



Research Paper

## Participatory governance in Moroccan education: What role for civil society organizations (CSOs)?

Youssef NAIT BELAID

<sup>1</sup> Mohammed V University (Faculty of Educational Sciences), Rabat-Morocco

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### ABSTRACT:

*Even if the Moroccan education system has undergone considerable reforms (1999, 2009 and 2015) regarding guaranteed education and the fight against illiteracy, it still faces a significant communication and mobilization gap between hierarchical and public bureaucracies, and civil society organizations (CSOs) dynamics.*

*International development strategies recognize the importance of civil society in education development, and various research studies have shown that strengthening civil society participation is critical for educational governance. However, there is no comprehensive evidence base in Morocco of how CSOs contribute to developing education and training, and very little research has focused on the question of participatory governance in improving quality education.*

*To fill this gap, this study explores the relationship between CSOs' actors and educational decision makers in terms of enhancing education governance.*

*While CSOs require more intermediary leadership within the public service, they have to manage between the expectations of the beneficiary population, the vision planning of their donors and the bureaucracy of educational administration.*

*Such tensions illustrate how huge the differences between the institutional logics of educational bureaucracy and the dynamics driving collaborative CSOs processes are.*

*Based on the survey and interviews with 12 Moroccan CSOs working in education, discourses and practices of Moroccan CSOs reveal the complexity of their relations with public education services in terms of evaluation and monitoring actions and projects. This sheds more light on both the reform of the education administration and the evolution of civil society in Morocco.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Civil society Organizations (SCOs), participation, education, governance, policy, citizenship.*

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### I. INTRODUCTION

In the global area of civil liberties advocacy and socioeconomic development, civil society is becoming an alternative development actor, intending to substitute for classical management (Salamon, 2010). This phenomenon has been widely observed, including Morocco, where there has been a growing interest in strengthening democratic and participatory governance.

Even if the 2011 constitution has explicitly recognized the importance of the participation of CSOs in the management of the "public matters" (Kingdom of Morocco, 2011), the relationships between state officials and civil society actors seem to be marked by paradoxes and tensions in terms of vision, governance style and tools to achieve development results, and promote citizenship.

The challenges of participatory governance undeniably question the role of civil society organizations (CSOs) and their practical involvement in the elaboration, implementation and decisions' evaluation taken by elected institutions and public authorities. In fact, although the fields of education and training in Morocco are considered in institutional discourse as a vital issue of human development, and a significant catalyst for economic growth (National Charter of Education and Training, 2000), the reform process is still perceived as relatively slow compared to the speed of economic, socio-cultural and political transformations around the school and Moroccan university (Higher Council of Education Training and Scientific Research, 2015).

Therefore, there is a growing appeal for integrating social accountability in education governance. This brings us to the question of the real involvement and participation of CSOs in the management of quality

education and training in Morocco. Accordingly, there is a lack of knowledge about the relationship between the commitment and participation of CSOs, and Moroccan educational management. The few studies that exist focus exclusively on the involvement of Moroccan CSOs with specific interests like political human rights and women's rights (Dimitrovova, 2010). Moreover, scientific research into the various aspects of civil society in education governance seems limited in Moroccan context (Llorent-Bedmar, 2015).

In this article, we will interrogate the explicit and implicit discourses and communication strategies between civil society actors and representatives of the governmental authority in charge of education and training.

Thus, this study tends to explore the steering of educational governance in terms of integrating social responsibility, citizen participation and mobilization into quality education.

The analysis of the discourse of associative actors will provide us with a basis for understanding the current and future situation of educational reforms, but also the evolution of Moroccan civil society.

To do this, this article is divided into three significant sections. First, we propose to describe the Moroccan context of education and training in order to achieve the involvement of the Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) with regard to access to quality, equitable and inclusive education and training.

Second, we will give the results of the empirical survey that we conducted with a representative sample of Moroccan associations involved in education and training. In this section, we will identify a number of tensions that CSOs actors and educational managers face when seeking to serve their tasks.

Finally, we will discuss our findings by showing how good governance could help in building a partnership between public authorities and CSOs for better education as a "common weal".

## **II. MOROCCAN EDUCATION SYSTEM AND CSOS : THE ISSUE OF PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE**

In Morocco, there has been a noticeable improvement in education and training since the country's independence in 1956. For instance, the rate of access to primary education rose from 30% in 1960 to 99.8% in 2019. Furthermore, illiteracy rate has been reduced from 87% in 1960 to 32% in 2019.

However, persistent problems hamper the realization of a Moroccan competitive society, which includes the right to equitable and quality education society (Bourqia, 2017).

In fact, the generalization of preschool is far from being effective. In 2016, only 43% of children aged between 4 and 6 received pre-school education, which reinforces deficits and inequalities in early childhood development (El-Kogali et al., 2015).

Furthermore, in 2018, the secondary school enrollment rate was just 34.6% for girls in rural areas, and 431876 students dropped out of public schools without obtaining school certificates (CSEFRS, 2019a).

In light of these statistics, the lack of widespread access to education is, nevertheless, an important factor which could reinforce inequalities in development between urban and rural areas, between boys and girls, and between private and public education (CSEFRS, 2018a).

On another side, the quality of learning is also a major issue. In 2016, Morocco scored only 358 points in the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) (CSEFRS, 2019b). In addition, according to the 2015 results of the Trends in International Maths and Science Study (TIMSS), the score of Moroccan students did not exceed 352 points in Science and 377 points in Mathematics, while the average is 500 points. Thus, whether in Mathematics or in Science, the levels of Moroccan students are below the expected average (CSEFRS, 2018b), which requires taking into consideration the internal as well as the external factors that affect Moroccan schools (Ibourk, 2013).

In addition to these challenges, there is unanimity in the diagnosis of other problems, namely: regional educational imbalances, insufficient teacher training, persistent school failure, lack of equipment for rural schools, low social mobilization for education, etc.

Therefore, the underperformance of the Moroccan education system can thus be seen as a result of governance failures. More importantly, this affects the responsibility of the state to guarantee "the right of all Moroccan citizens to access a modern, quality education" (Kingdom of Morocco, 2011).

In recent years, a large and growing body of academic literature has shown that good governance is the backbone of any educational system (Chapman, 2004; Dale, 1997; Daun, 2007; Howlett and Ramesh, 2014; Salamon, 2000; Wilkoszewski and Sundby, 2014).

On this basis, policymakers experiment widely with different approaches and paradigms such as decentralization, New Public Management, privatization, social accountability, and participatory governance. Some of these approaches are used with an emphasis on capacity building, open dialogue and the participation of stakeholders including CSOs.

In terms of human development in general, and education in particular, the mobilization and participation of civil society allows an increased influence of actors in the daily life of the school (Tolofari,

2005). In addition, these strategies make it possible to bring together institutional and non-institutional actors for the improvement of both quantitative and qualitative educational services.

Moreover, in the education sector in Morocco, grey literature produced by national and international organizations support the connection between the underperformance of the education system and the lack of participatory governance. It highlights the weak mobilization around Moroccan school, and the need to establish a clear and efficient contractual partnership between all stakeholders: State, economic actors and CSOs working in the field of education (CSEFRS, 2014, 2008; UNESCO, 2010; World Bank, 2008).

The relationship between Moroccan CSOs and national socio-educational issues is not new. During the 1990s, the country embarked on a path of top-down reform which has produced some significant changes such as the progressive alliance between the political power and the former political opposition parties while special attention was given to the human rights agenda (Sater, 2002).

This can be seen through two big changes: On the one hand, the development of the civil society movement as a key issue in the debate on democratization in Morocco. On the other hand, the need to reforming the Moroccan education system on the basis of consensus. By analyzing these two dynamics underlying the issue of human rights in Morocco, we can understand the current challenges of participatory governance in the field of education.

It is not the purpose of this article to engage in detail with the diverse meanings and uses of civil society concept. As an analytical construct and a political tool, this concept has become polysemous and discussed from a multidisciplinary perspective. This is expressed through the diversity of related terms and concepts (nonprofit organizations, third sector, non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, charitable sector, civil society sector, and global civil society).

Accordingly, (Salamon et al., 2003) defined civil society organizations (CSOs) as “a broad array of organizations that are essentially private, i.e., outside the institutional structures of government; that are not primarily commercial and do not exist primarily to distribute profits to their directors or “owners”; that are self-governing; and that people are free to join or support voluntarily.”

Furthermore, according to the OECD (2011: 10), CSOs “include community-based organizations and village associations, environmental groups, women’s rights groups, farmers’ associations, faith-based organizations, labor unions, co-operatives, professional associations, chambers of commerce, independent research institutes and the not-for-profit media”.

At the end of the 1990s, the concept of "civil society" started to gain popularity in the Moroccan political, sociological and media discourses. It was an opportunity to take advantage of the important and growing literature that has studied civil society organizations as a growing negotiation between citizens, states and markets (Fukuyama, 1995; Taylor 1991; Habermas, 1996 et al).

As an issue of the Moroccan democratization process, the concept of civil society illustrates the complex dynamics of state–civil society relationships (Dimitrovova, 2010). This view is supported by Ottaway and Riley (2006) who assert that Moroccan CSOs have shown a capacity to foster political and social debate in this permissive environment, whereas Tozy (2011) highlighted that civil society was working in an authoritarian configuration. Therefore, from this perspective, it is essential to approach civil society at the same time as a concept and as a reality (social phenomenon), in terms of the ability to achieve greater mobilization, wider participation and higher efficiency (Saaf 2016).

In Morocco, the evolution of CSOs marked the start to fundamentally reforming the national education system. Since the establishment of the National Charter for Education and Training (NCET, 1999), governance has become a priority, because the low performance of the Moroccan education system has seriously jeopardized the scope of efforts made in other sectors (Belfkih, 2000).

Indeed, under the umbrella of global governance evaluation (Rasmussen et al., 2015), Moroccan educational policy started to include various mechanisms such as decentralization, performativity, participatory governance and competitiveness.

More recently, an increasingly debated question is that of the place of civil society in the new education reform entitled "Strategic vision of the reform 2015-2030" which aims to enact a society based on democracy, equality, and active citizenship.

To guarantee a Moroccan school of equity, quality and promotion, the document of the strategic vision articulates 23 priority projects, including efficient governance which stipulates participation and transparency, responsibility and accountability.

The new reform commits to enacting a society based on democracy, equality, and active citizenship. Another point is that by using various instruments of good governance, the Moroccan government wants to “strengthen institutional partnerships and benefit from the various external expertise provided by social institutions such as families, civil societies, human rights organizations, the media and cultural institutions.» (HCETSR, 2015: 56).

Although those tools have been used to face the complexity of education system, the Moroccan government needs to adopt more flexible strategies to reduce the power of educational bureaucracy.

Despite successive reforms, bureaucratic logic still governs the daily management of the Moroccan education system. This is perceived from the expectations and aspirations of citizens and hinders institutional and social mobilization in favor of quality education and equity (Word Bank, 2019).

Recent studies have shown how bureaucratic tools have proven insufficient, and the need of a new steering of educational systems based on partnership rather than hierarchical command (Agger and Sørensen, 2018). In the same vein, Wilkoszewski & Sundby (2014) analyzed the governance of multi-level education systems, and demonstrated the new role of the central level in complex decision-making structures. They showed how innovation appears to be a necessary and promising alternative to the traditional and rigorous mechanisms.

Accordingly, Moroccan education requires commitment and action within and beyond the education system in order to meet the needs of 8 million children, 86% of whom attend public schools, and 1 million of students in high education system, 49% of whom are girls.

### **III. EMPIRICAL STUDY ON COMMUNICATION ISSUES BETWEEN CSO ACTORS AND ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICIALS**

In this section, we will describe the Moroccan CSOs which involved in the fields of education and training. We endeavour to see how the CSOs critically look at the management of the partnership with the State represented by the educational authorities.

In Morocco, the CSOs which intervene in the fields of education and training are heterogeneous, in terms of their size, mode of operation, and target audience. In the absence of a database on these social structures, it is difficult to have a detailed overview.

For this study, we eliminated parents' associations and literacy associations. The first type is present by force of law at the school level and is not considered as partner associations. The second type has a particular functioning and is governed by a national agency for the fight against illiteracy.

The study was based on a two-phase survey. The first one was quantitative in which a questionnaire was designed and sent to the 15 associations that we contacted and agreed to participate.

During the first analysis of the questionnaire, we were forced to eliminate 3 CSOs for two reasons: on the one hand, they do not meet the criteria retained for the study and on the other hand, they misinterpreted the objectives of the study and considered it to be an exploratory survey for possible funding of CSOs. Consequently, their responses did not contain a critical view of the partnership with Ministry of Education officials.

Of the 15 CSOs, we have selected 12 CSOs representing five regions of Morocco Table 1. The selection was on the basis of certain criteria: area of intervention (all associations focus on education and training); partnership framework: (they all have partnership agreements with the school and educational administration); legality they are all in compliance with the law governing the organization of associations in Morocco); and accessibility (they all have headquarters, and means of contact). 5 questionnaires were completed in French and 7 in Arabic.

The questionnaire was supplemented by semi-structured interviews, conducted face to face or by telephone with CSOs officials to explore certain aspects of their relationship with educational authorities.

Two main hypotheses guide this study: Despite the opening of the Moroccan educational /system to partnership initiatives with CSOs, the administrative services require mediators who understand and assimilate the logic of associative action.

CSO operating methods project or program management, external evaluation, evaluation by results) must strike a balance between donors requirements and the particularity of educational management characterized by bureaucratic reasoning and the predominance of hierarchical relationships.

To test these hypotheses, we asked questions that relate in particular to the limits of collaboration between CSO actors and representatives of the educational administration.

This study, which aims to reflect on the limits of CSOs participation in the governance of education in Morocco, will be limited to an analysis of the discourse CSOs actors. This angle of view does not allow us to analyze the same issue from the point of view of educational administration actors. This will require more time, resources and other methodological tools.

**Table 1.** Characteristics of CSOs interviewed.

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Headquarter</b>	<b>Region</b>	<b>Intervention zone</b>	<b>Area of action</b>
CSO 1	Casablanca	Casablanca-Settat	National	child protection
CSO 2	Casablanca	Casablanca-Settat	International	schooling in rural areas
CSO 3	Casablanca	Casablanca-Settat	International	Education accountability
CSO 4	Marrakech	Marrakech-Safi	Regional	reading in school

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CSO 5	Essaouira	Marrakech-Safi	Local	schooling of girls in rural areas
CSO 6	Marrakech	Marrakech-Safi	Regional	children with special needs
CSO 7	Imintanout	Marrakech-Safi	Local	Education in rural areas
CSO 8	Marrakech	Marrakech-Safi	National	education for sustainable development
CSO 9	Ouarzazate	Drâa-Tafilalet	International	intercultural education
CSO 10	Agadir	Souss-Massa	Regional	Non-formal education
CSO 11	Midelt	Drâa-Tafilalet	Local	Non-formal education
CSO 12	Tetouan	Tanger-Tétouan-Al Hoceïma	Local	artistic development

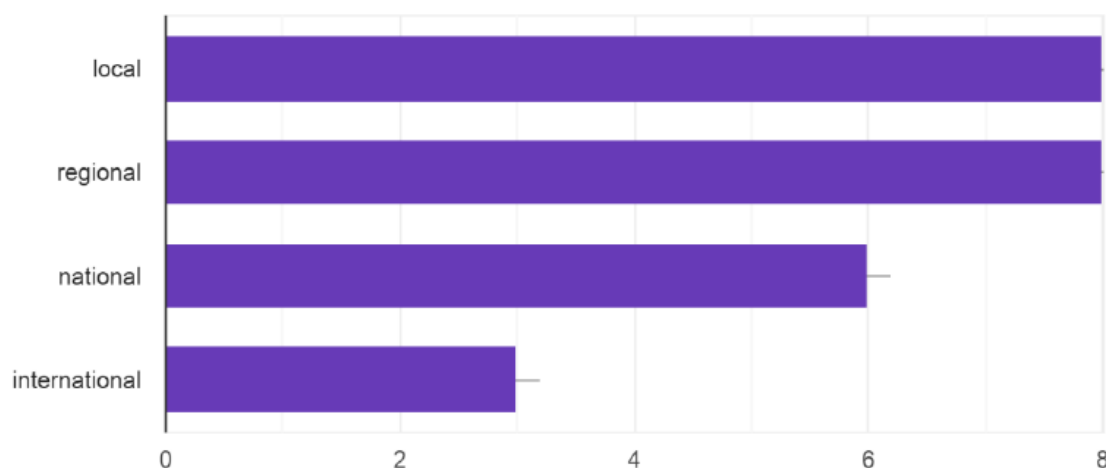
The analysis of the questionnaires and the interviews allowed us to highlight results that we have grouped into two sections:

- CSOs and administrative logics: some issues of mediation and professional communication.
- Moroccan CSOs and the characteristics of a paradoxical discourse.

**- CSOs and administrative logics: issues of mediation and professional communication**

The main point CSOs interviewed have in common is their awareness and conviction of the mediation role they play between the State and citizens who benefit from their actions. It is for this reason that the majority of CSOs actions take place at the local and regional levels, as shown in the following graph.

*Level of intervention*



In addition to their preference for local and regional levels, our survey reveals that 10/12 CSOs operate mainly in rural areas, where there is a growing awareness of the added value of associative work in the field of development in general, and education in particular.

Here is how one of the interviewees explained the importance of associative action in rural areas: *'It is mainly the CSOs that solve the problems of education in rural areas. For example, the Ministry of National Education cannot rent a house or prepare a tent for a classroom. CSOs can make a removable class. CSOs can contact parents whose children do not come to school. CSOs do a lot of things for the development of local populations.'* (CSO11). Another association manager speaks of the crisis of recognition of the added value of associative efforts *'Unfortunately, many educational leaders are not convinced of the role of civil society. They still don't understand. There is no participatory approach in important and priority matters. These leaders must know that nowadays the world works with participatory democracy'* (CSO7).

Moroccan CSOs discourse reveals that their daily struggle for mediation and development consists in facing three major challenges, which are the financing of their actions, the confidence of beneficiaries and communication with public authorities.

- **CSOs and funding crisis:** To contribute to the development of populations, the main sources of funding for CSOs are in order: donations and members' participation, foreign donors, the private sector, and finally state aid.

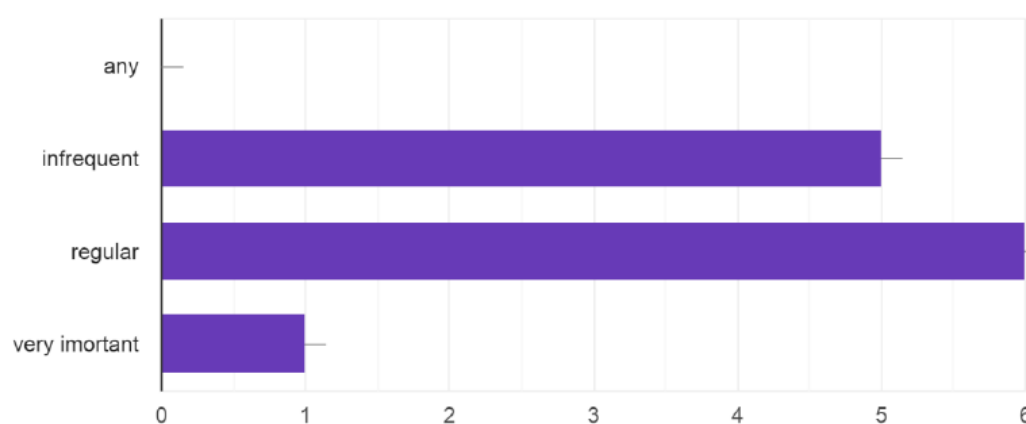
Here is how an associative actor explains the inadequacy of public funding for CSOs *'the big challenge for our association and for the majority of associations in Morocco is the absence or low funding from state. For example, it is up to us, as an association, to seek and ask for money to do an activity that is beneficial for*

the citizen and for the country. What would be appropriate is that the municipal or provincial council which has a budget finances our actions, instead of trying to block us'. (CSO1).

- **Beneficiaries trust building:** Gaining beneficiaries trust is a major issue for CSOs in Morocco, especially in the existence of other actors such as the State and political parties. With the growing number of associations in Morocco, citizens are starting to question the effectiveness of CSOs. For the president of this association 'An association that works for the good of the people is a citizen association..It is the beneficiaries who give this type of association good publicity. But there are also associations that only do projects on paper. Today citizens can easily distinguish between a citizen association and a non-citizen association.' (CSO4).

- **Lack of communication with public authorities:** The regularity of contacts between the CSO and administration representatives depends on the nature of their partnership agreement. In our case, 11/12 of the questioned CSOs report having relationships with institutional officials. The frequency of these relationships is shown in the following graphic.

*Frequency of relationships with institutional actors*

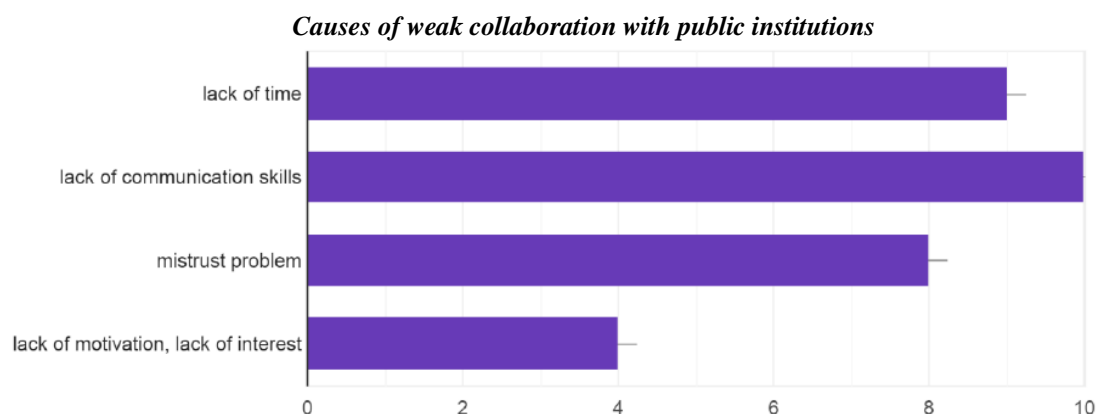


Paradoxically, the existence of this partnership agreement is coupled with a difficulty in understanding the administrative functioning of educational authorities. For Moroccan CSOs, the preparation of administrative files is characterized by a certain hierarchy. Moreover, the response to their requests for grants or authorization takes a long time. Consequently, associations lose out on projects because of missed deadlines for submission.

Here is how one of our interviewees explained this situation 'Educational managers live in a great contradiction. On the one hand, the official texts say that the school institution must be open to its environment and to associative actors. But when an association tries to take action within the school, it is impossible. There are many obstacles. For any action, authorization is required. Sometimes the blocking is done because of the objectives of the project. Otherwise, it will be because of other things. But when we ask for an authorization, we are asked for a lot of papers. The big problem is that the procedures are complicated and long. When we submit a request, we will have to wait almost a month and a half to get an answer'. (CSO 2)

In addition to cumbersome administrative procedures, CSOs must also deal with tensions related to the generation gap between elderly administrators and young associative actors. For instance, 80% of association leaders in our sample are under 35 years old. According to them, the age of their administrative interlocutors is between 50 and 58 years old.

Indeed, the weak collaboration between associative actors and their administrative counterparts can be explained by the reasons shown in the following graphic.



An association president sums up communication problems with administrative managers as follows: *'If an administrative manager has already worked in the associative context or has had experience in youth centers, the association will not encounter any communication problems with this person. This kind of manager does not exist much in the Moroccan administration. We have problems with those responsible who are drowned in paperwork. Even if we ask him to contribute to the achievement of some of his objectives, he thinks that our association will waste his time.... and even if he agrees to coordinate with us, he must see with his hierarchy to any kind of decision'* (CSO 4).

#### **- Moroccan CSOs and the characteristics of a paradoxical discourse**

The majority of CSOs hold very critical discourse towards public services: *'It is a general problem. If you were the provincial or regional head of the national education ministry and you set up projects and actions with civil society, it is impossible for the minister to blame you for having done so. On the contrary, what a minister could recommend to an official is to develop relations with civil society and its organizations'*. (CSO 3).

Nevertheless, the analysis that we made of the discourse of the CSOs and the description of their relations with the managers and official administrators, revealed three paradoxes:

-The NGOs criticize the administrative services for their lack of transparency in the sharing and dissemination of statistics. At the same time, many associations do not have reliable statistics on the beneficiaries of their actions.

-NGOs ask education officials for a more in-depth knowledge of how NGOs operate. On the other hand, the NGOs say they encounter difficulties in knowing how the Ministry of Education operates (hierarchical relationships, financial management methods, human resource management constraints, etc.).

- NGOs wish to have a stable interlocutor at the administrative level and paradoxically, these same associations do not have a stable interlocutor, because of the permanent change of their staff. All associations interviewed raise the problem of the status and characteristics of their interlocutor within the administration. Only 3/12 associations say they have a stable and recognized contact. In the administrative services, the interlocutor of NGOs changes all the time. Often, he is not familiar with NGOs characteristics and functioning.

#### **IV. UNDERSTANDING THE LIMITS OF PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE IN EDUCATION: DISCOURSE AND PRACTICES OF MOROCCAN CSOS**

As mentioned in the literature review, the relationships between CSOs involvement and education governance have rarely been studied in Morocco. There are two main reasons for this theoretical deficiency: the first is related to the process of institutionalization and opening up of the Moroccan education system. There have been a number of criticisms about the lack of implementation of citizenship education as a logical entry point for the involvement of civil society in educational management (Bourqia, 2017; Idrissi et al., 2019; Souali, 2004).

The second reason is intrinsically linked to the mixed history of the Moroccan associative movement, and the complex relations between the social and political missions of CSOs. Thus, the conflicts with the Moroccan power place the issue of human rights and freedoms above the concerns of educational management (Gandolfi, 2003; Guilain Denoeux, 2002; Mouna, 2018; Saaf, 2016).

Let us, then, discuss the limits of participatory governance in Moroccan education, based on key insights from CSOs' discourse and practice and some arguments of scientific research.

In summary, this research shows that the establishment of participatory governance in Moroccan education system comes up against tensions and communication issues (institutional and social) between associative actors and administrative managers.

The results that we are going to discuss come together in two research questions.

The first ones ought to determine the objective and subjective conditions of the functioning of Moroccan CSOs. The second one is linked to the existence of some paradoxes in associative discourse on education management.

It is interesting to note that the majority of CSOs interviewed work at the local level, particularly in rural areas. Indeed, official statistics (2017) show that there are more than 150,000 associations recognized at the national level and the majority of them operate in rural areas. These results match those observed in earlier studies such as a national study on the Civil Society Index in Morocco (ISC) which notes that despite the fact that only 10% of Moroccan citizens are members of an association, the membership rate in rural areas is higher (12.8%) than in urban areas (8.4%) (Akesbi, 2011).

How can this rise in associative action in rural areas be explained? There are several possible explanations. It's mainly due to participatory development programmes such as the National Initiative for Human Development that encourages a rapid increase of associations in rural areas, where the population prioritized access to basic infrastructures and services and economic development issues (Berriane, 2010). Even if the official discourse and that of the associative movement underline the importance of the associative action carried out within the framework of the INDH, some authors think that this national strategy can be seen as an instrument of power in the hands of the regime to control the critical civil society emerging (Bergh and Rossi-Doria, 2015).

We can also mention the emergence of new actors in the development of civil society in rural areas. This can be explained by the opportunities offered by the 2011 Constitution in terms of enhancing individual and associative freedoms. The new era of associative freedoms, even if still limited in rural areas, encouraged the quest of youth to become leaders. Thus, in rural areas, some authors describe three leadership profiles that are currently in competition: notable, associative, and political (Kadiri et al., 2015). Our survey confirms the relationship between young age and associative leadership. In our sample, 80% of association leaders are under 35 years old. Young leaders are now frequently present in associations and rural cooperatives because they mobilize new resources (technical, managerial, linguistic, etc.) which are different from those of traditional notables (large property, financial means, etc.).

Furthermore, our study indicates that Moroccan CSOs are facing three major challenges: funding for their actions, beneficiary confidence and communication with public authorities.

The problem of mobilizing funds handicaps the majority of associations which are characterized by a low self-financing capacity. Even if the Economic, Social and Environmental Council (ESEC) shows that in 2014, state subsidies for associations were the main source of funding for associations with 2.2 billion dirhams, the associative actors we interviewed emphasize the inadequacy of the budget allocated to associations. They highlight the problem of a minority of associations benefiting from these subsidies. For instance, the most important Moroccan CSOs are chaired by former ministers or great notables. In addition, CSOs are calling for an increase in public funds intended for associations, and for a shift from one-time grants to multi-year funding with projects lasting at least three years.

On another side, associative actors are confronted with the obligation of a managerial learning comparable to that of the entrepreneurs in order to develop an entrepreneurial spirit from the conception of the project through the assembly to its execution and its evaluation. Therefore, CSOs are facing a double challenge: finding budgets and succeeding in convincing donors, especially international organizations which constitute an important source of funding for Moroccan CSOs.

Indeed, according to the representatives of CSOs, gaining citizens trust is a great catalyst for the success of associative action. It is a hard mission, especially in rural areas where the population gives priority to access to basic infrastructure and services (education, health, equipment) and to questions of economic development. In most cases, people's expectations in terms of education are limited to building schools, providing school transport, boarding schools for girls and scholarships. The relationship between social demands for education, public action and associative intervention is characterized by great complexity, especially in rural areas where the State has always maintained strong relations with local elites as a strategy for dominating rural territories. Based on Khakee (2017), we adopt the notion of autocratic aid which makes civil society actors more tied to state power and more narrowly focused on the provision of basic social services or narrow political goals.

Let us now look at the analysis of the communication relations between associative actors and educational managers. Despite the existence of a partnership agreement between the majority of the associations questioned (11/12) and services and administrations in charge of education, our study reveals a number of problems and tensions between the stakeholders in terms of definition of the roles and responsibilities of these complex and highly interdependent relationships.



In contrast to the institutional discourse which advocates the adoption of new forms of educational governance, such as decentralization, results-based approach and project-based management, our survey highlights various institutional logics of public bureaucracies related to the education sector. For instance, the preparation of administrative files with CSOs is characterized by a certain cumbersome structure, which often causes the loss of subsidy to CSOs. Thus, the majority of CSOs in our sample underline the negative effect of the delay in administrative processing on their donor relations, especially foreign ones. These donors require compliance with a number of financial and accounting procedures, as well as planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting procedures.

It must be recognized that even beyond the educational field, it is the entire system of public administration that is often criticized as bureaucratic (in a pejorative sense) bloated, budget-consuming and paralyzing. The dynamics of both educational system and its bureaucratic functioning cannot be understood outside the global system of Moroccan administration. This is evidenced by the various evaluation reports which call for the urgent need to place the public service in a logic of management by performance and results.

This is a big challenge for a bureaucratic-administrative apparatus which has more than 860,000 civil servants, 53.6% of whom work in the education and training sector.

As evident from numerous studies, the major challenges of educational governance are linked to the promotion of collaboration in multi-actor processes involving different actors and citizens (Agger and Sørensen, 2018; Bobbio, 2019; McGee and Edson, 2014). To take the lead in coordinating the relationship with non-governmental actors (CSOs), educational managers must break with management methods by hierarchical structures and adopt management methods by results. Our study confirms a strong relationship between two different operating modes: on the one hand, the functioning of CSOs, which is characterized by flexibility and direct contact with the populations. On the other hand, bureaucracy, hierarchy, control and the multiple levels of validation (central, regional, provincial and local) which characterize the Moroccan educational administration.

We do not intend to oversimplify the complexity of the bureaucratic nature of Moroccan education, but we believe that this administration is currently overlapping between a traditional management mode and a hesitant adoption of new management approaches (New Public Management). Therefore, we stipulate that change management in Moroccan education requires reducing the weight of day-to-day management in order to highlight the objectives to be achieved.

On this basis, the conflict between administrative logics and associative dynamics reflects the issue of participatory governance and the complexity of the phenomenon of educational reform in Morocco, which cannot be understood outside the overall development system in Morocco.

Under the complexity paradigm, we must take into consideration, at least, three interconnected factors. The first is political because it is directly related to the decentralization process and the limit of educational leadership. The second is social in that it provides information on the place of education in the public sphere. Finally, the communicative factor is related to the problem of trust between stakeholders and the use of institutional and social communication skills.

As discussed above, the participation of Moroccan CSOs in management of education asks a fundamental question about governance of educational system for both policy and research.

In terms of educational policy, the logic of school provision has always prevailed over the social requirements of education (Souali, 2004). For instance, the Moroccan government has long been interested in solving problems relating to the generalization of basic education. This concern was accompanied by logic of endogenous change which made it impossible to conceive of the reforms outside the sphere of the Ministry of National Education, while the real reforms of education and training are a process which goes beyond the prerogatives of a single ministry. Furthermore, low institutional capacities, weak accountability and historical legacies of centralized control, are still hindering effective opportunities for participation (Houdret and Harnisch, 2019). In addition, research on education governance in Morocco has paid less attention to the tensions that may arise between institutional logic and bureaucracies and the dynamics of collaborative management with non-state actors. To our knowledge, on the one hand, there is no study on participatory management processes in Moroccan educational management. On the other hand, studies on Moroccan civil society have focused on socio-political issues of the paradigm of human rights and the improvement of the status of women.

Turning now on the analysis of the discourse of the CSOs which reveals three main paradoxes:

- While highlighting the lack of transparency in the sharing and dissemination of education statistics, many CSOs do not have reliable statistics on the beneficiaries of their actions. The explanatory reasons for this situation are the heterogeneity of CSOs (size, resources and areas of intervention). Small and medium-sized associations are far from setting up their actions in the form of a project with a diagnosis, planning, indicators and an evaluation and monitoring system. Moreover, the absence of control and audit explains why the majority of CSOs do not update and disseminate the annual statistics. These associations have many shortcomings

relating to internal governance mechanisms such as holding of annual meetings, financial management, record keeping, and the monopolization of information by the president or few members (Bergh, 2009).

-The second paradox is the limited knowledge of the mechanisms and the functioning of the Ministry of National Education (hierarchical configurations and relationships, financial and administrative management, historical development and reforms). Understanding these institutional configurations is valuable in the sense that it can guide CSOs managers in developing appropriate practices that reinforce the partnership with the public education service, and promote participatory governance.

For instance, many educational officials (school / college / high school director, office manager, department head, division head, provincial director and regional director), are convinced that their hierarchy will control and audit them only on realization of the physical program and action plan of the ministry. It is for this reason that they may consider the actions of CSOs to be superfluous. We argue that CSOs managers would benefit from learning about the explicit and implicit culture of the Ministry of National Education. For many observers, this ministry keeps thinking from the inside out, especially at the decision-making level, which presents a real obstacle to the effectiveness of the Moroccan education system.

- The third paradox is expressed by the wish of CSOs to have a single interlocutor who knows the specificities of associative action and who could contribute to the continuity of CSOs / Ministry of Education partnership. However, the majority of associations are experiencing a permanent change in their staff.

We argue that although Moroccan CSOs are aware of the need to invest in human capital, they are not taking enough steps in this direction. The majority of CSOs continue to operate on a voluntary basis. They must think beyond simple volunteering in order to consider new recruitment methods. Many of the partnerships that exist are based on individual relationships of a family or political nature between the association manager and his administrative counterpart. This situation leads to a clientelist mode of operation. For example, some so-called non-profit associations could become real incubators for personal businesses (Abdelmalek, 2011).

Although many of the elements for participatory governance have been initiated in Morocco, we argue that for both the education administration sector and the CSO sector, issues of leadership and organizational culture must be taken into consideration. The partnership between the educational administration and the CSOs must go beyond the values that stand in the way of a limited and short-term vision of the future, a poor culture of precision, a focus on the realization of the directives rather than on critical thinking, and a predominance of the procedural rather than problem-solving approach of the work (Cox et al., 2006).

Such limitations exist in many partnerships between education administration and CSOs. They are pushing these two organizations to adopt certain collaborative strategies rather than others. The size of a CSO, its funding resources, the place of leadership within the educational administration and the spirit of initiative are factors that influence partnership. After all, in order to set up a good educational partnership, administration and CSOs have to carry out their activities efficiently and collaboratively. The Moroccan Ministry of National Education must admit that it can not alone solve education policy problems; collaboration with non-governmental partners has to be as horizontal as possible.

The importance of CSOs in education and training development is undeniable. However, CSOs need to be socially innovative in their actions. As a result, communication between education managers and associations could actually progress towards more deliberative forms of decision-making.

## V. CONCLUSION

This study argued that with regard to contributions to development and governance of education, the participation of CSOs constitutes proof of dynamism and active citizenship in Morocco.

However, the practice of participatory governance on a daily basis reveals the existence of handicaps to good communication between administrative managers and associative actors.

The Morocco case study revealed new research evidence on the relevance of change management in the discourse and practice of education reform.

The link between participatory governance and the performance of the education system seems to give visible results for the capitalization of the achievements of past reforms and the effectiveness of future reforms. Traditional and hierarchical management could however constitute a real factor of failure in the event of lack of coherence and complementarity with the new modes of collaborative management.

In this regard, a bidirectional reading of the administration-CSO link and a more horizontal cooperation would be more advantageous for the development of education.

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