

Resource appropriation and deviation strategies in Santiago de Cali's Municipal Planning System

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From some elements that characterize an elite capture mechanism mentioned in literature, this article compares five resource appropriation strategies carried out by certain players from the participative Municipal Planning System (MPS) from Colombia's third largest municipality between 1998 and 2008. By using mixed methods and a utilization-focused evaluation design, the MPS players and their partnerships were approached by which their availing of informational asymmetries restricted participation and biased the use of resources. The research identified as the basic cause of the capture the disarticulation of the MPS into three subsystems: the community, instances of local participation, and the Planning Department. The article also describes the series of institutional adjustments carried out between 2012 and 2015 (monitoring, e-voting) seeking to minimize capture possibilities.

Keywords: participative local planning; social mechanisms; evaluation; elite capture; informational asymmetries.

Estratégias de apropriação e desvio de recursos no Sistema Municipal de Planejamento de Santiago de Cali

A partir de alguns elementos que caracterizam o mecanismo de captura de elite mencionado na literatura, este artigo compara cinco estratégias de apropriação de recursos feitas por certos atores do Sistema Municipal de Planejamento (SMP) participativo, numa cidade colombiana entre 1998 e 2008. A partir de uma abordagem de avaliação com foco no uso foram abordados os atores do SMP e as parcerias, aproveitando assimetrias de informação, restringiram a participação e enviesaram o uso de recursos territoriais. A pesquisa identificou como a causa básica da captura, o desmantelamento do SMP em três subsistemas: a comunidade, as instâncias de participação local e o Departamento Municipal de Planejamento. O artigo também descreve os ajustes institucionais desenvolvidos entre 2012 e 2015 (monitoração, voto eletrônico), buscando reduzir as possibilidades de captura.

Palavras-chave: planejamento local participativo; mecanismos sociais; avaliação; captura de elite; assimetrias de informação.

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A partir de algunos elementos que caracterizan un mecanismo de captura de élite mencionado en la literatura, este artículo compara cinco estrategias de apropiación de recursos realizadas por ciertos actores del Sistema Municipal de Planeación (SMP) participativa, del tercer municipio de Colombia entre 1998 y 2008. Desde un enfoque de evaluación centrada en el uso, se abordaron los actores del SMP y sus alianzas que, aprovechando asimetrías informacionales, restringieron la participación y sesgaron el uso de los recursos. La investigación identificó como causal básica de la captura, la desarticulación del SMP en tres subsistemas: la comunidad, las instancias de participación local y el Departamento de Planeación. El artículo describe igualmente la serie de ajustes institucionales desarrollados entre 2012 y 2015 (monitoreo, e-voting) buscando minimizar las posibilidades de captura.

Palabras claves: planeación local participativa; mecanismos sociales; evaluación; captura de elites; asimetrías de información.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Adoption of participative approaches, both in the public sphere as in that of international development, has meant an important theoretical and methodological turn in the relationship among citizens, the State, and development agencies. After periods strongly guided by the technical criterion appertaining to scientific optimism since the 1950s to the 1970s; during the 1980s, participative techniques began appear in the field, including perspectives, like “alternative development”, social capital, and citizen participation (Hickey and Mohan, 2004). Nevertheless, studies question the guarantee of such participation in practice (Montecinos, 2005). By 1989, C. de Mattos highlighted from the Latin American and Caribbean Institute for Economic and Social Planning (Ilpes, for the term in Spanish) the fact that the variety of frequently contradictory interests, rationalities, and strategies produced political projects in permanent confrontation, which question the viability of any construction process of consensus around a “local general interest” sought (De Mattos, 1989:127).

Our contribution in this critical line lies in sketching, in light of these weaknesses, the cooperation strategies deployed by the players in a decentralized municipal planning system in terms of public resource capture or deviation networks. Thus, we provide empirical evidence on the “black box” of the Municipal Planning System (MPS) of Santiago de Cali, whose modalities of parallel operation through partnerships and informational asymmetry restricts participation and biases the use of public resources transferred through the Fiscal Municipal Territorial “Situado”, which is a local revenue-sharing system (the Situado, hereinafter). After enunciating five capture strategies discovered in 2009, emphasis is made on the most determinant causes of their consolidation, finally describing the principal changes arising to date by the Municipal Mayor’s office, product of their knowledge.

The document is divided into eight sections. The first establishes the elite capture concept. The second, third, and fourth present the MPS evolution, the study context, and the evaluation methodology used. The fifth and sixth comprise the study results for the 1998-2008 period and their respective discussion, laying out the capture strategies. The seventh summarizes adjustments to the MPS between 2012 and 2015 from the assessment findings. Lastly, conclusions and perspectives are presented.

2. THE CONCEPT OF CAPTURE AND ELITE CAPTURE

The term “capture” has been used in literature, mainly economic and of public administration, to account for a behavior through which a given individual or organization obtains for its particular wellbeing a specific benefit or exemption. Thus, for example, the Public Choice Theory, located between economy and policy and aimed at the knowledge of political markets, has contributed since its foundation during the mid-20th century a vast series of studies around the Capture by the State and Revenue-seeking (Mitchell, 1988). This is how certain groups act as “revenue hunters”, trying to obtain benefits for themselves through the political sphere (Krueger, 1974).

Further, the agency theory (Laffont and Tirole, 1993) focuses on the regulatory problems where the effectiveness of the regulation depends on the level of information the principal (government/regulatory organism) and the agent (company/regulated agent) have. The challenge consists in the incentives available for the regulator to motivate and control the agents to use the superior quality information they have to benefit the general wellbeing, although persisting in the search for their own

interest. Such disparity bases an informational asymmetry that generates an imbalance of power and a reliance of the principal on the agent.

Our interest, most marked by the participative and political dimensions (regarding the relations of power exerted locally) of the phenomenon, guide us to the theoretical body of the Development Studies. The concept derives from a critique of the participative approaches by social scientists, which highlights the fact that the elites within the communities that due to ethnic reasons, gender, survival, political or religious affiliation, etc., seek to appropriate the benefits of the participation initiatives (Lund and Saito, 2013). Hence, although the participation seeks to insert and give voice to the marginalized in the community's decision making organism (Mansuri and Rao, 2013), when the elite capture takes place, it represents a selection bias of the resource beneficiaries.

Among its causes, literature indicates the asymmetry of power as a force that makes the preferences of the elites prevail (Platteau and Somville, 2014). But geographic and social factors exist to reinforce it; a review of nearly 500 studies on the theme of participative development and decentralization shows that the capture tends to be higher in the centers of remote communities, with low level of literacy and significant inequity regarding income, gender, race, or cast (Mansuri and Rao, 2013:5). Thereby, the term refers to an "Intra-community Capture", quite different from that developed within the context of the federalist theory (Mookherjee, 2015).

2.1 CONSTITUENT ELEMENTS OF AN ELITE CAPTURE MECHANISM

Appealing to the image of mechanisms as "collections of entities and activities organized in the production of regular changes from initial conditions to final conditions" (Craver, 2001:58), our interest in this article was to expose the way certain changes take place in the action system denominated Municipal Planning System (MPS), in function of certain interaction patterns. Without seeking to formalize an "elite capture mechanism", which requires a systematization of literature that differs from the purpose of this article, we will identify the elements that constitute a mechanism that allows, in principle, characterizing the capture strategies identified in the MPS. Chart 1 presents, thus, these elements as "social practices" and some expressions that tend to be expressed in literature.

CHART 1 **CONSTITUENT ELEMENTS OF AN ELITE CAPTURE MECHANISM**

SOCIAL PRACTICE		CONCEPTUALIZATION
i	The funder finds it tempting to skip the phase of community empowerment	Intervention strategies
ii	The funder requests the future beneficiaries:	
iii	- to conform groups or adhere to organizations	Intermediation; Conformation of elites (e.g. Platteau and Gaspart, 2004)
iv	- "elect" leaders that can direct them	

Continue

SOCIAL PRACTICE		CONCEPTUALIZATION
v	* These leaders are typically the most prominent members	
vi	* Are well-connected people	Power based on key resources (e.g. Friedberg, 1997)
vii	** Can gain access to leadership positions in associations eligible for funding"	
viii	The funder has little or no communication with the community, except through said leaders	Information asymmetries (e.g. Laffont and Tirole, 1993)
ix	A relationship of power open to abuse is established	Structuring of power relations (e.g. Friedberg, 1997)
x	Leaders are usually adept to representing their own interests on behalf of community interests	Capture of participation (Platteau and Somville, 2014)
xi	Personal interests are expressed in light of the deliverables of the project	Capture of benefits (Mosse, 2001)

Source: Sánchez (2018) from Platteau and Gaspart (2003).

As noted, the presentation scheme does not include all the interactions and causal relations and, in practice, these elements are presented less linearly. Therein the interest in illustrating their interaction applied to the MPS case. In this first work, we have found it convenient to use metaphors as illustration and explanation tool.

2.2 A METAPHORICAL REPRESENTATION OF CAPTURE STRATEGIES

In the final elaboration of the capture strategies, we proceeded through assigning images or metaphors that highlight the principal elements that, to our understanding, allow apprehending their functioning. Of great tradition in the physical sciences, the metaphor is a figure commonly used to refer to objects and entities of various kinds; the case of the eight *images of the organization* proposed by G. Morgan (1986) is a clear example of its explanatory power in the field of collective action. Metaphors allow, from an interpretivist epistemology, condensing in a single semantic figure a broad margin of explanatory concepts that facilitate their comprehension, differentiation, and categorization. This resource has been used for a long time in understanding public administration phenomena (Sköldbberg, 1994). Metaphors acquire a “strong cognitive function [...] when “a metaphorical statement can generate new knowledge and vision changing relations among things designated”, allowing, for example, the use of fantasy terms in scientific texts (Black, 1977; cited in Bailer-Jones, 2002:114).

3. THE MUNICIPAL PLANNING SYSTEM (MPS) OF SANTIAGO DE CALI. COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND POLITICAL ORGANIZATION OF THE TERRITORY

Within the decentralization context of the 1950s emerges State planning in Colombia, gaining strength in the 1970s with Cepal guidelines, and later by Ilpes. With the current Political Constitution of 1991,

such advances were consolidated, among others, with the Territorial Development Plans, reaffirming several aspects of territorial autonomy.

The territorial organization and division of municipalities into communes (urban area) and villages (rural area) (Legislation 136/1994), is carried out in Colombia by the Municipal Councils,¹ for the sake of improving service delivery and ensuring citizen participation. Each of these communes/villages has local boards: Local Administrative Board (JAL, for the term in Spanish)² and Communal Action Board (JAC, for the term in Spanish),³ whose operations, interactions, and investment decisions are the object of this article. It is worth stating that the JAC are the country's most disseminated and oldest forms of community organization, institutionalized by Legislation 19/1958 as a mechanism of social insertion to the municipal dynamics and of pacification and prevention of more insurgent movements. They are even considered among the most legitimate instances to implement the peace agreements (FIP, 2014).

In Cali—the third most populated municipality in Colombia—⁴ the first participative planning process, the 1979 Municipal Development Plan, was accompanied by the first efforts to divide the city into zones, a later reference of the current territorial division. This is how since 1986, Cali is subdivided into 22 communes and 15 villages, with their respective JACs (one per neighborhood) and JALs (one per commune/village). The following will show the emergence of the planning system object of study.

3.1 CALI'S MUNICIPAL PLANNING SYSTEM (MPS). STRUCTURE AND RESOURCES

After the appearance of the first instances of territorial management and participation in the 1980s, the Municipal Planning System (MPS) was created in the 1990s: in 1988, the Local Integrated Attention Centers (C.A.L.I., for the term in Spanish) came about for delegation and administrative decentralization and to be closer to the community; and at participative level, in 1989, the current Territorial Planning Committees (TP Committees)⁵ in the communes/villages appeared to optimize their resources and services and receive investment projects from the citizens. Both instances became the basis to create the MPS in 1993 (Agreement 25), consolidating active citizen participation through the JAC and JAL.

¹ Composed of 21 seats elected through direct vote for 4 years; debates and approves the mayor's projects, propitiating citizen participation. It should be stated that, in Colombia, the political and administrative control of Governors and Mayors is exerted respectively by the Departmental Assemblies and the Municipal Councils.

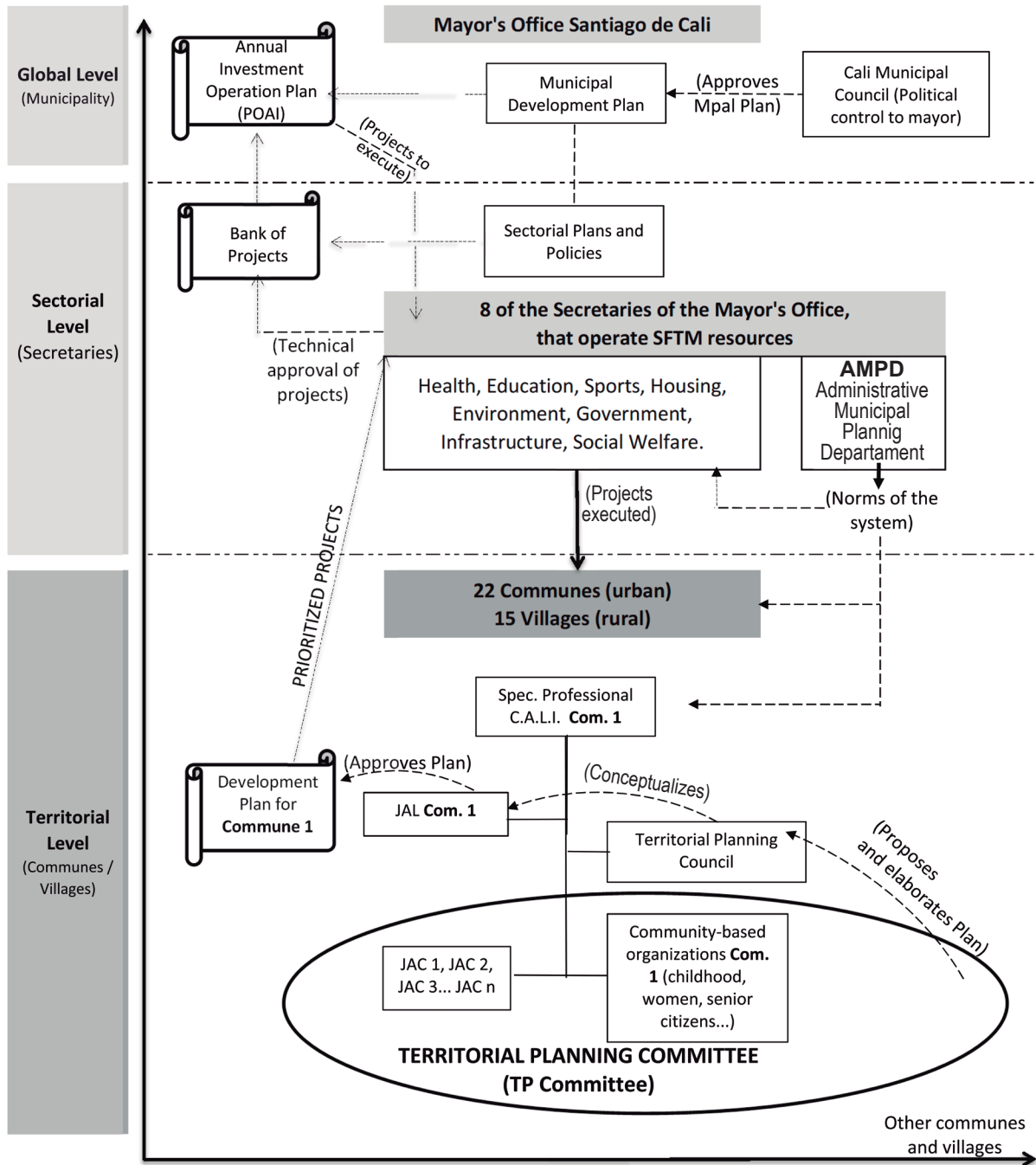
² Each commune/village has a JAL with members elected *ad honorem* through popular vote for four-year periods coinciding with the period of the Municipal Council; these are its articulator with the Mayor and the community.

³ Comprised voluntarily by inhabitants from group of neighborhoods, many times organized into community associations, with the purpose of improving their living conditions and practicing participative democracy.

⁴ With 2.3 million inhabitants (Department of Valle del Cauca with 4.6 million), and Bogotá and Medellín with 7.9 and 2.4 million inhabitants, respectively, according to projections to 2015 by DANE (www.dane.gov.co).

⁵ They were, then, called Inter-sectorial Committees conformed by offices from the Administration and entities from the private sector, but in 1997 these were replaced by spaces of democratic agreement called Territorial Planning Committees (TP Committees).

FIGURE 1 STRUCTURE AND FLOW OF DECISIONS IN THE MUNICIPAL PLANNING SYSTEM, MPS, OF SANTIAGO DE CALI. VISION FROM COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION



Source: Elaborated by the authors.

At the national level, Organic Legislation 152/1994 established the procedures and mechanisms for the elaboration, approval, execution, follow up, and evaluation of the National, Departmental, and Municipal Development Plans, within a framework of decentralization and participation.

In line with such legislation, Agreement 01 by the Cali Municipal Council redefined in 1996 the MPS as

the set of agents and instances that, according to certain principles and through an established procedure, formulate, approve, execute, and evaluate the different planning instruments [...] to guarantee integral and harmonious development of the territorial entity.

According to it, the MPS operates in three levels (figure 1):

- *Global Planning*, of municipal reach, which is aimed at the harmonious interrelation of the components of social, economic, physical, administrative, and financial development;
- *Sectorial Planning*, where the offices or secretaries identify and prioritize the policies of sectors, like health and education in function of the objectives of the global level;
- *Territorial Planning*, functionally materializes both previous levels in territorial units defined as Commune or Village; three components are differentiated:
 - a. The Development Plan for the commune/village, governing instrument of the affairs of the commune that must contain the mid-term objectives and strategies to confront prioritized problems. This condenses the projects approved locally for their revision by the offices, inclusion in the municipality's bank of projects, and their programming for execution through the municipality's Poai.⁶
 - b. The Specialized Professional, director of a C.A.L.I. and authority responsible for the planning process by the TP Committees (see iii ahead).
 - c. The three instances of local planning:
 - i. The JAL, which approves the Commune's Development Plan, with prior presentation by the Specialized Professional from the C.A.L.I.;
 - ii. The Territorial Planning Council, which must issue a concept on the content of the Plan and follow up its execution. These were created in 1998 with only a consulting function in representation of civilian society;
 - iii. The Territorial Planning Committee (TP Committee) from the commune/village in charge of formulating the development plan from participation at the most basic level in neighborhoods (communes) and townships (villages). Presidents of the JACs and community-based organizations can vote; the C.A.L.I. professional and JAL presidents participate without vote. These were created in 1997 and adopted a planning methodology through training supported by UNDP.

Lastly, the financial resources for the MPS come from the Situado, as transference from the nation for the basic needs of the Departments. Cali began executing projects in 1998, giving

⁶ The Annual Investment Operating Plan (Poai, for the term in Spanish) relates the projects of a given fiscal period of the municipality, classified by sectors and offices, and which will permit reaching the objectives of the Municipal Development Plan.

each commune an average of Cop\$4,500 million (US\$1.5 million) every four years, with villages receiving far less.

4. STUDY CONTEXT

The Municipal Development Plan for 2008-11 established the goal of evaluating the MPS in 2009; consequently, the Administrative Department of Municipal Planning (ADMP) hired a study to evaluate its operability between 1998 and 2008, and improve the impact of planning and local investment. That allowed addressing, in a broader sense than reported here, the functioning and internal articulation of the MPS, the composition and representativeness of each participation instance, the perceptions of the players of the system, and the investment analysis of the Situado during this period. On the basis of the explanation of the capture strategies and other findings, the Mayor's office identified a series of institutional adaptations, which it set into practice during the 2011 planning process (Plans for 2012-15). For 2015, nevertheless, it considered it necessary to advance complementary adaptations for the process to generate the 2016-19 Local plans.

5. METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted between September and December 2009, under a 'use-centered evaluation' model (Patton, 2002), focused on the later management of the results for the potential adjustment of the system. This model foresees the preliminary identification of relevant users of the information, planners, and decision makers with whom close work is conducted from the design to the incorporation of results.

The design used mixed methods (Datta, 1997; Chen, 1997) as a pragmatic way of gathering relevant information from diverse perspectives, seeking to corroborate the hypotheses that emerge and increase the reliability of the conclusions. Process assessment and implementation elements were integrated, as well as the analysis of the logical action model on which the MPS was constructed and its articulation with the sectorial and global levels.

The study defined 37 spatial evaluative units: 22 Communes (urban) and 15 Villages (rural) of the municipality of Santiago de Cali, Colombia, with their respective planning instances as levels of action: C.A.L.I., TP Committee, JAC, and JAL. In each spatial unit, 268 semi-structured interviews and focal groups were carried out, along with a documentary review. Additionally, local experts were interviewed on urban planning, spatial planning, political representation, distribution of resources, and public projects, among others; municipal employees and citizens in general were also interviewed.

The global information processing was achieved through data analysis software (Atlas Ti 5.7, SPSS 15.0, Excel 2007, CMAP-tools 5.03, and GeoDa 9.5). The data obtained was converted into codes, categories, variables, conceptual maps, cartographic maps, dynamic tables, checklists, and output documents. After processing, the findings were recoded according to the working hypothesis and MPS patterns were constructed at global level and in the spatial units. A legal analysis was also included about the information found on the terrain with expert judgment to validate conclusions.

6. ELEMENTS OF THE ELITE CAPTURE MECHANISM WITHIN THE MPS CONTEXT

The results presented ahead concentrate on describing, from the operation of the MPS and the distribution of the Situado, the parallel operation modalities that, based on partnerships and informational asymmetry, constitute true capture strategies of the resources by certain agents of the system.

These descriptions establish a first link between the constituent elements of the elite capture mechanism defined in chart 1 and its relationship is established by citing the Roman numeral assigned in the chart.

6.1 MPS OPERATION

Leaders only participate in instances where they can exercise any practice associated to the capture mechanism (concretely practices v-xi, chart 1), where their action allows influencing upon investment decisions. Hence, the MPS only works through the TP Committee in which the JAC and JAL, Specialized C.A.L.I. Professionals, and representatives from the social organizations converge. Other planning instances, like the Territorial Planning Councils (TP Councils), of consultant nature and without administrative autonomy, do not operate due to scarce participation.

The deliverables of the projects, thus, suffered a misalignment in favor of personal interest (xi, chart 1), giving the Plans a mere character of formalism because the projects selected annually did not correspond to the problems prioritized in the Development Plans for communes/villages (Plans, hereinafter) to 2008.

Informational asymmetries were created (viii, chart 1) among the leaders recently arrived and those Specialized Professionals, JAC and JAL presidents, and former members of the TP Committee who, *being well connected* (vi, chart 1) to other players, had partnerships established and practical knowledge of the MPS. Over time, that *created unbalanced relations of power* (ix, chart 1) used as tools when negotiating in the TP Committees. Paradoxically, this dynamic was created in collegiate organisms by definition operating according to the norm.

An important effect of such informational asymmetries (viii, chart 1) and better connection with other players (vi, chart 1) is the consolidation of 'clientelism' practices in the JALs, where economic benefits are obtained from politicians given that they are leaders belonging to a political party and elected through popular vote. These partnerships have allowed accelerating processes in projects, receiving additional resources for their neighborhoods, or obtaining social recognition.

6.2 PROJECTS AND THE MUNICIPAL TERRITORIAL FISCAL REVENUE-SHARING SYSTEM (THE SITUADO)

The materialization of the practices described, associated to the elite capture from chart 1, may be evidenced in the resulting projects, both at the level of perception of the leaders as of the data added.

Furthermore, both the representation of particular interests on behalf of the community (x, chart 1), both the representation of self-interest on behalf of the community, and its expression in light of the deliverables of the projects (xi, chart 1) materialize, according to leaders consulted, in resources invested in micro projects, aimed at satisfying the particular needs of a neighborhood and its respective JAC, leaving without budget the rest of the neighborhoods in the commune. The particular interest is

reflected here on the validation of the performance of a given leader in the neighborhood that elected him/her (political credibility). However, this does not imply objectivity by the leaders, given that, subject to informational asymmetries (viii, chart 1), the MPS has no way of validate that the needs a particular project seeks to satisfy respond to the expression of the population because these were identified through the personal criterion of each leader.

The study of the structure of the Situado through investment areas revealed its concentration in two offices. Of the eight offices that execute the Situado, 51% of the investments were executed by two: Sports and Recreation (28%) and Education (23%), followed by Social Welfare (14%) and Culture (10%); together representing 75% of the total of the Situado during the period. The criterion to define bias in the projects selected lies in the incoherence with the needs expressed in the Plans and in the “objective” needs supported in the figures from the offices. For example, while previously a deficit was reported of sports fields requesting in response adaptation projects, the leaders consulted state that when others had been remodeled, they remained unused or without sports training programs. This shows how personal interests are expressed in light of the deliverables of the projects (xi, chart 1).

Together, these findings suggest that the use of the Situado by the communities passes through somewhat ineffective decision making processes. Nevertheless, the documentary review showed that the procedure was performed within the norm, i.e., the projects were approved by the TP Committee, conceptualized by the JAL, issued by resolution from the C.A.L.I. Specialized Professional, delivered to the Administrative Department of Municipal Planning (ADMP), evaluated and incorporated to the budget of the Annual Investment Operating Plan, and hired for execution by the secretaries. Due to this contrast, it becomes necessary to delve into the reality of these processes for the sake of explaining their ineffectiveness.

7. CAPTURE STRATEGIES OF THE SITUADO ASSOCIATED TO THE ELITE CAPTURE MECHANISM

Approaching the community players of the MPS permitted delving into the description differentiated from the parallel operation modalities consolidated over time. This differentiation is important because it allows recognizing practices that seek to restrict participation from those that are the result of the lack of agreement or common vision, or from those created by the offices themselves, but which as a whole undermine the effectiveness of the MPS. The investigation allowed reconstructing these modalities as capture strategies that reveal the real operation of this decentralized planning system.

Each of the five capture strategies was assigned a name that, by using the rhetorical figure of the metaphor in the creation of knowledge (Bailer-Jones, 2002), relevantly illustrates its dual form of operation and blockage of the effectiveness of citizen participation.

7.1 “TROJAN HORSE” CAPTURE STRATEGIES

These consist in introducing in the MPS a package of agreements and negotiations from interest groups without being detected by the norm, and complying successfully with the requisites. It functions through the association among particular contractors (builders, service providers, etc.)

and politicians (some in function as Municipal Councilmen), to introduce a project proposal to the community via NGOs with direct links to a politician or contractor. Introduction of the project in the commune/village is carried out through a leader (member of the political group, sometimes paid) who is part of or influences upon the JAC. Thus fulfilling, through this leader link, all the constituent elements of the elite capture mechanism (i-xi, chart 1), given that by being connected, there is also access to a fundable association, exercising an external relation that grants them power and which other leaders do not have, and ending by expressing their interests as project deliverables on behalf of the community.

This capture strategy reveals the importance of electing representatives to the MPS decision instances by those who act as “revenue hunters”, distorting the concept of representativeness. Although apparently legal, the project does not necessarily respond to community problems or guarantee the impact required or, in such case, is “accommodated” to any of the problems related in the Plan.

Likewise, the strategy shows how blockages to participation and to information to the community propitiates the capture of the system, which is reinforced over time by interest groups.

7.2 “TRAIN HEIST” CAPTURE STRATEGIES

These are variants of the previous, evading community participation and discussion of a given problem and directly introduces to convenience a project-solution or rather in the decision instances of the commune/village or the C.A.L.I. (“assault on the station”) or, definitely, in the municipal secretaries (“assault on the terminal”). The key is the possibility of influencing the leaders, members of TP Committees, or public servants to authorize introducing the project so that it seems to be part of community planning or, in some cases, registered directly onto the Bank of Projects. Some former and active personnel even talked about the famous “*phantom hand*” that matriculates and matriculated projects with nobody detecting such.

This strategy, compared to the previous, although incorporating all the elements, highlights the role of the connections within the system (vi, chart 1). These connections are practiced within the TP Committees or before the public servants themselves. This particular condition makes the relation of power and the capture of participation and benefits (ix-xi, chart 1) possible.

7.3 “PRODUCT SALE” CAPTURE STRATEGIES

This strategy accounts for a situation that has sought to convince a leader, pressure group, member of the TP Committee or the Specialized Professional directly to decide on purchasing a service from a company or NGO. The capture is carried out through a commercial transaction or by convincing the agent about the benefits of the good/service. The idea is to create the need for a certain “product” in the TP Committee, which responds to real or fictional demands. This strategy reported by the leaders seems not to correspond to any element of the elite capture mechanism, owing more to the capacity of conviction of those “selling” the product, above all in terms of corresponding such product to the solution of a problem, to which is associated a

representation that validates the product's usefulness. To achieve this goal, a partnership is not necessary. Nevertheless, the asymmetry of information between the Planning Department and the TP Committee (viii, chart 1) is the necessary element so that the first does not have the legitimacy to oppose the transaction.

7.4 "50% WEIGHTED CONTRIBUTION" CAPTURE STRATEGIES

Unlike all the aforementioned, this strategy originates from the very offices of the Municipal Administration and has been welcomed enthusiastically by the communities, which call the strategy colloquially. Seeking to ensure its annual investment, an office offers community leaders an important contribution, encouraging them to include in the budget projects of its competence. This ensures their hiring, while the leaders even see the investment amount duplicated.

The strategy evades institutional processes of participative identification of solutions to community problems and, as reflected in the budget proceedings, concentrates the purchase of goods/services, useful to some measure, but of doubtful impact upon critical problems identified by the community in the Plans. Thus, only elements i to v from chart 1 impact upon the appropriation or capture of resources. But, additionally, the asymmetry of information does not take place, given that it is the principal (the specific office) that induces the agent to make decisions that benefit their specific institutional interests (budget execution), and — hence — knowledge of the local needs is not considered of strategic value by the office.

7.5 "PIE TYPE" CAPTURE STRATEGIES

Acting directly in the TP Committees, their members distribute the budget equally among every neighborhood. The strategy shows that the leaders, upon lacking institutional information and pressure mechanisms to do their work, establish their own decision rules in coordinated manner, managing to avoid potential conflicts and maximizing investments per neighborhood. This strategy invalidates every assumption of the system related to the search for global solutions to problems posed in the Plans, as well as the participative debate with the communities.

This strategy only implies elements i-v from chart 1, that is, they are simply prominent leaders, but who do not need to be well-connected or exercise particular relations of power with respect to the rest to reach an agreement of equal distribution; nevertheless, the asymmetry of information (viii, chart 1) with respect to the Planning Department remains, although it is not exploited in a special way as in the first three strategies.

7.6 WHAT ENABLES THE APPEARANCE OF CAPTURE BEHAVIORS?

Given that the practices and dynamics of local decision are materialized, in part, in the capture strategies described, it is worth delving into the conditions that enable these deviations. Firstly, the prior analysis shows the preponderant role of the informational asymmetries, which was confirmed by the interview methods and expert consultation, upon suggesting as basic cause the MPS disarticulation into three subsystems, thus:

7.6.1 THE COMMUNITY IN GENERAL AND THE ORGANIZATIONS THAT REPRESENT IT

The norm tries to ensure inclusion of minorities by decree (ethnic groups, senior citizens, women, etc.), contributing to the polarization of interests and to their fragmentation within the community. That weakens the possibility of thinking integrally on concrete problems that have as base the needs of individuals as bio-psycho-social beings in the different stages of their lives: children, youth, adult males, adult females, senior citizens. On the contrary, channeling participation in the MPS through the constitution of interest groups, deepens the sectorization of problems and dispersion in the search for solutions.

This way, the MPS promotes the struggle and competition of interests among groups, a situation that would be valid as liberal and democratic mechanism of competition of ideas (Barber, 1984) as long as there was decided support by the community toward the different groups, as well as decision mechanisms (in processes, projects, investments, etc.) open to citizen surveillance. Given that, according to the study, none of that exists, the MPS ends up captured by those members who, availing of disinformation and lack of citizen interest to manage, become group representatives (vi, chart 1) and reach the decision organs.

7.6.2 INSTANCES OF LOCAL PARTICIPATION

These become a representation subsystem unlinked from the community subsystem and its preferences, but legitimized by compliance of the norms. The state's disconnection in its functions of planning, monitoring, and evaluation of policies (Mayne and Zapico-Goñi, 1999), as well as the lack of citizen interest and disinformation, allows the appearance at this level of new players who manipulate the decisions without being "easily" detected or controlled. The great weapon of this subsystem to prevail is the asymmetry of information, the technical knowledge of "how to reach" the Municipal Administration, and — above all — their relations of influence with alternate communication and pressure channels. This subsystem, which is where much of the capture occurs, has the following bases of operation:

- Legalization of representativeness. The leader from the JAL or the TP Committee endorses all the process, which is why the capture requires the MPS to limit participation of other players and community negotiation, with the election of representatives to the community's decisive instances becoming key. Their decisions are, thus, validated through norm, demanding compliance of formal processes and legal requisites, of easy manipulation. Paradoxically, the facts show that upon bringing the decisions to predesigned spaces (TP Committees, C.A.L.I), in the local context — characterized by citizen apathy and indifference — this facilitates the conformation of interest groups and decision making in closed spaces, which permit skillfully manipulating the MPS.
- The aforementioned evidences the weakness of communication and dissemination mechanisms of the decisions among the Municipal Administration, the local planning instances, and the community in general.
- The MPS considers its players as agents without particular interests, totally altruist and with no capacity or intention of agency to obtain benefits for themselves or other market agents. On the

contrary, it assumes them as volunteer philanthropists whose decisions will be in function of community interests.⁷

- Minimum control, even by the planning personnel, given that a lack of a clear definition allows the overlapping of *technical decision roles* with *participative decision roles* by the offices (“50% weighted contribution” strategy).

7.6.3 THE ADMINISTRATIVE MUNICIPAL PLANNING DEPARTMENT AND THE SECRETARIES

Evidence shows that some offices have incidence capacity over isolated projects if they apply incentives, like the denominated “50% weighted contribution”, or if they adjust certain characteristics of the projects to ensure their approval. This maneuver capacity contributes to dismembering the planning. However, the MPS does not allow the government, as responsible for local development, to influence and control planning and execution to guarantee coherence among the Municipal Plan and the local plans, and less still with the sectorial plans of the offices (sector planning level).

In this fragmentation, only those groups that manage to establish connections among the three subsystems may act and ‘win’, bridging the information gaps for their benefit; connections that, within a strategic perspective, allow the exchange of the action possibilities of the system – unbalanced exchange that conditions its results (Friedberg, 1993:78) and bases the exercise of power (conception shared with Dahl, 1957 and Emerson, 1962). Hence, a network is constituted that allows mobilizing the people necessary to approve its projects of interest, on the basis of relations as resource for action and source of power of negotiation and influence. The MPS resources alluded to in this last point are explained ahead:

- Information (about the current status of the system): allows foreseeing and planning action.
- Knowledge: de normativity, methodologies, forms of participation, etc.
- Experience: knowing how to manage and affect the system.
- Economic capacity: to establish relations and generate delegate decision status.
- Public relations: equal to economic capacity.
- Participation: mobilization through legitimate leadership or negotiation with political groups.
- Prestige: natural leaders with sufficient prestige to exercise representativeness.
- Assets or properties: imply economic capacity, prestige and power of decision.
- Management capacity: both in communities as in municipal offices.
- (In)security: incidence on decisions through illegal means of intimidation.

Concentration of these resources in the hands of individuals or groups of interest and their use for their own benefit are key pieces to describe the real behavior of the MPS and its dysfunctions. The capture strategies identified are, thus, an exposition of the system’s reproduction mechanisms in which the resources mentioned give shape to the action.

⁷ Decree 0203/2001 (Book IX, Chap. 3) establishes that: “The C.A.L.I. work teams will be made up by public servants (...) transferred on commission (...), by university students through internships (...); or by members from the community that due to their altruist spirit and desire to collaborate seek to be chosen by the director of the C.A.L.I. without that generating a working relation or payment of any type”.

8. POST-EVALUATION ADJUSTMENTS OF THE MPS

The evaluation findings reported herein were socialized in January 2009 with MPS participation instances. The debate in this regard was marked, because it evidenced lack of ethics among many of the leaders, which was already often manifested to one another. The most important effect, nevertheless, was the series of normative and institutional changes and adjustments carried out by ADMP team.

A first group of changes began in 2012 on the occasion of the local plans to 2015; mainly control mechanisms were implemented, like the design of a monitoring system that permitted measuring performance in real time, with more corrective and even preventive purposes than punitive. This system is, however, complex to construct because it implies agreeing among offices on which type of indicators to gather and how to collect and store the data in coordinated manner. Due to that, the system is still under construction.

Seeking to commit offices more on the execution of projects, the ADMP assigned a set of goals of results, nevertheless, their effects were not those expected, and only some offices complied with an important part of these.

In addition, by early 2015, the ADMP began the process to support communes/villages in the elaboration of their Plans for the 2016-2019 period. The importance of generating increasingly objective Local plans lies on the fact that these, according to norm, are the base to formulate the Municipal Development Plan for Santiago de Cali by the incoming Mayor in 2016. For the sake of preventing as much as possible the capture of the Situado by dominant players, the following changes were applied when generating Plans:

- A method without precedent was adopted in Colombia, the electronic vote, which allowed leaders to discuss in public, but vote anonymously, avoiding any personal intimidation from dominant groups. Both the experience and effects of this voting modality will be discussed by the authors in other articles.

- Given the experience of the MPS in having very disperse Plans, which allowed for almost any project to be accommodated at any time and, on the other hand, some offices that executed few goals; the targeting of the Plans was sought by restricting the plans to five major problems, albeit to attack intersectorially.

- The type of investments to be made was limited in the two offices most selected traditionally to execute resources of the Situado: Sports and Recreation and that of Culture and Tourism. Both banned the construction of new scenarios, enabling only training programs and their outfitting. That is, promoting the use of that already constructed.

9. CONCLUSIONS

In this article, we analyzed how the inconsistencies of the MPS for Santiago de Cali to 2008, upon being evaluated in light of the concept of elite capture, shed light to better understand the social mechanism underlying them.

In conclusion, the five strategies analyzed demonstrate that what they have in common is the search to avoid participative deliberation, as well as to detract from the development plans and not use objective diagnoses of the local needs. Several differences, nevertheless, were identified. The

“Trojan horse” strategy sets running the 11 constituent elements of the elite capture mechanism proposed in chart 1. “Train heist”, a variant, incorporates the same elements, but emphasizes on the use of connections to other instances, even those of institutional type. Hereinafter, the strategies are *sui generis*. The strategy “product sale” does not incorporate these elements and — instead — relies on the ability to “sell” a “product” within a TP Committee, thus, leaving the elements of the mechanism enunciated. The last two strategies only incorporate the first five elements of the mechanism, given that they express very different interactions in the future. The “50% weighted contribution” strategy is an incitation generated at institutional level and breaks up any validity of the information about the local needs, and — hence — the asymmetry of information that characterizes all the other strategies. Finally, the “pie type” strategy is not based on the ability of the leaders to evade participation, but — rather — on their lack of capacity to generate a common vision or consensus on the problems of the commune, thereby, deciding to distribute resources with a criterion of equality.

Additionally, as base for the gestation of such strategies, the study revealed disarticulation of the MPS between the authorities and instances in the global, sector, and territorial levels, fragmenting into three subsystems: (i) the community in general and the organizations that represent it; (ii) instances of local participation and C.A.L.I.s (iii) the Administrative Department of Municipal Planning (ADMP); each lacking a coordination and management subsystem.

This article provides basic elements to analyze the behavior of local players in situations of risk of capture or deviation of resources, which would facilitate a subsequent analysis to design corrective strategies.

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