

Network in public policy education

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I begin with the following question: How can we innovate in public policy education in the context of information and communication society?

The project proposal of the Network for Public Policy (Rede de Políticas Públicas – RPP)¹ has the objective to develop knowledge production and, at the same time, make public policy experiences by actors from different fields that are members of the network and commit themselves to the defense of collective interests.

The proposal is to change the structure of thought. Instead of thinking about space planning the challenge is to think about the action and the transformation of space. Planning is a category below the action and of instrumental nature; there can be actions that result from planning and others that result from social resistance.

Following the methodological approach proposed by Ana Clara Torres Ribeiro, sociology should focus on the present and look to what exists². With this intent, public policies are recognized to be organized in policies, such as: environmental protection, urban development, health, education.

Our goal is to join in the same network research laboratories focused on the analysis of different public policies and their effects on the process of territory transformation. Its meaning is associated with the need to do a work experience that links theory with the practice of public policy. Clearly, modernity separates the academic thinking from political action when the institutions that are responsible for knowledge formulation are separated from the bodies responsible for implementation of public policies.

¹ The Network for Public Policy, was created as part of the project Public Policy Network, approved and funded by Pronex program of Faperj and Cnpq in 2013. It currently brings together 9 research labs and it is currently in a expansion process.

² RIBEIRO, Ana Clara Torres . Sociologia do presente,: ação, técnica e espaço. Rio de Janeiro: Letra Capital, 2012.

At the present time information and communication technologies transform the time-space relationships and allow cross-scale power, actors transversality, multidisciplinary and interdisciplinarity of fields. It defines alternative possibilities of actors articulation for education and production of public policy. The RPP's goal is to join in the same field actors of research institutions associated with urban and regional studies and those dedicated to making public policy.

The challenge that is proposed is to make a collective work experience associated with the possibility in which information and communication technology reveals deep changes with regard to the education and politics. This is why the idea of authorship, research processes, documentation, dissemination of knowledge that influences public policies has changed.

In order to enable virtual communication for the network has been designed and programmed the platform at the following address: www.rpp.ippur.ufri/rpp . This collaborative system was built by two research laboratories, the Lab3D at the COPPE and the LabEspaço of the IPPUR, both from the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro. It also reveals the important collaboration between engineering and social science.

The platform consists of a web portal that aims to provide an infrastructure for Web content management. This makes possible visibility, usability, democratization of education and politics. To achieve this objective, it was necessary to consider the technological management of the network and its systems of virtual communities coordination. Among these systems the following can be highlighted: groupware systems, support for cooperative and collaborative work, knowledge management, storage and retrieval of knowledge and workflow, planning and controlling workflow. This is basically the design and the development of communities management systems and web content management for the organization of research and formulation of public policies.

The platform aims to organize a repository of informations in order to produce a base for knowledge and experiences on relevant thematic for the field: public policy, environmental protection, health, sanitation. In addition to providing a mechanism for relating successful and unsuccessful experiences, it contributes for the field

development by combining theoretical and practical production about social action through a collaborative process.

It is then created an ecosystem, understood as a set of actors working together, i.e. a socio-technical network, where a huge and varied universes of researchers interact and where researchers, managers, technicians, activists, public bodies representatives, people are connected, expanding the ability to access knowledge. It means a technological platform that facilitates the relationships among all these actors. The components of this ecosystem are: self-contained research artifacts and clearly identifiable, which describe or perform a specific function and have clear interfaces, such as the results of research and public policy experiences. In this platform is possible to deposit: image files, sound, video or texts.

This is the objective: to form a network of laboratories linked by a shared ethic values, and an object of study resulting from the transversality among actors and interdisciplinary among fields of knowledge. The network, through technological intermediation, produces and influences public policies in the defense of public interest.

The last four years, since the beginning of the research, make us believe that creating new institutions composed by different actors is possible. This allows to innovate in the urban and regional planning field and to produce knowledge for new public policies, more flexible and democratic.