

Social Responsibility in Government Relations

MSc. Gabriel Rocha Lima Amaral¹, Dr. Ronaldo do Nascimento Carvalho²

¹Master in Administration

²Pós Graduation from UEG/TECCER

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Abstract— *Democracies considered advanced have legislation regulating lobbying activities as an important element in the representation of interest groups, but the relationship of these groups with the State integrates elements of corporate social responsibility. What has not been considered is how public servants view this regulation as an interested party. The present study observes the perception of the Federal District Legislative Chamber employees on the elements necessary for effective social responsibility in government relations.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Brazil has been going through a moment of weakening public opinion before its rulers, this is due to the successive political crises that have been reported.

One of the elements common to these news is the involvement with so-called lobbyists, which creates a certain repulsion in the population when there is talk of this type of professional.

According to the Michaelis dictionary, lobbying is “the activity of pressure on the part of an organized group in order to influence the vote of parliamentarians, according to certain interests”

Since the 1988 constitution, the Brazilian parliament has been discussing the regulation of lobbying, all without exception failed to be approved by the National Congress. That said, it leads us to the idea that Brazil would need specific legislation to aggregate the interests of all in the definitive resolution of this activity.

Considering that for the full functioning of a democracy it is necessary the performance of this professional, much has been discussed the regulation of this profession, aiming at mitigating risks to society and the treasury.

Given this scenario, we question what would be the effects or impacts of lobbying regulation and what is the level of transparency of the activities of interest groups with legislators and bureaucrats and, finally, how does the integration of agendas, political agents and interest groups take place?

This article aims to observe in the Legislative Chamber of the Federal District how the servers of this house face the possible changes of rules arising from a regulation. That said, we must observe what elements are necessary for a practice of transparency and compliance in the offices of district deputies.

II. METHODOLOGY

Knowing that it is very important, that the researcher has in mind, which principles to be followed, to achieve a certain result. In this context, it is necessary to follow certain axioms-principles, as they will guide the researcher to achieve the desired result in the best possible way.

The method used was inductive, in this way we reached conclusions based on particular to general facts and in order to confront transparency practices.

The research was carried out in the Legislative Chamber of the Federal District located in the city of Brasília, capital of the Federative Republic of Brazil.

The Universe surveyed is 24 heads of cabinets, all district deputies' offices.

The research is quantitative and the universe is of 24 chiefs of staff, so we have a sample for convenience.

It is determined with inclusion criteria to occupy the position of chief of staff or another substitute servant in one of the 24 offices, it is noteworthy that another servant of the office may respond to the questionnaire if delegated by the chief of staff.

As exclusion criteria, forms delivered after the deadline and incomplete forms were excluded, so we had 22 volunteers, and two offices refused to participate in the research

The data collected by the research will be grouped by category of information, thus a ranking was created by category of each cabinet of the Legislative Chamber. Simple descriptive statistics and the presentation of data through graphics were also used for better understanding.

The field research was developed through a questionnaire prepared on the Google Forms platform and applied in person by the researcher to each person in the population, which was carried out from September 1 to 30, 2018.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The applied questionnaire contains questions and the first questions are not the object of analysis, it only consists of a validation mechanism from the person to the sample.

The first question, "name" will not be disclosed to maintain the confidentiality of the researched person, as well as the questions that are respectively "which parliamentarian do you work for?" and "email". It is noteworthy that the latter has its relevance for the dissemination of results to those surveyed.

The second question asks "position you hold in the cabinet" which has two answers, the first being the chief of staff and the second others. This question aims to answer that, in order to have the universe researched, the respondents must necessarily be the chief of staff or someone designated by him.

Within the 24 offices, which consists of the universe, we obtained 22 responses with only two offices that will refuse to answer the questionnaire. Fifty percent of those interviewed held the position of chief of staff and the other 50 percent were appointed by the chief of staff, an

interesting fact is that the advisor appointed in all cases was a press officer.

Thus, we have that 64% of the occupants are in their first term and 36% have already held the position for more than one term.

Questions that aim to observe the degree of autonomy that the chief of staff exercises in relation to the deputy's political mandate, considering a scale from 0 to 10, where zero means no autonomy and 10 means full autonomy? separated into two questions in order to establish the difference between administrative autonomy and political autonomy.

The questions aimed at identifying whether there is a specific mechanism for receiving people and for scheduling a hearing with the parliamentarian.

The question below assesses the perception of mandate transparency that the chief of staff attributes to the mandate on a scale of 0 to 10, where zero means no transparency and 10 means full transparency.

The question that wants to observe how pressure groups try to interact with parliamentarians even if they have a divergent political agenda. This data shows us that the cabinets receive information that is contradictory to the parliamentarian's thinking.

The question asks whether there is a policy of transparency on the matters dealt with in the hearings held in the cabinet.

It is observed that 64% of the offices do not have any transparency policy in the hearings held in the offices.

The perception if there is a need to have clear rules (norms/laws) that determine transparency policies for the cabinet is the objective of the question.

In the question below, the scale from 0 to 10 is again applied to observe what would be the positive impact on the parliamentary mandate if there was a detailed transparency policy. It is noteworthy that the focus is on the positive, as we understand that increased transparency can also have a negative impact.

We observed that 73% of respondents believe in the greater scale of positive impact and the other 27% still have a high expectation of positive impacts.

The following question raises the possibility of passing lobbying regulation and assesses whether the cabinet would require the presentation of corporate responsibility and transparency policies to receive in the cabinet.

73% of respondents point out that the possibility of requiring social responsibility policies to be received in the cabinet could be a reality if lobby regulation is approved.

The following question resumes the discussion about self-regulation or specific legislation, so should the existence of transparency rules in the public service also require transparency from the lobbyist?

Finally, it directly questions whether self-regulation would be sufficient for pressure groups to act or whether legislation would be the most appropriate.

We can infer that the chief of staff presents himself in most cases as a political adviser to the parliamentarian and less as an administrator of the cabinet.

The first interesting fact that the research showed us was that fifty percent of the interviewees held the position of chief of staff and the other 50 percent were appointed by the chief of staff, and all those appointed were press officers, which shows us that the term of office of the district deputies has a high degree of concern with communication, making it possible to infer that there is a probable hierarchy within the cabinets, placing the press officer as of a high degree of importance.

This data allows us to make a preliminary inference that the cabinets have a high degree of concern with accountability issues.

We can infer that the chief of staff in most cases mainly performs the role of political adviser and the strictly administrative functions have a much greater dispersion, that is, it depends a lot on the parliamentary style.

Thus, we have that the relationship of society or pressure groups in relation to the cabinet is greatly influenced by the performance of the chief of staff.

These data show us how a good accountability policy can generate compliance mechanisms on the part of pressure groups if well-detailed procedures are required from civil servants in the application of this first filter of access to parliamentarians, given the importance of civil servants in guaranteeing or hindering access to the parliamentary.

In the same way, the research observed that in most offices there is a policy of transparency of the hearings held, which indicates that the filter that the offices exercise in holding the hearings is directly linked to the fact that these hearings tend to be published, probably through of social networks.

Having considered the approval of the lobbying regulation, the advisors demonstrated that they could require pressure groups to present social responsibility policies to be received in the cabinets.

Firstly, in the perception of the employees of the Legislative Chamber of the Federal District, there is no

difference between pressure groups and/or citizens. This observation is consistent with the perception that groups arise from individual interests without the need for anchoring in a larger representation, that is, their origin does not define them as a pressure group.

A primeira abordagem discutida refere-se à teoria dos grupos, ancorada nos trabalhos de Bentley (1908) e Truman (1951) e caracterizada pela ideia de que organizações surgem espontaneamente dos interesses individuais. A segunda abordagem é a de Olson (1965), o qual afirma, enfatizando as motivações individuais para a ação, que, mesmo não havendo obstáculos, a existência de interesses na sociedade não acarreta, necessariamente, a sua organização em grupos. (REZENDE, 2018, p. 173).

On the other hand, we have a significant divergence regarding its effectiveness. We have a tradition of pointing out that organization in groups is more effective in claims before public bodies, but our data indicate that the interests of district deputies are little influenced by pressure groups, given that the cabinets cannot perceive any difference between the claim of a citizen or pressure group.

Dois pontos dominaram a discussão empreendida. O primeiro diz respeito às características dos grupos associadas com maiores oportunidades de influência. Nesse sentido, Olson (1982) afirma que pequenos grupos em uma sociedade, geralmente, terão maior poder de lobbying, enquanto evidências trazidas por Aragão (1994) ressaltam que a capacidade de influência depende de um número representativo de componentes. Ademais, é corrente a afirmação de que grandes grupos são mais influentes. Diante das aparentes contradições e da análise dos resultados de um survey, alguns elementos para a pesquisa vieram à tona. Para além de um problema de número, outros fatores devem ser considerados, esperando-se que grupos com maiores recursos financeiros e mais estruturados organizacionalmente tenham mais facilidade em superar os dilemas associados à ação coletiva e, por conseguinte, maiores oportunidades de influenciar o processo decisório. O segundo ponto a ser destacado refere-se a uma problematização da ideia presente em Bentley (1908) e Truman (1951), segundo

a qual o sistema político configura-se como um processador neutro dos interesses que emergem da sociedade. (REZENDE, 2018, p. 173)

We have strong indications that the political system works as a neutral processor of interests, which has the perception that groups are indifferent from the perspective of the parliamentary cabinet, however, no indication of preference was presented that justifies that any group has a greater opportunity for influence.

No entanto, não é este o cenário que advém de nossas arenas decisórias. São distintos, entre os grupos, os recursos, as oportunidades de acesso aos tomadores de decisão e a capacidade de influenciar o jogo político, caracterizado por demasiada assimetria. Os pontos supracitados se conectam, justificando a relevância da pergunta apresentada e o diálogo que se estabelece com duas importantes perspectivas do estudo dos grupos de interesse. (RESENDE, 2018, p. 174).

That said, it puts us in check on what could generate this distortion, it seems to us that the fact of the relationship between private agents as actors that finance the candidacies could determine the degree of influence of pressure groups.

É possível deduzir que, em muitas situações, os parlamentares representam os interesses daqueles que, pela via econômica, viabilizaram a campanha eleitoral para que estes pudessem ocupar o cargo de legisladores. Para tanto, em muitas situações, os legisladores atendem prioritariamente aos interesses de grupos econômicos que os auxiliaram com doações as campanhas eleitorais. Logo, os grupos econômicos, por meio do financiamento das campanhas eleitorais, trocas de favores e outros atos espúrios, têm interferência e influência direta no processo legislativo. E, em muitas situações, o interesse público é ignorado, embora este seja uma das principais premissas à representatividade da população no Congresso Nacional. (MELO, FRITZEN, FERNANDES, SIEDENBERG, ALLEBRANDT, 2018, p. 101)

However, this factor was not considered in this research due to the change in the electoral legislation that prohibited corporate campaign financing, which puts us

with two possible scenarios, the first of having a migration of campaign financing money to pressure groups. and the second is that the interests that pressure groups may have in the Legislative Chamber of the Federal District are significantly lower than in the National Congress.

Visando ao financiamento da próxima eleição, o político acaba sendo influenciado a seguir orientações que podem não servir ao clamor da população; porém, na visão dele ou do próprio partido, são necessárias para a garantia de sua reeleição, mesmo que a notícia se mostre negativa para os seus eleitores. Uma solução possível para o caso seria a aprovação de lei que regulamentasse o lobby e a sua prática, tornando o processo o mais transparente possível. (MELO, FRITZEN, FERNANDES, SIEDENBERG, ALLEBRANDT, 2018, p. 101)

Considering that this relationship between private agents and political agents was, at least in theory, mitigated by the prohibition of financing and we do not have any indication of reduced influence of companies in the legislature, we believe that there is another factor that influences the political agenda.

Ao longo do exposto aqui, tentamos abarcar o lobby da CNI via Agenda Legislativa. Assim, foram esboçadas aqui questões atinentes aos grupos de interesses, suas influências na democracia, bem como o lobby, cada vez mais presente em nossa realidade brasileira. Ambos os temas, lobby e grupos de interesses, foram relacionados de forma a construir um conhecimento acerca de como um está vinculado ao outro. Com isso, foi possível perceber a importância que os grupos de interesses têm para a democracia, à medida que garantem uma participação dos cidadãos no debate público, além de permitir uma maior capacidade de influenciar na agenda governamental. Ademais, não se pode pensar em grupos de interesses sem pensar em lobby, em atuação política. (PINA, 2017, p. 54) .

This puts us into questioning where the agenda power of the district deputies would be, in our research it was clear that their administrative structure makes the first filter, thus, it is noted that the levels of governance of the cabinet directly influence the construction of the schedule.

Além de tratarmos sobre o lobby, objeto principal de estudo deste trabalho, falamos

sobre o sistema corporativista brasileiro no qual tanto o lobby quanto a própria CNI existem. Portanto, debruçar-se sobre o sistema corporativista, suas mudanças e como está o cenário atual foi de grande relevância para uma compreensão holística sobre o motivo que leva a CNI a ser tão importante. O que por sua vez, também é fruto das mudanças que ocorreram no ambiente econômico e político após o fim da ditadura militar, o que mudou o Brasil e mudou a forma de atuação política dos grupos de interesses, incluindo a CNI; período quando o lobby começou a se proliferar no cenário político nacional. Justamente neste período se insere a Agenda Legislativa da Indústria, fruto da ação da CNI para fomentar uma produção legislativa que fosse mais positiva para o setor. (PINA, 2017, p. 54).

We observed that the literature points to the need to regulate lobbying, but our research indicates that this would be a secondary path, being necessary first to regulate the performance of public servants in relation to pressure groups due to their power of agenda and their understanding of that self-regulation by the lobby would be sufficient to mitigate possible corruption risks.

IV. CONCLUSION

This article observed that for the execution of a good policy of transparency on the part of the offices of district deputies, a high degree of communication on the part of the communication area of the office is necessary, with a main focus on communication through social networks, however it became clear that there are no rules for compliance by these offices.

We also observed that changes in legislation regarding lobbying regulation do not have practical effects on the interaction of cabinets with pressure groups.

We have no indications that the absence of regulation would bring any gain in the activities of the Legislative Chamber, but we can infer that due to the potentially harmful nature of lobbying activity, its regulation may be welcome.

Likewise, from the public servants' perspective, the regulation would not generate any change in the behavior of pressure groups in relation to the offices.

Also, there is no clear link between the agenda of the legislature on aspects of corporate social responsibility,

however, in this case there is a latent need for regulation in order to have an impact.

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