

# Social Economy and Management of Solid Waste: Case Study about two Organizations of Collectors-Recyclers in the city of Florianopolis/Brazil

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## Abstract

*Social economy is becoming an important changing tool, displaying at the same time diverse focus that can be used by society and individuals in the communities. This paper presents results from a research carried out in Brazil, more specifically in the city of Florianopolis, capital of the southern State of Santa Catarina. The research was financed by the Brazilian National Committee of Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq). The aim of this research was the study of two organizations of collectors-recyclers: Associação de Recicladores Esperança (AREsp), and Associação de Coletores de Materiais Recicláveis (ACMR). The dates analyzed were qualitative and quantitative. In relation to these two particular organizations, the main results show that they both are still in a stage of pre-cooperativism, where financial economical survival and dichotomy between instrumental and substantive reasoning surpass largely the value of social participation, and citizenship.*

## Abstrait

L'economie sociale se configure comme un important outil de changement à la mesure qu'elle présente des approches différenciées qui peuvent être utilisés par la société et leurs individus. Cet article présente des résultats d'une recherche réalisée au Brésil, spécifiquement à la ville de Florianópolis, capitale de l'État de Santa Catarina, située au sud du pays. La recherche a été financée par le Conseil National de Développement Scientifique et Technologique (CNPq). Le but de cette recherche a été l'étude de deux associations de collecteurs de déchets solides et recyclage: l'Association du Recyclage Espoir (AREsp) et l'Association de collecteurs de matériels

recyclables (ACMR). Les données analysées ont été qualitatives et quantitatives. Concernant les deux associations mise en relief, les résultats démontrent que toutes les deux sont encore dans un niveau pré-coopérativiste où la survie économique-financière et la dichotomie entre la raison instrumentale et la raison substantive dépassent en ampleur la valeur de la participation sociale, de la citoyenneté.

## Resumen

*La economía social se viene configurando como un importante instrumento de cambio, en la medida que presenta enfoques diferenciados que pueden ser usados por la sociedad e individuos de esa sociedad. Este artículo presenta resultados de una investigación realizada en Brasil, más específicamente en la ciudad de Florianópolis, capital del Estado de Santa Catarina, localizada en la región sur del país. Dicha investigación ha sido financiada por el Consejo Nacional de Desarrollo Científico y Tecnológico (CNPq) y su objetivo ha sido el estudio de dos asociaciones de colectores y recicladores de basura: la Asociación de Recicladores Esperanza (AREsp) y la Asociación de Colectores de Materiales Reciclables (ACMR). Los datos analizados fueron cualitativos y cuantitativos y los resultados indican, con relación a esas dos asociaciones en particular, que ambas están todavía en una etapa pre-cooperativista, en que la supervivencia económica-financiera y la dicotomía entre la razón instrumental y la razón substantiva superan ampliamente el valor de la participación social, de la ciudadanía.*

## **1.Introduction**

The Research of the background of relation between society/individual/men and nature or the environment has emerged as one of the greatest challenges for mankind in the last three decades of the twentieth century, and more specifically since the Stockholm Conference on Human Environment in June 1972 (McCORMICK, 1992; LEIS, 1999), raising debates and multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary scientific production amongst the so called paradigm crisis or modern science epistemological crisis (MORIN, 1998).

The aim of this article is to categorize and to compare the two major companies of recyclers-pickers of urban solid residues (RSU) of the city of Florianopolis, under the perspective of public social environmental management. This particular city is located in a region with sea and land interfacial eco systems, just of the coastline of Santa Catarina State (CRUZ, 1998). In that area, soil occupation and general urban planning have in common as one of the most relevant and increasing social problems, the collection, treatment and disposal of solid residues due to various combined factors which are: a) antagonism between natural public assets and predominant urban forms (with strong property speculation); b) antagonism between massive, seasonal tourism flow and the institutional capacity for residues recycling. On average, 263 tons of residues are collected every day, reaching 361 tons in the summer months. Only 6% of this material finds its way through recycling, though our city has pioneered selective collection in Brazil (FORUM DA AGENDA 21 LOCAL, 2000, p. 182); c) competition between formal and informal systems of collection and recycling of residues, and the increasing complexity of this competition due to recycling market diversification and emergence of companies of pickers, as well as an increase in numbers of independent pickers amongst lower and medium income segments; d) conflict between

particularistic moral approach of indifference to the environment and future generations on one hand, and universalistic and environmental ethics on the other hand – both of them challenged by existing economical and political interests (BOEIRA; SILVA, 2004; KUHNEN, 1995; 2002; FANTIN, 2000; SCHERER-WARREN; ROSSIAUD, 1999). However, although visibly opposing the cluster of these factors and perspectives, The Human Development Index (HDI) of the State of Santa Catarina shows a level of excellence in terms of quality of life in the city of Florianopolis, which was occupying second place in the ranking in the year 2000 – HDI of 0,966 (RODRIGUES, 2002).

In Brazil as a whole 130 tons of RSU are produced every day and 47.5 million tons annually (GRIMBERG, 2003). According to IBGE (Brazilian Bureau of Statistics) (2001a, p. 61; IBGE, 2000), there has been an increase in the conventional collection of garbage on the census period between 1991 and the year 2000 in all regions, showing an increase in the Southeast region at the end of year 2000 (90.3%, against 78.6% in 1991), in the South region (83.6% against 67.7%), in the Northeast region (60.6% against 41.5%), in the Central West region (81.7% against 62.9%) and in the North region (57.7% against 36.9%). When seen under a more detailed social environmental analysis such figures should be compared to the indicators about population in the differing stratum of distribution of wealth. In the year 2000, amongst the richest 10%, 80.1% of households had proper basic sanitation whereas amongst the poorest 40% the percentage was only 32.3% (IBGE, 2001b, p. 118).

Despite all this, it is sustained here that positive tendencies should be analyzed under a focus that surpasses the one from conventional collection (not selective): it is shown, therefore, that around 88% of the total number of 5,559 Brazilian municipalities dispose of their residues in garbage dumping areas or supposedly ‘controlled’ landfills (technically considered ‘not sanitary’), causing social impact and environmental

degradation (chromium contamination of freatic water table and agricultural fertile soils in rural areas and air pollution caused by toxic gas emission in urban areas). On the other hand, sewerage blockage and river sedimentation by RSU adding to deforestation and urban growth (and the increase in pavement of roads with asphalt) are seen as an aggravating and determining factor contributing to flooding (social environmental disasters harming mainly the poorest). Apart from that, few localities (10%), which dispose of properly its residues in sanitary landfills, invest considerable amounts of resources burying raw material. Only 451 localities have in place programs of selective collection (ALVES FILHO, 2002).

According to the sociologist Elizabeth Grimberg (2003), from The Polis Institute, Brazil wastes at least 9.5 million tons of recyclable material every year, wasted material that the process of selective collection could bring back into the productive process, creating jobs, income, public savings and reduction on the environmental impact. Moreover, according to Grimberg, 14 million tons of food are wasted every year around the country. If we only could combine potential existing reducing alternatives, reutilization and recycling of organic and non organic products, we would have, no doubt, effective gain in terms of sustainability in its different dimensions (environmental, economical, social cultural and ethic-political) (CALDERONI, 2003).

In the scenario of the State of Santa Catarina, the figures in 2001 were: Collection of urban solid residues reached approximately 75% of urban population; and 13.78% of the total collected received 'proper' treatment, that is, were sent to licensed sanitary landfills. The remaining 86.22% were disposed of in open air garbage dumps. Because of this situation, in June 2001, state government created *The State Proposal for Recycling Residues Zero and Job Creation and Income*. This state initiative would involve 96 thousand workers in cooperatives, social organizations, companies and city

hall administrations with the intention of creating, indirectly, 384 thousand job vacancies. The aim of the state government was to transform an environmental problem into profitable solution (CORREIO DE SC, 2001). Unfortunately this never manifested out of the intentions book.

Soon after the above it was created yet another plan, *The Regional Management Plan of Integrated Administration of Urban Solid Residues* (PDRS) which would involve areas integrating all metropolitan areas of the City of Florianopolis, Vale do Itajai and Foz do Rio, including 47 localities (CODESC, 2003). The PDRS, also forgotten, was the result of state government partnership with French government. The plan had foreseen a cluster of measures to be implemented between the years of 2003 and 2016. Amongst those were incentive proposals to the self-organization of solid residues pickers in all three metropolitan regions. As a preliminary measure, 1300 pickers were officially registered, whose activities would be integrated to PDRS through social administration, and capable of creating 3200 stable jobs for the needy. Such measures echoed the objectives of a program called *Our Daily Rubbish*, from Federal Government and Fundação do Meio Ambiente (FATMA) (State Environmental Protection Agency), that had as its main objective the eradication of open air landfills promoting technical adequacy of sanitary garbage dumps in all state localities by the end of 2003.

In the local context it is highlighted a research called *Physical Characterization of Urban Solid Residues of the City of Florianopolis* carried out by Companhia de Melhoramentos da Capital (COMCAP), a mix capital company holding concession from the City Hall of Florianopolis (PMF) to manage local RSU. According to this research, and whereas formal selective collection is done door to door, with pre determined routes, days and hours, monitoring data in each route; the informal selective

collection, on the other hand and in most cases, is done ‘without any criteria’ by the *pickers* using hand pulled wagons, horse wagons, bicycles and automotive vehicles (OROFINO, 2002, p. 75).

The Instituto de Geração de Oportunidades de Florianópolis (IGEOP) (Opportunity Creation Institute of the City of Florianópolis), is a non profit public body organization that was established by PMF with the aim of creating sustainable job options and income. The IGEOP, in partnership with Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina (UFSC) (Federal University of the State of Santa Catarina) and various others public bodies, concluded a report in 2004 called *Production, Formal and Informal Collection Diagnosis and Marketing of Recyclable Residues in the City of Florianópolis* (ZANCANARO; OROFINO, 2004), complementing the research carried out by COMCAP.

The mobilization of recyclers-pickers reached a historical mark in June 2001, when 1300 pickers from 17 Brazilian estates gathered for a meeting at the Encontro Nacional do Movimento dos Catadores (National Conference of Pickers Movement) that took place in Brasilia. They lobbied with federal government asking for official recognition of their profession, specific lines of credit for their class and implementation at national level of a selective collection legislation aimed at associations and cooperatives of pickers. After the event it was officially structured the Movimento Nacional dos Catadores (National Movement of Pickers), with representation in all regions of the country. A National Commission meets and discusses, on a regular basis, their participation on the national context of solid residues management. As a result of this action they were able to have their first claim met in 2002: their profession was recognized officially by the Ministério do Trabalho e Emprego (Federal Department of

Employment) as part of the Classificação Brasileira de Ocupações (Brazilian Classification of Professions). For further details please see [www.lixoecidadania.org.br](http://www.lixoecidadania.org.br).

This national articulation was paramount to the institution of the I Congresso Latino Americano de Catadores e Catadoras de Materiais Recicláveis (First Latin-American Congress of Male and Female Pickers of Recyclable Materials) that took place in the city of Caxias do Sul, from the 19<sup>th</sup> through to the 23<sup>rd</sup> of January 2003, promoted by the Movimento Nacional de Catadores de Materiais Recicláveis (National Movement of Pickers of Recyclable Materials) and by the Fórum Nacional de Estudos de População de Rua (National Forum for the Study of People Living in the Streets). The event was attended by well over one thousand pickers from various regions of Brazil, as well as Argentina, Uruguay, Mexico, Canada and France.

## **2. Brief Presentation of Associations Involved: ACMR and AREsp**

The two non profit organizations representing the main focus of this study are: Associação de Coletores de Materiais Recicláveis (ACMR) (Association of Pickers of Recyclable Material) currently located near the Ponte Pedro Ivo Campos (bridge Pedro Ivo Campos) at the entrance of Santa Catarina Island; and Associação de Recicladores Esperança (AREsp) (Esperança Association of Recyclers), located in the suburb of Itacorubi.

ACMR had a non programmed start (opposed to what happened to AREsp) in 1995 (PERIN, 2003). Nearly all ACMR members are related to each other, ex rural workers and migrants from west region of the state of Santa Catarina (RENK, 1999). The company was initially located under the Passarela do Samba (Samba Underpass) (at landfill Baia Sul) as per PMF determination. However, after various complaints by the community about poor conditions in the area (the place was a gathering point for

criminals, drug users and the like), PMF finally succumbed and had to find another suitable location. In 1997, the Secretaria de Urbanismo e Serviços Públicos (SUSP) (Local Government's Department of Urban Services) and COMCAP reached an agreement with the Departamento de Estradas e Rodagem (DER) (Department of Roads) in order to build suitable accommodation under the Bridge Pedro Ivo Campos. It was only in 1999 that the pickers were transferred to their new location, with the official opening in March 2000 of an under cover area of about 360 m<sup>2</sup>, equipped with public telephone, electrical power, tap water, two bathroom and kitchen. There were 57 official members and 28 'peons' in 2003. Currently there are 104 'official members' working exclusively in the down town area.

The Associação de Recicladores Esperança (AREsp) however, originated from a further project carried out by Escola Técnica Federal de Santa Catarina (ETFSC) (Federal Technical School of Santa Catarina), winner of the 1<sup>st</sup> Competition of Social Projects from Fundação Mauricio Sirotsky Sobrinho (FMSS) (Mauricio Sirotsky Sobrinho Foundation) in July 1997. The proposal was to engage socially outcast people (pickers) into the selection of urban solid residues, recycling of paper, as well as access to knowledge about the establishment of cooperative society and partnerships in order to facilitate their autonomy and achieve means to manage their business. The project was put into practice, starting in December 1997 and finished in July 1999, when AREsp was officially established. Currently AREsp has 30 members and is located in a public area, on the former city landfill (mangue do Itacorubi) sharing the grounds with the Centro de Transferência de Resíduos Sólidos de Florianópolis (Center for Transferring of Solid Residues of Florianópolis) (administered by COMCAP).

Those two entities are members of, though with slight representation, the Fórum Estadual Lixo & Cidadania (State Forum Garbage & Citizenship) located in the city of

Florianopolis. The Forum represents a place for debates, formulation and assessment of public policies by members of various private and public organizations. It is worth mentioning here that up to this moment there are still no local (a municipal body) of Fórum Lixo & Cidadania.

### **3. Two Models of Public Administration in Confrontation**

In the last three decades of the twentieth century, especially in the nineties, the neo-liberal ideology enhanced centralization of societies around market dynamics and values, while decisively contributing to a crisis of the role of State-nation. Paula (2005), debating with former minister Bresser Pereira (1998) – responsible for the introduction of management reform in Brazil since 1995 – compares ‘new public management’ or managerialism (since Reagan and Thatcher administrations) with what she terms ‘societal public administration’. In summary the characteristics of management model are: a) decentralization of the State body that splits government activities of planning and implementation and turns public policies into government department’s monopoly; b) privatization of government owned companies; c) outsourcing of public services; d) state regulation of public activities conducted by private sector; e) use of ideas and management tools coming from private sector (PAULA, 2005, p. 47). On the other hand, the so called ‘societal public administration’ is characterized as the product of a mobilizing tradition that reached its peak in the sixties, reclaimed by the dictatorship years of the seventies and emerging as versant alternative of reform and State administration during mobilizations of the eighties. In its essence there are the local experiences of creating institutional formats to facilitate popular integration in the process of democratization of communities and the State, as per table bellow.

Variable	<i>Managerial Public Administration</i>	<i>Societal Public Administration</i>
Origin	International movement for the State reform started in the eighties and is based mainly on British and American models.	Brazilian social movements that started in the sixties and unfolding in the subsequent three decades.
Political Project	Highlights administrative efficiency and is based on structural adjustment, on recommendations from multilateral international organs and on management movement.	Highlights social participation and try to structure a political project that rethinks the Brazilian development model, the structure of State government and management paradigm.
Structural dimensions highlighted in the management	Economical-financial dimension and institutional-administrative.	Social-political dimension.
Administrative organization of State government	Separation between exclusive and non exclusive State activities in all three government levels.	It does not have an organizational proposal for the State government and highlights local initiatives of organization and public administration.
The opening of political institutions to social participation.	Participative at discourse level but centralized as far as decision making process, political institutions organization and the building of bridges for popular participation.	Participative at institutions level, highlighting the creation of structures and bridges enabling popular participation.
Administrative approach	Managerialism: highlights adjustment of managerial recommendations for the public sector.	Social administration: highlights implementation of experiences from participative administration.

Map 1: Comparison between models of public administration, managerial and societal

Source: PAULA (2005, p. 175)

Giddens (2001, p. 58) on his sequel of the global bestseller *The Third Way* affirms that any society which allows for too much market infiltration in others

institutions would eventually experience public activity decline. However, the one that does not find enough space for its market would not be capable of generating economical prosperity. Equally where communities in civil societies make themselves too strong, democracy and economical development can be under threat. But if civil order is too weak then efficient government and economical growth are also under threat. Therefore the author proposes a new social agreement, based on the theorem that ‘there are no rights without responsibilities’.

Guerreiro Ramos (1981) strongly criticized the theory of organization considering it subordinated to an instrumental reason that, despite its pragmatic success, would contribute with a naïve and undimensional view of societies. After examining genesis and the development of calculating and instrumental reason on Western history, mainly from those ideas expressed by Bacon and Hobbes (seventeenth century), the author reclaims the notion of substantive reason – that can be defined as an act of thought reveling intelligent perceptions about the inter-relation of events, in a specific situation. This rationality makes up for the foundation of ethical and responsible human life. According to Ramos (1981), since ancient times and until the seventeenth century this kind of reason combined with modes of life and societies non-centralized around market found suitable conditions for their development but since modern times and the beginning of industrial revolution there has been a narrowing of reason with damaging impact on the human capacity to get together. Societies centered around markets, dominants through instrumental reason, would have then a challenge recognizing market as an enclave amongst others, allowing for the reappearance of substantive reason and the constitution of a society that is multicentric and reticular (in network).

The Associated Human Life theory, according to Guerreiro Ramos, distinguishes those two kinds of reasons already mentioned; whose characteristics are synthesized below:

<i>Instrumental Reason</i>	<i>Substantive Reason</i>
<p>Criteria for ordination of human associations are given socially;</p> <p>An underlying condition of social order is that economy turns into self regulated system;</p> <p>The scientific study of human associations is free from the concept of values: there is dichotomy between values and facts;</p> <p>Sense of history can be captured by knowledge that reveals itself through a series of pre determined empiric-temporal stages;</p> <p>Natural science provides theoretic paradigm for the precise focus of all issues and questions posit by reality.</p>	<p>Criteria for ordination of human associations are rational, that is, self evident to the common sense of the individual; it does not depend upon any specific socialization process;</p> <p>An underlying condition of social order is the political regulation of the economy;</p> <p>The scientific study of human associations is normative; a dichotomy between values and facts is false in practice and, in theory, tends to reproduce defective analysis;</p> <p>History has become important for mankind through paradigmatic method of self interpretation of organized community. Its sense cannot be captured by serially oriented thought;</p> <p>Proper scientific study of human associations is a kind of investigation around itself, distinct from the science of natural phenomena and broader than it is.</p>

Map 2: Associated Human Life theory

Source: Adapted from Ramos (1981).

For the purpose of being used by public policies of support to the development of recycling and social inclusion of pickers, the theory of Guerreiro Ramos, when updated by contemporary reality, would implicate in a challenge of integrating environmental, economical and social aspects, delimiting economical organizational spaces (based on instrumental reason) and phenonomic and isonomic settings (based on substantive rationality and symbolic interaction). In opposite case the tendency would be towards continuity of widespread instrumental rationality and exchange values (monetary) over substantive rationality and values of ethical-political use. This tendency

is currently felt in the supremacy of managerial public administration over societal public administration (or social environmental).

#### 4. Quantitative Comparison between ACMR and AREsp

A sequence of 17 tables is presented next with quantitative data that allows for comparison between two realities: a) from ACMR involving 104 participants with a total of 44 interviewed (42.3%); and b) from AREsp which is formed by 30 official members and a total of 18 interviewed (60%). Results were gathered through research founded by The Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico (CNPq) (National Council for Scientific and Technological Development) that went on from the year 2004 through to the year 2006. A questioner for data collection was developed and structured with multiple choice questions that were answered by ACMR and AREsp during the year 2005.

Consideration must be given to the fact that AREsp, opposed to ACMR, did not perform collection of materials in the streets gathering them through a trial system after receiving material from COMCAP. And for this reason not everything that applies to one particular entity can be applied to the other

Table 1: *Duration of Picking / Collection or Trial*

Percentage of pickers according to the duration of picking / collection / trial	ACMR	AREsp
Duration (time)	Percentage	Percentage
Less than 1 year	11.3	22.2
Between 1 and 2 years	9.0	50.0
Between 3 and 5 years	15.9	27.8
More than 5 years	63.6	0.0

Table 2: *Marital Status*

	ACMR	AREsp
Marital status	Percentage	Percentage
Married	15.9	11.1
Single	22.7	16.7
Separated	4.5	16.7
Widower	0.0	5.5
De facto (informal) relationship	54.5	50.0

Table 3: *Activity of Male/Female Partner*

	ACMR	AREsp
Type of activity	Percentage	Percentage
Not working	20.4	8.3
Working with garbage	47.7	33.3
Registered worker	4.5	33.3
Non registered worker	0.0	25.0

Table 4: *Total Number of Dependants*

	ACMR	AREsp
Dependants	Percentage	Percentage
Zero	13.6	16.7
One	4.5	22.2
Two	11.4	27.8
Three	22.7	16.7
Four	18.2	0.0
More than 4	29.6	16.6

Table 5: *Types of Accommodation (Housing)*

	ACMR	AREsp
Type	Percentage	Percentage
Brick or wood	100	100
Other	0.0	0.0
Shelter	0.0	0.0
On the streets	0.0	0.0

Table 6: *Housing Regime*

	ACMR	AREsp
Housing	Percentage	Percentage
Owned	86.3	55.5
Rented	0.0	11.1
Free boarding	13.6	27.8

Table 7: *Gender*

	ACMR	AREsp
Gender	Percentage	Percentage
Male	65.9	22.2
Female	34.0	77.8

Table 8: *Level of Education*

	ACMR	AREsp
	Percentage	Percentage
Fundamental (not completed)	72.7	55.6
Fundamental (completed)	18.1	27.8
Medium (not completed)	6.8	11.1
Medium (completed)	0.0	0.0
No formal education	2.2	5.5

Table 9: *Pickers Health*

	ACMR	AREsp
Occurrence of health problems	Percentage	Percentage
None	38.6	38.9
Yes, physical illness	52.2	33.3
Yes, emotional problems	2.2	5.5
Yes, caused by accidents	0.0	5.5
Yes, physical and emotional	4.5	16.7

Table 10: *Former Activities Dropping Out*

	ACMR	AREsp
Motive	Percentage	Percentage
Lower wages	40.0	27.8
Dislike of jobs	9.0	0.0
Dismissal	2.2	16.7
Other	47.7	50.0

Table 11: *Other Sources of Monthly Revenue (Complement)*

	ACMR	AREsp
Revenue in BRL (reais)	Percentage	Percentage
Up to BRL 50	4.5	0.0
From BRL 50 up to BRL 150	0.0	5.6
More than BRL 150	2.2	0.0
No other source	93.1	94.4

Table 12: *Length of Participation in the Association / Cooperative*

	ACMR	AREsp
Length	Percentage	Percentage
Up to 1 year	22.7	33.3
Between 1 and 5 years	27.5	66.7
More than 5 years	50	0.0

Table 13: *Collection Location*

	ACMR	AREsp
Experience working at landfills	Percentage	Percentage
Worked at landfills (picking)	6.8	16.7
Never worked at landfills (picking)	93.1	83.3

Table 14: *Monthly Revenue of Pickers / Collectors / Selectors (Trail)*

	ACMR	AREsp
Revenue in BRL (reais)	Percentage	Percentage
Up to BRL 150	4.5	44.4
From BRL 150 to BRL 250	29.5	44.4
From BRL 250 to BRL 400	22.7	11.1
More than BRL 400	36.3	0.0

Table 15: *Type of Desired Qualification*

	ACMR	AREsp
Type	Percentage	Percentage
Cooperative	22.7	10.0
Literacy	15.9	45.0
Partnership projects	25.0	10.0
Recyclable and Market	34.0	25.0

Table 16: *Type of Desired Assistance*

	ACMR	AREsp
Type	Percentage	Percentage
Justice (legal)	15.9	18.2
Public safety	9.09	0.0
Groups of AA and NA	0.0	0.0
Medical and Dental	75.0	77.3

Table 17: *Job Satisfaction*

	ACMR	AREsp
Option for continuing with activity	Percentage	Percentage
No	27.2	11.1
Yes	72.7	88.9

Source: Data collected from Research.

Interpretation of each table alone and the crossing interpretation of tables amongst themselves would exceed the aim of this article because of its complexity and extensiveness; however as a mean of contribution in this direction, not only from the gathering of quantitative data above, but also from data collected through bibliographic revision, at National Profile, and direct observation at AREsp and ACMR meetings, it is presented next what is termed ‘qualitative comparison’.

## **5. Qualitative Comparison and Emerging Themes from Public Debates**

We verified that the beginning of AREsp was well planned, with public selection test and technical courses, as well as contribution from municipal executive council, whereas the beginning of ACMR activities was informal and confusing, with PMF under pressure to find a solution in accordance with estate government.

The experience of pickers from ACMR is comparatively bigger than AREsp in which we see lot more turn around of employees. All reports shown relative ‘job satisfaction’ since the option to keep on doing the same kind of work is predominant in

all three cases. Surely this happens because of lack of better options, lack of formal education as it was evident on the commentaries made at the interviews.

At ACMR the predominance is mainly male whereas at AREsp females are predominantly higher in numbers, and on the National Scenario we can actually see certain balance but with slightly bigger male participation. As far as marital status, the percentage relating to 'de facto (informal) relationship' at ACMR and AREsp are emphasized. But the partners of those workers from AREsp have better working conditions given the fact that they are officially registered workers. Revenue from ACMR male workers is higher than AREsp female workers which, nevertheless, have better working conditions because they don't need to go out on the streets picking up recyclable material. It is not surprising that ACMR pickers have more complaints as far as their health condition, mainly physical illnesses; whereas emotional problems are more evident amongst AREsp female workers. It catches our attention however such high percentage of those workers saying that they don't have any health problems whatsoever, even though medical and dental assistance are the kind of basic service mostly needed in all three groups surveyed.

Even though percentage about 'housing ownership' is highly emphasized, closer investigation would probably find some irregular and illegal situations as far as documentation as this is common occurrence in suburbs with lower income residents.

As far as political awareness we observe that the desire for qualification in cooperative activity is, understandably and comparatively, higher in the survey carried out at the I Encontro Nacional do Movimento dos Catadores amongst mobile pickers, even though 32% of them said that were not members of any cooperative or association. Desire for literacy is strong amongst AREsp workers, whereas amongst ACMR workers and also on the National Scenario, we find huge demand for better knowledge about the

market of recyclable materials, even though the desire for qualification in cooperative activity was not dismissed.

Cooperativism and the so called solidarity-based economy are sometimes pointed as references normative theoretic in literature about this kind of organizations. Magera (2003) stresses in his survey about cooperatives of pickers from the interior of the State of Sao Paulo that this organizations are far from classical principles of cooperativism.

The culture found in AREsp in relation to ACMR is less 'individualistic', and more 'solidarity-based', concentrating on equalitarian managerial practices (such as fortnightly sharing), therefore closer to the cooperativist ideal. At ACMR is prominent not only individualism but also the power of some of the families over the others, especially from a family that holds 60% of the membership. Intra-family conflicts have served as an obstacle to professional organization and also to the process of citizenship development in the same way that meetings and gatherings are permeated by communications with strong emotional content. The writing culture is a great obstacle in those two organizations.

Therefore, social environmental public administration as well as delimitation and economical spaces integration (instrumental) and phenonomic and isonomic settings (symbolic) are challenges to supporting public policies about the development of recycling activity. Gonçalves (2003), in this sense observes rightly that there are two points of view distinct but complementary: first, more conventional that defends urban cleanliness, universalizing of regular collection and final disposal in sanitary landfills amongst other topics; and second, more recent and innovative that puts an emphases on selective collection, separation of residues at the source, environmental education,

cooperatives of pickers integrated to productive chain of recycling amongst other topics (GONÇALVES, 2003, p. 159).

These two complementary points of view are, actually, potentialized in the public debate under the theme reverse logistic and the theme of the three 'Rs' (reduce, reutilize, and recycle). Convergent in this sense are the federal government legislation of a National Policy for Solid Residues and the proposal from National Council for Solid Residues of ABES (Brazilian Association of Environmental and Sanitary Engineering). However, the complexity of implementing future legislation is too big, not only from technical operational point of view but also political and socio environmental (SAMPAIO, 2005; CAMPANI, 2005).

## **6. Conclusion**

It can be deduced from the comparison between the two models of public administration synthesized that a socio environmental management even though still in the initial stage of its creation has the underlying principles needed to make viable the insertion of pickers-recyclers and its organization into the Brazilian democratic process, as long as it aggregates emerging issues such as: the policy of three 'Rs' (reduce, reutilize, recycle) and the so called reverse logistic which demands studies about life cycles of the products, as well as studies about the potential, costs and recycling demand. However, beyond these themes on public debate there is the classical challenge of delimiting the growth of instrumental reason over the potential of substantive reason existent in the phenomic and isonomic organizations. Without such delimitation the organizations of pickers are destined to social invisibility or submission to a 'parochial vision of human nature', characteristic that is typical on dominant organizational theories from communities centered on market. (RAMOS, 1981, p. 93). This underlying

challenge is also emerging in the so called crisis of paradigms from contemporary science (MORIN, 1998).

Towards substantive rationality and socio environmental management emerges a broad social network, such as the one formed by the Movimento Nacional dos Catadores and by Forum Lixo & Cidadania, mobilizing itself multi and trans-sectorially, permeating diverse social levels and going beyond national boundaries. However, it is eminent in Florianopolis the pioneering of selective collection as well as the lack of a Garbage & Citizenship Municipal Forum.

In this study the two organizations in focus are facing, since the last half of the nineties, a central dilemma: with the help of organizations and professionals from various organs they have managed to overcome most of its internal differences whilst perceiving, as consequence of this process, new organizational challenges such as the challenge of articulating those two organizations in only one local network. They are still at pre-cooperativist stage, so to speak, where economical financial survival and the dichotomy between instrumental reason and substantive reason surpass significantly the value of 'social participation', of 'citizenship'. Lack of integrated supporting public policies to recycling is still a reality in the City of Florianopolis although there has been considerable steps taken in this direction, especially in terms of data gathering in partnership with research centers.

This article surely contains few gaps which could be the target of more specific research about the subject. The so called emerging themes were only mentioned here as aspects of a critical, contextual and socio environmental approach, linking, introductorily, quantitative and qualitative data, empiric research and some concepts from bibliographic revision.

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