

EXPLORATORY STUDY OF GEOGOVERNANCE: MECHANISMS OF SOCIAL PARTICIPATION AND TERRITORIAL MANAGEMENT IN KABYLIA: BEJAIA AND TIZI OUZOU (NORTH OF ALGERIA)

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Abstract: The concept of "Geogovernance" emerged during the 2010s, contributing to the enrichment of the scientific debate in geography and territorial management. Geogovernance represents a new paradigm that brings a fresh analytical approach, necessitating practical and empirical studies. The study focuses on an experience carried out in Algeria, specifically the "Best Cleanest Village" competition project initiated by the popular assemblies of Bejaia and Tizi Ouzou wilayas. The impact of this project on the neighborhoods of Aguemoune N'ath Amar in Bejaia and Sahel in Bouzguène, Tizi Ouzou, is also analyzed. The study underscores the significance of social participation for all spatial managers, emphasizing a "participatory imperative" or the "duty of consultation" as crucial pedagogy for effective management and development initiatives. For geogovernance, a reference protocol specific to its process is essential, along with comprehensive training and information dissemination among actors to equip them with the necessary competencies, methods, and catalyst tools for territorial information.

Key words: geogovernance, social participation, actors, planning, territorial management, tourism

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INTRODUCTION

Governance fundamentally raises the question of steering mechanisms or responsibility in the ambiguous areas of juridical and instrumental norms, in the absence of scientific certainty, when values, preferences, or contents of collective utility are diverse (Briand, 2001). In this context, governance constitutes a development strategy (Brodhag, 2000). However, the implementation process proves challenging in the fields of territorial planning and the environment. There is still very little consensus, both theoretically and practically, on the best ways to involve the public. Actors are identified based on the characteristics of the mission. This is where the first network of stakeholders is constructed, guiding the process and ensuring the steering system of governance (Carlo, 2009). Indeed, postmodern societies seek to combine environmental conservation, interdependencies between different land uses, benefits of full utilization of natural resources, and sustainability (Alexander, 2006). Moreover, they must take into consideration the values, preferences, and needs of the public in decision-making processes, rather than basing societal goodness or badness solely on professional and partisan considerations (Geneviève and Sacco, 2012). Thus, planning and intervention instruments recognizing the legitimacy of social participation in territorial project decision-making processes are required (Schiffino et al., 2019). OECD guidelines push many member countries to integrate more reflexive approaches for increasingly effective mobilization with public collaboration, civil society, the private sector, and research communities (European Commission, 2001). Public participation is a fundamental challenge in environmental management and habitat design. Since the Rio Conference (UNCED, 1992).

In Algeria, the state's monopolistic approach to space management has not yielded satisfactory results (Bendjelid, 2010). The state's monopoly is currently being challenged by local, public, and private actors, as well as numerous specialists and academic researchers. For years, these actors have been advocating for a gradual disengagement of the state and the application of a new approach to space management. To make these gaps less visible, it is necessary to garner greater interest from authorities and the population to increase the attractiveness of the territory and ensure balanced development within it (Caloian et al., 2021). From an economic perspective, territorial governance is defined as a "process of coordinating actors among themselves in the perspective of organizing economic activity" (Leloup et al., 2005). A new attitude emerges, involving citizens in matters that directly concern them, thus fostering a sense of responsibility and, above all, an initiative to close the chapter of the period of dependency (Benmohammed, 2010).

The involvement of local populations is essential for achieving sustainable development and promoting balanced and dynamic settlements. By proposing a vision for the development of their territory, local authorities must ensure that the

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population will be able to contribute (Hauptmann and Wates, 2010). Sharing information to propose solutions and involving residents in the management of their living space implies a sharing of decision-making and responsibility that goes hand in hand. One may wonder whether policies are ready for this sharing of decision-making and whether residents are ready for the resulting sharing of responsibilities (Leloup et al., 2005).

We have witnessed since the 2010s the emergence of the concept of "Geogovernance," which has enriched the scientific debate in geography and urban planning. It is a new paradigm around new approaches to territorial management through the use of new communication technology tools and citizen participation. Geogovernance (territorial governance) enables active citizen participation in the management of their territory, capable of absorbing crises and addressing the surrounding spatial context, allowing for timely intervention in conflict resolution (Belhedi, 2013). However, their conception of governance is limited to the mechanistic aspects of certain processes, does not dwell on the qualities and modes of association of certain actors, and provides little explanation of spatial facts. The term "geogovernance" itself has been used before as "The New-Geo-Governance" (Paquet, 1996). Therefore, we start with the observation of this dual deficit of participation and effectiveness of action, considering the inherent tension in both the deficit of citizen integration in the so-called "participatory" making of public policies (Blondiaux, 2008).

This concept of geogovernance can encompass a reasoned and sensible approach that combines participation and social innovation with territorial management. In this article, we will explore the following questions:

1. What is the real weight and type of antagonistic and/or complementary positions of the various territorial players in a geogovernance approach?
2. What local territorial management strategy was adopted by the authorities to implement the new measures taken as part of the "best cleanest village" competition project in Bejaia and Tizi Ouzou?
3. What is the social, ecological and cultural impact of this geo-governance approach, which combines social participation and innovation with territorial management?

With regard to the question of how the forms of social participation introduced in the communes of Taourirh Ighil (Bejaia) and Sahel (Tizi Ouzou) can contribute to territorial development, it was necessary to analyze and specify how these social innovations relate to the dimensions of governance mentioned. Starting with the social dimensions, the article highlighted the governance mechanisms created in the communes which, serving as guidelines for the actions that followed, constitute institutional innovations in themselves. The main contribution of our research is to analyze the mechanisms for implementing certain initiatives at village level through projects framed by popular assemblies (the "best cleanest village" competition in Bejaia and Tizi Ouzou), according to the most striking theoretical model based on our analysis of a geogovernance approach. This article thus contributes to thinking about a new way of assessing social participation, showing that it can only be understood in terms of the decision-making context in which it takes place. On the one hand, the ancestral contribution of "Touiza" traditions as a form of community solidarity, and on the other, the use of new information technologies and geographic information systems in the age of globalization.

As we see it, the geogovernance approach is intended to be a means of co-understanding and co-resolving the difficulties of a project based on the territory, which analyzes facts using geographic information as a vector for participation and decision-making. And we have deliberately positioned ourselves within a heuristic and learning approach.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Our exploratory research will address two different study areas in two wilayas (provinces) of Algeria. However, they share almost identical natural, social, and cultural characteristics. The first study area is the neighborhood of Aguemounen'Ath Amar, located in the wilaya of Bejaia. The second study area is the Sahel neighborhood, located in the wilaya of Tizi Ouzou.

Study Area 01: Aguemounen'Ath Amar neighborhood, situated in Taourirt Ighil, a municipality in the wilaya of Béjaïa, in Kabylie. It is a village located 3km from Fort-Taourirt, nestled at an altitude of 800m between the Akfadou National Park towards Djurdjura and the Gouraya National Park towards the Mediterranean. The population is 2600 inhabitants (RGPH "General population and habitat survey"2008).

Study Area 02: The Sahel neighborhood in Bouzeguène is located approximately 70 km from the city of Tizi Ouzou. It is one of the largest villages in the Bouzeguène daïra in terms of area and population. It is situated southwest of Bouzeguène, 05 km towards Illoul Oumalou (Figure 1). The population is 5500 inhabitants (projections 2022, DPSB, Statistical planning and budget directorate).

Our position in this exploratory research aligns with a development approach for tools to aid decision-making, particularly in environmental planning and management, based on solidarity, information sharing, co-elaboration of territorial projects, and the search for decision-making compromises. The case studies of the "Best Cleanest Village" competition in Bejaia and Tizi Ouzou help implement institutional tools through integrated decision-making processes adapted to the context of territorial geogovernance. This article could serve as a foundation for a territorial management approach in Algeria and beyond.

It is essential to clarify that the contribution of residents in urban and territorial design is far from being a well-defined field of study or without controversy. To study the involvement or contribution of residents to a project, the approach used here analyzes this involvement within the participatory devices and processes implemented by various actors. We aim to approach expertise differently to address the challenges and issues of resident involvement in the project or even in planning actions in favor of a development approach based on a geogovernance process. Thus, we will focus on the analysis of a contribution made through the production and promotion of competitive and attractive spaces. A descriptive and analytical approach will be applied to participatory devices, specifically the "Best Cleanest Village" competition project initiated by the two popular assemblies of the wilayas of Tizi Ouzou and Bejaia. It is crucial, first and foremost, to

define some elements of governance, such as social participation, as well as what is meant by geogovernance, its purpose, and its tools. The objective of geogovernance appears, according to our understanding, twofold: on one hand, to contribute to defining the issues of a given territory from a sustainability perspective, and on the other hand, to inform and train the manager to ensure an understanding of the territory's challenges and involve citizens in decision-making.

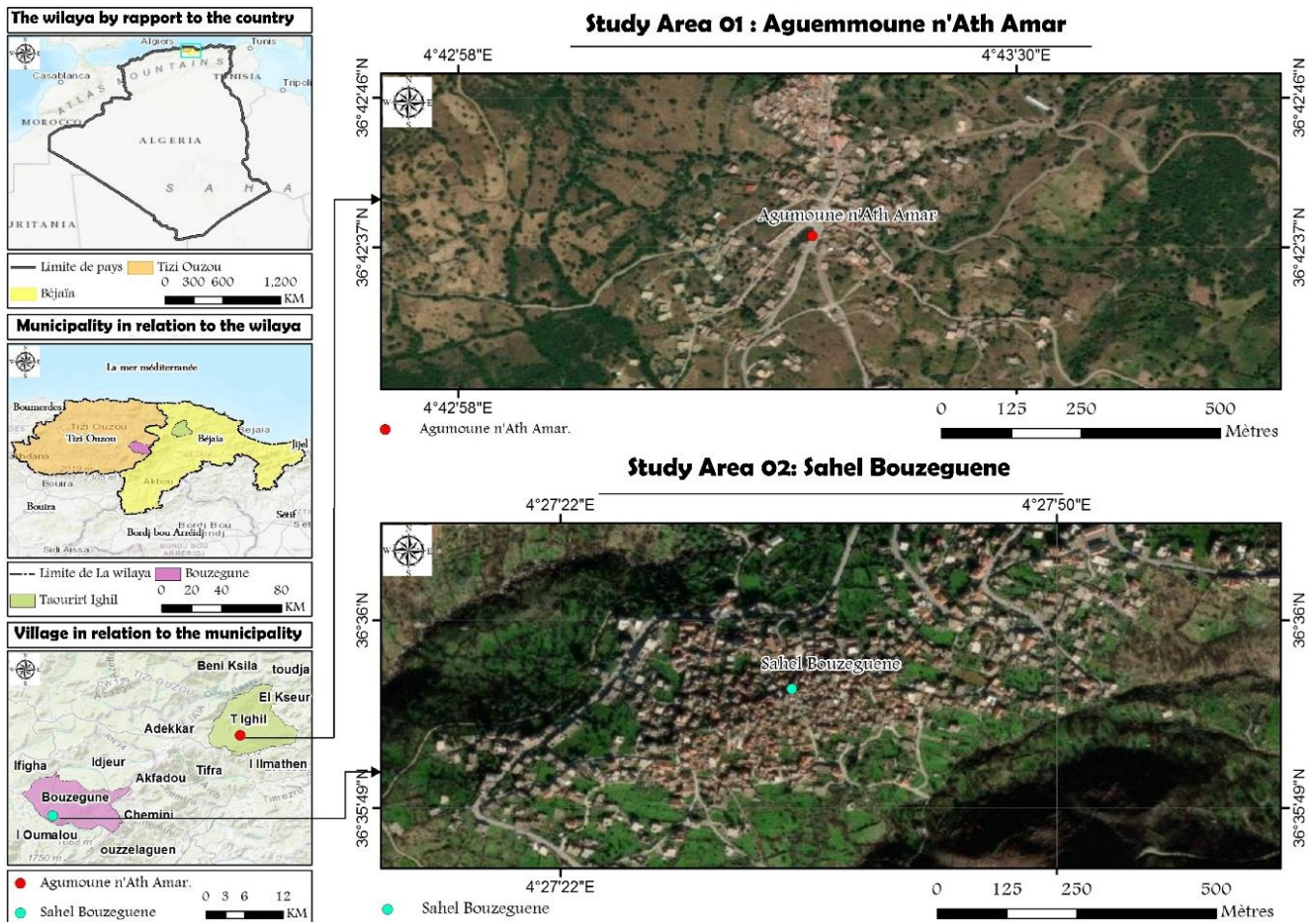


Figure 1. Study Area Location (Source: Authors, February 2023; Satellite image: world imagery basemap, Imagery date: 02/26/2023)

Decoding: Social participation, ICT, GIS and territorial governance

Before beginning our analysis, we felt it necessary to decrypt the notions of social participation, ICT and GIS and territorial governance. Over the last decade, national and sub-national governments have had to face several environmental and societal challenges that have necessitated the development of new public policies (Steinebach and Knill, 2017; Casula, 2022). It is quite clear that, the rise of the recent economic, environmental and social crisis as well as the increase in urbanization are leading cities to face complex and interrelated societal problems (Govigli et al., 2020).

Such problems make it increasingly difficult for a single societal actor to find adequate solutions (Baccarne et al., 2016), as resolving them often involves negotiations and articulation between different stakeholders. From this perspective, the urban performance of a town or village depends not only on its physical material infrastructures, but also on knowledge and social infrastructures (Caragliu et al., 2011).

Innovation and social participation and governance often involve collaborative practices between civil society organizations and public actors to develop alternative solutions to meet social needs, and are often faced with comparable socio-political challenges (Galego et al., 2022). We therefore examine five academic fields (political science and public administration, urban and territorial studies, sociology, sustainability and ecology, and cultural and creativity studies) to identify the most relevant dimensions linking social participation and governance. With the growing power of ICT, people have demanded more direct participation in public decision-making (Cossetta and Palumbo, 2014). Moreover, ICT and technological innovations enable real-time citizen participation that can both integrate and replace traditional forms of democratic processes (Cossetta and Palumbo, 2014). ICTs have the potential to boost social participation by facilitating access to websites and collaborative platforms, administrations' communications cells, as well as helping to communicate the initiative, for example via social media, thus helping to reach a wider population (González and Díaz-Díaz, 2015). Territorial governance processes that strengthen the role of economic and social players in driving social change help to instill more open and democratic practices in social leadership (Baker and Mehmood, 2015).

From this perspective, participatory governance is presented as a means of achieving democratic values such as efficiency, legitimacy and social justice (Fung, 2015). In so doing, community collaboration, the Co-construction of territory, would lead to social participation mechanisms as solutions - whether products, services or new models, public

space planning, - capable of creating social value beyond the capacities of current systems in place (Adams and Hess, 2010). Socially innovative governance is in fact particularly useful for tackling "growing social challenges that neither government nor citizens have the resources to solve alone". Citizens do not have the resources to solve them alone" (Pestoff 2012, 1106). Governance thus serves as the general foundation for geogovernance, at the center of which is the decision associated with power, with the transition from representative democracy, which favors a top-down decision-making approach, to participatory democracy, which relies on a bottom-up approach and a shared decision-making principle between citizens and elected representatives. This is exactly what we are going to analyze in detail in our case study.

Social Participation (Touiza): Immersive Vector of the Territory

"Touiza" refers to a participatory project, in which members of a territory or a given community organize themselves to carry out a collective operation for the collective or individual interest. In history, the Kabyles organized Touiza operations for cultivating the land, collecting olives, constructing houses, opening paths and tracks, and also in the implementation of hydraulic structures and drinking water supply. Additionally, it aimed to create a model that promotes access to property for disadvantaged social categories. It intended to offer these future residents the possibility to build their own living spaces, thus facilitating their social reintegration (Adad, 2008). Since the 1990s (...), new needs have emerged, highlighting the inadequacy of traditional responses and the obligation to modify the forms of social action to propose solutions that are closer to local realities (Gaulène, 2017). The theorists of local and regional development have emphasized since the early 1990s the importance of governance as a winning mechanism to ensure the redevelopment of territories lacking economic vitality or experiencing a decline (Xavier, 1992). The paradigm of local or regional development emphasizes the central role of governance in facilitating the networking of actors and making the mobilization of resources more effective (Le Galès, 1995). Taken in its generic sense, the term "participation" thus applies to the full range of methods through which the public can take part in decisions that concern them, regardless of the influence it exerts on the process and its degree of engagement (Gagnon and Gauthier, 2018).

From Governance to Geogovernance

Developed by the geographers of the intersite group "Spatial Analysis and Geogovernance" of the UMR Espace, this concept was enriched through a seminar in 2010, where it was confronted with actors from the expertise, political, and media spheres. The works carried out between 2007 and 2011 - field experiments, innovative methods, and scientific reflections - have contributed to its development (Cécile and Masson-Vincent, 2010). The modeling of territorial phenomena is now an area where significant progress has been made, leading to a better understanding of the territory, its actors, and their space. However, significant difficulties arise in the planning of territories (Loubier, 2004). The archeology of the "geogovernance" concept and examples that have contributed to its construction have been presented in various publications (Masson-Vincent, 2008; Dubus et al., 2010; Masson-Vincent et al., 2011, 2012). Likewise, various applications have been the subject of several articles by group members (Jacob, 2006; Douart, 2008; Lampin-Maillet, 2009). Therefore, we will provide a brief presentation before focusing on the subject of this article: an overview of field experiments and scientific reflections to support what we call geogovernance.

Through the observation and analysis of different types of citizen initiatives, we have identified several relevant criteria to distinguish them (actors, temporality, scale, location, materialization, relationship with public authorities, legal status, and controversy) (Mercenier, 2015). This institutionalization of public debate and citizen participation in collective decision-making echoes the development of the political concept of participatory democracy (Bacqué et al., 2005). Participatory democracy denotes a new form of power sharing and exercise, based on strengthening citizens' participation in political decision-making. The integration of citizens into the processes of constructing public action involves a combination of various factors (Hamel, 1991): economic crisis, political crisis, questioning of practices and techniques of local government management, etc. Therefore, local governments and authorities must adapt to new regulatory frameworks regarding access to geographical information and public participation in local life, as well as citizens' expectations in terms of information and means to communicate and express themselves about territorial matters. This dual requirement - information/training in territorial knowledge and the emergence of the needs and expectations of populations for inclusion in projects - seems to be one of the crucial components for ensuring active citizen participation in the management of their living space. Indeed, various studies conducted in recent years have shown that participatory democracy is not an easy task (Blondiaux, 2008; Rosanvallon, 2008).

Today, the discourse has changed. Territorial governance has become a method. In the name of sustainable development, each individual, as a territorial actor, could get involved and participate in decision-making (Piot, 2007).

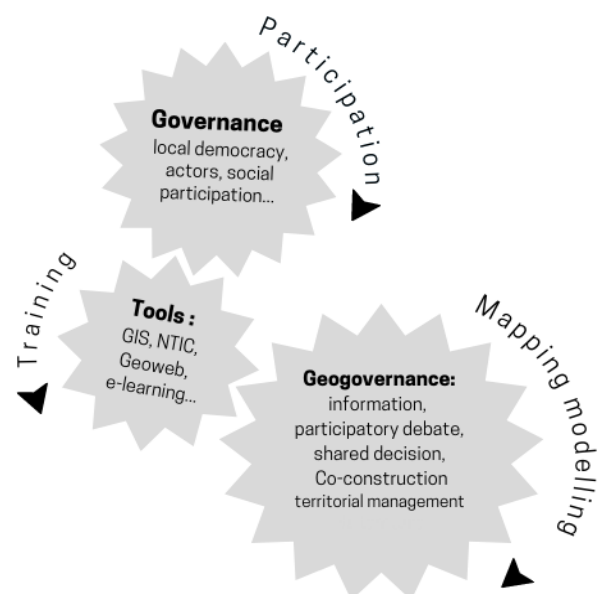


Figure 2. Articulation between governance and geogovernance (Source: Authors, February 2023)

With the emergence of participatory tools and practices from the social web, geomatics has adapted to new online techniques and practices, providing both professionals and the general public with enriched access to geographical information (Mericskay, 2013). The research conducted by the "Spatial Analysis and Geogovernance" group began with a theoretical exploration of the concepts of governance and then geogovernance, which we define as a process to achieve a shared understanding of the territory based on the multiple visions of its actors (civil society, elected officials, experts) to co-construct the territory of the future, relying on spatial analysis tools (Masson-Vincent, 2008; Dubus et al., 2010).

The experiments allow for the validation or refutation of certain theoretical aspects. Furthermore, they open new questions and theoretical fields that can take shape in the realm of tools, particularly in the area of complex representations of actors in contrast to computer representations. Ultimately, these experiments pave the way for an operational approach (Emsellem et al., 2018). The top diagram (Figure 2) analyzes the transition from governance to geogovernance and the practical articulation through the integration of participatory approaches with information and communication tools (GIS, ICT, and Geoweb), and in our case, the Touiza approach, which is an ancestral form of gathering territorial actors for participative debate, shared decision-making, and co-elaboration of territorial projects.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To understand the practical aspect of our research, it is essential to highlight two projects that have boosted the social participation process in our study area. These are the "Cleanest Village" competitions organized by the two Popular Assemblies of Tizi Ouzou and Bejaia wilayas. In the participatory framework, a sequence of activities and evaluations was created to implement this project, which can be presented in a cycle of development and improvement. The community's strategy determined the levels of participation, and the nature of different tasks in the project created different types of participation.

Project Description

Since 2006, the Popular Assembly of Tizi Ouzou wilaya initiated a competition called the "Best Cleanest Village." This project has contributed to strengthening social bonds and citizen attachment to the territory. The village of Sahel (Tizi Ouzou) won the first prize in the 7th edition of the competition. Among 57 participating villages, Sahel was selected among the ten nominated villages to receive this award. As a result of this distinction, Sahel received financial support of approximately 900 million centimes (around 45,000 €), with 20% of this amount dedicated to environmental projects according to the new regulations. These financial aids are granted as subsidies to the winning villages for the acquisition of public works equipment, waste collection, and other related activities.

Additionally, in January 2019, the wilaya of Bejaia duplicated the "Best Cleanest Village" project. Launched by the Popular Assembly of Bejaia, this new initiative takes the form of a competition aimed at civil society to motivate and involve actors in reviving the ancestral voluntary traditions known as "Touiza" in Kabylie. A set of internal rules determines the conditions of participation. Before participation, villages and neighborhoods must express their willingness to take part by familiarizing themselves with the criteria on which they will be evaluated by the assessment commission, composed of elected officials and representatives from the environment, tourism, and culture departments. The internal rules of the competition are based on the following points:

Table 1. Evaluation Elements of the "Cleanest Village Competition" Project (Source: Bejaia Provincial Popular Assembly, 2020)

N°	Element of Evaluation	Details	Scoring
1.	Public Roads	Maintenance, Lighting...	35
2.	Waste Management	Waste Collection, Recycling...	25
3.	Public Squares	Cleanliness, Design	20
4.	Fountains, Water Management	Maintenance, Design	10
5.	Places of Worship and Monuments	Maintenance, Cleanliness, and Design	20
6.	Cemeteries	Cleanliness, Design	20
7.	Social Organization: Village Committee	Solidarity, Participation, Volunteering	10
8.	Green and Recreational Spaces	Beautification and Cleanliness	20
		Total Points	160

As a reward, the village of Aguemounen'Ath Amar received a check of five hundred million centimes (5,000,000 DZD) in the first edition of the project in the Bejaia province in 2020. This project has become a new tourist destination for many visitors in Algeria. It has generated great interest in improving the living environment, public hygiene, and the cultural aspect of the region. In addition to revitalizing social ties and boosting local development, this competition has enhanced the attractiveness of the territory.

Impacts of the project on the social level

Through our fieldwork (2020, 2021, 2022) in the two villages, we observed that the "Best Cleanest Village" competition had a major impact on social, environmental, cultural, and economic aspects. The observed elements can be summarized as follows:

- Strengthening the capacities of local actors, elected officials, and associative actors (Figure 3a)
- Creating a citizen-driven dynamic for the preservation of tangible and intangible heritage.
- Strengthening the spirit of solidarity and organization that characterizes village communities.

- The project has also contributed to reinforcing social bonds and citizen engagement in the management of their living spaces.
- Rehabilitation of ancestral values of touiza, volunteerism, solidarity, and social voluntarism.

Impact of the project on the environmental level

One of the major contributions of the "Best Cleanest Village" project is its ecological impact. It has provided a new motivating framework that contributes to improving the hygienic situation in neighborhoods and villages. Through our field investigation, we observed the following achievements:

- Installation of selective waste sorting facilities so that residents can easily recycle paper, plastic, metal, and glass.
- Implementation of composting (one composter per 10 households) where organic waste is transformed into compost used to fertilize gardens and nurseries in the villages.
- Creation of educational gardens for children to promote ecological education (Figure 4b).
- Design and creation of green spaces and recreational areas for children, youth, and families, as well as the rehabilitation of village fountains and water sources (Figure 3b).
- Participation in the preservation of the ecosystem in the surrounding areas of the village.



Figure 3a. Study Area - Impact of the project on the social level (Organization of a governance forum with all village actors) (Source: Authors fieldwork, 2020, 2021, and 2023)



Figure 3b. Study Area - Impact of the project on the social level (Results of the residents' participation in the village beautification project) (Source: Authors fieldwork, 2020, 2021, and 2023)

Impact of the project on the tourist, cultural, and economic levels

The competition has boosted local development and revitalized the territorial attraction and cultural animation by:

- Supporting the creation of economic activities for vulnerable populations in the villages (youth and women).
- Involving members of the Algerian community abroad in the project.
- Creating jobs for villagers in waste recycling and compost production, providing an additional source of income for families (Figure 4a).
- In 2021, the village of Sahel welcomed over 30,000 visitors from all corners of Algeria during the Berber New Year celebrations (Village Association).
- In January 2023, the village committee decided to charge an entry fee for visitors, namely 100 DZD per visitor (around 2 €). This has become a significant source of revenue for the village, used for maintenance and improvements.



Figure 4a. Study Area - Impact of the project on the environmental and ecological level (Installation of domestic waste sorting points) (Source: Authors, fieldwork, 2020, 2021, and 2023)



Figure 4b. Study Area - Impact of the project on the environmental and ecological level (Massive operation to plant flowers and decorative plants in the village) (Source: Authors, fieldwork, 2020, 2021, and 2023)

- In July 2019, Sahel hosted and organized the Racont'ARTS Festival, which lasted for 7 days with the participation of several countries (Figure 5a).
- Annual celebration of the Fig Festival, including product exhibitions, local product sales, debates, and cultural visits (Figure 5b).
- Promotion of rural agriculture through the encouragement of farmers and the strengthening of local product production chains.

This article focuses on the relationships between actors and the contested space as the center of this discussion. The main limitation of this analysis lies in the fact that the proposed framework for fieldwork analysis was developed during the real-time monitoring of processes. Therefore, drawing definitive conclusions would be premature, especially since episodes of friction and participation are still ongoing in the two cases under study. Instead, the aim is to paint a picture of the scene in which the actors operate and finely characterize the socio-spatial relationships that connect them. Local knowledge of citizens is a source of proposals, but it requires both territory managers and citizen collectives to have appropriate tools, which should be integrated into processes that effectively involve citizens (Mericskay, 2011). The territorial project finds its coherence in the alignment between the organizational model and the model of development and spatial planning.



Figure 5a. Study Area - Impact of the project on the cultural and tourist level (Sahel hosted and organized the Racont'ARTS Festival, which lasted for 7 days with the participation of several countries) Source: Authors, fieldwork (2020, 2021, and 2023)



Figure 5b. Study Area - Impact of the project on the cultural and tourist level (Annual celebration of the Fig Festival, including product exhibitions, local product sales, debates, and cultural visits) Source: Authors, fieldwork (2020, 2021, and 2023)

The economic factor is crucial in maintaining the spatial balance of the city, as it represents the product of the main sectors of activity existing in the region (Lixăndrescu et al., 2022). In the context of supporting territorial projects, it is essential to provide actors with the tools for their spatial reasoning and expression of their territoriality. Participatory democracy requires tools and methods aligned with the expectations of civil society. On one hand, conventional participatory GIS interfaces were too complex for non-experts (McHugh et al., 2009). The project design stage is crucial in the territorial development process as it broadens the scope of possible actions and the leeway of actors, through a process of social and participatory governance. Sustainability and the measurement of environmental performance have become standard within most major tourism companies. It is believed that there are strong connections between creativity and entrepreneurship (Al Fahmawee and Jawabreh, 2023).

Social participation in a geogovernance approach refers to any activity undertaken by citizens to improve their living conditions, either individually or in collaboration with popular assemblies or associations. Social relations do not develop spontaneously; they are the result of a long process of constructing relationships, where traditional institutions play a significant role, particularly through the establishment of spaces for meeting, exchange, and consultation. Organizing participatory processes is complex as it questions the ways and conditions of the population's appropriation of space, issues related to daily life, living territory, user relations with their living environment, and forms of belonging and socialization. Governance can thus be associated with four initial concepts: multiple actors, shared decision-making, decentralized management, and the common good managed by the private sphere (Cécile and Masson-Vincent, 2010). It is essential to conceptualize the approach adopted by the popular assemblies of the wilayas of Bejaia and Tizi Ouzou to popularize this experience and capitalize on its achievements. Indeed, territorial management in a geogovernance approach is based on two dimensions of articulation. On the one hand, administration, support, and funding are provided by the communal popular assemblies and the popular assemblies of wilaya in collaboration with state departments and institutions (Figure 6)

As already known, solidarity or community volunteering is one of the foundations of Kabyle and even indigenous society's culture. The beneficiaries and users of a project, by working collectively, get to know each other and become familiar. In this way, people are prepared to live together in the future, creating a true extended family within a city, village, or shared territory. Indeed, there is no universally best formula for participatory work. In a "Touiza" operation, three essential elements can be found: the organizer, the participants, and the professional facilitator, each with their respective roles. The organizer is the project manager who calls and invites others to participate (Figure 7).

The participants are those who volunteer and willingly join the project, including family, friends, or other members of society. The professional facilitator brings technical expertise to the implementation. In principle, given their position, the facilitator guides the participatory work.

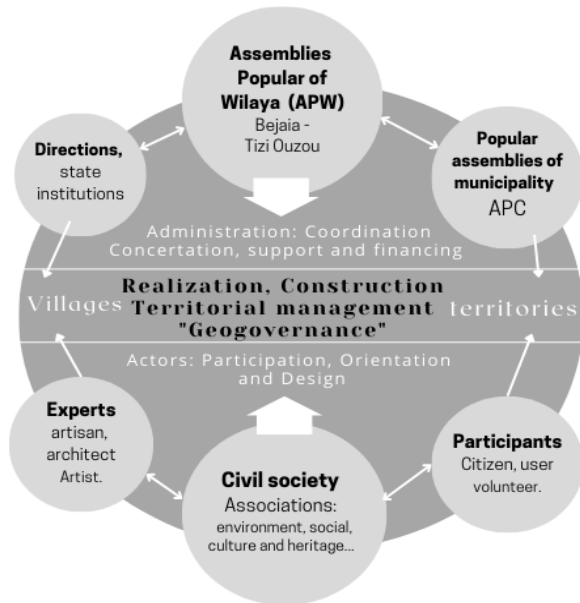


Figure 6. Conceptualization of the geogovernance approach in the study area (Source: Authors, 2023)



Figure 7. The three elements of a "Touiza" operation (social participation) (Source: Authors, February 2023)

The members of a "Touiza" are equal and complementary. Each person is responsible, in the eyes of others, for the work they accomplish. The organization is circular (Harian, 1973) around the task that constitutes the center of the activity. There is no "leader," but rather a guide, an advisor who works as much as the other group members. This practice is regulated by customary law, supplemented by certain principles of Sharia. Any offender is subject to penalties ranging from fines to exclusion from the group or quarantine. Thus, community cohesion is maintained based on this principle and accepted by all because it aligns with customs and religion. An approach of citizen consultation in urban planning offers the privilege of entering the life of neighborhoods and their inhabitants. For us, professionals, it is a fantastic opportunity to make connections and establish genuine communication (Hauptmann and Wates, 2010).

CONCLUSION

Social and citizen participation is now considered essential and mandatory for all space managers, including local and territorial authorities, as well as public administrations. Several factors can explain what we can call the "participatory imperative" or the "duty of consultation," such as higher levels of education among inhabitants, easier access to information through new communication and information technologies (ICT), and the power of the internet and social networks (Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, and YouTube), as well as an increased awareness of their rights and responsibilities.

The participation of actors in local development projects involves both their roles as implementers and beneficiaries of public programs. This bottom-up approach takes into account the different actors (residents, elected officials, users, entrepreneurs, professionals, neighborhood associations, etc.) on the territory and their interrelationships, forming a system of collective action, and strengthening the process of geogovernance. Indeed, means must be defined and implemented to inform, consult, and mobilize residents and socio-economic actors, representing all components of the territory. However, it is up to each community to design its governance approach based on its history, traditions, and local resources, as demonstrated by the "Best Village Cleanliness Contest" project. The territorial management framework should build a shared culture of territorial issues and fully involve all its actors. This objective, necessarily based on time, is the guarantee of strengthening community cohesion and the economic, social, and environmental effectiveness of the community.

Lastly, the conception of geogovernance as presented here will always require its reference protocol for its process. It must also be accompanied by a principle of training and information for actors, directly or indirectly, to enable them to acquire the necessary skills for understanding knowledge and grasping the methods and tools that catalyze territorial information, including ownership, identification, and reappropriation of space.

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