

1 Collaborative Governance and its Role in Fighting the Pandemic:
 2 From the Conception of What it is to the Verification of its
 3 Inexistence

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9 **Abstract**

10 Complex problems such as the public management of a pandemic require coordinated and
 11 horizontal action, involving not only public officials and their state agents but also
 12 representatives of civil society, their universities, and researchers, the technical and the
 13 corporate staff in the health field, such as collaborative governance practices. However, what
 14 we observed in Brazil in the Covid-19 first months of the pandemic, was the intensified action
 15 in the government sphere, with precarious effectiveness and little coordinative efficiency.

17 **Index terms**— public management. collaborative governance. territorial governance. covid-19 pandemic.
 18 Collaborative Governance and its Role in Fighting the Pandemic: From the Conception of What it is to
 19 the Verification of its Inexistence Abstract-Complex problems such as the public management of a pandemic
 20 require coordinated and horizontal action, involving not only public officials and their state agents but also
 21 representatives of civil society, their universities, and researchers, the technical and the corporate staff in the
 22 health field, such as collaborative governance practices. However, what we observed in Brazil in the Covid-19
 23 first months of the pandemic, was the intensified action in the government sphere, with precarious effectiveness
 24 and little coordinative efficiency.

25 **Keywords:** public management. collaborative governance. territorial governance. covid-19 pandemic.
 26 **Resumo-**Problemas complexos, como a gestão pública de uma pandemia exige a ação coordenada e horizontal,
 27 envolvendo não apenas dirigentes públicos com seus agentes estatais, mas representações da sociedade civil,
 28 suas universidades e pesquisadores, além de quadros técnicos e empresariais da área da saúde, como práticas
 29 de governança colaborativa. No entanto, o que se observou no Brasil nesses primeiros meses de presença da
 30 pandemia Covid-19 foram ações concentradas na esfera governamental, com precária eficácia e pouca eficiência
 31 coordenativa.

32 **Palavras-Chave:** gestão pública. governança colaborativa. governança territorial. pandemia covid-19.
 33 **Resumen-**Los problemas complejos, como la gestión pública de una pandemia, requieren una acción coordinada
 34 y horizontal, que involucre no solo a los funcionarios públicos con sus agentes estatales, sino también a las
 35 representaciones de la sociedad civil, sus universidades e investigadores, además del personal técnico y comercial
 36 en el campo de la salud, como prácticas de gobierno colaborativo. Sin embargo, lo que se observó en Brasil en
 37 los primeros meses de la pandemia de Covid-19 fueron acciones concentradas en la esfera gubernamental, con
 38 efectividad precaria y poca eficiencia de coordinación.

39 **1 Introduction**

40 Governance is a term present in different areas of knowledge, even though with slightly different meanings.
 41 According to Coase (1937), firstly and later to Williamson (1996), it refers to the devices used by the company
 42 to achieve effective coordination to reduce transaction costs, contributing therefore to economic growth. The

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43 theoretical basis for the discussion on governance is based on institutionalist economists and follows a corporate
44 point of view.

45 In 1975, the governability of democracies was the object of analysis and its central hypothesis was that such
46 governability problems in Western Europe, Japan and in the United States happened due to the gap between the
47 increase in social demands and the lack of both financial and human resources, not to mention the inability of
48 public management (Milani & Solinís, 2002). With the pass of time, the term started to describe arrangements
49 of socio-political nature.

50 The formation of such collaborative arrangements would be justified by the recognition that each of the
51 organizations involved, whether public or private, do not have the necessary skills to respond individually to
52 the needs of consumers and citizens who make up contemporary society (Sørensen & Torfing, 2007). Despite
53 demands for new ways of government in a global socio-economic-political context, whereby new governance
54 ways are emerging, according to Jessop (2006), it is essential to keep the National State playing the central
55 political role; its duty may not be reduced but redefined by contemporary changes. Mayntz (1998) prefers to
56 call it governance, a more cooperative way of governing, different from the old hierarchical model in which the
57 state authorities exercised sovereign power over groups and citizens in a civil society. In this new format,
58 state and non-state institutions, public and private actors participate and often cooperate in the formulation
59 and implementation of public policies. Kooiman (2004) refers to governance as a pattern or structure that
60 emerged from the socio-political system, looking for shared purposes in the group of actors. They interact in
61 each environment, implying, therefore, the presence of a polycentric state.

62 Consequently, limits would be set for a central actor to govern, and there would no longer be a single sovereign
63 authority. These socio-political-administrative actors would share goals, with imprecise boundaries between
64 public, private, and voluntary sectors, multiplying the forms of intervention, action, and control. It is about
65 structuring governance practices of high complexity into management processes, issues, and problems that are
66 also intricate, specifically, governance practices. This text intends to deliberate over this theme.

67 The governance processes take place historically and territorially, so one can speak of territorial governance.
68 Next, we shall delve on theoretical contributions for a broad understanding of collaborative governance, its
69 stages, and characterization. These first two parts of the text consist of the literature review about the subject,
70 while the third part presents an integrative synthesis between territorial and collaborative governance. This
71 concept contextualizes the case of public management related to the Covid-19 pandemic. The fourth part refers
72 to management actions related to the Covid-19 in Brazil; the analysis and the conclusion that, unfortunately,
73 there are no collaborative governance practices being implemented, as presented in this theoretical basis. To
74 substantiate the studies, it was necessary to consult official websites, and to check facts and initiatives of the
75 public authorities, being our reference what the press had disclosed on the subject.

2 II.

3 Territorial Governance

78 Synthetically, the concept of governance refers to the collaborative arrangements formed to manage public
79 actions, involving state agents, the civil society, and the corporate sector. We structured the meaning of territorial
80 governance by understanding that the effectiveness of its processes occurs two ways: historically and territorially.

81 The conceptual category of territorial governance, despite its recent use, is already transcribed in three
82 different Brazilian dictionaries of Portuguese (Dallabrida, 2006(Dallabrida, 2014(Dallabrida, 2017)). The
83 introduction of the concept in literature starts from the understanding that it is within the territory (as a way of
84 living) that men shall express different forms of action and power. They are manifested in cooperative relations,
85 but also in conflict, where there is the concreteness of people's different ways of thinking and acting. Thus,
86 territorial management processes are complex, requiring the coordinated and collaborative action of state agents,
87 civil society representatives, and market players through governance practices.

88 Territorial governance is the process of planning and managing dynamics, by prioritizing and innovating,
89 shared, and collaborative approach through horizontal relations. However, this process includes power struggles,
90 discussions, negotiations, and deliberations among state agents, representatives of the social and business sectors,
91 research centers, and higher education institutions. Processes of this nature are based on an irreplaceable role
92 of the State, a good notion of democracy, and on the part of civil society, aiming to harmonize a vision about the
93 future and a pattern of territorial development (Dallabrida, 2015a, p. 325) 1 Therefore, territorial governance
94 practices are intrinsically related to the development process of regions and territories. According to Farinós
95 (2008), territorial governance ultimate purpose is sustainable development, while its objective is social cohesion.
96 Efficient territorial governance is a relevant precondition for strengthening national cohesion. It is a practice/
97 process of organizing multiple relationships that characterize interactions among different actors and interests in
98 a territory, to develop a shared territorial vision sustained by the identification and appraisal of the territorial
99 heritage. 2 1 To check more about this subject in other publications: Dallabrida (2015b; 2018). 2 About
100 territorial heritage and its relation to Territorial Governance, see Dallabrida (under publication).

101 . There are different options, conditions, and limitations for the practice of territorial governance. In this
102 sense, Farinós (2015) defends the need and convenience to expand the prevailing governanceeconomy relations,
103 with a new and more powerful relationship between politics and territory. According to the author, the aim is

104 to improve governability from the perspective of a more decent territorial development, a better democracy, and
105 the population's well-being.

106 Therefore, we realize territorial governance processes turn public-private consultation practices effective
107 (Dallabrida, 2003) once it defines future perspectives of people who live in the territory going beyond economics
108 and including health, leisure, and the people's quality of life.

109 **4 III.**

110 **5 Collaborative Governance**

111 Collaborative governance is a standard oriented to achieve consent and to cooperatively produce results and
112 solutions, as a contemporary perspective of interest management and as a mechanism of solving complex problems
113 (Ansel & Gash, 2007; Bodin, 2017), in especially those related to the public sphere (Emerson, Nabatchi & Balogh,
114 2012). The challenge of conducting a collaborative governance model implies mainly in balancing the different
115 interests of the actors involved in the management process. It is different from other ways of governing and from
116 other decision-making processes that require consensus since collaborative governance goal is to solve complex
117 issues and problems (Bodin, 2017). In other words, governance practices are interdependent among actors, even
118 they shall remain functionally independent from state institutions, from companies, non-profit organizations, and
119 representatives of civil society (Taylor, De Loë & Bjornlund, 2012). Finally, collaborative governance models
120 or collaborative virtual communities demonstrate the potential for driving value co-creation and co-innovation
121 (Romero & Molina, 2011).

122 As you can see in Table ??, Ansel and Gash (2007) propose a model of Collaborative Governance based on
123 the ever-growing trust among actors and the consolidation of a more cooperative behavior based on dialogue.

124 **6 Table 1: Development Stages of Collaborative Governance**

125 **7 Stages**

126 Stage Description

127 **8 Face to face communication**

128 Each and every collaborative governance is based on face-to-face dialogue between stakeholders. As a consensus-
129 driven process, the "direct communication" enabled by direct dialogue is necessary for stakeholders to identify
130 opportunities for mutual gain.

131 **9 Building Trust**

132 Collaborative processes are not only about negotiation, but also about building trust among stakeholders.

133 **10 Commitment the process**

134 The design of the decision-making process in collaborative governance mechanisms is crucial to trust building,
135 once it prevents favoritism and clientelism.

136 **11 Shared vision of the future**

137 At some point through the collaborative process, stakeholders must develop a shared understanding of what
138 they can achieve together.

139 **12 Source: Adapted from Anseel and Gash (2007)**

140 From the presented framework, it is possible to observe the consolidation of collaborative governance among
141 actors involved in the shared decision-making process in the territory.

142 Based on a bibliometric study of publications on collaborative governance published in the Web of Science
143 database from 2009 to 2018, the studies by Anseel and Gash (2007), Bartz, Turcato and Baggio (2019)
144 acknowledge collaborative governance as a stable arrangement made up of actors who have complementary
145 resources and therefore depend on one another for the achievement of converging goals.

146 IV.

147 **13 An Integrative Synthesis between Territorial and Collaborative Governance**

148
149 In summary, the focus on territorial governance and collaborative governance derive both from the general concept
150 of the word, as a way of governing that is different from the old hierarchical model concentrated on the state
151 (Mayntz, 1998); a sociopolitical system is acting in search of alike purposes on behalf of the actors who interact
152 in a determined environment (Kooiman, 2004). Therefore, they are not exclusive.

153 The focus on territorial governance lies in the understanding that public policies, in general, aim at the territory
154 as a means of life for the people, as space where things happen. Therefore, any governance practice aiming to
155 reach local social groups is territorial and inevitably, horizontal, and collaborative. On the other hand, the focus
156 on collaborative governance emphasizes the extent of collaboration, or sharing, in the decision-making process.
157 Such a dimension is not entirely disregarded by a territorial approach once it strengthens interorganizational
158 relationships and balances different interests of the actors involved (Bodin, 2017).

159 In any case, the word of Ferrão (2013) on governance processes (territorial and collaborative) is valuable:
160 the more fragile political institutions and civil society are, the bigger are the chances of forms of governance to
161 become arenas of a decision taken by organized interests. Without accountability and democratic control, many
162 types of governments can effortlessly become instruments of inequality and injustice in favor of crony interests
163 or populist behavior. For this reason, the debate on forms of governance integrates with the one on the types of
164 democratic control.

165 What is unique about both approaches to the theme is that they are ways of solving complex problems (Ansel
166 & Gash, 2007; Bodin, 2017), especially those related to the public sphere (Emerson et al., 2012).

167 A current example of an intricate issue related to the public sphere is the process of managing solutions to the
168 Covid-19 pandemic, which is not a matter of management measures, but governmental. It implies collaborative
169 and horizontal involvement of health representatives -especially on infectious diseases along with government
170 action. In this case, collaborative governance practices require the involvement of government officials and
171 technicians of interdisciplinary teams, with representation from academia, civil society, and the corporate health
172 sector.

173 Afterward, we intend to analyze the efforts from the Brazilian government in the management of actions
174 regarding the Covid-19 pandemic, covering the period of February to April 2020.

175 14 V. Management Actions Related to the Pandemic Covid-19 176 in Brazil

177 The socio-political moment experienced in the world, and particularly in Brazil, presents certain unfavorable
178 factors to solve complex and unexpected situation as a world pandemic. Such factors include the globalization
179 process consolidation; man's belief in his supremacy over nature; the estrangement in historical political relations;
180 the preeminence of the elite in the world in articulation with liberal political positions of their rulers; little
181 appreciation of cooperation, humanism, trust, solidarity among people and institutions. Among possible
182 consequences, intense processes of corrosion of democracy.

183 The liberal position of the rulers, reducing investments in health, education, and social assistance shapes the
184 background of the pandemic Brazil. In this scenario of lack of democratic practices and of social/welfare crisis
185 that the Covid-19 pandemic emerges, demanding urgent measures from the government and the society. Even
186 though several initiatives came up, what is observed is that the power of decision has not gone beyond the sphere
187 of government.

188 The main legal instrument related to the management of the pandemic was the Federal Government Decree No.
189 We observed the very same situation in the municipalities. To name two examples, in the town of Osvaldo Cruz
190 (SP), a Crisis and Emergency Management Committee was set up, with the participation of the president of
191 the Commercial and Business Association, the Retail Trade Union and the members of the municipal government
192 structure. Again, representations from civil society or university institutions remain absent. In the Municipality
193 of Irani (SC), the Crisis Management Committee was set up by municipal government agents, representatives of
194 epidemiological surveillance, the Municipal Health Council, the municipal medical staff, the City Council, and
195 the Retailers Association. Other cases include, in addition to state agents, members of the health sector, and
196 representatives of the local hospital entity.

197 15 VI.

198 16 Final Considerations

199 Finally, we could ask ourselves: why would collaborative governance structures be recommended in the
200 management of the Covid-19 pandemic?

201 One possible answer is: in a pandemic, government decisions cannot be the only ones to be taken once they
202 are driven to political parties' interests rather than for technical reasons. Such decisions we have seen occurring
203 daily, in disputes among federal, municipal public authorities, compromising the effectiveness of civil action in
204 the crisis management, implying in the reduction of the devastating effects of the pandemic.

205 Another issue to highlight is that the contemporary world society lacks, more than ever, governance structures
206 to manage complex issues such as a pandemic. We mean a social and democratic regulation of the world order,
207 considering the number of actors in action, sometimes in a disconnected way, or focused on the interests of a few
208 countries. Undoubtedly, times of crisis demand urgent and important global governance structures, such as the
209 one caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. However, Arturi (2003) had already warned that the creation of a global
210 and democratic public space would have crucial challenges, such as the relativization of the influence of state
211 entities.

212 Therefore, the emergence is the urgent institutional arrangements for the global governance of major existential
213 dangers (VEIGA, 2000), as exemplified by climate change and world pandemics. The main purpose is to
214 contribute to the effectiveness of biosphere health, aka planetary health.
215 Eventually, at any geographic scale, collaborative governance requires practices qualified as democracy, and
this is something the contemporary world misses.¹

Figure 1:

Figure 2:

216

¹Collaborative Governance and its Role in Fighting the Pandemic: From the Conception of What it is to the Verification of its Inexistence

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