas of application: one linked to public management, from the concept of societal public administration, management of social development, or social management, and the other to dialogical, managerial action, used in different private, non-governmental and public social systems.

In a theoretical exercise, with equal systematization, Cançado, Pereira and Tenório (2015) list the following social management categories: deliberative democracy, dialogicity, emancipation, the public sphere, self-interest rightly understood, intersubjectivity, rationality, solidarity and sustainability. With these categories, the authors establish a framework for analysis with the following configuration: a) self-interest rightly understood (SIRU), including the categories solidarity and sustainability; b) the public sphere, as a *locus* and essential condition for social management, including the categories deliberative democracy, dialogicity, intersubjectivity and rationality, and c) emancipation, as the point of arrival. The authors` reasoning is available in the above-mentioned text, dispensing with complementary explanations in this article.

Based on these references, our interest is to reinforce the interactional nature of social management. This interest is widely understood in texts by Tocqueville (1998) which, as Cançado et al. (2015) highlight, take the assumption that collective well-being is a precondition for the provision of individual well-being. It refers to a useful virtue, from which by defending collective interests, an individual defends their own. This concept leads these authors to relate the solidarity and sustainability categories in SIRU which, essentially, present objectives shared by groups and societies. SIRU lends the idea of interdependence, when individuals observe the dynamics of their actions in the public sphere, from the slant of the collective (re)construction of a place, with the intention of contributing towards collective and, consequently, individual well-being (Cançado et al., 2015). Therefore, there are occasions in which individuals realize they depend on each other, dispelling egocentric feelings, and those of independence, that confuse freedom with personal self-sufficiency.

Cançado et al. (2015) elect the deliberative democracy, dialogicity, intersubjectivity and rationality categories to establish characteristics pertaining to the decision-making process, in light of social management. Deliberative democracy assumes “[...] the form of decision-making within this public sphere in which social management takes place, but other theoretical categories are required to construct its scope” (Cançado et al., 2015, p. 10). With a similar slant, Oliveira, Cançado and Pereira (2010, p. 624) describe approximations between participative spaces and social management, understanding that “the Brazilian public sphere has (re)created public spaces, where public action becomes possible”, so that social management becomes a possibility for these spaces, since what is sought is the effectiveness of collective decision-making.

Decisions in the public sphere, from the point of view of social management, in addition to the criterion of deliberative democracy, include dialogicity and intersubjectivity. The former is understood as “the capacity to communicate and, consequently, get along with other people”, and the latter is materialized in the “capacity of individuals to understand the subjectivity of the other through communication [...]”. Decisions also involve knowledge of the language and symbols used for

the communication that take place, and also in the perception of what is ‘not said’”. The last component, which characterizes the nature of decisions made in the public sphere, is rationality, in this case based on substantive rational action; in other words, in a “balance between social and personal satisfaction, which promotes the desire of human capacity for self-realization, self-development and emancipation” (Cançado et al., 2015, p. 12).

Emancipation, as the point of arrival of social management processes, represents “[...] deliverance from oppressive domination, based on relations of production and the reproduction of life, becoming a process that breaks from subalternity, and a refusal to be manipulated” (Cançado et al., 2015, p. 12). Therefore, we can summarize that, like decision-making process, social management:

- 1) Starts from a need: SIRU, when individuals take on the goal of contributing towards collective well-being, understanding that, by following this path, they achieve their own well-being. This prerequisite does not appear in Peres and Pereira’s (2014) review of systematization, mentioned above. However, it is a component that is relevant to the social management process, which we consider later on, in a discussion on the field research results.
- 2) Takes place in the public sphere, in deliberative democracy processes (Cançado et al., 2015) or, similarly, at a meeting of individuals at a given place, with the objective of achieving the common good, through participative decision-making processes and dialogue (Peres & Pereira, 2014, 2014).
- 3) Objective emancipation (Cançado et al., 2015). In other words, the common good (Peres & Pereira, 2014).

Therefore, we have two revisions of the concept and categorization of elements of social management in Brazil, which took place in 2014 and 2015, respectively, in alignment with the understanding of Fischer et al. (2006), drawn up in the previous decade. We can summarize that social management is a “reflection of practices” – originating from participative processes and an empirical experimentation of deliberative democracy – and “knowledge constructed by multiple disciplines” – which adds a theoretical nature –, “outlining a multiparadigmatic proposal of an interdisciplinary nature” (Fischer et al., 2006, p. 797). The integration of theory and practice by Fischer et al. (2006) is clear in the two revisions mentioned above. Peres and Pereira (2014) identify participation and dialogicity as elements inherent to social management processes, in practices which seek the common good. Similarly, Cançado et al. (2015) elect aspects of SIRU, and the public sphere, as the principle and means of social management processes, respectively, understanding that the aim is emancipation.

Equally, in a systematization exercise, Salgado, Santos, Resende et al. reiterate an interactional understanding, based on an analysis of the use of Jürgen Habermas’ construct of deliberative citizenship in social management in Brazil. They summarize that “the field of knowledge of social management appears in the articles analyzed [18 in total], based on three broad, dovetailed categories: public interest (in other words, self-interest rightly understood), the public sphere and social emancipation” (Salgado et al., 2019, p. 825). Therefore, we take Cançado et al. (2015) model for an empirical analysis of the subject addressed here: community development in social housing developments.

## METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURE

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The methodological strategy adopted continues to qualify the social management process, based on attributes of community development taken from the social work carried out by a group of residents at the Residencial Ruy Pereira dos Santos, in the form of informal association, made up exclusively of men. The complex houses six condominiums with eighteen blocks of sixteen apartments, in addition to a block with a further twelve apartments, forming a total of three hundred homes per condominium. With an estimated population of over 7,200 inhabitants, the development is located in the municipality of São Gonçalo do Amarante (Rio Grande do Norte).

Of the six condominiums, the Ruy Pereira I (CRP-I) condominium was selected for data collection, initially with the objective of evaluating the results of the PTTS contracted by the city council. CRP-I was selected both due to the fact that it was occupied first and, therefore, received the highest volume of PTTS actions implemented by a company contracted through a public tender, and its accessibility. The condominium manager was available to contribute to the research team, and operationalize the meetings required for data collection. During the first data collection meeting via a focus group and semi-structured

interviews with condominium residents, the team became aware of the actions carried out by the Lambe Sal Association in CRP-I. In terms of effectiveness and the quantitative involvement of residents, Lambe Sal presented results superior to those attributed to the city council PTTS to those in attendance. Based on the unanimity of this understanding, the team decided to take Lambe Sal as its unit of analysis, to form the focus group, and the collection of complementary information via semi-structured interviews with the condominium managers.

In consideration of the proposed objective, we selected a perspective that incorporates quantitative and qualitative approaches. The study is descriptive, with a theoretical-empirical slant. It is also a case study, with a methodological trajectory that started with bibliographic research, followed by field research at the Residencial Ruy Pereira dos Santos. Three visits were made to the housing complex, specifically to condominiums I and VI, which were both fully occupied. Semi-structured interviews (Flick, 2009) were held with the respective condominium managers and assistant managers, in order to reinforce our understanding of the challenges faced by residents in the post-occupation phase. Following contact with the condominium managers, who provided a general overview of the challenges encountered, references were made to the Lambe Sal Association, a collective of approximately fifty men in CRP-I. It is an informal group which was established in their free time, and gradually started to take on structural organizational functions of a community nature, with actions that supplement those of the condominium association.

Following contact with the association leader, a focus group session was held, being the instrument selected to enable flexible interaction between residents in a group discussion (Flick, 2009). Twelve men took part in the focus group, with an age range of between 27 and 55 – and average age of 40 –, a maximum income of three minimum salaries, and were employed in the following roles: security guard, construction worker, maintenance assistant, general services employee, waiter and salesman, with basic education and no record of higher education. One participant indicated that he was retired due to a disability, and another was unemployed. The name of the collective originates from jokes between the members, referring to a man who had been betrayed, which explains the exclusive presence of men. They explained that this reference is due to the fact that a bovine animal has the habit of licking salt.

The focus group took place using a semi-structured interview, with questions divided into four blocks, addressing the residents' profiles, daily lives, the challenges faced, and measures adopted. Data collection was centered on the objective of qualifying the social management process in community development through Lambe Sal's activities at CRP-I. At the time, the residents' association was being established and two condominiums – six hundred housing units – were not yet occupied.

Flick's (2009) guidance on conducting the focus group were followed and, therefore, the data collection included a mediator, assistant facilitator and assistant, responsible for conducting the debate, taking note of any observations and making audio-visual records. In addition, the agreement of those present was required through signature of a free, prior and informed consent form (FPIC). The twelve members of Lambe Sal who took part in the focus group are identified below using the codes A1 to A12.

In turn, the semi-structured interview had the objective of clarifying and confirming the information and data collected in the focus group. Selection of this type of interview resides in the "expectation that it is more probable that the points of view of the subjects interviewed are expressed in an interview situation with open planning than in a standardized interview or questionnaire" (Flick, 2009, p. 143). As previously stated, we selected the condominium manager and assistant manager from the two condominiums that had completed the post-occupation process (CRP-I and CRP-V). The questions in this case followed the same focus group blocks.

The data was transcribed and then analyzed, based on a lexicometric approach, supported by the free data analysis software Iramuteq, which uses statistical calculations to make analyses of the text corpus and individual tables/words (Camargo & Justo, 2013). The software enables the application of simple procedures and multivariate analyses, including descending hierarchical classification (DHC). DHC was used in this research to operationalize the data obtained in the focus group, considering that application of the semi-structured interview was exclusively confirmatory, not requiring additional information. Based on processing the transcribed text into a unified corpus, the software generated analytical classes and statistical data which support the discussion of the results in the informed sequence.

## INTERLOCUTIONS BETWEEN SOCIAL MANAGEMENT CATEGORIES AND LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES

In the dissertation "*Para uma gestão social no Programa Minha Casa, Minha Vida: reflexões acerca da organização comunitária na faixa 1*", Cardoso (2015) used Caçado et al. (2015) theoretical model, which we refer to in this article, in an analysis of two social work experiences. One of the developments studied, a PTTS was implemented by the Assú city council (Rio Grande do Norte). At the other, in São Gonçalo do Amarante, there was no PTTS, but there was an active community association, and this was selected as the locus of the research. In an analysis of the two cases, Cardoso (2015) explored the externalities of community organization, based on formalities, using this theoretical model as the theoretical lens (Caçado et al., 2015) and PTTS orientation, in accordance with the CEF instrument. In one case, the author addressed PTTS implementation by Assú city council; in the other, the value of the Conjunto Brasil Residents' Association in São Gonçalo do Amarante.

The case studied here, in contrast to Cardoso (2015), provides the externalities of social management derived from community development actions, based on the activities of an informal group of residents who call themselves the Lambe Sal Association. With no formal registration, the association is formed exclusively by men, and originated from interaction between residents in their free time. It arose from jokes between men who met in front of the condominium on weekends to talk and have fun. The collective has a genuinely community origin, with no participation from an external agent. The group took on the role of organizing trips and parties to integrate the residents' families and any subsequent guests. There are approximately fifty associates (families) who, with the identity of an association – although informal –, has an administration, with the positions of president, vice-president and treasurer, selected to perform their duties by the other participants.

**Figure1**  
**Some of the members of the Lambe Sal collective**



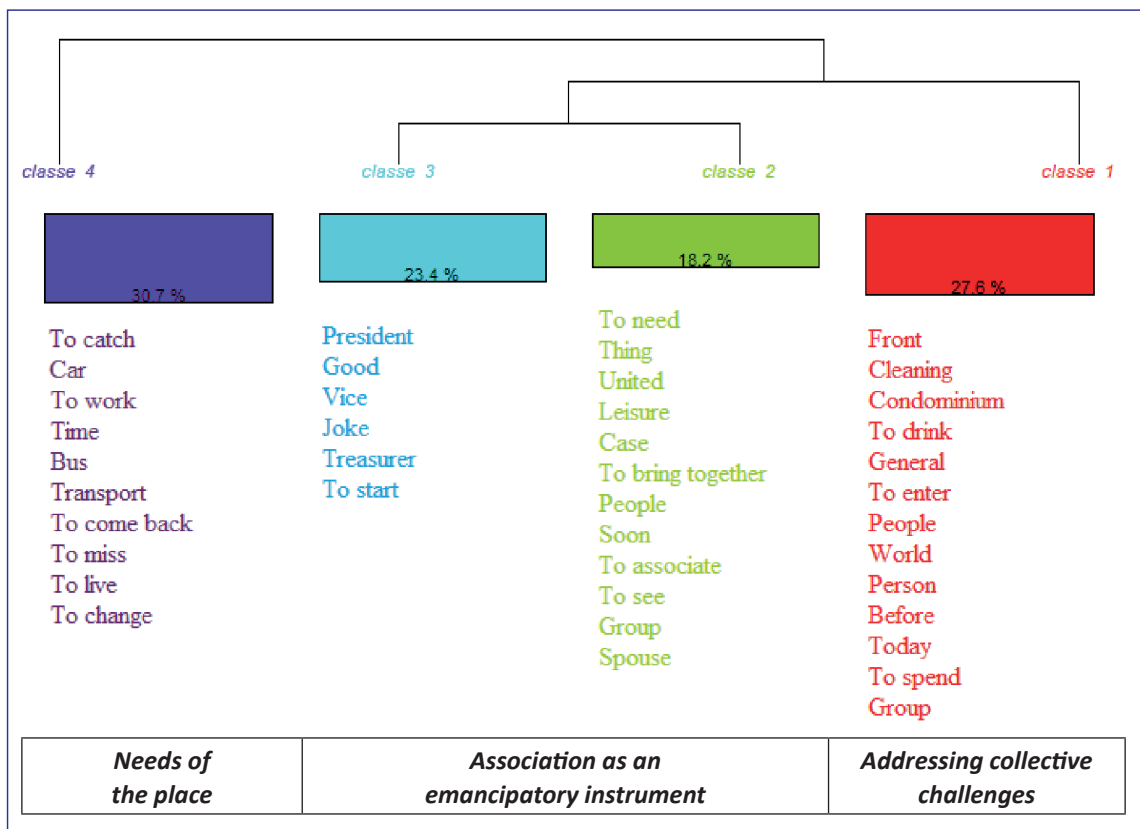
Source: Authors own archives (2020).

The association has the policy of charging a symbolic monthly fee of BRL 5.00 for recreational activities with members' families. However, repeated delays in the payment of the condominium charge has led Lambe Sal to sharing part of the collective's resources with everyone, including expenditure on cleaning and the maintenance of communal areas. In addition to this voluntary action, the collective holds parties on commemorative dates, with open participation, and pays for small expenses of a general interest.

With the transcription of the focus group, a corpus was prepared with Iramuteq processing, accompanied by statistics. In the corpus, the software identified 268 text segments (TS), correspondent to the cuts that the tool makes to every group of forty words. The utilization was 192 TS, representing 71.64% retention, which is a percentage considered sufficient to guarantee the quality of the findings (Camargo & Justo, 2016). Eight thousand, eight hundred and forty-five (8,845) occurrences (words, forms or vocables) were calculated, with 1,403 distinct words, and 671 with a single occurrence.

Iramuteq’s descending hierarchical classification (DHC) generated four classes: 1, with 53 TS (27.6%); 2, with 35 TS (18.23%); 3, with 45 TS (23.44%), and 4, with 59 TS (30.73%). This data is provided in the dendrogram (Figure 2), which also summarizes significant words, and is ordered using the chi-squared test ( $\chi^2$ ), to indicate the strength of the association of each word to the class. The classes received titles, *a posteriori*, based on the group of words for each cluster.

**Figure 2**  
**Dendrogram of the classes with some of the characterizing words**

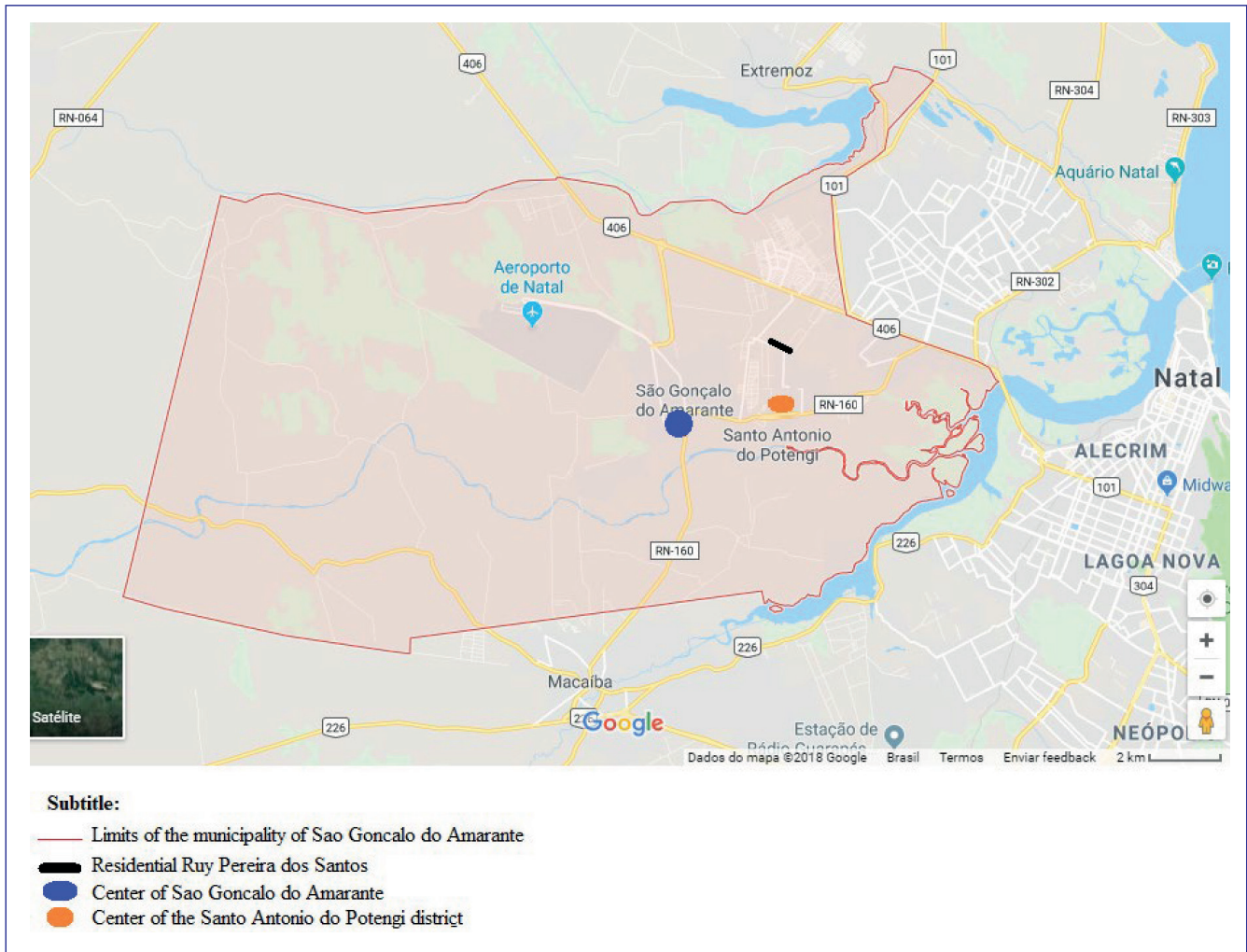


Source: Adapted from Iramuteq software, research data (2020).

Considering the hierarchical characteristic of the classification presented in the dendrogram, the thematic classes were analyzed according to the order of independence in relation to the others and, therefore, the analysis sequence respects the following order in this case: needs of the place (class 4), addressing collective challenges (class 1) and association as an emancipatory instrument (classes 2 and 3).

Class 4, which we call “needs of the place”, is related to comments related to deficiencies in local infrastructure in the vicinity of the residential area, starting with the location, which is approximately 4.5 km from the administrative center of São Gonçalo do Amarante, and approximately 3.2 km from the district of Santo Antônio, which is within the municipality. Figure 3 illustrates the location of the residential area in relation to these two points and the main link roads.

**Figure 3**  
**Residencial Ruy Pereira in relation to the municipality of São Gonçalo do Amarante, the Santo Antônio do Potengi district and main link roads**

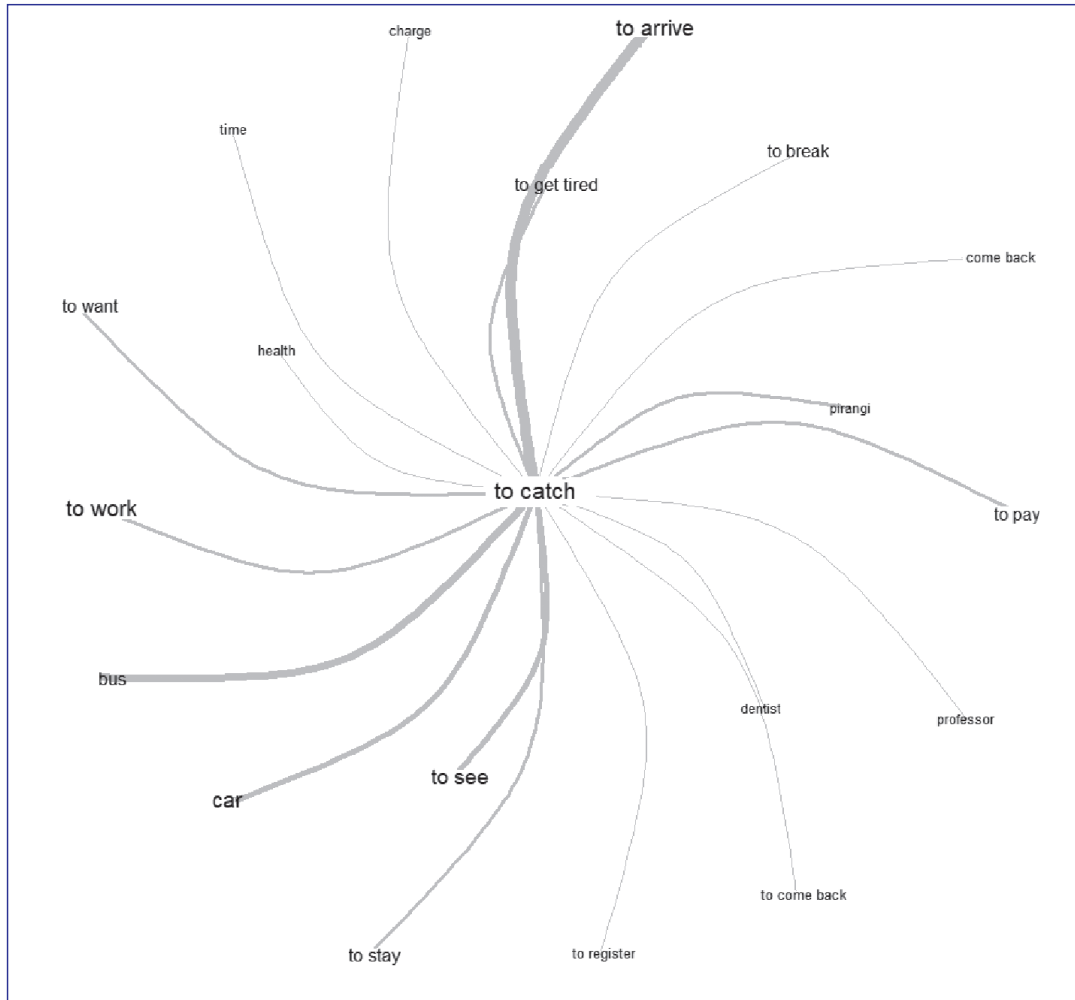


Source: Adapted from Google Maps (2020).

Urban transport is highlighted, mentioned recurrently, and being the only form of transportation for a significant number of residents, including the commute to work. One of the participants commented that he had lost his job on account of systematic irregularities in the local public transport service. “To be tired”, “bus”, “car”, “transport”, “to catch” and “to miss” clearly illustrate this phenomenon. The Iramuteq similarity analysis, based on graph theory, reinforces the relation of “to catch”, principally “to arrive” and “to work”. The following statements illustrate this phenomenon: “have to catch two buses to get here” (A5), “I catch the circular here; I catch the R [...] then I catch the 10 [bus]. I arrive there tired; I am more tired from the bus journey than from working” (A1). In turn, “To arrive” refers to some of the destinations of the house-work-house commute. The relation to quality of life is observed by the presence of the word “health” in a lower position in the class.



**Figure 4**  
**Analysis of the similarity of the word to catch**



Source: Adapted from Iramuteq software, research data (2020).

Due to the fact that Lambe Sal does not include all of the families – it has fifty members in a universe of three hundred at CRP-I –, it is not possible to relate stable social relations and identity with the place from its actions. However, the collective does have an internal identity and with the place, generating proximity and solidarity that extrapolate members` express interests. It is interesting to observe that, according to the participants, the association was established for leisure activities, and to bring the families closer together. However, the continuity of the association goes beyond this motivation: “[...] because I am telling you: if it were not for us, today, from the association that we started [the cleaning activities] before forming the condominium association, I don`t know how the cleaning of the condominium would be carried out” (A2). The idea is reinforced by the perspective of substantive rationality put forward by Resident A7: “We are in the group because we help each other to do something, to do something else, so [...] if it is the case, if we [...] if I should leave, he would leave too [...] and he will be missed and [the group] will dissolve.”

Social work guided by collectivity approaches the “self-interest rightly understood” category (Cançado et al., 2015), taken as a precondition for individual well-being which, in the associated residents` comments, refers to actions they share in a physical environment: “When I go to clean, I think about [...] the children; who from my family is going to arrive [...] who is going to come in [...] I think that everyone has the same thought” (A1); “This here is like [...] because we don`t have a garden; this here is as if it were the garden at our home. The condominium itself is the garden of our house. If we don`t take care of it [...] it is as if it were a landfill site, you know?” (A2).

The logic of interdependence (Cançado et al., 2015) is demonstrated in the perception of the people who act in the search to (re)construct a physical space – cleaning and painting walls – and social, relations between neighbors – leisure time and events on commemorative dates – and goals for collective well-being. Therefore, we are analyzing relations between members of an association. Instead of internal management, to fulfil the mission they elected for the collective – leisure for their own families –, we have an extended action, which gains non-linear interactions because they focus on their children, on those from the family who are going to arrive, and those who will enter the condominium as visitors.

In turn, class 1 refers to addressing collective challenges, related both to the search for quality of life, and demands resulting from the non-payment of condominium charges, such as the absence of a cleaning service in the condominium. There were significant references to the word “cleaning”, since this is the activity that most characterized the association’s actions, as Resident A2 reports: “We are cleaning the condominium because we are an association and we are here to do that. And we want our own well-being.” A statement of this nature represents the collective feeling and indicates the nature of social management: the complexity of non-government public phenomena, of a community interest. Therefore, cleaning the condominium is not simply cleaning and embellishment, but also has the goal that “we want our own well-being.” There were no individual demonstrations; on the contrary, the feelings expressed were from everyone.

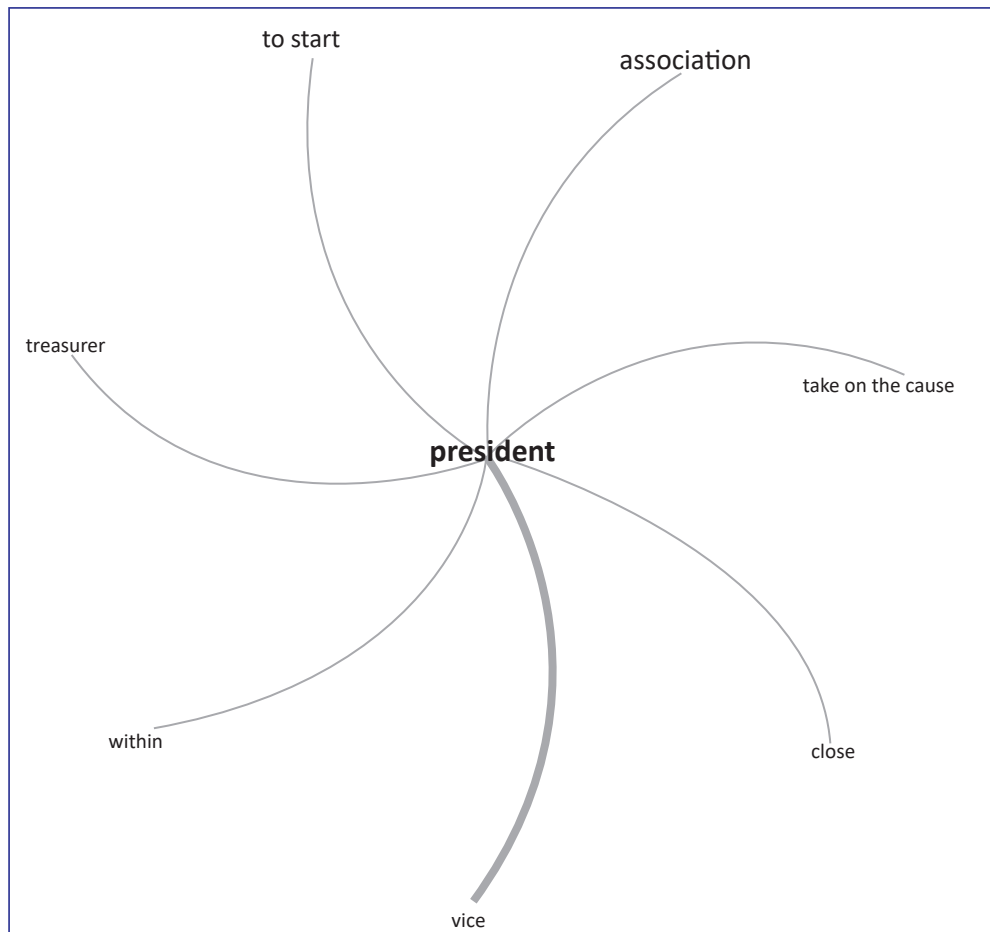
The collective has clarity between the role that it should take on (and does), in order to contribute towards the well-being and leisure of members and their families, and what is exclusively that of the condominium management, with regards to community organization and managing the problems, demands, and interests of the entire community. However, we should consider that Lambe Sal contributes towards bringing people together at CRP-I, both through work, when it voluntarily carries out collective cleaning activities in the communal areas, and leisure, when it sponsors parties for families with free participation. But not only this. They have hybrid relations, which leave the organizational environment for external community coexistence, when they show concern for families and other visitors.

Lambe Sal is an expression of societal management (Carvalho, 1998), acting for community renewal through roles taken on in public housing policy and the adoption of flexible, non-structured processes. Considering the practice from a participative point of view, with the aim of its participation sharing power between the state and society (Dagnino, 2004a, 2004b; Demo, 2009; Presoto & Westphal, 2005), the CRP-I experience is an underdeveloped practice, since it has limited dialogues with public authority representatives to solve emergency demands: “I would have a meeting with a person there, and I would chase after that person, to see if they would help me next year; if they would help the association, to have a person here to give additional school classes. I don’t know... I am waiting for their answer, and I think I will get it tomorrow” (A2).

It is sharing power that, as Demo (2009) suggests, involves reality and takes place through guided actions and dialogue, in an intersubjective sense (Cançado et al., 2015), which is the starting point in the defense of the interests of the community, which contributes and encourages potential. The space in which they act constitutes the public sphere (Habermas, 1997), since the validation of standards and actions takes place here, by way of collective decisions in which interested social actors take part: “[...] if you arrive and want to be part of the group, we hold a meeting and you will become a contributor” (A3). The phrases stated by residents, although limited within the domain of the condominium, enable an approximation with intersubjectivity and dialogicity (Tenório, 2005).

In the joint analysis of classes 2 and 3, which present the association as an emancipatory instrument, comments linked to members’ social relations in the condominium are observed. During data collection, integrating statements prevail: “we are light-hearted and united” (A9); “I think the best thing we have here is unity, although [the gate] is open here. It is ours!” (A5); “it is because, it is not by chance that the group brought almost fifty people together. So it is a... mainly our group; it is very united group” (A2). When the matching function is used in the word “president”, highlighted in class 3, the relation with the association president’s comments is clear, in which he reinforced the collective’s role as a mobilizing agent, to the detriment of an authoritative concept: “The members have to know that I am not the association; I am just the president; the association is them. The association is only weak if they weaken.” The same understanding is extended to other mentions of the association’s functions observed in the class, such as the vice-president and treasurer.

**Figure 5**  
**Analysis of the similarity of the expression “president”**



Source: Adapted from Iramuteq software, research data (2020).

The residents` reference to the word “good” is associated to the evaluation they make of community life following establishment of the association. The presence of words such as “joke” (class 3), “leisure”, “to meet” and “group” (class 2) refers to the initial meetings of male condominium residents – to talk about and enjoy their leisure time –, associating those moments both to the reasons for its beginning and the possibility of continuing the initiative. It draws attention to the fact that, before moving to CRP-I, the group participants did not know each other, and they held short meetings at various times, which explains the subsequent proximity and relationship of trust. The informants advised that from the moment they identified themselves as a group, they decided to call it Lambe Sal, due to the jokes they made to refer to a man who has been betrayed: “We met here and started to drink, eat a few things, and then, [...] a bean stew [...] because it was our leisure time, you know? So, we started to take care of the condominium, in terms of cleaning” (A1).

The emancipatory ideal (Cançado et al., 2015) is observed in the way that the collective arose, and the members` shared interest in continuing the actions which they carry out, focused on the objective of autonomy “This association will pan out, you know? Its main idea is really cool” (A7); “Continuity! It may even decrease, but end, I don` t think that it will end, no!” (A1 and A10); “Further on, in the future, we would like it to be for our children [...] we made great efforts to achieve this, you know? [...] We would like it to be even better in the future” (A11).

With regards to the prospect of social work actions in housing policy, which should be orientated to promote community organization, the CRP-I experience did not have any link with the PTTS implemented by the city council via the employment of a third party company. Displays of the participants' total disinterest, and even a lack of knowledge of the fact that this was social work also occurred during the data collection: "There was not! [...] In fact, I don't even know what it is" (A1); "I never participated" (A9).

The spontaneous way that the collective has conducted these activities influenced the intersubjective way the members see themselves, among other aspects. When asked about Lambe Sal's (collective) action, the response given was: "We see ourselves as citizens, you know?" (A1). They are active social subjects who recognize themselves as such (Demo, 2009) through (shared) experiences which value the sociocultural aspect of identity and returns to the struggle for rights (Costa, 2008). The collective also emerges, consolidating physical identities with the place and of affection, with a sociocultural and interactional slant that encourages it to tackle a context defined by problems of different types, shaped by recently forged relationships of trust (less than two years): "It is the friendship that we have for each other. [...] we are united people here. Like being brothers. What one needs from another, helps [...] collecting something [...] if there is a person who needs something, and something has happened [...] everybody comes together, helps him... everybody is like that" (A6).

The collective has taken on a position of self-promotion (Demo, 2009), taking over the space as an accomplishment and of social recognition. A point frequently observed in the comments which Demo (2009) calls moments of self-criticism. They are times that lead the informants to reflect on the role they have in the condominium, and the collective's field of activity. For this reason, they are clear about the condominium association's responsibility of dealing with and solving the demands of all residents. On the other hand, they are aware of the criticism that surrounds the collective, starting with its name, which refers to the idea of a man who has been betrayed: "If the association had a different name, there would definitely be more members" (A9).

While they consider that the name chosen is a reason for criticism, deterring new members, the collective is not interested in changing this, since they see a reference to social cohesion in it – a symbol, an identity: "Someone suggesting a change in the name is an offence to the association!" (A8); "Definitely [a change of name] not even fifty will stay; many people would leave" (A1). Self-criticism occurs not only towards the resistance and reproach that flank the collective's name, and any loss of new members, but also related to their actions – which they recognize are limited when considering community requirements which, on the other hand, require efforts that are beyond the association's competencies.

The participants identify that the interventions they have carried out in the physical environment, such as cleaning and conservation, in fact correspond to condominium management responsibilities. In addition, they recognize the existence of requirements in the physical environment that need to be addressed by the public authorities and should be a joint struggle by residents, as is the case of the provision of public transport and other public services at the site. Therefore, they recognize that, at given moments, they extrapolate the role that orientated the association's establishment: reinforcing interpersonal relations through leisure opportunities and integrating members' families.

## CONCLUSION

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Social management is reported here through emancipatory movements via physical identities and of affection between residents assisted by the set of actions that the Lambe Sal Association conducts in interactional ways that extrapolate the exclusive idea of serving the needs of members and community coexistence, reaching external concerns, especially the condominium-visitor relation. An expression of autonomous community management, the informal collective did not take on any role in the PTTS implemented by the company that won the city council public tender. However, it is a community organization that mitigates conflicts and brings people together, although it has limited effects, considering that it is not the collective's objective to take on duties that are the responsibility of condominium management. Nevertheless, the collective is the initiative which contributes most towards a community feeling and life, with a higher quality than that of the condominium management, conducting work in communal spaces and at events. It also responds to community interests, meeting the financial shortfall in the condominium charges.

Attributes of community development are seen in the social management of CRP-I. SIRU explains the origins of the association, which emerged from agreed interests related to community life, bringing neighbors together to establish ties of friendship and trust. The association mitigates deficiencies in public services and equipment, although it recognizes limitations in its role and capacity for resolution. Through relations of proximity and solidarity, the members see that collective well-being is synonymous with individual well-being. The collective is not recognized for actions within the public sphere, in a broad sense, considering that they do not experience situations such as negotiations with government officials to solve public transport needs, or equipping the place with the public equipment required, such as a school.

The association is widely recognized internally, and the members identify themselves as active subjects in shared decisions. It provides cohesion and social change, although with limited political participation, and no interaction with the public authorities to claim their rights. The collective is seen by members as a community development alternative, with a limited reach. Although it does not take on broader community development actions, the collective has the profile of self-promotion, with ownership of the place as an achievement, contributing towards bringing people closer together, both through voluntary cleaning of the communal areas and events on commemorative dates, which are open to condominium residents. The actions contribute to the formation of a local identity and sense of belonging.

Although some of the research took place in the evenings, following a suggestion from local leaders as a measure to tailor the data collection to conviviality and the residents' availability, mobility-related problems were observed. There were delays in starting the dialogues and non-attendance by some members, who did not take part due to family or work issues. There were various references to people who had "just arrived from work" and were tired, "were stuck in traffic" or "something had unexpectedly come up at work."

Social management processes become complex the more they attempt to meet varying public interests, expanding the range of action, and gaining a diffuse nature due to the limited availability of resources. This risk is contained by members' collective consciousness with regards to the role of Lambe Sal in relation to that of the condominium association. For this reason, their success should be followed-up, even more so when we consider that when this research ended, the six condominiums – each with three hundred housing units – coordinated the establishment of a unified association, involving 1,800 families. Therefore, the following should be investigated: How and which roles have Lambe Sal taken on following the establishment of a community association? What type of relation has been established between Lambe Sal and the community association? These are questions for future studies that may also address experiences of associations and collectives encouraged by PTTS actions, indicating internal social management processes by way of inducement. In addition, it would be an opportune moment to take other theoretical references, such as environmental psychology, which may contribute towards revealing aspects of attachment and affection for the physical and social environment, mediated by the socioeconomic and sociocultural profile of beneficiaries of social housing developments.

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