

Communication Management as a preliminary step in the Citizen Participatory Process

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Abstract:

Through this article, we present the process of evaluating the degree of communication management in the elaboration of permanent safeguard plan's projects in Algeria, by applying the Arneisten scale.

This evaluation was carried out on three different projects which selected at different stages of their life cycle: first one is the case of Constantine and Ghardaïa (have been achieved) and the second is the case of El-Oued (is in progress). The methodology followed to accomplish this evaluation is presented synthetically in the first part of the article, followed by the presentation and discussion of the results obtained using the SPSS statistical software in the second part.

Keywords: Permanent Safeguard Plan; Communication Management; evaluation; Citizen Participatory Process.

Jel Classification Codes: XN1, XN2.

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1. INTRODUCTION

2. communication or participation?

Effective communication creates a bridge between different stakeholders, likely to come from diverse cultural and organizational backgrounds, but also to have different levels of expertise, diverse perspectives and interests, who can impact or influence the execution of the project or its result [1]. This is the reason that obliges us to introduce a new process with the objective of ordering, systematizing and explaining the different stages of the project and ensuring the citizen's support.

Communication is different from participation. In general, it is the relational process of creating and interpreting messages that elicit a response [2], yet participation is generally understood as action or taking part in an activity [3].

According to the previous definitions, communication is a preliminary step of the participatory process, as we must provide citizens with the necessary information of the project before involving them.

Citizen participation has been defined as a process in which individuals participate in decision-making in the institutions, programs and environments that affect them [4].

In Algeria, after the outcome of Law No. 90-31 of December 4, 1990, is authorizing associative life, many associations have emerged. Subsequently, several legal texts were promulgated aimed at regulating citizen participation. It's mostly about planning, urbanism, housing and the urban actions [5].

First, the fundamental text in Algerian legislation "the constitution" requires the citizen's participation in local management through its articles. Then the law n° 90-29 relating to the development and the urbanism, in its article 74 stipulates that the associations have a competence allowing them to act vis-a-vis the damage caused on the inheritance [6]. After The provision of Article 11, it stipulates that the law n° 11-10 (of 22-06-11) commonly called "the Municipality code" relating to the creation of a municipal delegation: The municipality takes all measures to inform citizens of all matters concerning them, additionally, it consults them about planning, economic, social and cultural development choices under the conditions previously defined by this law [7].

Most recently, Law 06-06 of February 20, 2006 on the city's orientation recalls through its articles that citizens must be involved in the elaboration and implementation of the territory's planning and sustainable development policy [8].

Through this research, we have verified the degree of citizen participation, by applying the Arnstein scale 1969 and by using the above-mentioned laws.

the specific problem under study and describes the research strategy.

3. The Permanent safeguard plans [PSP] in Algeria: an overview

According to the Malraux law of 4 August, 1962, a safeguarded sector is a protection measure relating to a historical sector [9].

The safeguarded sector is a regulatory approach that specifies two main objectives:

Avoid the disappearance or irreversible damage to historic districts establishing legal

protection measure;

Promote the restoration and enhancement of the entire heritage while allowing its evolution.

In a safeguarded sector, the intervention measures are framed by a permanent safeguard plan (PSP).

Since 2003, Algeria has established the (98-04) law on the protection of cultural heritage, as well as its executive decree (03-324 of 5/10/2003), which are applicable for the protection and implementation's value of historic sites through PSP.

The permanent safeguarding plan is a new protection measure that has taken a prominent place in Algerian policy as part of halting the deterioration of historic building.

Its objective is the programming and the implementation of a conservation and restoration projects [10].

4. An effective communication process: The Arnstein scale 1969

The effectiveness of a communication process is the best involvement of the citizens concerned in the decision-making process, by informing them, consulting them, and taking into account their point of view [11]. (S. Arnstein, 1969) proposed a reading grid that allows both; to measure and to monitor the citizen participation degree in public actions. This grid distinguishes eight levels of participation.

At the highest level, citizens have effective control over decisions made. While a low level refers to the participation of manipulated citizens, misinformed and whose point of view is not taken into account: it is non-participation [12].

The table below illustrates Arnstein's reading grid as well as a small definition of each degree of participation:

Table 1. The degree of citizen communication process

Types of Communication	Degree of Communication	
Citizen control: a local community autonomously manages a project.	Effective powers of citizens	Elevated
Delegation of power: the central power delegates the power to decide on a project and carry it out to the local community.		
Partnership: decision-making takes place through negotiation between public authorities and citizens.		
Conciliation: a few inhabitants are admitted to the decision-making bodies and can have an influence on the realization of the project.	Symbolic cooperation	
Consultation: Surveys or public meetings allow residents to express their views on planned changes.		

Information: citizens receive real information on current projects, but cannot give their opinion.		
Therapy: additional treatment of the problems encountered by the inhabitants, without addressing the real issues.	Non-participation	
Manipulation: biased information used to "educate" citizens by giving them the illusion that they are involved in the process.		
		Weak

Source: Author, 2019 inspired from Sherry R. Arnstein 1971

5. Project's evaluation

Evaluation is a systematic and objective analysis of an ongoing or completed project, program or policy, of its design, implementation and outcomes [13], according to Scriven, M. 1991 the evaluation is a systematic examination of the value or importance of an object [14]. It is usually about standards, criteria, measures of success or goals that describe what the object is worth. Evaluation can determine the criteria for success, lessons learned, ways to improve the work, and ways to move forward. The type of project evaluation differs depending on its time schedule, and depending on the evaluation's author, the following table summarizes all the types:

Table 2. The project evaluation types

Evaluation Types		Explanation
According to the evaluation time	Evaluation ex-ante	Intervenes after the implementation of the project
	Intermediate evaluation	Allows the redirection of the action. Can be implemented to verify, in the middle of the project cycle.
	Final Evaluation	At the end of the program, allows the observation of the short-term consequences.
	Evaluation ex-post	After the end of the program, is clearly after the end of the project.
	Initial evaluation	It is the evaluation of the content of the project by comparing its compliance with the objectives of the strategy set-upstream.
According to the author of the review	The auto-evaluation	Carried out by one or more people directly involved in the evaluated action.
	The internal evaluation	Carried out by an agent of the structure responsible for the action

	The external evaluation	Involves recourse to external contributors, promotes a neutral and fresh perspective.
	The evaluation by beneficiaries	This involves going beyond the stage of simply consulting users to move towards participation in the design and implementation of the monitoring and evaluation system

Source: Author, 2019

6. The methodology implementation

The PSP elaboration projects of the three cities, taken as a case study, vary according to their stage of realization: at this date, Constantine, Ghardaïa (are accomplished) and El-Oued (is in progress). This different phase requires us to apply two different types of evaluation according to the criterion of time (on-line and ex-post evaluation).

Besides belonging to the context of the studied project, being a citizen of the old district of El-Oued, and furthermore I represent one of the stakeholders responsible for the same project. This multiplication of roles also requires us to apply two different types of evaluation according to the criterion of the evaluation's author (evaluation by beneficiaries and internal evaluation).

Our evaluation of the PSP elaboration project focuses on the analysis of the effectiveness of the participatory process in order to determine the degree of participation applied in the elaboration of Permanent Safeguard Plans projects in Algeria.

6.1. Establishment of an evaluation grid

Before establishing the grid for our assessment, it is essential to clarify the difference between criterion and indicator

The criteria are broken down, assessed in indicators, observable or measurable signs specific to each situation, in connection with the context.

The criteria are the benchmarks that we choose to serve as the basis for our judgment.

They specify what to expect, on which aspect our judgment will be made. And indicators are the signs that testify to the existence of a phenomenon, of an effect.

Based on the initially targeted evaluation objective, we matched the criteria of our evaluation to those established by the Arnstein scale (1971), in order to measure the degree of citizen participation in the elaboration project of the Permanent Safeguard Plan. The table below explains the rating scale:

Table.3: Evaluation scale of citizen communication degree

Concept	Index	Indicators	Evaluation criteria
Degree of communication	Non-participation	Manipulation	- I have been asked to participate in activities related to your neighborhood - I have been informed of the nature of the activity
		Therapy	-I had the opportunity to express my concerns in the neighborhood -They have been taken into account

	Symbolic cooperation	Information	-I knew that (...) was classified by the State as a protected sector -I know the objective of this project -I know some information about the project -I got the information through.... -I am periodically informed of all the news on the project
		Consultation	-I took part in an event relating to the project (colloquium, conference, forum or citizen meeting) -the type of participation -I was asked to give my opinion on the project by answering a questionnaire or attending a public meeting
		Conciliation	-I am active in a heritage conservation association
	Effective authorities of citizens	Partnership	-I have negotiated / been consulted in decisions relating to the project
		Delegation of authorities	-I had the opportunity to participate in making critical decisions in the project
		Citizen control	- Some members of the neighborhood have been appointed to represent us in various municipal or state meetings -I am satisfied with the initiatives that have been taken by the State to involve us in the project

Source: Author, 2019 inspired from Sherry R. Arnstein 1971

6.2. Sample and procedure

Recall that our study objective requires the comparison between three cases studies, so we have three different populations presenting themselves in citizens who live in the old neighborhoods of three cities Ghardaia, El Oued and Constantine and who are over the age of 18 years old.

We determined the study sample according to the simple random probability design

where each individual of the target population had an equal (and known) chance of being part of the selected sample, no selection bias affects the selection process of individuals to be surveyed, and made sure to diversify the sample as much as possible (age, sex, level of education, occupation, etc.).

We used the questionnaire survey technique to collect data for the criteria previously selected. We determined the sample size, by applying the following formula:

$$n = z^2 \times p (1 - p) / m^2$$

Or:

$$n = \frac{\text{sample size}}{z^2 \times p (1 - p) / m^2}$$

z = confidence level according to the reduced centered normal rule (for a confidence level of 95%, $z = 1.96$, for a confidence level of 99%, $z = 2.575$)

p = estimated proportion of the population exhibiting the characteristic (when unknown, we use $p = 0.5$ which corresponds to the worst case, i.e. the greatest dispersion)

m = tolerated margin of error (for example we want to know the real proportion to within 5%)

This formula determines the number of people (n) to be questioned in terms of the margin of error (m) that can be tolerated on a proportion of responses (p).

Considering that the confidence level is 95% and the margin of error is 6%, therefore the size of our sample will be:

$$n = (1.96)^2 \times 0.5 (1 - 0.5) / (0.06)^2 = 267$$

6.3. Survey

We translated the scale criteria for the evaluation of the degree of citizen participation in a survey, which contains three types of closed questions, dichotomous questions, multiple choice questions and scale questions (the LIKERT model).

In order for the survey not to be boring, monotonous, and useless, we varied the way of questioning. The survey was written in Arabic and French. It is worth mentioning that before launching the survey, we checked the clarity of the questions, the ease of answering, the duration and the fluidity of the survey.

7. Results presentation

In this research work, we analyzed and interpreted the data using the SPSS software following two steps:

7.1. Alpha Cronbakh test

Prior to data collection, we performed a pretest to examine the suitability and reliability of the research instrument, using the (α) from CRONBACH (1951) which is commonly used as a measure of internal consistency of a scale with several items [15].

Some researchers take pride in invoking the acceptable values which are between 0.70 and 0.80 for preliminary research and between 0.80 and 0.90 for basic research [16], Values greater than 0.95 are required especially in the context of applied research [17].

In addition, Van de Ven and Ferry (1988) presented an example of expected values for α , which we have summarized in the following table [18]:

Table.4: Expected interval of the α value

Number of items in the measurement scale	1	2	3 or more
Average inter-correlation	0.50-0.65	0.30-0.45	0.10-0.25
expected value of α	0.70-0.90	0.55-0.70	0.35-0.55

Source: Author, 2019 using SPSS software

Van de Van and Ferry (1988) showed in the table above that α increases as the number of items in a scale decreases.

Table.5: Relevance and reliability survey test

Item group	Number of elements	Cronbach's Alpha value	Expected interval of the value of α
Manipulation	2	61%	0.55-0.70
Therapy	2	69%	0.55-0.70
Information	4	76%	0.35-0.55
Consultation	2	69%	0.55-0.70
Citizen control	2	77%	0.55-0.70

Source: Author, 2019 using SPSS software

7.2. Results visualization in tables and graphs form

We will apply the following semantic scale in order to give an evaluation to the results:

Table.6: The semantic scale according to the indices interval

Semantic meaning	Indices interval in %
Non-existence	0
Very weak	1-15
weak	16-30
Medium	31-50
Strong	51-80
Very strong	81-100

Source: Author, 2019

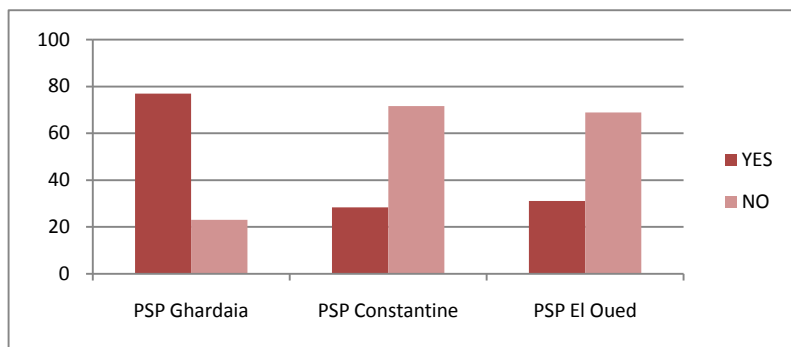
Table.7: Result of the evaluation criteria of citizen participation degree

Concept	Index	Indicators	Evaluation criteria	PSP of Ghardaia		PSP of Constantine		PSP of El Oued		
Degree of communication	Non-participation	Manipulation	- I have been asked to participate in activities related to your neighborhood - I have been informed of the nature of the activity	57	77	21	28.4	23	31.1	
		Therapy	-I had the opportunity to express my concerns in the neighborhood -They have been taken into account	15	20.3	11	14.9	7	9.5	
Symbolic cooperation	Information	Information	-I knew that (...) was classified by the State as a protected sector -I know the objective of this project -I know some information about the project -I got the information through....	49	66.2	18	24.3	18	24.3	
			Consultation	-I took part in an event relating to the project (colloquium, conference, forum or citizen meeting) -the type of participation -I was asked to give my opinion on the project by answering a questionnaire or attending a public meeting	10	13.5	5	6.8	4	5.4
				Conciliation	-I am active in a heritage conservation	57	77	37	50	21
Effective authorities of citizens	Partnership	Partnership	-I have negotiated / been consulted in decisions relating to the project	54	73	35	47.3	21	28.4	
			Delegation of authorities	-I had the opportunity to participate in making critical decisions in the project	49	66.2	35	47.3	36	48.6
				Citizen control	- Some members of the neighborhood have been appointed to represent us in various municipal or state meetings -I am satisfied with the initiatives that have been taken by the State to involve us in the project	31	41.9	7	9.5	12

Source: Author, 2019 using SPSS software

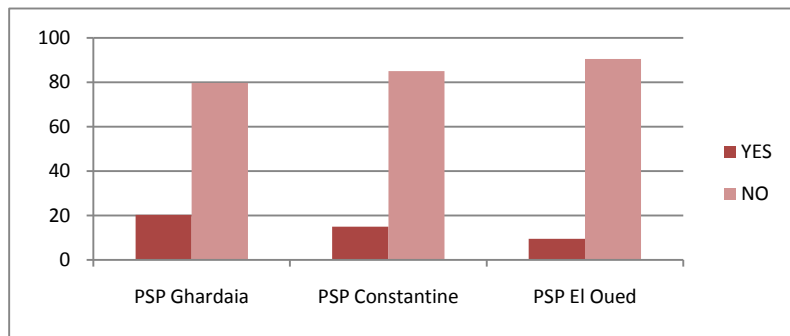
7.2.1. Manipulation

Fig.1. They asked me before participating in activities related to my neighborhood?



Source: Author, 2019 using SPSS software

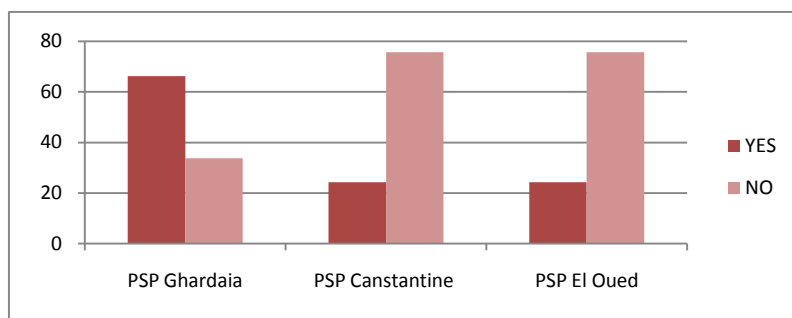
Fig.2. I knew what it is about



Source: Author, 2019 using SPSS software

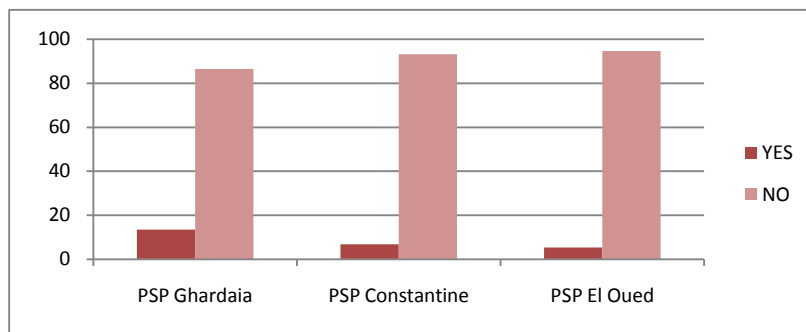
7.2.2. Therapy

Fig.3. I had the opportunity to express my concerns in the neighborhood



Source: Author, 2019 using SPSS software

Fig.4. Have they been taken into account?

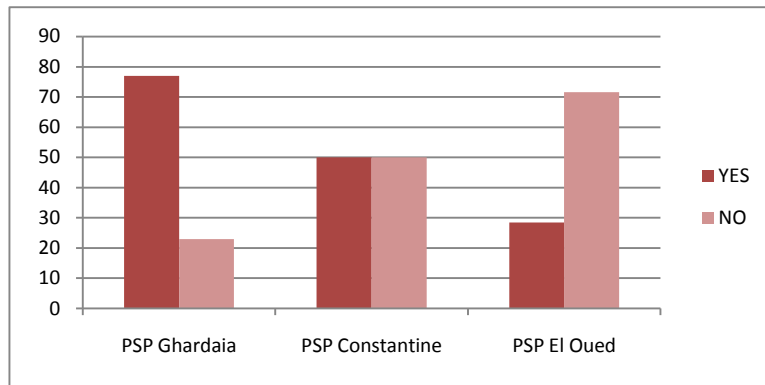


Source: Author, 2019 using SPSS software

77%, 28.4%, 31.1% of Ghardaia, Constantine samples, El-Oued were asked to participate in activities related to their neighborhoods, but only 20.3%, 14.9, 9.5% that they knew of what is it about, also 66.2%, 24.3%, 24.3% had the opportunity to express their concerns in the neighborhood. However 13.5%, 6.8%, 5.4% were taken into account.

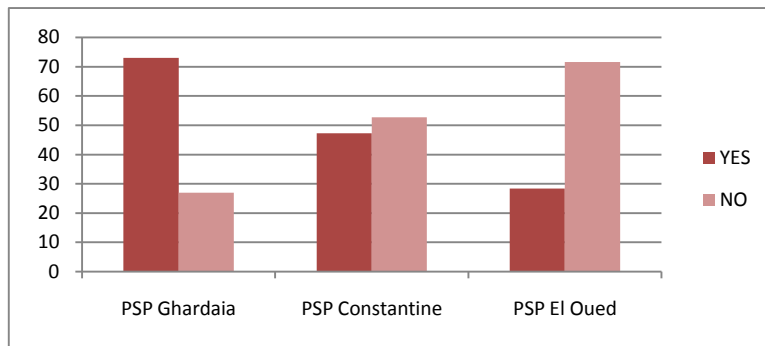
7.2.3. Information

Fig.5. I know that (...) has been classified by the State as a safeguarded sector



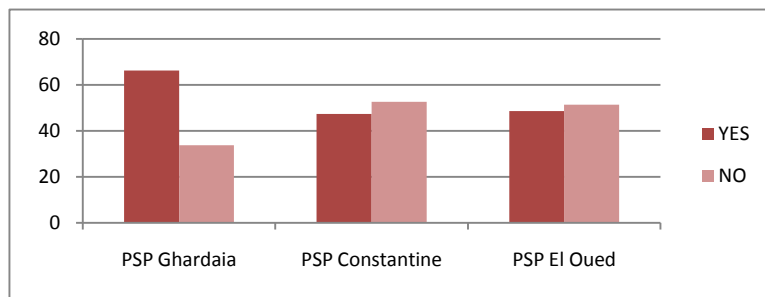
Source: Author, 2019 using SPSS software

Fig.6. I know the objective of this project



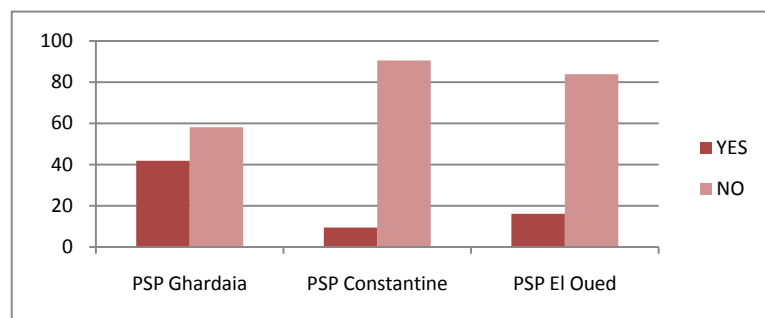
Source: Author, 2019 using SPSS software

Fig.7. I know some information about the project



Source: Author, 2019 using SPSS software

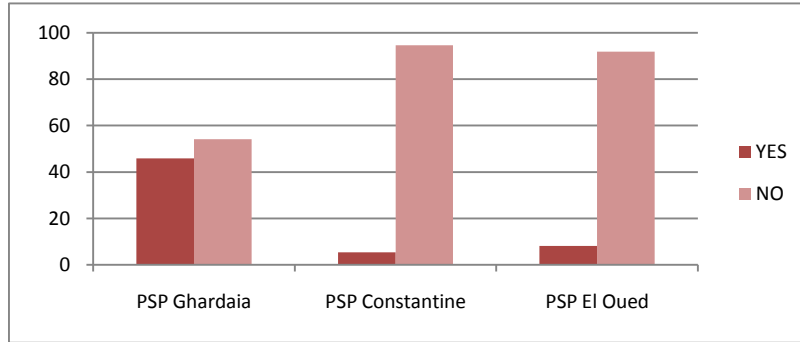
Fig.8. I am periodically informed of all the news on the project



Source: Author, 2019 using SPSS software

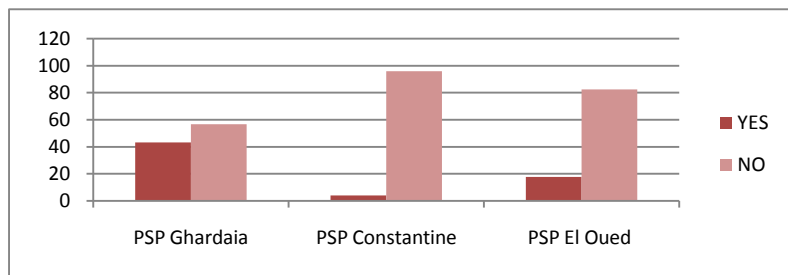
Figures 5,6,7,8 say that 66.2%, 47.3%, 48.6% of the sample of Ghardaïa, Constantine, El-Oued by order, know some information about the project but only 41.9%, 9.5%, 16.2% are periodically informed of the news. The project responsables posted signs that contain some necessary project information to interested neighborhoods at the beginning of the project, but afterward they made no sign.

Fig.9. I participated in a Project event



Source: Author, 2019 using SPSS software

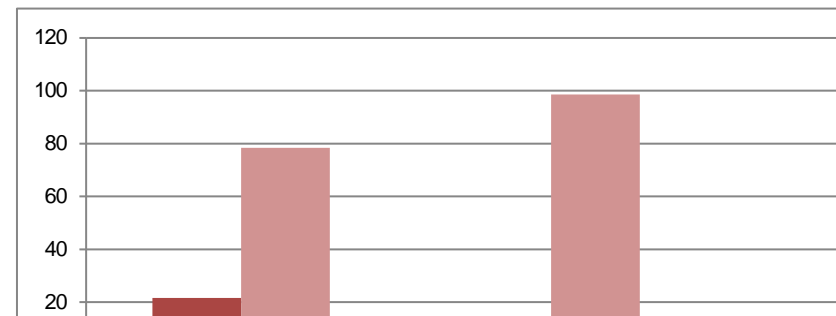
Fig.10. I was asked to give my opinion on the project by answering a questionnaire or attending a public meeting



Source: Author, 2019 using SPSS software

45.9%, 5.4%, 8.1% of the sample from Ghardaïa, Constantine, and El-Oued by order participated in at least one event related to the project (symposium, conference, forum or citizen meeting). On the other hand, 43.2%, 4.1%, 17.6% were asked to give their opinion on the project by answering a questionnaire or attending a public meeting. We note that the result of Ghardaïa is a little higher than the other samples, thanks to individual initiatives by associations and neighborhood committees.

Fig.11. I have been or I am active in a heritage conservation association

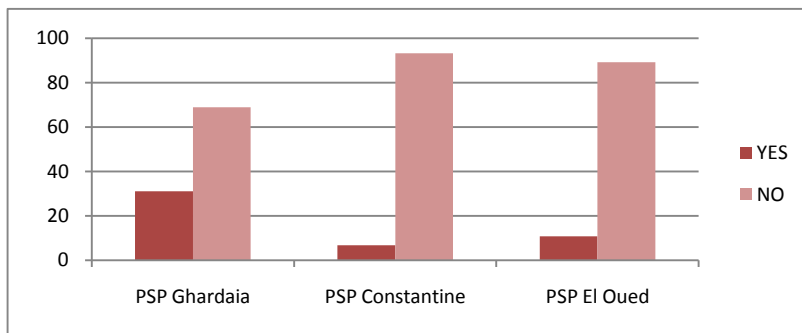


Source: Author, 2019 using SPSS software

21.6%, 1.4%, 4.1% of the samples from Ghardaïa, Constantine, and El-Oued by order were or they are active in a heritage conservation association, the level of reconciliation is very low for the three samples.

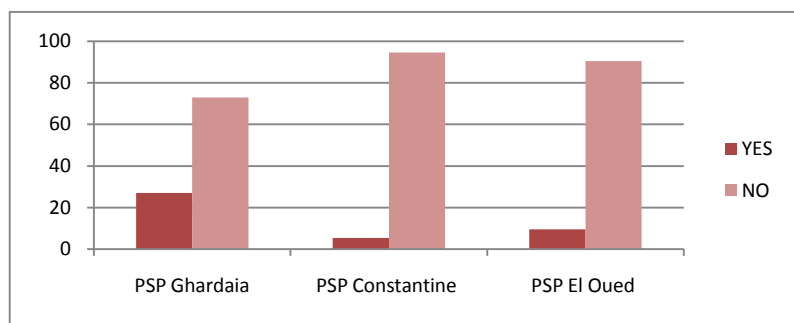
7.2.4. Partnership and authority delegation

Fig.11. I was negotiated / consulted in project decisions



Source: Author, 2019 using SPSS software

Fig.12. I have been given the opportunity to participate in making critical decisions in the project

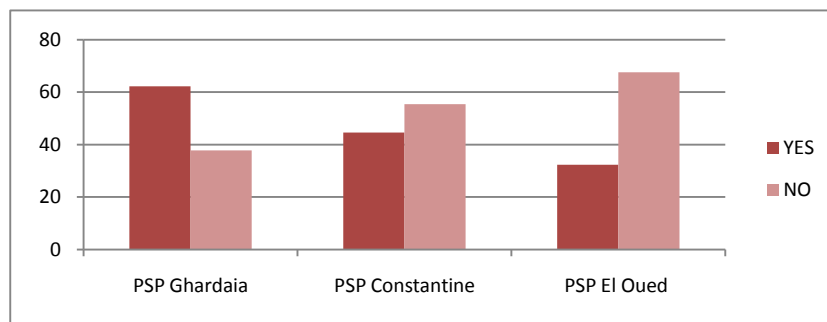


Source: Author, 2019 using SPSS software

The result is very low in these two scales: 31.1%, 6.8%, 10.8% only of the sample of Ghardaïa, Constantine and El-Oued by order that were negotiated or consulted in the decisions relating to the project, likewise 27%, 5.4 %, 9.5% only who were given the opportunity to participate in critical decision making in the project.

7.2.5. Citizen control

Fig.13. Some members of the neighborhood have been appointed to represent us in various municipal or state meetings



Source: Author, 2019 using SPSS software

62.2%, 44.6%, 32.4% of Ghardaia, Constantine, El-Oued samples by order confirm that some members of the neighborhood have been appointed to represent them in various municipal or state meetings, citizens say that public officials did nothing for them, no initiative was taken.

8. Discussion

Our survey objective was to determine the degree of communication in the PSP elaboration project; this investigation led us to results which are summarized in the following points:

- Few of the citizens have had the opportunity to express their concerns about their neighborhood;
- The citizens who have been asked to express their opinions do not know what it is about, they feel manipulated;
- Citizens were informed only at the start of the project. They were not informed periodically about the news;
- The citizens are not aware of all the information necessary for the project;
- Citizens were not asked to attend a meeting on the project despite their willingness to being involved.

We can therefore say that the degree of communication in PSP elaboration projects is at a primitive level. It is a symbolic cooperation, participation in this project does not go beyond information because of several factors namely the absence of clear regulations, and also the total absence of local authorities and associations.

There is a contradiction to be noted in the Ghardaia sample; the result shows a somewhat high degree of participation compared to the two other samples thanks to the private initiatives of associations and neighborhood committees. The Mozabite 1 community is distinguished by their great interest in their city, they engage independently for their own

¹ They are a Berber ethnic group inhabiting the city of Ghardaia.

good, they have a strong will to their city.

Conclusion:

Collectively, our findings indicate that the participatory process may have limited implementation in Algeria, due to the deficiencies of the legal devices, it does not ensure the integration of citizens in decision-making, and it invites them to a low level of involvement. Accordingly, it is essential to propose some devices with the objective of improving the participatory process effectiveness:

The promulgation of new legal texts that frame the participatory process and ensure optimal citizen involvement;

Deploying participatory budgets that facilitate citizen participation;

The organization of deliberative mechanisms between citizens, technicians and politicians, upstream of the decision-making process;

The integration of developed technological participation tools at all levels, from information to citizen control.

In conclusion, it is worth mentioning that the participatory process effectiveness is not only limited to the evaluation criteria of the Arnstein scale, in addition, there are still some factors to be taken into account and improved in general, includes individual difference variables [19]. These variables could be demographic (age groups, educational level, economic context... etc.) community spirit level variables [20], competency and knowledge level [21], as well as psychological variables [22].

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