

## Literature Analysis of Governance in Local Productive Arrangements: a Systematic Review

*Análise da literatura sobre governança em Arranjos Produtivos Locais: uma Revisão Sistemática de Literatura*

*Análisis de la literatura sobre gobernanza en Arreglos Productivos Locales: una Revisión Sistemática de la Literatura*

*Analyse de la littérature sur la gouvernance dans les Arrangements Productifs Locaux: une Revue Systématique*

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### ABSTRACT

The study analyzes the quantity of scientific publications related to governance in Local Productive Arrangements (LPAs). A systematic literature review covering the last 20 years was conducted. The survey was conducted on the portal of journals of the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES), the Scientific Periodicals Electronic Library (SPELL), and the Scientific Electronic Library Online (SCIELO), with 34 articles being cataloged, in Portuguese and English, using the keywords: "Local Productive Arrangements and Governance". It was found that the research addressed governance in LPAs from the following aspects: command, power and hierarchy relationships; representativeness; cooperation; coordination; participation in decision-making processes; dimensions and component factors of governance; environmental issues; territory; and factors that limit governance in LPAs.

**KEYWORDS:** Local Productive Arrangements (LPAs); Governance; Systematic Literature Review.

## RESUMO

O estudo analisa o quantitativo de publicações científicas relacionadas à governança em Arranjos Produtivos Locais (APLs). Para tal finalidade, foi realizada uma Revisão Sistemática de Literatura cobrindo os últimos 20 anos. O levantamento das publicações foi realizado no Portal de Periódicos da Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior (CAPES), Scientific Periodicals Electronic Library (SPELL) e Scientific Electronic Library Online (SCIELO) e catalogaram-se 34 artigos, nos idiomas português e inglês, a partir da utilização das palavras-chaves: “Arranjos Produtivos Locais e Governança”. Deste total, apenas dois trabalhos foram publicados em periódicos internacionais. Verificou-se que as pesquisas trataram a governança em APL a partir dos seguintes aspectos: relações de comando, poder e hierarquia; representatividade; cooperação; coordenação; participação nos processos decisórios; dimensões e fatores componentes da governança; questões ambientais; território; e fatores que limitam a governança em APL.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Arranjos Produtivos Locais (APLs); Governança; Revisão Sistemática de Literatura.

## RESUMEN

El estudio analiza el cuantitativo de publicaciones científicas relacionadas a la gobernanza en Arreglos Productivos Locales (APLs). Para tal finalidad, fue realizada una Revisión Sistemática de Literatura envolviendo los últimos 20 años. El levantamiento de las publicaciones fue realizado en el Portal de Periódicos de la Coordinación de Perfeccionamiento de Personal de Nivel Superior (CAPES), *Scientific Periodicals Electronic Library* (SPELL) y *Scientific Electronic Library Online* (SCIELO) y catalogó 34 artículos, en portugués e inglés, utilizando las palabras clave: “Acuerdos productivos locales y gobernanza”. Se encontró que la investigación abordó la gobernanza en APL desde los siguientes aspectos: relaciones de mando, poder y jerarquía; representatividad; cooperación; coordinación; participación en procesos de toma de decisiones; dimensiones y factores componentes de la gobernanza; cuestiones ambientales; territorio; y factores que limitan la gobernanza en APL.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** Arreglos Productivos Locales (APLs); Gobernanza; Revisión Sistemática de Literatura.

## RÉSUMÉ

L'étude analyse la quantité de publications scientifiques liées à la gouvernance dans les Arrangements Productifs Locaux (APL). À cette fin, une

revue systématique de la littérature couvrant les 20 dernières années a été réalisée. La recherche bibliographique a été réalisée sur le Portail des Revues de la Coordination du Perfectionnement des Personnes de Niveau Supérieur (CAPES), la Bibliothèque Électronique des Périodiques Scientifiques (SPELL) et la Bibliothèque Électronique Scientifique en Ligne (SCIELO), et 34 articles ont été catalogués, en portugais et en anglais, en utilisant les mots-clés : « Arrangements productifs locaux et gouvernance ». Il a été constaté que la recherche abordait la gouvernance dans APL sous les aspects suivants: les relations de commandement, de pouvoir et de hiérarchie ; représentativité; coopération; coordination; participation aux processus décisionnels; dimensions et facteurs constitutifs de la gouvernance; problèmes environnementaux; territoire; et facteurs qui limitent la gouvernance dans APL.

**MOTS-CLÉS :** Arrangements Productifs Locaux (APLs) ; Gouvernance ; Revue Systématique de la Littérature.

## INTRODUCTION

The transformations related to the acceleration of globalization and the change in productive and innovative patterns have stimulated the dissemination of local development models as a viable alternative for developing countries. From this perspective, the importance of articulating development with a view to the specificities of national and subnational systems and their forms of integration into the global system has been highlighted (Szapiro et al., 2017). Within this concept, the focus of Local Productive Arrangements (LPAs) has stood out for its ability to generate business and local development.

Local productive arrangements are productive clusters arising from systemic interactions between a group of actors who, in the same location, have links, albeit incipient, with the purpose of obtaining economic gains from various productive and innovative activities (Cassiolato; Lastres, 2003).

These arrangements are made up of a complex structure arising from the number of actors that interact and their behavioral characteristics, often characterized by conflicting interests. For this reason, and given the need for coordination between the various actors in the context of LPAs, governance becomes essential to facilitate synergies and ensure the promotion of competitiveness and development of these spaces (Cassiolato, Lastres; 2003; Suzigan; Garcia; Furtado, 2007; Fuini, 2014).

Given the importance of this topic and the notable academic attention to capturing the contributions of governance in the context of LPAs, an analysis of the publications is relevant, with a view to understanding what has already been produced and indicating paths for future research.

In view of the above, the study sought to answer the following question: what is the scenario of scientific publications related to governance in LPAs? To this end, this literature review was developed with the aim of analyzing the general apparatus of publications that have dealt with governance in LPAs during the last 20 years.

To achieve this objective, using the keywords “Local Production Arrangements and Governance”, we searched for and selected articles published in the journal portal of the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES), the Scientific Periodicals Electronic Library (SPELL) and the Scientific Electronic Library Online (SCIELO) to identify trends and analytical gaps in this topic, considering that the results provide support for guiding new research. A total of 34 articles were cataloged in Portuguese and English, of which only two were international publications.

The structure of this article is based on four sections, in addition to this introduction. In section 2, the theoretical-conceptual aspects and analytical approaches regarding Local Production Arrangements and Governance are presented, followed by the description of the methodological procedures applied to the research in the third section. In section 4, the results and discussions are presented and within the last section the final considerations.

## **LOCAL PRODUCTIVE ARRANGEMENTS (LPAS)**

The literature on productive clusters is supported by studies developed in different contexts, with different theoretical perspectives, resulting in a diversity of approaches and terminologies.

The term LPA is a Brazilian definition for some of the local clusters found in the country. This approach spread nationwide at the turn of the 20th century, amid the productive disruption caused by a liberal policy, centered on an adjustment strategy based on trade openness, liberalization and deregulation (Szapiro et al., 2017).

In this scenario, this new political, conceptual and methodological approach to LPAs implies a new way of understanding and guiding productive and innovative development, in contrast to traditional theories that emphasized the exclusion of cases of less developed and disjointed productive structures. The aim is to take a new look at the economic space that takes into account the regional and local specificities of those involved in productive activities.

LPAs are productive clusters resulting from interactions between a set of economic, political and social agents that, focusing on a set of economic activities in the same location, present links, albeit incipient, and create synergies that enable the achievement of gains by being located in the same economic space. In general, they involve the participation and interaction of companies and their various forms of representation and association, and also encompass public and private organizations aimed at training and qualifying human resources (Cassiolato; Lastres, 2003).

Their focus is more advanced and goes beyond traditional concepts based on individual organizations; The systemic vision that permeates the conception of LPA encompasses actors and productive and innovative activities with distinct dynamics and trajectories, ranging from the most intensive to those that adopt endogenous or traditional knowledge (Cassiolato; Vargas, 2012). It is also important to add that the different agents can form a complex struc-

ture, depending on their relationships and interactions, providing external economies that are fundamental to their competitiveness.

The notion of territory is important for the performance of LPAs, because in addition to the fact that the territory is the reference of a place with a concentration of economic activities, it represents a common social, cultural, political and economic base (Amaral Filho, 2009). However, the importance given to the territory should not be confused with limiting the arrangement to the local dimension, given that the LPA constitutes a space for articulation between the different protagonists, external and internal, contributing to the emergence of innovative solutions for the benefit of society (Lastres; Cassiolato, 2008).

Some characteristics are considered important when talking about LPA, such as: (i) territorial dimension, since its actors are located and interact in a specific area; (ii) diversity of economic, political and social activities and actors, since it involves the participation not only of companies, but a diversity of actors; (iii) tacit knowledge, that is, knowledge that is not codified, but is implicit and incorporated in individuals, organizations and even regions; (iv) interactive innovation and learning, which constitutes a fundamental source for the transmission of knowledge and expansion of the productive and innovative capacity of companies and other organizations; (v) degree of embeddedness, which includes the articulations and the different agents of the LPAs with the capabilities and their resources (human, natural, technical-scientific, financial); and vi) governance, which refers to the different modes of coordination between agents and activities, given that the configuration of each LPA is unique and, thus, making these arrangements anchored in particular forms of coordination (or governance) (Cassiolato; Lastres; 2003).

### **Governance Approaches in Local Productive Arrangements (LPAs)**

Governance is supported by several types of analytical approach. Among the theories that address governance based on the relationships of command, power and hierarchy existing in the production system, the contributions of Storper and Harrison (1991); Gereffi (1994, 1999) and Humphrey and Schmitz (2000), considered fundamental authors for these discussions, stand out. Based on the original contributions of Williamson (1985), Storper and Harrison (1991), governance structures based on the relationships of power and hierarchy existing in the production system are discussed. The authors initially present a classification of production chains (production systems)

based on three dimensions: (i) the structure of input-output systems; (ii) the existence of clusters of companies; and (iii) the governance structure of the network of companies. They then develop a core and ring matrix, which relates the core, a condition where power is asymmetrical, so that some firms or some companies determine the existence of others in the arrangement; and the ring, where power is symmetrical between different segments of agents, and the existence of firms does not necessarily depend on the decision-making power of other companies (Table 1).

**Table 1** – Governance structures of Storper and Harrison (1991)

All ring no core	Core-ring with coordinating firm	Core-ring with lead firm	All-core no-ring
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no leading company;</li> <li>• There is no hierarchy;</li> <li>• Symmetry between agents.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presence of a certain degree of hierarchy;</li> <li>• Asymmetry between agents;</li> <li>• Existence of a certain systemic influence that one (or more) companies exert over others.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asymmetry between agents;</li> <li>• Hierarchical relationships between agents;</li> <li>• Presence of a dominant leading company;</li> <li>• Leading company is dominant (participation of other companies in the system depends on the leader's strategy);</li> <li>• Leading company independent of its suppliers, distributors and subcontractors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large vertically integrated company takes over the production and distribution of goods.</li> </ul>

Source: Adapted from Storper and Harrison (1991)

It is important to highlight that the relationships between companies in the coordination of productive activity are most commonly configured according to the two intermediate structures (Core-ring with coordinating firm and Core-ring with lead firm).

Another important aspect regarding governance is linked to the analysis of global commodity chains by Gereffi (1994). Through an analysis of the organizational format of international production chains, the author investigates the hierarchies and forms of governance present throughout the chain. One of the central points is that the appropriation of value by the agents that make up the production chain is not carried out symmetrically, since the hie-



rarchies are notable throughout the system. Governance is analyzed under four dimensions<sup>1</sup>, based on as Gereffi (1994) points out, the existence of two types of global production chains: producer-driven chains (directed by the producer) and buyer-driven chains (directed by the buyer). These formats are linked to different governance structures, determined by the company's ability to retain strategic assets. Insertion into global chains, according to Gereffi (1999), presents itself to local producers as a path to the process of learning and industrial upgrading, obtained from interaction with global buyers.

However, there are some points of divergence or criticism regarding the impact of external ties on the process of upgrading local producers in developing countries, with regard to insertion in global chains. In view of this, there is room for investigating the relationships between the form of governance of the local system and its interactions with the global chain, as well as the possibilities for development of local producers.

From this perspective, Humphrey and Schmitz (2000) present the concept of governance associated with the coordination of economic activities through extra-market relationships, identified from three forms of governance that portray the degree of symmetry of the relationships between local and global actors: (i) network governance, which represents forms of coordination where the power relationship between companies is relatively symmetrical, with companies having approximately the same weight in decision-making; (ii) quasi-hierarchical governance, which implies the subordination of one company to another with greater power; and (iii) hierarchical governance, which involves strong integration and the existence of a leading company that defines rules, products and their specificities. While differentiating the interactions between global and local forms of governance, the authors use the term to list two forms of local governance, public and private, as illustrated in Table 2.

**Table 2** – Categories of Public-Private and Local-Global Governance

	Local Level	Global Level
Public governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carried out by the public sector;</li> <li>• Actions coordinated by local governments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WTO rules;</li> <li>• National and supranational rules of global reference.</li> </ul>

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<sup>1</sup> Value added chain; geographic space; authority or power relations of companies; and institutional context (Gereffi, 1994).



	Local Level	Global Level
<b>Private governance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Carried out by professional associations and private local development agencies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Global chains coordinated by buyers;</li> <li>Global chains coordinated by producers.</li> </ul>
<b>Public-Private Governance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local and regional policy networks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>International parameters;</li> <li>International campaigns by non-governmental organizations.</li> </ul>

Source: Humphrey and Schmitz (2000, p.5).

In this regard, the central focus of the analysis is on the interaction between global forms of coordination and local forms of governance, particularly those involving the interaction between public and private forms of governance.

Contributing to the understanding of governance in Local Productive Arrangements or Systems, Suzigan, Garcia and Furtado (2007) state that this can be understood as the capacity for command or coordination that certain agents exercise over mutual productive, commercial and other relations, decisively interfering in the development of the local system or arrangement.

Considering the governance mechanisms existing in a specific territory, as is the case of LPAs, governance must be seen as a participatory and inclusive process, which requires the generation of synergy among all actors involved to avoid conflicts and contradictory actions (Lastres and Cassiolato, 2008).

From this analytical perspective, governance in LPA is defined as structures and modes of coordination of the participation of actors to achieve collectively defined objectives. In this understanding, governance refers to the different ways in which individuals and organizations (public and private) manage their common problems and accommodate conflicting interests through cooperative actions, based on the practice of shared management of decision-making processes, focused on achieving common goals and benefiting the largest possible number of companies with their initiatives (Cassiolato; Lastres 2003; Villela; Pinto, 2009).

In the conception of Cassiolato and Szapiro (2002), governance is linked to the establishment of local democratic practices, through the intervention and participation of various categories of actors. However, they draw attention to the fact that companies located outside the arrangement significantly affect local decision-making processes. The way in which the governance structure is coordinated is defined according to the particularities of each cluster, and as for the forms of governance, either local companies are organized in the form of "networks", or governance is carried out through "hierarchical" forms.

In the hierarchical form, authority is internalized by large organizations, while in the network form, there is a high number of relationships between different agents, with none of them having a dominant character.

In the same vein, Lastres and Cassiolato (2008) identified two types of governance in LPAs: hierarchical and non-hierarchical governance. In the second form, governance is characterized by the presence of small and medium-sized companies, where few actors are dominant and the prevailing coordination is horizontal.

Also in the understanding of governance with a focus on the participation of actors as a means to achieve development, the analysis by Cançado, Tavares and Dallabrida (2013) stands out, which approaches governance in LPAs from two perspectives: structural and procedural. Structural governance involves the actions of the group of actors that operate in the LPA, as well as their influences on the group, according to their possibilities. Procedural governance, on the other hand, is linked to the coordination of the relationships that occur between these actors, addressing mechanisms of cooperation and collaboration that involve the decision-making process.

## METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

In order to conduct a survey of scientific production on governance in Local Productive Arrangements, this study used the Systematic Literature Review, which identifies key scientific contributions in a given field of research and is currently considered a fundamental scientific procedure. This methodology facilitates the comprehensive search, evaluation and synthesis of relevant studies on a specific topic (Mentzer; Kahn, 1995; Tranfield; Denyer; Smart, 2003). It stands out as a rigorous and well-defined approach, aiming to minimize the bias of the literature, as an exhaustive search is carried out for the texts published on the topic to be analyzed, in addition to providing a general framework on the subject and facilitating the visualization of theoretical controversies (Thorpe et al., 2005).

This review was conducted based on the following steps: (i) formulation of the research question; (ii) definition of search strategies; (iii) selection and access to the literature; and (iv) analysis, synthesis and dissemination of the results.

The survey of publications was carried out on the periodicals portal of the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES), the Scientific Periodicals Electronic Library (SPELL) and the Scientific Electro-

nic Library Online (SCIELO), using the keywords: “Local Production Arrangements and Governance”. The large number of articles returned raised the need for filters. In the filtering stage, the following criteria were used: (i) articles; (ii) peer-reviewed journals to better ensure quality<sup>2</sup>; and (iii) published in the last 20 years, since this literature has flourished during this period.

Then, the title, abstract, keywords and conclusion of the listed articles were read to identify research related to the objective of this study. Those that, despite addressing governance, did not propose to analyze this theme in the context of LPAs, and therefore, did not contribute to the theme of this research, were excluded<sup>3</sup>.

The critical analysis of the articles selected in the previous stage was carried out by reading the articles in full, aiming to extract relevant aspects of the studies, such as: objective, theoretical approach, methodology, results and conclusion. In addition, a brief summary was prepared for each article to assist in the evaluation and interpretation of the data (Table 3).

**Table 3** – Portfolio formation stages\*

Searches: articles linked to the keywords “Local Productive Arrangements and Governance” and their variations <sup>4</sup> : 206 articles	Capes Portal: 173 articles Scielo Portal: 12 articles Spell Portal: 21 articles
Duplicate and excluded articles: 39 articles	Capes Portal: 28 articles Scielo Portal: 5 articles Spell Portal: 6 articles
Reading of titles, abstracts, keywords and conclusions: 167 articles	Capes Portal: 145 articles Scielo Portal: 7 articles Spell Portal: 15 articles

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2 Used in the Capes portal, which allowed this type of filter.

3 It is worth noting that the concept of LPA is part of a systematization proposal made by a group of researchers from Redesist (Research Network for Local Production and Innovation Systems of the Economics Institute of Federal University of Rio de Janeiro), and is essentially a characterization of Brazil. The term, in theoretical conception, differs from the cluster used in international literature, but it also differs especially in content. Although the LPA is a specific type of cluster, they differ based on the involvement of the economic actors present in the two cluster formations. In geographic aspects, for example, they differ in terms of territorial aspect, internal governance structure, size and scope of the firms involved, and the participation of social and political actors. Since the interest of the problem proposed here requires the theoretical elements that the concept of LPA carries, the methodological resource may have limitations; however, it is considered adequate for the analytical purposes which reinforce the theory that supports the problem, especially in its association with the construct of governance.

4 In the Capes periodicals portal, the asterisk is used to consider word variations.

Deletion of misaligned articles: 133 articles	Capes Portal: 122 articles SciELO Portal: 2 articles Spell Portal: 9 articles
Careful reading of articles (final portfolio): 34 articles	Capes Portal: 23 articles SciELO Portal: 5 articles Spell Portal: 6 articles

\*Research data.

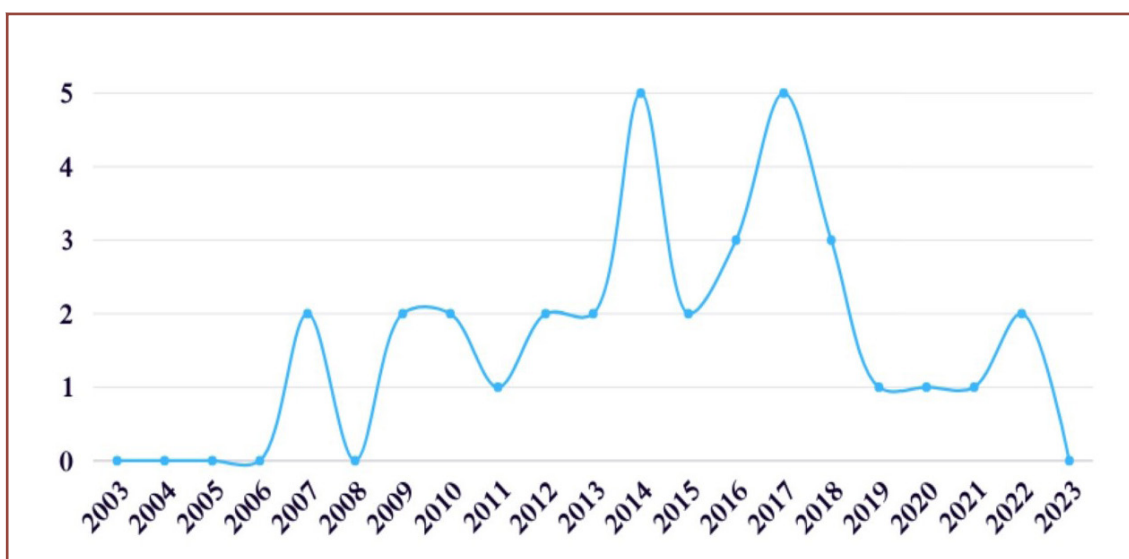
Source: Produced by the authors.

The synthesis and presentation of the results focused on describing the main characteristics of the studies, such as: the temporal distribution of publications, periodicals, methodological approaches and main focuses identified in the research.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

According to the temporal distribution of the publications cataloged in this study, it is clear that there is interest in the literature on the topic addressed in this research, since all the selected articles were published between 2007 and 2022. In the period from 2007 to 2013, the records cataloged 11 publications; in the years 2014 and 2017, the largest number of publications was found, totaling 29.4% of the textual corpus of the research, with 5 in 2014 and 5 in 2017. Figure 1 shows a downward trend after 2017; however, the annual scientific production rate remained positive during the period from 2018 to 2022.

**Figure 1** – Year and number of articles published on “Local Productive Arrangements and Governance”/“vos Locais e Governança”



Source: Produced by the authors.

Next, a survey of journals was conducted, and as shown in Table 4, the journals *Revista de Administração Pública (RAP)* and *Revista de Economia e Sociologia Rural (RESR)* constitute the two main sources of scientific dissemination on governance in LPAs in the period, corresponding, respectively, to 17.6% of the total publications.

Table 4 – Governance in Local Productive Arrangements – scientific dissemination by journal 2007-2023

Journal	Quantity	(%)
Revista de Administração Pública	3	8,8
Revista de Economia e Sociologia Rural	3	8,8
Gestão & Produção	2	5,9
Organizações em Contexto	2	5,9
Desenvolvimento em Questão	2	5,9
REGE Revista de Gestão	2	5,9
Textos de Economia	2	5,9
Revista Ibero-Americana de Estratégia	2	5,9
RA'EGA: O Espaço Geográfico em Análise	2	5,9
Interações	1	2,9
READ. Revista Eletrônica de Administração	1	2,9
Revista de Empreendedorismo e Gestão de Pequenas Empresas	1	2,9
Journal of Latin American Geography	1	2,9
Revista de Ciências da Administração	1	2,9
Ambiente & Sociedade	1	2,9
REDES Revista de Desenvolvimento Regional	1	2,9
Revista de Economia Contemporânea	1	2,9
Gestão e Regionalidade	1	2,9
Revista Paraense de Desenvolvimento	1	2,9
Research, Society and Development	1	2,9
Interciência	1	2,9
Revista Eletrônica de Ciências Administrativa	1	2,9
Revista Geográfica de América Central	1	2,9
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Produced by the authors

Regarding the incidence of published articles, a concentration was found in Qualis B1 and B2. Thus, it is concluded that the productions related to the axis studied meet the technical-scientific aspects of the journals with high classifications, demonstrating quality and relevance in the area.

Regarding the main methodologies used in the articles, the percentage of qualitative, quantitative and quantitative-qualitative research was 81.3%, 6.2% and 12.5%, respectively. In the first group, case studies, questionnaires and interviews were the most used strategies. For quantitative research, Exploratory Factor Analysis and Structural Equation Modeling, based on Partial Least Squares were the techniques used for data processing. Similarly to the first group, the qualitative-quantitative studies carried out the same procedures, with exceptions for statistical data processing and the creation of indexes, for example.

After an overview of the research to identify the trends and themes addressed, it was found that the research addressed governance in LPAs from the following aspects: command, power and hierarchy relationships; representation; cooperation; coordination; participation in decision-making processes; dimensions and factors that make up governance; environmental issues; territory; and factors that limit governance in LPAs.

### **Relationship of command, power and hierarchy**

In this context, the governance structure is associated with the way in which the actors are organized, representing the organizational and institutional forces (hierarchy, power, relationship, etc.) that direct the behavior of the agents. From this perspective, some studies (Baptista; Alvarez, 2007; Suzigan; Garcia; Furtado, 2007; Queiroz, 2013; Mello; Pinto, 2022) investigated the governance structure in LPAs with a focus on relationships of command, power and hierarchy. The central argument of these essays is that governance in LPA enables the identification of the structure for the relationship between companies. They pointed out that one of the ways in which agents structure themselves in the context of an LPA is through hierarchy, with governance imposed by the agents with the greatest strength in the market, due to the asymmetries that exist there.

Regarding insertion in global chains, the study by Tahim and Araújo Júnior (2014) corroborates the findings of several studies produced by RedeSist, indicating asymmetrical power relations throughout the production chain, in which the main stages of the value chain are largely seized by external

agents. In this sense, Suzigan, Garcia and Furtado (2007) made reservations about the fact that LPA's composed predominantly of large dominant companies, inserted in global chains, leave little room for local forms of governance. This type of articulation between global and local results in the establishment of a hierarchical governance structure.

### Representativeness

Representativeness, understood as one of the fundamental elements in the analysis of governance, concerns the structural dimension, which includes the actors and their respective activities in the LPA. It is also through representativeness that a transparent and consensual decision-making process is ensured. Furthermore, the way in which the actors carry out their activities determines their performance and allows us to identify greater or lesser representation in the LPA.

The forms of representation of the actors that are part of the LPA are defined by different groups, including: companies, educational and research institutions, support organizations, business organizations, public authorities, etc. (Campos; Trintin; Vidigal, 2009; Antero et al., 2016; Antero et al., 2022).

These actors interact to achieve common goals, and to this end, they act in different ways. The clear definition of the roles and responsibilities of each actor facilitates coordination and enhances governance actions. Among the different actors, support organizations and public authorities stand out for exercising an important influence on governance through the creation or strengthening of spaces for dialogue and the construction of collective strategies.

From this perspective, some authors (Sacomano Neto; Paulillo, 2012; Gussoni; Weise; Medeiros, 2015; Zambrana; Teixeira, 2016) have highlighted the importance of the committed role of support organizations and public authorities in enabling cooperation practices between companies and the development of the LPA. Other studies (Baptista; Alvarez, 2007; Villela; Pinto, 2009; Campos; Trintin; Vidigal, 2009; Farina et al., 2017) have added that support organizations are essential for the consolidation of development, since they assist in the institutionalization and operationalization of activities in the LPA, generating collective effort through joint action. In addition, the existence of local institutions with political, economic, and social representation, in dialogue with the productive sector, is also essential for establishing the form of governance that will prevail in the agglomeration.



Regarding the activity, the action performed by each actor is identified, and how this contributes to the performance of the LPA, since these actors seek, in an articulated manner, to plan and develop structuring actions to strengthen the arrangement (Silva; Tavares; Silva, 2015; Antero et al., 2016). In this sense, some studies (Azevedo Filho; Ribeiro, 2011; Antero et al., 2016) have highlighted the actions performed by support organizations, such as: creation of workforce training programs, creation of a technological information supply agency, promotion of cooperative actions, among others.

In other studies (Campos; Trintin; Vidigal, 2009; Azevedo Filho; Ribeiro, 2011), educational and research institutions were cited for their importance in supporting the technological development of companies through proposals for research projects developed with entrepreneurs in the sector. These institutions are responsible for training skills and specialized labor, with an emphasis on productive activities, aiming to promote the development of the LPA.

## Cooperation

One of the primary roles of governance in business clusters is the ability to strengthen and stimulate cooperation policies, with the aim of making companies more competitive and, mainly, ensuring local and regional sustainability (Cassiolato; Lastres, 2003). From this perspective, structuring a sustainable governance arrangement requires the development of mechanisms that enable joint action.

By enabling interaction between actors, governance is identified as a guide for joint actions in favor of the development of LPAs. In this direction, some literature (Oliveira; Santana, 2012; Almeida; Cario, 2013; Patias et al., 2017) has highlighted the importance of interaction between actors for providing effectiveness and competitiveness for the LPA, and also for optimizing (Alves; Gonçalves; Pardini, 2014; Herrmann et al., 2017) performance through the implementation of innovative processes.

In other studies (Teixeira; Teixeira, 2011; Gussoni; Weise; Medeiros, 2015; Silva; Tavares; Silva, 2015; Zambrana; Teixeira, 2016; Herrmann et al., 2017), the relationship between actors is characterized by cooperation ties, which imply the implementation of joint actions by the actors of the LPA, inducing local companies to consolidate governance. For this reason, some studies (Campos; Trintin; Vidigal, 2009; Zambrana; Teixeira, 2016) emphasized that it is in the implementation of joint action that cooperation materializes, providing greater integration, dialogue and mutual trust between actors.

Joint actions can occur between companies, between companies and the government and between companies and technical and financial institutions. Some essays (Villela; Pinto, 2009; Sacomano Neto; Paulillo, 2012; Zambrana; Teixeira, 2016) highlighted the existence of several types of collective actions, such as: development of joint projects to improve products and processes, collective participation in business fairs, collective purchase of materials, agreement to obtain investment and promotion of the LPA, among other actions, which allow benefits to be obtained related to competitiveness and development of the arrangement.

### Coordination

One of the basic functions of the governance system is to coordinate the dispersed activities of the actors so that collective objectives are met. In view of this, the coordination of processes and the articulation of the actors, performed by governance, are considered important elements in the evolution of a simple cluster into an LPA.

As actions cease to be individualized and become more collectivized, some studies (Baptista; Alvarez, 2007; Sacomano Neto; Paulillo, 2012; Queiroz, 2013) have pointed to the need for coordination of the various governance actions, in view of the conflicting interests existing in the interactions, requiring a high level of organization and management of these actions. Therefore, the basis for these actions is the coordination system developed and implemented to unite efforts and result in competitive advantages for the actors participating in the arrangements.

To understand coordination in the LPA, factors related to the organization and management of the activities performed are highlighted. In this effort, essays (Azevedo Filho; Ribeiro, 2011; Antero et al., 2016; Bitante et al., 2018) have highlighted the importance of establishing procedures and operations in advance so that there is standardization of the activities performed by the actors in the arrangement, since, in some cases, such procedures and operations can help companies to comply with standards and rules based on social, fiscal and sustainability responsibility, in addition to respecting international labor standards.

The preparation of a strategic plan, transparency in the implementation of actions, as well as the monitoring of implemented projects, are considered fundamental to monitor governance performance. Despite the complexity of verifying such performance, it is important that the actions are managed

and distortions corrected, aiming at achieving the objectives of the LPA. From this perspective, as some authors (Villela; Pinto, 2009; Azevedo Filho; Ribeiro, 2011; Antero et al., 2016; Bitante et al., 2018) have pointed out, activities related to planning, implementation and control, the periodic meetings in which issues related to the dissemination of information and control of activities are discussed.

As for the management structure, this is defined by the way in which coordination is carried out among the actors of the LPA. Among the actors responsible for carrying out coordination, some studies (Azevedo Filho; Ribeiro, 2011; Sacomano Neto; Paulillo, 2012) mentioned entities in the performance of this function, with emphasis on business organizations. However, they emphasized that the best type of actor to carry out coordination is always the one that meets the desires of others and promotes the development of the LPA.

Coordinating the interaction between actors is also a fundamental issue when it comes to governance, since such interactions determine how connected the actors are in the LPA, favoring the implementation of joint actions to achieve collective objectives. From this perspective, certain studies (Azevedo Filho; Ribeiro; 2011; Zambrana; Teixeira, 2016; Antero et al., 2016) have highlighted that interaction is directly related to the development of the actors, and consequently, of the LPA.

### **Participation in decision-making processes**

This perspective indicates that centralized decision-making processes hinder the development of the LPA, resulting in the implementation of goals that are contrary to the interests of many participants. On the other hand, the greater the participation in the decision-making process, characterized by the engagement of all actors present in the LPA, deliberating jointly, the more favored is the promotion of development, as well as the coordination of LPA in general.

For this reason, certain studies (Campos; Trintin; Vidigal, 2009; Villela; Pinto; 2009; Antero et al., 2016; Conejero; César, 2017) emphasized the importance of shared management of decision-making processes, based on the consensus established among the actors in favor of actions for business and local development.

However, despite the importance of shared management, some studies (Campos Trintin; Vidigal, 2009; Farina et al., 2017) highlight a weak and incipient participation of company representatives, showing that such a gap

generates the need for actions that foster and strengthen this participation so that the LPA's deliberations reflect their demands and are more assertive regarding the implementation of activities that promote development.

Other essays (Villela; Pinto, 2009; Antero et al., 2016, Conejero; César, 2017; Antero et al., 2022) have pointed to the difficulties of actors in building a collective identity, highlighting reservations about the need to qualify actors to actively participate in the decision-making process in favor of joint deliberations. They have also stressed that the decision-making process needs to be democratic, transparent and inviting enough to avoid distrust among those involved, as an incipient decision-making process tends to generate a cycle in which there is a distancing of actors who do not participate in the decisions, reflecting in the inefficiency of the decisions and actions and opposition to the granting of benefits.

### **Dimensions and components of governance**

Given the diversity of ways to understand governance in LPAs, it was possible to note that some studies (Silva; Tavares; Silva, 2015; Bitante et al., 2018; Marini; Corrêa Neto, 2018; Salume; Guimarães; Rantisi, 2019) sought to examine it based on the definition of dimensions and identification of its component factors.

Silva, Tavares and Silva (2015) approached governance from a structural and procedural perspective. The analysis of the structural and procedural dimensions considered the elements of representativeness, cooperation and coordination to understand governance in LPAs.

Salume, Guimarães and Rantisi (2019), when analyzing the contextual, structural and instrumental dimensions of governance that influence the evolution of productive agglomerations, sought to understand the causal relationships between these dimensions, pointing out their influence on the different forms of governance in the agglomerations.

Given the importance of the factors that make up governance, the research by Bitante et al. (2018) analyzed whether the factors structure, objectives, functions, mechanisms and agents are really essential components of governance in LPAs. The results highlighted the importance of these factors for characterizing and evaluating governance in these environments.

Marini and Corrêa Neto (2018), when analyzing local governance based on a set of elements (coordination capacity, articulation capacity, power in conflict resolution, transparency in management, democratic practices and

difficulties in local governance) signaled the urgent need to structure governance in LPAs.

### **Environmental issues**

Environmental issues should be considered as priorities in governance interactions in the context of LPAs, given that it is in this space that negotiations and power relations can effectively contribute to improving or worsening the quality of the environment. However, few studies (Tahim; Araújo Júnior, 2014; Teixeira, 2020) have focused on this discussion.

Tahim and Araújo Júnior (2014) highlighted that the competitiveness of companies depends heavily on the capacity for innovation in ways of preserving the environment, because, in order to be competitive in the global market, companies need to develop greater competences in environmental issues.

Despite this, the study by Teixeira (2020) demonstrated that the governance dynamics in LPAs dedicated to environmental issues in Brazil do not fit into some of the main assumptions found in conventional literature. The central argument is that governance interactions related to waste in Brazilian LPAs are more likely to result in divergent and fragmented strategies and initiatives than in cooperation and collective actions to solve shared environmental problems. This is because governance interactions are marked by unequal power relations and, therefore, by conflicting hierarchical decision-making processes, making the resolution of environmental problems even more complex. Given the lack of representation and collective actions, environmental issues are neglected at the local governance level, due to the influence of a few powerful participants, even though environmental problems are a common concern in LPAs.

### **Territory**

Territory appears as a fundamental dimension of governance structures in LPAs, since it provides the social, economic and cultural context in which they operate. Territorialization also involves the construction of a local identity that strengthens cohesion among participants, and consequently the governance structure. From this perspective, some essays (Fuini, 2012, 2014; Corrêa Neto, 2018) have highlighted that the territorial structure and local characteristics (such as infrastructure, culture and natural resources) influence governance practices in the arrangements. They added that such practices are even more effective when adapted to the specificities of the territory.

For this reason, certain studies (Fuini, 2014; Conejero; César, 2017) have pointed out that governance is an important discussion in the context of LPAs, as it has the capacity to define what type of competitive strategy each territory should adopt and how this will be reflected in local development.

Regarding the geographic location of LPAs, this can determine the power relations between actors, with more developed regions having a greater capacity to attract investment. In view of this, Fuini (2014) highlighted that the geographic location of LPAs directly influences their governance dynamics. Aspects such as proximity to markets, access to natural resources and socioeconomic characteristics affect the way actors interact. In this sense, the literature by Fuini (2014), Tahim and Araújo Júnior (2014), Conejero and César (2017) and Antero et al. (2022) added that LPAs located in regions with favorable geographic characteristics may have more robust governance and greater representation.

### **Factors that hinder governance**

Despite the importance of governance as a promoter of development in LPAs, several factors have hindered its consolidation, as pointed out by many studies (Suzigan; Garcia; Furtado, 2007; Villela; Pinto, 2009; Campos; Trintin; Vidigal, 2009; Teixeira; Teixeira, 2011; Alves; Gonçalves; Pardini, 2014; Silva; Tavares; Silva, 2015; Gussoni; Weise; Medeiros, 2015; Antero et al., 2016; Zambrana, Teixeira, 2016; Krag et al., 2017; Marini; Corrêa Neto, 2018; Teixeira, 2020), among them: lack of monitoring instruments; lack of planning and objectives; leading or anchor companies dominating coordination, making it difficult for smaller companies to participate in planning and decision-making processes; lack of open and continuous negotiation practices between stakeholders; fragility of interactions and joint actions; lack of trust caused by unstable relationships between competitors, which can lead to a lack of collective interest, causing low participation in meetings; fragility in the governance structure regarding the centrality, proximity and intermediation of the innovation network; weak intervention by support institutions and public authorities; divergent and fragmented strategies aimed at environmental problems, among others.

Vilpoux and Oliveira (2010) also point out the lack of an efficient methodology for evaluating governance systems that takes into account informal relationships and cooperation, which are very characteristic of local arrangements and production systems. In view of this, this reality requires differen-



tiated forms of governance, considering the specificities of the relationships that occur between the stakeholders inserted in these contexts.

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Based on this systematic review, it was possible to identify trends and gaps in publications that address governance in LPAs, demonstrating that the field of research has received notable academic attention. The analysis of the 34 cataloged articles allowed us to identify the evolution of research on the topic, with emphasis on the years 2014 and 2017, which accounted for 29.4% of the publications. Qualitative studies prevailed among the most used approaches.

Evidence highlighted by the full reading of the articles has ratified the importance of governance in the context of LPAs. By involving the participation of different actors and guiding joint actions, they favor the promotion of competitiveness and business and local development. However, the literature has drawn attention to the need to improve governance in LPAs, signaling the existence of a series of challenges related to the difficulties in its implementation and effectiveness, such as: leading or anchor companies that dominate coordination, making it difficult for smaller companies to participate in the planning and decision-making processes; lack of open and continuous negotiation practices, lack of significant representation, divergent and fragmented strategies and initiatives.

The review also revealed that, despite the various approaches addressed in the cataloged research, there are gaps that can guide future research. As a suggestion, it is recommended that theoretical and empirical studies be carried out in order to identify and analyze the contradictions and fragmentations in governance interactions related to environmental problems in LPAs, considering their particularities.

Another research frontier could be the suggestion of strategies for conducting governance in LPAs so that the various actors obtain better results through the organization and management of joint actions.

As a research opportunity, it is also suggested that quantitative multicriteria methodologies be used, such as the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP), to verify which factors should be present in governance interactions in LPAs.

Like any other study of the same nature, this one also has its limitations. Among them, is the limited number of databases used, and in view of this, it is possible that queries in other databases could increase the sample and in turn reveal new results.



The contributions of this systematic review may be of interest to academics and professionals who wish to investigate the topic by expanding the scope of the research, for example, by selecting other search, exclusion and inclusion criteria, different databases, as well as the use of other literature review techniques.

It is also worth noting that, as Fuini (2013) points out, productive agglomerations and LPAs manifest themselves as territories with strong economic and historical-cultural connotations, but they are especially a territorial expression of a regional development action or policy. This debate, therefore, by having territory as an indispensable analytical category and this being a fundamental category of geographic knowledge, constitutes a relevant contribution to the studies of economic geography and development as an interdisciplinary field for theoretical studies and proposals for the action of multiple agents and public policies. Support is found in the literature analyzed, when considering the distribution of economic activities in the territory; governance mechanisms and their territorial and developmental repercussions; the perspective of sustainability, imprinted on sustainable governance; the idea of global chains and interactions; the multiplicity that the concept of development has acquired, in the expressions of regional, local and territorial development. These elements therefore raise the need to problematize the relationships proposed here with the growing perspective of interdisciplinarity. ●

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*Fábio Domingues Waltenberg*: Writing – revision and editing.

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