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LUIZ GUSTAVO TERRA SECA SILVEIRA

“ENGAGING ACTION LEARNING DYNAMICS WITHIN DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT”.

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ASSINATURA DOS MEMBROS DA BANCA EXAMINADORA

ALEXANDRE DE ALMEIDA FARIA
Orientador(a)

LUCIA BARBOSA DE OLIVEIRA
Membro Interno

DENISE FRANCA BARROS
Membro Externo
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Abstract

Purpose – The present study investigates how a management action learning international collaborative program involving academic institution(s) and a governmental development organization in Brazil, going through multiple compliance-resistance dynamics, produces emotional and political impacts on participants who deal with the decay of public administration and the rise of managerialism within the broad and contested realm of development administration and management.

Methodology/Research Design – Qualitative action research, with the co-creation of data divided into two interconnected parts. The first part was co-created via participant observation and engaged inquiry within and across multiple sites within and outside the focal organization. The second was undertaken via semi-structured interviews with selected participants. Both processes happened alongside constant and heterogeneous interactions between researcher, advisor, academic colleagues and other members of the action learning program.

Findings – Analysis indicates that practitioners and academics who practice and both research and teach within realms of management and administration might embrace learning-unlearning engaged practices and critical reflection in order to understand contemporary compliance-resistance impacts faced by individuals within academic and governmental institutions and foster engaging alternatives within the realms of education and research particularly in development administration and management.

Research Limitations – Due to multiple constraints in the meetings' schedule over time, there is no guarantee that the participants were the same across all interactions, which hampers our capacity to match each participant with its own narratives (i.e., to single out individual's interventions). Due to privacy issues and the sensitive issues addressed during the investigation, the names and business positions of participants are not disclosed. Moreover, this study represents the thoughts of participants during the investigation, which may or may not represent current participants’ thoughts.

Practical implications – The present research contributes to understanding how collaborative action-oriented research and education impacts individuals and organizations within the realm of development administration and management facing the rise of managerialism and decay of public administration at large, within a broad
context marked by multiple dynamics of compliance and resistance. For unravelling complex and sensitive questions, from a Global South perspective, that are relevant for the under-researched field of development administration and management results have implications for the fields of both public administration and management learning. It also contributes for showing the importance of academic-organization collaborative action learning programs to engage compliance-resistance dynamics at different levels of reality.

**Keywords:** Development Administration and Management, Action Learning, Public Management, Action Research
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BASIC – Brasil, South Africa, India and China

BNDES – Banco Nacional de Desenvolvimento Econômico e Social (Brazilian Bank for Economic and Social Development)

BRICS – Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa

BSC – Balance Scorecard

CAL – Critical Action Learning

CDM – Critical Development Management

DAM – Development Administration Management

IBSA – India, Brazil and South Africa

IMPM – International Masters Program for Managers

MSc – Master of Science

NPM – New Public Management
1. Introduction

This research investigates how an international collaborative program of management action learning within the Brazilian Development Bank (BNDES) puts into practice the challenging and contested principles of action learning (Pedler et al., 2005) put forward in a particular way by the International Master Program for Managers (IMPM). The collaborative action learning program investigated in this research emerges out of this twenty-year-old Master of Science (MSc) program, which has Henry Mintzberg and Jonathan Gosling as main founders. IMPM brings together managers of different organizations, world regions and backgrounds alongside academic institutions of five world regions to share and co-construct learning around the concept of mindset (Mintzberg & Gosling, 2002; Gosling & Mintzberg, 2003).

Over the years IMPM has both reproduced and challenged the disciplinarian universalist knowledge created and globalized by US-led managerialism in general and, in particular, management knowledge and education programs (Gosling & Mintzberg, 2003) – which “are mostly about the functions of business, not the practice of administering” (Mintzberg & Gosling, 2002: 64) – and create conditions to collective organization-academy learning dynamics in order to trigger continuous development of management and administration. As a rather well succeeded developmental project within the contested realm of management learning or management education (Steyaert et al, 2016; Grey, 2004), the program aims to influence the development of both individual participants and organizations around the world, particularly by engaging perspectives of the Global South: “What matters is impact: how the learning comes into the organization, beyond the participating manager” (Mintzberg, 2011, p. 25).

More particularly, the present study investigates specific dimensions of impact – i.e., political and emotional1 (Vince et al, 2018) – over participants of a joint academy-organization management action learning program (also called mini-IMPM) who are dealing with resistance-compliance dynamics2 and respective contradictions within the

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1 Political and emotional dynamics influence on individuals’ decisions (see page 27).
2 With western impositions, individuals within developing countries are constantly both internalizing and/or resisting to the US-led imposed transfer of knowledge within their organizations.
broad realm of Development Administration and Management (DAM) in Brazil. It focuses on a large development public organization in Brazil, under continuous attacks on its legitimacy and identity (Lazzarini et al., 2015), facing the decay of both development and public administration and the contested rise of US-led managerialism (Dar & Cooke, 2008; Kerr, 2008; Cooke & Faria, 2013).

1.1 Contextualization

Brazil is a developing country, formerly classified as Third World country by US-led First World countries and more recently as ‘emerging economy’ by US-led finance-driven development institutions (Cooke & Faria, 2013; Rist, 2008; Escobar, 2011). In accordance with a vast US-led management literature, public administration and business management in emerging economies still lack managerial skills (Garcia-Zamor, 2001), as a one-way civilizing process to progress and prosperity of the Third World (Parker, 2002; Cooke, 2004). This led to pressing reforms in emerging countries within the realms of research and education following mainstream managerial concepts as neutral and objective science as a continuation of the globalization of neoliberal managerialism (Fotaki & Prasad, 2015), overlooking a growing postcolonial critique on the legitimacy of such claims within an era of counter-hegemonic alternatives and interconnected globalizations (Faria et al., 2010).

Action learning has been reactivated in recent years as a relevant, but contested, alternative for management learning in emerging economies and elsewhere (Pedler et al., 2005), particularly for what regards the broad realm of DAM (Cooke, 2004). Therefore, it is crucial to highlight contemporary resistance-compliance dynamics, directed toward managerialism, experienced by agents, participants, and individuals in public government organizations in emerging economies.

To shed light on these issues, we first need to understand the contemporary context of global neoliberal capitalism, in which US-led managerial knowledge and institutions have championed successive crises over recent years and have been subjects to several heterogeneous effective processes of compliance-resistance around the world (Pedler et al., 2005; Pieterse, 2000). Continuous articulations of
managerialism in emerging economies within the realms of public administration in general, and DAM in particular, have triggered resistance-compliance dynamics in education reforms and, correspondingly, alternative modes of organizing development activities in/with society (Pedler et al., 2005; Pieterse, 2000; Lipton, 2017).

Farazmand (2012) points out multiple challenges that these countries and their respective public organizations and agents have faced with the rise of US-led institutionalization of the so-called New Public Management (NPM) within the contested era of global neoliberal capitalism. Although there is a vast literature giving support to anti-development ideas in favor of market-driven globalization, it is clear that the managerialization of public administration and its countries has led to rather different responses and outcomes in different parts of the world (Chilcote, 2002; Mander & Goldsmith, 1996). Compliance-resistance dynamics have become particularly relevant not only for the rise of so-called emerging economies but also for the sustainability of US-led global neoliberal capitalism facing successive crises at home and abroad (Lipton, 2017). Farazmand (2012) claims that the unlimited expansion of managerial capitalism across the world is obviously predatory for the majority, arguing that the corresponding system triggered by NPM goes against the principles and interests of state democracy and public interest in a global scale. The successive failures of market-oriented managerialist institutions have not only highlighted multiple problems triggered by the aggressive globalization of US-led capitalism and corresponding institutions but also hegemonic and counter-hegemonic alternatives connected to the multifaceted field of DAM (Bresser-Pereira, 2016; Cooke & Faria, 2013; Farazmand 2012). To investigate these specific resistance-compliance dynamics, in the next section we first problematize what societies frame as “development”. In order to engage with different meanings given to development and different modes of organizing and managing, our research discusses US-led classical theories of development, and how they have been able (or not) to narrow the economic and social gap between the so-called First World countries and those which are trying to both catch up with and delink from them by means of different conceptualizations of sustainable development (Abdalla & Faria, 2018).

By reviewing the extant literature, section two identifies the lasting imposition of dominant knowledge and cultures regarding the way developing and emerging countries must administer and manage public and private organizations in order to
reach developed countries (Escobar, 2011; Cooke, 2004; Banerjee & Linstead, 2001). This contested imperative question and respective North-South transfer of management knowledge and managerialist institutions (Srinivas, 2010; Dar & Cooke, 2013) are interrogated, in the fourth section, through the investigation of specific impacts triggered by compliance-resistance dynamics experienced by participants of a joint organization-academy action learning program in Brazil within the realm of development administration. In this sense, we observe how Development Administration is being shaped within a major state-owned development organization in Brazil, identifying enduring Third World dynamics within contemporary Global South, especially in emerging economies. Our qualitative action research, developed in the third section, has a focus on a specific action learning program and engages with ongoing action research principles and practices in interconnected levels to understand how agents and practitioners, to a major extent, and academics, to a minor extent, are dealing with impactful resistance-compliance dynamics within the realms of DAM. In detail, we embrace political and emotional impacts over participants of an action learning program called “Leadership for Development”, an engaged scholarship project involving BNDES, a public/governmental development bank, FGV-EBAPES, a renowned school of public and business administrations in Brazil, and the IMPM, a twenty-year-old international program championed by a network of five academic institutions around the world. Nowadays, the Brazilian Bank is facing a profound crisis underpinned by attacks from media, the decreasing of public funding due to the federal administration deficit (Lazzarini et al., 2015; Torres Filho, 2017). Such specific action learning program reinforces IMPM’s objective of pursuing an alternative action-learning developmental education worldwide together with academic institutions and organizations of emerging economies (Mintzberg & Gosling, 2002; Gosling & Mintzberg, 2003).

By embracing the broad guidelines pursued by IMPM over the last two decades or so, the action learning program “Leadership for Development” (which is also known by its members as mini-IMPM) reinforce an on-going international action research project coordinated by the supervisor of the author of this research in order to foster discussions over alternatives to DAM. It also embraces initiatives in management education and learning undertaken by other academic institutions and organizations based on the promotion of debates and continuous co-creation of knowledge through
action-oriented learning dynamics taking place within and beyond organizations (Antonacoupolou, 2009) since the investigation of impactful tensions over participants who take part in action learning programs remains scant (Vince et al., 2018).

1.2 – Objectives and research question

In face of the sharp decay of public management and development worldwide alongside with the rise of managerialism (Dar & Cooke, 2008; Kerr, 2008; Cooke & Faria, 2013), the main goal of this research is to investigate to what extent does a management action learning program impact employees’ political-emotional issues triggered by resistance-compliance dynamics within a state-owned development bank in an emerging country. We are going to discuss further in this research the way politics-emotions dynamics (Vince et al, 2018) influence on the behavior individuals, thus, the organization.

To tackle such issues, the present investigation will also understand how the embracement of learning-unlearning process have been triggering discussions and reflections over these dynamics in participants that face such managerial trend, and the consequences of the intervention within the organization. By investigating such resistance-compliance dynamics, we analyze the impacts of the program on participants and, thus far, on the institution by itself. The main question that the present research tries to disentangle is:

**How a specific joint academy-organization management action learning program impacts political and emotional dynamics over individuals who deal with the broad context marked by resistance-compliance dynamics.**

Our specific setting allows us to conduct the proposed investigation with a sample of public agents employed in the Brazilian Bank for Economic and Social Development (BNDES). Besides discussing particularly the matter within BNDES, such qualitative action-oriented research contributes to the literature in two new ways:

1 – It demonstrates the impact of resistance-compliance dynamics over participants of an action learning program within a large public development
organization in an emerging Latin American country, and the outcomes (i.e., impacts) of the program intervention.

2 - It analyzes not only the organization, but also the context in which both organization and the action learning program are embedded in a historical perspective (we define as ‘temporality dynamics’) which reveals dimensions overlooked by the emerging action learning literature with a focus on political and emotional impacts generated by action learning programs.

The present qualitative research was made with the co-creation of data through action research (Peters & Robinson, 1984; Reason & Bradbury, 2001; Berg et al., 2004; Reason & Torbert, 2001; Antonacopoulou, 2009). Both researcher and supervisor attended a series of discussions which were hold over the action learning program, with constant interactions between participants, researcher, advisor and academic colleagues. As integrated part of data collection of the research, semi-structured interviews were held with employees of different levels at BNDES.
2. Literature Review

In this section, we review the extant literature with a focus on specific constructs and concepts, relevant for the understanding of the present research and the broader international action research undertaken by the supervisor of the author of this dissertation. The literature review is divided in four subsections, concatenating ideas beyond the specific realms of action learning mobilized by different authors from diverse fields of knowledge. Among other objectives, the following literature review aims to set a multi-level dialogue between the big picture in which development administration and compliance-resistance dynamics have taken place with a specific focus of our engaged investigation.

The first subsection discourses about the origin of the term Development and the contested deployment of this concept over the years. It highlights the problem of managerialism, positing critics on the imperialist technics and tools that dominant countries are using to maintain their power over developing countries. Subsection two presents alternative ways of thinking about development, arguing that emerging economies should resist to the impositions from First World countries. Subsection three provides more detailed information about how public government organizations in emerging economies are dealing with resistance-compliance dynamics directed toward managerialism, putting in evidence the role of state-owned banks, especially the BNDES. Finally, the fourth subsection presents a summary of the conceptual framework mobilized as a provisional learning-driven outcome of this literature review.

2.1 Development for whom?

As first step of our review, it is essential to understand the different meanings given to Development. In countries and societies increasingly impacted by the main discourses of development in the post-World War II as well as neoliberal globalization and dynamics championed by the US-led capitalism, some might assume that developed countries are those who have more purchasing power and fostered the replacement of an era of state-led development with the ultimate stage of global
market-driven capitalism (Dwivedi & Nef, 1982; Cooke, 2004). In tandem with multiple situations of compliance-resistance toward US-led theories and programs of development directed toward Third World countries and peoples, alternative meanings and theories of development evolved in Latin America and elsewhere. Escobar (2011) posits that the word Development emerged in the US mainly after World War II as a consequence of the complex imperialist relationship between the First and Third World. Indeed, the term was created to impose over the Third World countries and its development organizations the US-led globalization of liberal capitalism, driven by liberal ideas such as the taming of the state activities and the unrestraining of market-driven theories and practices (Cooke, 2004). However, several authors developed alternative meanings to development and claimed that the development discourse constitutes a complex machinery aimed to control local alternatives/meanings of development with the purpose to continue with imperialism project over “developing countries” and ‘backward peoples’. (Banerjee & Linstead, 2001; Dwivedi & Nef, 1982).

Escobar (2011) claims the suitability of the meaning of development for every nation, affirming that this is not something feasible, and that in accepting models imposed by the dominant countries, Third World nations would be assuming a huge risk that could lead to the harm of their societies. Indeed, the US agenda for development in the Third World is part of the strategic goal to resubordinate the Global South in order to consolidate the US imperialist hegemony and reestablish the condition for capital accumulation (Harvey, 2007; Steger & Roy, 2010). However, several authors raised debates on the potential of local knowledge in Third World countries and its contribution on shape a development trend in accordance to local cultural context, histories, geographies and other forms of representation, instead of an international economic development as a one-way civilizing process to progress and prosperity of the Third World (Escobar, 2011; Cooke, 2004; Banerjee & Linstead, 2001). In sum, such authors embrace and theorize counter-hegemonic initiatives undertaken by Third World countries and peoples by challenging the US-led dominant understanding of development, questioning the validity of this Eurocentric and non-historical model which does not take into account the multifaceted reality among so-called “underdeveloped” or developing countries (Cooke, 2004; Escobar, 2011; Banerjee & Linstead, 2001; Dwivedi & Nef, 1982).
Authors in Brazil have embraced alternative conceptualizations in tandem with the recent articulations of developmentalisms in Brazil and other emerging economies over recent decades debating the concept from the perspective of development administration (Santos et al., 2012). In detail, Santos et. al (2012) argue that development comprises four different dimensions: economic, political, social and environmental. They posit that the main root of the word development is indeed economic, by pointing out that influential theorists frame development as a major constituent of the consolidation of the capitalist system (e.g., Marx, 2013; Ricardo, 1817) affirming that development is perceived as the primary cause which brings backward societies into advanced ones. To achieve it, economic theories claim that countries must first accumulate wealth, then distribute it. The authors both comply and resist to highlight that history proved these dominant theories wrong, since the engulfing difference between rich and poor nations has increased. This kind of “development” has been framed as the only way by advanced economies and US-led theories, but the underlying dynamics of Westernization have been particularly problematic for denying the idea of the Third World taking over its own development (Pieterse, 2000).

The US-led expansion of neoliberal theory and practices suggests that the western political, economical and administrative institutions are role models, and developing countries must follow their structure in order to modernize their public machinery. To attain development, developing countries are supposed to follow the standards of first world countries, known by their advanced industrial societies (Dwivedi & Nef, 1982). The globalization of these practices lead liberalism to be a commonsense economic practice, with the minimization of the role of the state (Harvey, 2007). Indeed, liberal ideas became dominant because of the articulation of its concepts, putting political thoughts of the individual as central values of civilization, rejecting all forms of state interventions due to the considerations from that state interventions are a threat to liberty (Steger & Roy, 2010; Harvey, 2007). However, while neoliberals try to intensify their practices worldwide, claiming that neoliberal theory is succeeding in the task of helping poor economies to achieve economic growth, there are plenty of examples which indicate that those practices failed around the world (Steger & Roy, 2010; Harvey, 2007). In this sense, Harvey (2007) suggests that there are still alternatives to the traditional model, with the continuous growth of oppositional
movements. He lists a series of types of resistance, each one with different foundations, but with the same goal. To empower their mission, those voices are coming together, sharing the purpose of confronting these set of imperialist ideas. Harvey (2007) suggests that these movements must understand that, even with different means, their central objective is to stand up against the neoliberalization. The earlier they start to bring their fight together, the earlier they will push the institution of capitalism in the other direction.

While the globalization phenomenon is widely accepted as an inclusion concept, integrating people from all over the world, there are still questionings regarding this universalist idea by highlighting the globalized-globalized colonialist dichotomy. Instead of multiculturalism and celebration of differences, they argue that globalization is a new way of first world nations reactivate control former colonies. (Banerjee & Linstead, 2001). The emergence of the global culture is an incentive to the consumption. Nonetheless, encourage developing countries to engage in global consumption is only another way of first world countries maintain their competitive advantage over poor economies. It is only a new way of colonialism. (Banerjee and Linstead, 2001). This constant tensions between first world and third world countries lead countries to pursue alternatives to the global-neoliberal business model. China, for instance, promoted a new trying and experimenting approach to public development administration, learning from errors. Focusing on the reduction of the economic disparity among its people (Griffin, 1977, cited by Dwived & Nef, 1982).

Following the assumption that First World countries are trying to maintain their dominance over poor economies, in 1941, James Burnham published a book called The Managerial Revolution, intended to discuss the ongoing revolution, regarding a transition from European capitalism in crisis toward a US-led managerial society. Although Burnham’s book became a bestseller which surprised many around the world, McLaren (2011) affirms that this revolution has never happened. Nevertheless, the book has provided inputs for the development of management theory. McLaren claims that to learn about management and its practices in contemporary times of widespread managerial neoliberalism and inequality on a global scale requires a comprehensive understanding of how and why this theory has emerged and developed.
Burnham claimed that societies could be neither capitalist nor socialist, arguing in favor of a third type which was portrayed as superior to both of them: the managerial society. The author explains that a set of particularities compose this society, and must be pursued by leading developed countries. The means of production are controlled by the state instead of being owned by capitalists. In the transition between capitalism and managerial societies, Burnham highlight three stages as follows:

1. Capitalists must be powerless.
2. The masses must accept managerial rules.
3. Managers must compete among themselves.

After World War II, with the increase of undergraduate students in management and the growing popularity of business schools and MBA programs in the US and also in Europe and Third World countries, a kind of managerial class had a sudden rise. Whereas Burnham imagined that managers themselves would keep the control of their own class, choosing what students would learn from them, "Management" began to appear as a discipline in leading business schools throughout the US. This has created conditions for the development of management as an autonomous scientific which institutionalized the privilege of the modern corporation and the transformation of Burnham's managerial society into corporate society (Perrow, 1991). Similar to what happened to the field of development in the post-World War II, management was gradually transformed during this historical period into a US-led liberal universal field of knowledge and practices. Both have become particularly relevant for the contested objective of managing the (Third) World (Cooke, 2004).

Some predictions that Burnham raised in his influential book failed to turn into reality. McLaren (2011) claims that some points listed by Burnham are still taking place, but not following all the characteristics foreseen by the author. For instance, the control of production is in the hands of managers, instead of being centralized in the State. McLaren (2011) argues that the revolution did not occur mainly because of the overwhelming influence of the US as a hegemonic power, at two great historical moments as follows: The New Deal, and the Cold War.

On the one hand, the New Deal would contribute to the Managerial Revolution because of the similarities between them. McLaren (2011) affirms that ideologies were similar, with promises of state intervention directed toward collectivism and jobs for
everyone. On the other hand, in the author's own words, the context of the Cold War created grounds and justifications for a substantive ideological turn: “American government officials and business owners saw a careful plan to strengthen capitalism and regain power for its ideologies.” (Mc Laren, 2011: p. 417). This grand government-corporate strategy associated with the support of anti-communist ideas and education spread within the Cold War led Burnham’s Managerial Society to an end. As Burnham (1941) foresaw in a particular way the authority of managers was raised in a particular way with the academic support provided by the system of business schools to specific management discourses. Corporate powers mobilized their multiple influences within and outside business schools to disseminate what they have learned from managerialism: how to maintain and expand the dominant system.

Over recent decades, with the US-led overwhelming dissemination of new managerialism within public organizations (Terry, 1998) and higher education institutions (Deem & Brehony, 2005) multiple criticisms on managerialism have become increasingly common around the world, including in emerging economies in general and in Latin America in particular. Ceci Misoczky (2011), for instance, take a decolonial standpoint to affirm that Managerialism, within the broad field of development administration, is the interconnection of three different problematic features:

(a) the value of technical, managerial expertise expressed in the increasing professionalization of development aid;

(b) the dissemination of instruments and practices of control and;

(c) the transplantation of managerial knowledge produced for a specific kind of organization.

These different features constitute the expression of another type of coloniality. In other words, neo-managerialism means neo-colonialism within different fields of business and public administration, including development administration (Cooke & Faria, 2013). Other scholars affirm that those features are harbingers of imperialism, resources mobilized by the US to dominate and contain the emerging power of the First World countries (Banerjee & Linstead, 2001; Dwivedi & Nef, 1982). In agreement with the Dwivedi & Nef (1982), Srinivas (2010) affirm that even though managerialism
is assumed as expertise, it is a type of technique through which one “train” the other. In other words, managerialism is an artifact aimed to maintain power and control of organizations. In this scenario, countries which already succeeded in terms of development “teach” undeveloped emerging countries their techniques to develop.

Following a similar rationale based on meanings of managerialism denied by the dominant literature in management and organization studies, Maor (1999) also criticizes the recent managerial reforms undertaken within in the broader realm of public administration. Maor (1999) also posits his critics on neo-liberal practices, arguing that these practices are decentralized, consumer-centered administration, which focuses only on earning money and improving the performance, much like private organizations. Maor (1999) sheds light on some problems of this new system, discussing six different test cases in western countries. Instead of economic-driven solutions, this NPM triggered and amplified many political problems. The central hypothesis proposed by Maor (1999) is that when the government increases the investment in NPM capital, they are raising the possibilities of disinvestment in the political capital.

This apparent paradox is explained by two different arguments. The first one is that political executives do not tolerate employees to have much autonomy, seeking to maintain their power by controlling and supervising them. Hence, executives are always trying to achieve higher positions, putting their matters in front of public issues. This is what Maor (1999) calls the paradox of managerialism. The main problem is that public managers should not put their individual questions upfront the state necessities. Hence, New Public Management backfires the development question, causing problems to the states that adhered it.

Pieterse (2000) will also criticize the constitution and globalization of materialist thinking. The author will argue along the idea of post-development, which in his words, “rejects development.” The author underlines that development is an economic mindset that is rejected not only because it did not work, but also because of its intentions. From a worldwide perspective, development brings environmental destruction, reducing the view of existence. The Western ambition to shape economies and societies requires both interventionist and managerial attitudes. On behalf of development, people should obey certain constraints, thereby, evolve as a nation,
progress, reduce poverty, achieve sustainable development. This is the dominant discourse.

However, although Post-Development advocates such as Escobar underline several problems in the development, managerial and Western matters, most of the literature does not provide new ways to overtake this idea. Cowen and Shenton (1996) affirm that this is the core weakness of Post-Development theory. Regarding this issue, Pieterse (2000) present some counterpoints relying on indigenous knowledge and cultural diversity. Besides the critics, Post-Development reinforces the idea of resistance, with countries that are being explored and dominated using their grassroots, resisting and implementing their own knowledge towards different ways of development. Notwithstanding, although both post-development and alternative development theories contribute with perspectives that are welcome to face the current neoliberal scenario, neither of them proposes solutions to the problem diagnosed. We may wonder whether there are alternatives to development in the wide sense of evolution (Pieterse, 2000).

2.2 The rise of Development Administration Management

The rise of the contested managerialism emerged with theories questioning the efficiency of the “old-fashioned” Public Administration in favor of development conditions, with the rise of the development administration studies, an attempt to modernize and fix the “delayed countries” (Cooke, 2004). Development Administration emerged in the post second War, with different mechanisms intending to standardize the way people in underdeveloped countries live. The whole point was grounded on the idea that if Europe and the USA could overcome the war with superior skills, they could fight a different war (against underdevelopment) the same way (Dwivedi & Nef, 1982).

The critical issue then was to make a transition from the traditional existing underdeveloped Public Administration into a new and modern system (Development Administration), relying on the transfer of knowledge from “foreign experts” that already succeed in First World countries. Through DAM, first world countries disguised the
power relations between countries, using the term “technical assistance”, implying that they were assisting or cooperating with the developing countries (Cooke, 2004). In this sense, Dwivedi and Nef (1982) stated that a “role model” emerged: the administrative state. This Western model was technocratic, similar to a Weberian model of bureaucratic administration. In this case, the dominant idea of a causal relationship between bureaucracy and development was highlighted. In addition to the bureaucracy, the model demands a series of social, economic, cultural and political conditions, which are not available in the third world. These conditions are mostly liberal-capitalist values, including, for instance, an extension in the economic base and a society open to the universalization of its knowledge.

To overcome development administration issues, Gulrajani (2010) proposes a new way of criticism, reinforcing that most development management thoughts are managerial. To tackle this matter, the author argues in favor of a Critical Development Management (CDM), an opportunity for a more democratic, tolerant and self-critical development management. The author claims that this CDM provides a debate between radicals and reformists about developing management, rejecting the idea of high modernism supported by managerialism. With the lenses of radical-reformist, the practice of development management can be an alternative, both theoretically and practically, since its challenge the understanding of developing as a straightforward modernization and recognizes the power of pluralism in terms of political and cultural engagement, achieving new levels of equality, justice, and sustainability.

Dar (2008) will also address the critical development management issue, highlighting the increase in the managerialism as a central strategy among different countries. She claims that there is an ongoing re-definition of what development is, and these changes are being made by various management practices. To shed light on this issue, Dar (2008) provides a critic connecting management and development concepts in the modernity. Dar (2008) discuss the meaning and definitions of development nowadays, positing that it is not only an essential object of academic study but also a political and economic matter. She discusses the after-war meaning of development, which was supported by geopolitics and socio-economical questions. There are contradictions within theories of development, with individuals trying to maintain their power instead of proposing new ways to develop, suggesting that a new
focus must be pursued by academics, looking into alternatives in organizational practice, identifying resistance-compliance dynamics in the present scenario. (Dar, 2008).

In agreement with the critics over Development Management, Bresser-Pereira (2016) builds up a new development concept, based on countries which accomplished late industrial revolutions. The author argues that his new concept accepts the indigenous characteristics of these non-west countries, affirming that emerging economies can afford their own investment on development, avoiding impositions from First World countries. This new developmentalist theory, in contradiction to the neoliberalism, relies on an active state, able to promote sustainable growth. These contradictions generate different tensions between dominant-dominated countries, that are constantly under compliance-resistance situations. Within this context, Action Learning emerged as a relevant alternative for management learning in emerging countries, mainly regarding the field of development and management administration (Cooke, 2004; Keys, 1994).

Trying to stand against the globalization of the neoliberalism and the rise of DAM, Antonacoupoulou (2009) brings into the discussion the concept of Action Learning, and how it can make an impact in the organizational learning. The central idea in her research is the unlearning process, in which the focus is not about finding answers, but re-asking questions that might contribute to a further understanding of the processes. “Unlearning as a mode of learning requires practicing asking different questions by extending the outcomes sought.” (Antonacoupoulou, 2009. p. 424)

Recreating these questionings leads to better integration of knowledge, by co-creating it. It extends the simple idea of sharing knowledge. It is a joint pursuit of new questions, which relies on different priorities and capabilities. Knowledge creation is built towards a set of questions. Pedler et al. (2005) reinforce the idea that action learning emerged in opposition to the traditional business model, established in the wealthiest countries, finding evidence that action learning was mainly practiced in developing countries, raising the interest of academics in the subject. However, the authors found a lack of objectivity in the extant literature, regarding the definition of action learning, and how it is being used. To fill this gap, they conducted a research in the UK, within different institutions (e.g., business schools, large organizations), with a bundle of questions in order to lessen this issue. According to their findings, Action
Learning involves more than six people, in real-world problems, learning from the reflection of their actions by questioning what they are doing.

Pedler et al. (2005) were concerned about how the concept of action learning may influence and contribute to business schools and management teaching. They recognize that most of the schools are still adepts of the traditional lecturing, and posit two essential contributions of the new method:

- It can link theory-based teaching with actual business problems.
- Its pluralism make it flexible, and widely accepted by different contexts.

The authors claim that these two advantages can improve the contribution of business schools in the mission of helping companies. Nonetheless, Pedler et al. (2005) indicate that the power of action learning regarding the development of human capital towards a collective capacity is an obvious subject to be exploited. Although Pedler et al. (2005) highlight the interconnection between action learning and development of social capital, the authors do not address questions around dominant and dominated countries, which is vital to this research.

There are several examples of action learning activities indicating that indigenous knowledge and debates within the own group/organization/country are more efficient in problem-solving questions than outsiders trying to fix them. In Nigeria, for instance, different managers from different vegetable oil mills were having problems related to performance. The problem was solved by putting them together in the same room, strongly motivated to understand the problem (Revans, 1986).

After the Seven Day War in 1967, Egypt asked by Revans support. The author accepted the invitation under one condition:

“Since I am convinced that the only people who can understand and solve the problems of Egypt are the Egyptians in Egypt, I said that I would go on condition that the Egyptians did not expect me to go there as an expert with a book full of solutions to their problems.” (Revans, 1986, p. 4)

In this sense, action learning programs seem to face the Westernization, triggering discussions in Third World countries citizens over resistance-compliance.
dynamics. Western countries have failed to help developing countries because they
do not understand that they need to learn from the countries that they are supposedly
helping. (Revans, 1991). Development of industrial and civil leadership influence both
cultural and economic questions of countries. Such important questions should not be
addressed by “advisors”. In this regard, Third World countries should establish their
independence over Western values and advice instead of following them (Revans,
1986). Action Learning rises as a paradigm, challenging the traditional management
education and development (McLaughlin & Thorpe, 1993).

In the peak of modernization discourses, authors related to decolonization
studies overcome ethnocentric and colonial questions from the past, disagreeing with
argue in favor of the engagement in co-creation of a “transcomopolitan” decolonial
agenda (i.e., not cosmopolitan neither regionalist, continentalist or nacionalist), facing
the radicalization of the inequalities within the Management/Administration field. This
agenda has strong implications on resistance-compliance dynamics regarding the
universalization of liberalism, in the sense that recognizes colonized-decolonized
questions, affirming that both colonizer and colonized must be decolonized. This
decolonial agenda intends to foster reflections over the creation of management and
administration knowledge.

Extant literature indicates that Action Learning represents a strong resource
regarding the understandings of compliance-resistance dynamics in this dominant-
dominated relationship. There are contradictions within the theory that both support
and undermine learning, helping organizations to discover new ways of work at the
same time it imposes limits on learning, reinforcing current assumptions (Vince et al.,
2018). The authors affirm that these contradictions generate politics and emotional
questions, and assert that these questions are beyond action learning literature,
arguing in favor of Critical Action Learning (CAL). This approach tries to understand
how political and emotional dynamics influence in individual and organizational
learning (Vince et al., 2018)

In order to investigate Action Learning practices, Vince et al. (2018) article
collect data from two private companies within an action learning program. The authors
created a critical reflection framework, integrating action learning with critical action
learning. Figure 1 illustrates the framework. By drawing in the intersection between
action learning and CAL, the authors propose that the contradictions between individuals encourage the enhancement of the company through individual and collectivistic possibilities of learning. These contradictions will be further discussed in the BNDES context, where, as Vince et al. (2018), we can also identify in-bound tensions that are acknowledged, but ignored.

Figure 1: Critical Reflection

It is important to highlight that, by drawing this framework, the authors were seeking to demonstrate that this critical reflection intends to engage with political and emotional issues, affirming that organizational members tend to avoid this questions. Before discussing these issues, it is important to explain what do the authors mean by emotions and politics:

- **Politics** “Politics refers both to social forces that influence organization as well as all the many strategic processes that arise or are employed and deployed to maintain, to avoid or to challenge power relations.” (Vince, 2004)

- **Emotions**: The author affirms that emotions are the drivers of individual and organizations actions. “Individuals and groups continually manage and organize themselves both on the basis of their emotional responses to organizational issues as well as on the basis of avoiding emotion, and both of these have strategic (i.e. political) implications.” (Vince, 2004).
Based on these concepts, the article contributes not only to the literature, with the new framework, but also with implications for organizational practices. First, it encourages the collective thinking, with individuals learning from the paradoxical tensions within the organizational context. The second point supports the idea that action learning must be applied to understand the tensions within and outside a particular group, encouraging reflection discussions engagement in new initiatives towards better performance.

Although Action Learning represents a strong source regarding the understanding of resistance-compliance dynamics, it does not fundamentally challenge the prevailing organizational structures of inequity (Fenwick, 2003). For instance, Vince et al. (2018) do not investigate questions regarding these dynamics. It is necessary, from a critical perspective, understand the structures of dominance regarding social relationships and competing practices within organization (Fenwick, 2003). In order to fill this gap, this research is going to investigate to what extent a management action learning program is impacting employees that are dealing with resistance-compliance dynamics within a state-owned development institution.

2.3 Compliance-resistance dynamics within development administration

Although the action learning literature in management studies has been led by US and European authors, its practices are mainly observed within developing countries (Pedler et al., 2005). Action learning programs within the realm of DAM have been both celebrated for its many benefits to organizations and societies, and highly criticized for being used as conduits in these contexts for rearticulation of the colonialist side of development through the mobilization of a humanistic ‘participation-driven’ face (Cooke, 2003). In this sense, we problematize how Brazil, in the same fashion as other emerging economies, is dealing with respective resistance-compliance dynamics, facing the dominant practices.

Even with the consolidation of the global liberal order after the Cold War, there is a considerable number of countries that are challenging the US-led imposed global hierarchy (e.g., China, Russia) (Stuenkel & Taylor, 2015). They affirm that the most curious case emerges in Brazil, a middle power that represents a powerful challenge to international politics. While the country questions the US positions, the dominant
practitioners classify this attitudes as simple actions against the Americans, towards approval of anti-Americans electorate.

Brazil is stepping up on the global scenario, becoming an example of success, due to their own domestic challenges. This prosperity is attached by the authors to the enhancement of democracy. Even in the recent political crisis, they still find the positive light of democracy, like the demonstrations of dissatisfaction that took place in Brazilian cities in 2013 and 2014. These uprisings represent the impatience of the middle class with the constant cases of corruption, an essential consequence of the past generations. To reinforce his point, Stuenkel and Taylor (2015) highlight other rising powers that are also engaging in the confrontation, like the initiatives of IBSA (India, Brazil and South Africa), BASIC (Brazil, South Africa, India, and China), and the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa). The main rationally behind these new emerging powers lies in the idea that they do not play by the Western-centered rules. These countries are challenging the contested imperative DAM, pursuing alternative visions of the world. They claim that they could create a parallel system, with their own set of rules.

The impact of these developing countries made them part of the global political landscape. Laidi (2011) argues that the BRICS are a group of heterogeneous nations that keep facing the West hegemony. Their coalition influence the political, international system. It is important to highlight that they are not intended to create an anti-western movement but keep their independence and sovereignty. The author divides BRICS’s purpose into two different dynamics: economic and strategic. The first one is related to the globalization. Although these emerging countries are not the wealthiest, they have a big population, with economic power to push the global economy up. It means that they represent a massive threat to the American protectionism. The latter concerns the response to the Iraq war. The former president of USA George Bush suggested that any country that was against the North-American interests would taste their power. Despite threatened, the middle countries at that time were emerging in the global scenario and found a way not to go directly against the dominant country, but somehow strengthen their position in the international domain. Laidi (2011) affirms that, although the BRICS do not share a standard orientation, due to the Russian and Chinese regime, their strategy is to gather their strength to pool their power in international negotiations.
Following these questions, de Oliveira (2017) identifies some questions related to Western and Non-Western theories of public management that are not well explained yet. The author goes along the idea that, by standing against the impositions from Western countries, Brazil and other countries are not only building their own public administration but also influencing other countries in the matter of reforms and resistance. He identifies three main dimensions that are shaping countries:

1. The decline of trust in public institutions.
2. Growing interest in developing countries Public Administration.
3. The rise of the interconnection between countries.

Nevertheless, de Oliveira (2017) affirms that there are still pockets of managerial modes in some organizations in Brazil, like the state-owned development bank studied in this research, and that such pockets of western developmentalist management tools are constantly influencing on these three dimensions. With the acknowledgment that such developmentalist practices are new forms of colonialism, studies identified that when combined with indigenous knowledge, the western knowledge imposition is creating a new hybrid knowledge, enabling colonized countries not only to resist, but also subvert the imposed knowledge into creative alternatives (Yousfi, 2014).

However, Yousfi (2014) also highlights that, sometimes, instead of facing and resisting to dominance, managers in colonized countries are spreading western practices, accepting the imposed knowledge as a solution to developing countries. In this sense, within developing countries organizations, individuals are dealing both with resistance and compliance dynamics. These contradictions between accepting/resisting the impositions is taking place within BNDES, and it is important to highlight in what aspects the continuous insertion of managerial tools in this public institution influence in the public administration of the country.

Although the existence of BNDES is well known, there is a lack of understanding about its role. Besides that, the common sense still has some beliefs that are not true. The rise of neoliberal theories and the continuous neoliberal restructuring are challenging the development banks importance within the field of development. Nevertheless, this questioning is a result of a series of myths about state-owned banks,
arguing that they still have a lot of importance in the long-term development of the countries (Marois, 2016). Marois (2016) goes against the neoliberal reforms that keep affirming that state-owned banks are bad for development, selling the idea of privatization as solution for actual improvement. Nonetheless, sometimes it is not possible to privatize some institutions. To overcome this issue, neoliberal theory pushes these public organizations to act like private ones, seeking the maximization of the profit. This results in the decay of the number of state-owned banks operating associated with their corporatization (Marois, 2016). Figure 2 illustrates the previous statement, measuring the percentage number of state-owned banks over time within different locations.

**Figure 2: The decay of state-owned banks worldwide**

![Graph showing the decay of state-owned banks worldwide](image)

Source: Yeyati et al. (2007)

Public bank debates usually discuss the trade-off between market and government failures (Yeyati et al., 2007). Nonetheless, Yeyati et al. (2007) claim that public banks are more efficient than private banks regarding development matters, in the sense that public banks assign a smaller weight to performance. However, public bank managers still fear financial losses, deviating the bank goals from their social responsibility (Yeyati et al, 2007). In this sense, the question around the continuous insertion of management tools and the globalization of neoliberal practices represent
a critical issue, since it pushes state-owned banks to act like private ones. Although the neoliberal wave aimed to facilitate the entry of new firms into the market, privatizing or even closing state-owned banks, governments in Asia and Latin America resisted to this pressure, with state-owned banks continuing to function and, in some cases, growing in size and importance (Culpeper, 2012).

In Brazil, even with BNDES passing through managerial reforms and a serious crises of legitimacy, the Bank still plays an important role in many national realms of public policy, with international implications. The imposition of western modernization tools pushes individuals to embrace ambivalent identities, simultaneously internalizing and detaching from the managerialist North-South transfer of management knowledge (Yousfi, 2014), leading them to deal with multiple resistance-compliance dynamics overlooked by management knowledge in general. Although there is plenty of literature concerning such North-South of developed-developing countries relationship, there is still a lack of studies regarding such specific resistance-compliance dynamics within the contested realm of development administration and management. In order to fill this gap from an engaging perspective, from a perspective of the Global South, this research provides a qualitative action research with a focus on a collaborative action learning program within BNDES.

2.4 The action-oriented research framework

This action-oriented framework intends to summarize the main points discussed in the literature review that are going to underpin this qualitative research. Figure 1 illustrates the framework:
Western countries are pushing developing countries to adopt neoliberal practices through managerialism, arguing that the modernization of Third World “old practices” are the only way to achieve “development”. The insertion of managerial tools is resulting in the rise of DAM alongside the decay of public administration, leading government organizations to deal with broader resistance-compliance dynamics. In the face of DAM and the globalization of neoliberal practices, scholars engaged on alternatives to this non-democratic development administration. Challenging the US-led traditional transfer of knowledge, potential alternatives emerged, creating possibilities for the collaborative creation of knowledge through unlearning practices and critical reflection, impacting individuals political-emotional dynamics.

Although there is plenty of literature concerning this developed-developing countries relationship, there is still a lack of studies regarding political-emotional issues within broader resistance-compliance dynamics. In order to fill this gap, this research provides a qualitative action research within a management action learning program in BNDES.
3. Methodology and research design

This qualitative action research investigates participants of a management action learning program within a state-owned development bank. It intends to understand how participants deal with specific emotional and political issues within broader compliance-resistance dynamics when facing the decay of public and development administration and the rise of managerialism within the organization. To achieve results, this research used different qualitative research methods, discussed in the next subsections. Subsection one describes different qualitative approaches, indicating how the researcher tackled the current problem. Subsection two explains how empirical results were co-created, detailing the interactions between researcher, advisor, participants of the program and other employees involved in the research. Subsection three presents different methods of data analysis, moving away from positivist methods, from a researcher's reflexive perspective. Both subsections two and three discuss different ways of inserting the researcher within the organization under investigation, thus, engaging further the participants. Finally, subsection four describes how the researcher was able to conduct this action research, integrating the action-oriented framework that underpins this study with further results.

3.1 Methodological choices

The present research aims to investigate real-life experiences that are occurring in a public development bank in Brazil. This qualitative research seeks to understand social realities, drawing attention to processes, patterns and structural features at both individual and contextual levels (Flick et al, 2004). Silverman (2013) posits that its main objective regards a concern upon the scientific objective of reality (e.g., the logic of conversations).

Grounded on the work of Vince et al. (2018), this study will investigate political and emotional impacts over participants of an action learning program within a broader context of compliance-resistance dynamics faced by public/development administration in an emerging economy dealing with the decay of public administration and rise of managerialism at large. Unlike the investigation undertaken by Vince et al (2018) in South Africa, this action-oriented learning investigation focuses not on private
companies, but on a government organization. Hence, action learning practices have potential to influence not only in the institution, but also in public administration and development administration and management.

Although qualitative research field is a heterogeneous and open-ended camp marked by many different approaches and debates, there are common assumptions among them (Flick et al, 2004), as follows:

1. Social reality is understood as a shared product and attribution of meanings.
2. Processual nature and reflexivity of social reality are assumed.
3. ‘Objective’ life circumstances are made relevant to a life-world through subjective meanings.
4. The communicative nature of social reality permits the reconstruction of constructions of social reality to become the starting point for research.

Regarding these four main assumptions, the authors affirm that, in methodological terms, strategies of data collection have intrinsically dialogic character, resulting in the constant reconstruction of the social construction of reality. To understand these continuous changes, this research moves away from the traditional positivist methods, relying on alternative methods detailed in the next subsections. It is important to highlight that, by engaging on action-oriented qualitative research, actors of the present study (researcher, advisor, academic colleagues and program participants) were also dealing with resistance-compliance dynamics underpinned by the radical globalization of the darker side of managerialism (Abdalla & Faria, 2017) and mainstream empirical (post-)positivistic approach (Reason & Torbert, 2001).

Given particularities that characterize action-oriented qualitative research, unlike positivistic research or controlled experiments, the methodology is divided into two different – but interconnected – parts, that have been taken alongside with the constant interaction between participants, researcher, advisor, and academic colleagues:

1. Participation of the researcher in different reunions within and outside the focal organization as both engaged and disengaged-observer.
2. Interviews with program’s members from different hierarchical levels in the Bank (as focal organization).
3.2 Co-construction of data

To conduct this action oriented qualitative research, the author pursuit to engage in the co-creation of data. It is important to highlight that during both processes or parts, there were constant interactions between researcher, advisor, academic colleagues and different members involved in the action learning program. These interactions play a fundamental role in the co-creation of data, since it deals with constant interventions of actors in the research.

Reason and Torbert (2001) affirm that nowadays, research methodology is a constant conflict between empirical positivism (which is the mainstream in the academy) and a resistance movement, which they define as “postmodern interpretism”. While former refers to operationalization and measurements, the latter views reality in a humanistic way, drawing on several different qualitative analyses, always trying to deconstruct what is “taken-for-granted”. Notwithstanding, neither of these constructs is satisfactory. They claim that scholars must pursue an action turn, studying ourselves acting in relation with others, towards an action research. This action turn proposes a revision of our view of the nature and purpose of social science, asserting that instead of aim universalization, action research looks aims for voluntary, mutual and transformative action. (Reason & Torbert, 2001).

Although the vast and contested action research has different research designs and methods, action research share minimal requirements (Peters & Robinson, 1984), as follows:

1. Problem-focused.
2. Cyclical stages.
3. Collaborative characteristic.

Action research allows individuals who experience the problem to act in collaboration with the study, contributing both to co-production of practical solutions and general knowledge (Elden & Chisholm, 1993). Arguably, it is such collaborative approach that allows individuals within organizations to promote democratic and participatory discussions and reflections over particular issues (Berg et al., 2004). Action researchers collaborate with individuals involved in the problem studied,
through constant planning, acting, learning/unlearning, monitoring and evaluating the results and findings under co-construction (Tripp, 2005; Lewin 1946). This continuous interventions within the research is what we call the cyclical construction, with the data being co-created through the interactions between the individuals involved in the study, giving them the opportunity to collaborate and share their thoughts on the results identified, triggering new discussions with the rise of new questions.

Engaging on action research allowed the researcher to promote continuous learning and improvements in the research, re-presenting and re-discussing with the advisor, academic colleagues and participants of the mini-IMPM program not only the results, but also new approaches to reframe and investigate the research problem within a broad context of compliance-resistance dynamics. In other words, this research experiences the daily routine, putting individuals' interactions within the focal organization into the center of the investigation (Reason & Torbert, 2001) at the same time it connects with developments taking place at other interactions involving the focal organization and the academic institution the researcher belongs to. A main purpose is to raise critical reflections purposes and behaviors mobilized by individuals. It has been particularly important for the researcher to be present within the organization under study and within those other multiple sites. This is particularly relevant for a broader and deep understanding of political and emotional on-going impacts experienced by participants of this action learning program. The undertaking of action-oriented qualitative research with a focus on action learning program is a major challenge, with particular relevance for colaborative projects involving academy and organizations. Action learning takes place within situated organizational contexts embedded into multiple power relations that dominant learning theories often overlook (Contu & Willmott, 2003). The investigation and analysis of impacts triggered by action learning requires the researchers to embrace a action-oriented historical perspective in order to to disentangle the origins of specific impactful changes at the level of individuals by identifying patterns of organizational or systemic continuity (Pettigrew, 1987).

While positivist science prescribes the separation of scientist and the object (or subject) of study as a principle, this action oriented qualitative research relies on the principles of so-called extended case method, a more reflexive epistemic approach that allows and requires the researcher to experience everyday life within the
organization under study within its broader context (Burawoy, 1998). Using this methodology, researcher, advisor and program participants had the possibility of overcoming limited context effects, shedding light on domination, silencing, objectification and normalization issues, portrayed as “power effects” (Burawoy, 1998).

In what regards this particular investigation, this methodological/epistemic approach enables the researcher to connect the political and emotional impacts experienced by participants of the action learning program with broader compliance-resistance dynamics experienced by this organization within the realms of public/development administration facing the decay of public administration and the rise of managerialism.

3.2.1 Within the organization: mini-IMPM reunions

In line with the different perspectives of qualitative research mobilized in this action-oriented investigation, in the first part of the study, the researcher took part into diverse sessions of the mini-IMPM action learning program as both engaged and disengaged participant observer (Silverman, 2013). The researcher was introduced to the program in November, 2017, after several meetings with his advisor in which the program itself was being designed in collaboration with academic colleagues and administrators of the focal organization. Managers from the focal organization (advocates of the mini-IMPM program who acted as co-designers and moderators within the organization) presented their main concerns – as a result of previous action-oriented research in collaboration with advisor and academic colleagues at EBAPE – over the continuous insertion of managerial tools within the Bank to a group of students who were attending to a class within FGV/EBAPE. After the presentation, with the collaboration of the advisor, the researcher was invited to participate in the “Leadership for Development” program reunions. All the participants of the program are employees from BNDES. In the first moment, the program was planning to count with thirty participants. However, with the large number of employees interested in “mini-IMPM”, managers who were ahead of the program opened a new class, with the addition of thirty new members, totalizing sixty participants. It is also important to highlight that, in the beginning, the selection of participants were imperative, with each sector indicating the employees who were going to attend to the program. This condition also changed,
result from the growing interest in the program. Employees who were not indicated to the program in the first moment had the chance to apply for the program, with their admission conditioned to the approval of their sector.

The researcher was able to attend different meetings, being physically present for the first time in the facilities of the focal organization in December, 2017. Figure 4 illustrate the timeline of the reunions where the researcher participated. These reunions took place not only in the focal organization, but also in the FGV facilities, and within a non-profit organization called “Galpão Aplauso”, a program for social inclusion that count with the strategic partnership from BNDES and FGV.

Figure 4: Reunions Timeline

Over the day-long sessions, conducted by managers of the organization who act as action-learning professors with the eventual support of the researcher’s advisor, the researcher had the opportunity to take notes on participants' multiple and heterogeneous statements and critical reflections regarding their learning experiences which occurred within and outside the classroom. The program encourages participants to discuss and reflect, debating over critical questions which, in accordance with coordinators of the program (a manager of the organization, together with researcher’s advisor and a professor of a UK management school) and participants themselves, are not being well voiced nor discussed collectively within the organization. During these many situated sessions underpinned by emotional and political issues at the level of participants and compliance-resistance multiple dynamics at the level of the organization, the researcher had the opportunity to interact freely with participants (Bradbury & Reason, 2003) and both learn and unlearn as an engaged action-oriented investigator also embedded into broader compliance-resistance dynamics in the academic side (Abdalla & Faria, 2017).

Over the discussions analysis, it was not possible to identify the number of participants who were expressing their opinions, hindering the identification of the
employees through different meetings. Nonetheless, in order to present the results in
the fourth section, their opinions will be presented in the italic source text.

### 3.2.2 Interview with participants

Over the year, with the continuous presence of both research and advisor within
and around the program, participants started to ask questions regarding the research.
With the collaboration of the advisor and mini-IMPM participants, the researcher was
able to interview different participants, engaging in discussions regarding the impact of
the program, allowing this study to achieve new perspectives over the current results.
The selection of interviewees was based on their influence within the program, their
availability to be interviewed and from the advisor's approval.

The researcher interviewed 4 (four) different employees. The interviews took
around 60 minutes. All the interviews were recorded, with the approval of the
interviewees. The contacts between interviewer, interviewee and advisor were
constant, within the program reunions, email and meetings. The interviews were made
in a semi-structured method (Carvalho & Vergara, 2002; Flick et al., 2004), with guiding
questions that triggered discussions (Appendix A), allowing interviewees and
interviewer to debate around the purpose of the program. Semi-structured interviews
overlap boundaries of positivist structured and romantic unstructured interviews,
approaching interviewee and interviewer in an interpersonal talk, producing new
questions and answers (Qu & Dumay, 2011). The interviews were made not only to
clarify questions that were still unclear after the reunions and support statements
observed within them, but also to trigger new discussions over the current results
observed. These new discussions go along with the co-creation of data process, since
it present interventions from the researcher, advisor and the managers interviewed.

In order to protect the participant's confidentiality, this research will use
pseudonyms, different business positions and sectors from real-life. To present the
data analysis, Table 1 shows information about the interview's respondents in order to
show their transcriptions in section four where we will discuss the results:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonyms</th>
<th>Business Position</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fernando Alegra</td>
<td>Junior Executive</td>
<td>Engineer</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suzana Alves</td>
<td>Manager</td>
<td>Economist</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erick Dias</td>
<td>Superintendent</td>
<td>Administrator</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luana Teles</td>
<td>Technician</td>
<td>Lawyer</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.3 Data analysis: Moving away from positivism

In order to analyze the data, this research relies on the re-presentation of the triangulation method. Instead of using the traditional “triangulation from distance”, with the assumption that converging findings will allow the researcher present results with more reliability and validity (Cox & Hassard, 2005), this research uses a different approach. This research moves from the traditional method to a more reflexive method, from the researcher stance. Figure 5 illustrates the method. Cox and Hassard (2005) present the possibilities and problems of each of the three different stances proposed, arguing that this different model allows the researcher to get more involved with the organization being studied.

**Figure 5: Triangulation from researcher stance**

Source: Adapted from Cox & Hassard (2005)
The nomothetic lines concern the identification of patterns, focusing on the convergence and divergence. This is an interesting point in this research, since this research presents participants from multi-levels within the organization, and this stance allows the researcher to identify between-group differences. However, this perspective does not capture interactions over time. Ideographic overview represents an alternative stance, where the researcher inquiries from within and is able to be involved and understand local realities. This shift (from outside to inside the research) can resemble previous patterns identified in the nomothetic lines, offering to the researcher only an illusion of inquiring from without. The third stance relates to the research angle of view. The researcher must accept that there are different possibilities to the understandings of his/her research, allowing new ways of thinking that, sometimes, may be different from the researcher stance. Instead of looking to triangulation method as a closure approach, this particular stance can be seen as an opening new perspective.

Alongside with the action research, this re-presentation of the triangulation method allows the researcher to analyze the co-created data in a more reflexive way, not pursuing straightforward and universal answers, but reflections over issues identified within the bank. In other words, the researcher (in collaboration with different actors present in this research) is trying to understand the reality of the bank, looking for new and different ways of thinking, with the perspective of others individuals that are also inserted within the focal organization. Ignoring differences between different perspectives contributes to the reinforcement of the “posture of supremacy” (Godoi, 2005). Since qualitative research is an interpretative activity, and interpretations upon the subject under study are constantly being impacted by different influences, alternative reflexive methods allow the researcher to interpret different interpretations, rejecting positivist notions of objectivity. Engage in thinking about what is being thought enhances the quality of qualitative research (Nadin & Cassel, 2006).

Following the framework illustrated in the literature review (see figure 3), in collaboration with members involved in action research and action learning projects within academy and organization, this research identified that there is still a gap regarding how the broader context of neoliberal capitalism globalization influences on particular political-emotional dynamics of individuals. To exploit this issue, the study investigates how BNDES employees, who are dealing with broader resistance-
compliance issues, are being impacted by a management action learning program regarding their political and emotional dynamics.

The results were obtained by gathering the data co-created within the reunions, interviews and interactions between researcher, advisor, academic colleagues, participants and any other individual who attended the discussions.
4. Main Results and Discussion

In this section, we analyze the main results of our investigation focusing on specific emotional-political impacts triggered by compliance-resistance dynamics experienced by participants of a joint organization-academy action learning program in Brazil within the realm of DAM and corresponding dynamics triggered by the retreat of public administration and rise of managerialism at large. First, before presenting the three analytical patterns underpinned by our action-research framework, we are going to highlight intertwined political-emotional and resistance-compliance dynamics experienced by participants from BNDES who attended the action learning program “Leadership for Development”, also known as mini-IMPM.

The second section is divided into three interconnected parts. In the first subsection, we discuss how the broad context of resistance-compliance dynamics is influencing in the particular realms of development and education, with the ascension of managerialism within DAM forcing BNDES into escalating crises of legitimacy and identity – involving also historical misrepresentations of the undertheorized realm of DAM reinforced at the present by the management academic community (see Lazzarini et al., 2015) – and multiple initiatives and critical reflections directed toward dealing with resistance-compliance dynamics. In a nutshell, it emphasizes the lack of research regarding the relationship between the broad global neoliberal capitalist context, which triggers resistance-compliance dynamics, with prior political-dynamics research (Vince et al, 2018). Subsection two introduces the discussion of the main findings, followed by three analytical patterns which came out of the action research practice. The first analytical pattern details the mini-IMPM, explaining some features of the program, how it is being conducted, characteristics of participants and how the joint program emerged within the focal organization. Further, it presents an analysis of the results co-constructed by the researcher through the multiple interactions with the mini-IMPM moderators, participants and academic colleagues who are also interested in the program. It identifies that the management action learning program is triggering discussions over compliance-resistance dynamics, encouraging participants to discuss problems that were already perceived by the employees, but none of them were able to talk about it within the organization. It also highlights the importance of action learning programs in the academic-organization relationship, in the sense that
the program is not only focusing in discussions over real-life context, but also providing academic literature to underpin these discussions.

The second analytical pattern engages in a particular way the discussions put forward by Vince et al. (2018) about political and emotional dynamics. It goes beyond Vince et al. (2018) work, in the sense that it engages on the discussion within the realms of development public administration and management context. It investigates the impact of a management action learning program in individuals on political and emotional dynamics over participants that are dealing with resistance-compliance issues within the Brazilian state-owned bank, facing the decay of public administration and the rise of contested managerialism. The program aims to influence the development of both individual participants and organization.

Finally, the third analytical pattern highlights the importance of the context in which each employee started to work in the Bank. It defines a concept that we called *temporality dynamics*, providing an analysis which strongly suggests that such dynamic has influence in the two dynamics discussed previously.

### 4.1 The Broad Context: managerialism ascension and public administration decay within development administration and management

BNDES is a state-owned development bank with more than 65 years working for the development of the country. In its history, the organization cumulated experience as an institutional public investor, with the main goal of fostering development and innovation in the national economy (Livro Verde BNDES, 2017). Throughout the Bank’s history, its employees created a group identity, proudly enunciating themselves as ‘Benedense family’. Nonetheless, with the US-led globalization of neoliberal managerialism alongside with the pressure for liberal reforms taking place not only in public and private organizations, but also within academic institutions – particularly in business schools (Fotaki & Prasad, 2015), the Bank started to suffer managerial restructuring in its multiple realms of development and administration. With the increasing of the number of individuals working in the Bank and the massive insertion of managerial knowledge and tools – much of this triggered by the active and ambiguous role played by its department of Human Resources directed toward the creation of a modern public organization in Brazil – employees’ perception over the
Bank values and goals, that was previously well defined – i.e., ethics, excellence and commitment to development (Livro verde BNDES, 2017) - , started to drift apart, generating tensions within the organization, leading employees to embrace and deal with multiple and heterogeneous resistance-compliance dynamics, which become increasingly relevant for the hegemonic and counter-hegemonic dynamics of globalization of neoliberal capitalism in emerging countries (Lipton, 2017). BNDES is one of the example of several state-owned banks that are suffering such pressures imposed by financialization of global capitalism and institutionalization of US-led neoliberal ideology and reforms, with a particular focus on non-Western BRICS-led emerging economies, also called ‘rising powers’ (Marois, 2016; Yeyati et al., 2017).

Throughout the historical and continuous globalization of development administration DAM, US-led First World countries claimed that they are cooperating with the development of underdeveloped, developing or emerging countries worldwide (Cooke, 2004). In other words, DAM may be seen as modernist hegemonic approach of US-led imperial globality where US-led managerialism replaces Cold War developmentalism by supporting neoliberal regime underpinned by mechanisms of accumulation by dispossession through the imposition of market-oriented structural reforms as unique solution for the progress of developing countries within an era of globality (Dar & Cooke, 2008; Kerr, 2008; Cooke & Faria, 2013).

These neoliberal practices were also taking place in academic institutions, with a post-war understanding that effective management of private and public organizations requires specialized and adequate knowledge, skills and training (McLaren, 2011). As result, the dominant ideology is reinforced, and the colonialism maintained since Third World academics have increasingly to follow a US-led western system of education and research (Yousfi, 2014). Among many other outcomes of the corresponding compliance-resistance dynamics, postcolonial academics embraced the understanding of how the introduction of such imperative mandate challenges the power relationships (Yousfi, 2014). The growing of postcolonial critique directed toward the legitimacy of the neoliberalism discourse coincided with the rise of counter-hegemonic alternatives, particularly within the realm of so-called emerging economies (Faria et al, 2010).

In the action-oriented research framework, we reviewed the literature that indicates that this dominant imposition triggers resistance-compliance dynamics at a
broader level and political-emotional dynamics at the more specific level of management learning and education. Third World countries have been dealing with such issue in different ways around the world, within and outside organizations and within and outside institutions of education and research (Abdalla & Faria, 2017). When imported to emerging economies, the implementation of the US management model pushes managers and public administrators to adopt an ambivalent or hybridist positions, by internalizing the western modernization discourse and simultaneously detaching or delinking themselves and organizations from the (neo)colonial matrix (Yousfi, 2014). Regarding such topic, former members of the IMPM program who work at BNDES are championing the impact of IMPM within the Bank through this particular management action learning program. More specifically, they aim at exploring and restituting the complex realms of development in response to the massive imposition of managerialist knowledge and routines alongside the overall decay of public administration throughout the country in order to both accommodate and challenge, through the mobilization of mechanisms of translation in collaboration with academics, the heterogeneous action-learning contents and methods learned from IMPM.

The continuous insertion of managerial tools were an evident problem within the bank, and although some employees were not satisfied with this new imperative condition, the discussion over this questions were not clear within the bank. The “mini-IMPM” program emerges in the bank as a space to discuss this overlooked issues, fostering discussions and encouraging employees to engage on action learning practices.

4.2 Relevant findings

In the following subsections, we connect and contrast prior research on political-emotional dynamics (Vince et al., 2018) with the broad context faced by BNDES (i.e., the insertion of managerial tools), understanding how the mini-IMPM program, formally called “Leadership for Development”, is impacting these specific dynamics embedded within a context marked by heterogeneous broad compliance-resistance dynamics within the under-researched realm of DAM.

The results were obtained through the action research practice, with the cyclical construction of data during interactions and interventions from participants involved
both in the research and action learning program (Tripp, 2005). With the continuous process of co-creating data through action research (Peters & Robinson, 1984; Reason & Bradbury, 2001; Berg et al., 2004; Reason & Torbert, 2001; Antonacopoulou, 2009), we identified three different patterns that stood out along the research.

4.2.1 – Resistance-compliance dynamics within and around BNDES

One of the first concern to discuss is the effective impact the program has in the organization as all. Narrative shows the difficulty of a broader application of the knowledge learned in the IMPM program, which is actually restricted to small teams within the Bank championed by IMPM participants who either completed or are taking part in the program.

*The IMPM program has the impact concern. In the first moment, each former IMPM member was attempting to reproduce what they have learned in their own way, in their own team.*

*(Respondent 1)*

Such dynamic is not aligned with the aim of the IMPM program to influence the development of both individual participants and organizations, as declared by one of the founder of the program: “What matters is impact: how the learning comes into the organization, beyond the participating manager” (Mintzberg, 2011, p. 25).

However, the reaction of BNDES employees in order to enlarge its scope through the mobilization of impact objectives and enlarge the critical mass, they attempt to encourage other BNDES employees to undertake the IMPM course. With the increase of BNDES employees attending the course, the idea started to gain force within the Bank, and without a clear intention, the movement started to happen as related by Respondent 2:

*To enhance the impact, critical mass was necessary. In the first moment, we encouraged colleagues to take the full program. Through time, the number of BNDES employees which took the...*
course created a community of people that were trying to increase the impact within the Bank. Without any control, the movement towards the dissemination of the knowledge acquired was initiated. (Respondent 2)

Moreover, while some employees started to observe that the continuous insertion of managerial tools was an evident and undeniable problem within the Bank, there were still few discussions regarding such issue. Some employees did not agree with the path the Bank was taking, but without realizing, lot of them were complying with the imperative situation, internalizing and accepting the impositions. In this sense, former IMPM members identified this as an opportunity, and exploited it:

Over casual discussions, the diagnosis of the managerial problem was evident. The Bank was given over to the managerialism, with the introduction of the Balance Scorecard (BSC) and other tools. At the moment, we realized that this was a common concern, we identified that we could exploit this question. (Respondent 1)

As we can see, the imposition of western modernization tools pushes individuals to adopt an ambivalent nature, simultaneously internalizing and detaching themselves from the North-South transfer of management knowledge (Yousfi, 2014), leading employees to deal with continuous resistance-compliance dynamics.

In 2017, the mini-IMPM program emerged, with the name of “Leadership for development”. The program intends to encourage the reflection, triggering discussions over resistance-compliance dynamics, not only over the new managerial issues, but also around each individual action within the Bank. It plans to strengthen the capacity of Bank’s employees to discuss high complex issues at different levels of hierarchy. Hence, to be successful, the program requires employees from different business positions.

Considering the issue of group heterogeneity, we asked whether the program developers designed it purposely in a way to achieve diversity in the group of participants, or whether this effect was achieved by chance. Respondent 1 affirmed that, in the first moment, the selection was imperative, with the responsible from each
sector indicating the employees who would attend the course. Respondent 1 affirmed that, in the first moment, employees responsible for each sector were delegated to indicate the employees who should participate. Nonetheless, without the direct control from the program developers, each sector claims that employees were chosen from different business levels, increasing the heterogeneity in the group. In addition to this question, with the propagation of the program idea, the number of employees interested in the program increased:

*With the subject being discussed in daily meetings and discussions, questions about the program started to pop up within the Bank, with employees that were not indicated to take the course in the first moment asking to participate. (Respondent 2)*

Even though the program rationale goes along with proposition of action learning, with a group of people involved in a real-world problem, learning from the reflection of their actions in order to resist to the traditional business model (Pedler et al., 2005), the concept was not clearly defined at the beginning of the project, as stated by Respondent 1:

*All the concepts and practices of action learning were inside the program, but in the first moment, the word “Action Learning” was never mentioned. The discussion of this construct emerged through discussions within the meetings of the mini-IMPM, with the interaction of BNDES employees and academics. (Respondent 1)*

As exposed above, the mini-IMPM reunions have proved themselves useful in the sense that they induced discussions about issues which were present in the Bank, but not well defined. Participants were dealing with resistance-compliance dynamics, but they did not know about it. Over the meetings, we observed that several times employees were talking about some constructs discussed in the academia without knowing it. For instance, during one of the reunion, a Bank member said that “*there is lack of discussions involving “points and counterpoints”*, subject exploited in Organization Theory literature (e.g., Westwood & Clegg, 2009). A public agent that
works in a development organization must know what the literature posits about development, especially in a developing country. It must know that discussions are not supposed to be a problem, but the beginning of solutions. Such academic-organization relationship should be nurtured since extant literature already identified such gap between theory and practice spheres (e.g., Dar, 2008).

Besides encouraging the discussion and reflection among managers in a real-life context, the program provides to them academic literature that can foster their discussions, promoting alternatives to organizational practices. However, this academic-organization dialogue can be jeopardized by executives’ lack of academic background. Regarding such question, the researcher asked how employees are dealing with the academic contents and Respondents 1 and 2 declared the follow:

*The interaction between the organization and the academia is being very interesting. Sometimes, while discussing around daily questions, we understand some factors that were evident, but not well defined. This is not a traditional transfer of knowledge, but an action learning. Sometimes we need a better integration between the academic concepts and the corporative experience.* (Respondent 2)

*In the first moment, it was difficult to translate some constructs to the usual corporate language, but action learning has been providing a meaning to these constructs which are appropriate to corporative usage.* (Respondent 1)

This academic-organization relationship challenges the US-led disciplinarian knowledge (Gosling & Mintzberg, 2003), not only for what regards organizational practices, but also concerning the realms of education and research. Even scholars are dealing with resistance-compliance dynamics, since US-led managerialism is pushing researchers to aim for empirical positivism. Nonetheless, members involved in this study (researcher, advisor, academic colleagues and program participants) believe that moving away from this mainstream approach create better conditions to a collective organization-academy learning. Thus, within the meetings and interviewees,
by interacting with different actors of the program, the researcher was able to move away from the imported US-led dominant empirical positivism, based on operationalization, measurement and generalization of results (Reason & Torbert, 2001), acting in collaboration with different participants in order to engage in the co-creation of knowledge (Antonacopoulou, 2009).

The emergence of the program triggered discussions over resistance-compliance issues within the bank, and although Vince et al. (2018) already identified that political and emotional dynamics are constantly influencing in the way people act, no research has been made regarding how resistance-compliance issues impact these dynamics. In this sense, this research contributes in fulfilling the gap presented in the action-oriented framework, since it identifies the presence of broader resistance-compliance issues within the bank, with employees both complying and resisting to the insertion of managerial tools. These dynamics are not only putting individuals to adopt an ambivalent position (Yousfi, 2014), but also influencing in employees’ decisions, hence, impacting the organization positioning.

4.2.2 Political and Emotional Dynamics

Over the meetings and classes of the “Leadership for Development” program, several opinions and discussions were held. The employees had the chance to share their experiences, some of their dissatisfactions, and together, help each other improve and look for new directions for the Bank. Reunions followed the proposition behind Vince et al. (2018), co-creating data with participants’ collective reflection and questioning around real-life situations. It is important to reinforce that those meetings had employees from different levels of hierarchy within the organization, avoiding the segregation, and expanding the heterogeneity of the discussions.

During a discussion, one of the participants pointed out that “there is a consensus among the group that conflicts must be avoided”. Regarding this issue, the first contact of employees with the action learning program raised a collective reaction of surprise, since they are used to avoid discussions, while the program fosters it. In agreement with his/her colleague, another employee claimed that “avoiding conflict pushes away the solutions”, and that “employees rather take safety decisions in order to avoid individuals’ failures”. Towards an action turn (Reason & Torbert, 2001), they
are encouraged not only to question these decisions, but to go beyond first order reflections such as: What is the Bank mission? Why are they doing with their jobs? Are we still relevant for the development of the country? The critical reflections mobilized by the mini-IMPM program awakened participants from dominant and painful state of compliance and triggered action-oriented discussions that put under threat their managerial identities.

Due to the absence of hierarchical level in the horizontal discussions held by participants of the program within classroom, starts to emerge a renewed group identity. More experienced participants with stronger engagement with development ideals put forward discussions focused on the improvement of the organization based on criteria beyond the dominant efficiency requirements. This critical achievement within the program was underpinned by political and emotional dynamics, drivers of individual’s and organization actions. When sharing their opinions overtly, employees kept affirming that the reunions gave them the opportunity to talk and hear without being judged, without fearing repression and equivocal judgement. Regarding this issue, the researcher asked why employees were feeling more opened to discuss these questions within the program and Respondent 3 and 4 highlighted trust, at both interpersonal and organizational levels, and an organizational space for managers to reorganize themselves as key lacking dimensions, as follows:

*At the Bank, we are really good at diagnosis. In this sense, the program was not novel. Nonetheless, at least for me, the program allowed the participants to get deeper into unaccounted problems, mainly because of the focus on the reflections of our actions, decisions and routines. The program created a “space of trust”, where the ideas that were not being discussed started to rise.* (Respondent 4)

*The program opened a channel, a space to discuss and reflect over various issues.* (Respondent 3)

During the creation of such “space of trust” and the co-construction of a new space within the organization, some participants started to question matters about
managerialism from a political perspective. More particularly, they started questioning the degree of agency they could mobilize in order to manage the modernization of management within the organization, at the expense of the more complex principles of development administration (Thomas, 1996). During a critical reflection moment, one participant affirmed that “this modernization is twisting the values of the Bank”. Its values, in accordance with internal documents turned into past by continuous managerial reforms over recent years, were based on ethics, excellence, public spirit and commitment to development. In addition to this statement, another participant added that “the insertion of managerial tools diminished the employee’s autonomy, turning the bank into a mere executor of government tasks”.

By analyzing their discussions, the researcher identified that among BNDES employees it is acknowledged that conversations around development started to decrease, “turning the organization into a political investment tool of the government” as affirmed by another participant of the reunion. Such managerialist financialization of state-owned banks in emerging economies has been highlighted by Marois (2016). Given the impossibility to privatize public organizations, neoliberal institutions, at both nation and international levels, push state-owned banks to act like private banking. Through the imposition of control tools in name of efficiency and modernization, managerialism was allowing Federal state institutions to take over the governance of the Bank. Hence, in order to achieve the indicators results, employees reported that they prefer to stay in silence than to start a new discussion, making clear that resistance-compliance dynamics – triggered by the asymmetrical encounter between managerialism and development administration within development organizations – are directly impacting their both deliberate decisions and on-going routines.

However, the major emotional burden for participants of the program, enabled by discussions and critical reflections, is that confrontation of ideas is not something that must be avoided or silenced, but on the contrary nurtured and voiced. These emotional and political issues, which are typical for managers within the realms of DAM, have been virtually silenced by the managerial culture of consensus that nowadays virtually monopolizes the organization. Addressing and finding ways of going through political and emotional obstacles by highlighting compliance-resistance dynamics was framed as necessary by more engaged participants whereas the less engaged ones preferred to remain silent on those sensitive issues not only during the
sessions of the program but also in the conversations with the researcher. Although extant literature addressed the potential of action learning in challenging or undermining the dissemination of knowledge, exploring specific dynamics of impact (i.e., political-emotional) (Vince et al, 2018) this research address the impact of these dynamics within a broader resistance-compliance context, investigating how the engagement on action learning, underpinned by critical reflection and unlearning practices influence on practitioners and academics political-emotional dynamics within the contested realm of education and research in development administration.

During critical reflections over meetings, an increasing number of participants agreed that the managerialist culture of consensus which conceals emotions and suppress conflicts was jeopardizing the whole organization. The fear of being questioned leads many of them to stay quiet in reunions, even if in many situations they did not agree at all with what was being said and decided about their lives within and outside the organization. However, outside the office, the rumble was more clear. In order to encourage the participants of the program to face emotional and political constraints, a former IMPM member claimed that omission is a choice, and whenever anyone in the room chooses not to talk, they were resigning the opportunity to grow. He/she inspired course members to embrace the uncertainty, learning with their experiences, even if they make mistakes sometimes.

\[\text{Everything is a choice. How far you want to go, how much you want to protect your image, until where you want to push your questionings in order to achieve the results you want. Not talking about what you think is also a choice. (Respondent 3)}\]

While discussing on why some employees choose to stay neutral and omit their opinions, the researcher asked whether the participant believe that omission is a result of the continuous implementation of command and control practices as the organization standard. Respondent 3 in particular affirmed that each employee reacts in a certain way, but that some of them choose to stay quiet and comply with the imposed practices rather than to resist overtly and risk losing their business positions. In this sense, and referring to Federal government in general and Brasilia in particular, one participant expressed that they were “suffering a type of “brainwashing”, with top-
down centralized decisions". This participant argued overtly in a collective discussion underpinned by critical reflections that there is not alternative: "the bank must reinvent itself".

Following this idea, there was a particular reunion with the intent to discuss the outcomes of situations where employees did not avoid conflicts. The core subject discussed was the fear of acting with something (or someone) that was against its own way of thinking. Not surprisingly, most of the experiences accounted were positive. Instead of promoting consensus, the so-called “enemies”, with different ideas, promoted solutions through discussions as a way of overcoming both emotional distresses and lack of confidence on the deployment of politics. Indeed, once understood that, their idea was being contested not for being suppressed by the “other side”, but inputting other ways of thinking on it, the idea of the “other” in the debate was mentally transformed in the idea of a heterogeneous group, thinking differently in a contingent fashion at the same time working for the same purpose: the improvement of the organization and the restitution of development as an imperative. The main impact of the mini-IMPM in this sense, after analyzing employees’ reports, and discussing such dynamics with them, is that they observed that the discussion and reflection created new and different perspectives (i.e., co-created knowledge). The positive outcome from the discussions changed their mind about staying quiet and avoiding confrontation.

This is another strong impact of the program. Extant literature already investigated how action learning practices impact individuals’ political and emotional dynamics (Vince et al., 2018). Notwithstanding, this research identifies that action learning programs can challenge the delegitimation of political-emotional dynamics within organizations and classrooms that managerialism tries to impose, triggering discussions over individuals’ choice to resist or comply with problems faced, contributing to our framework.

Previously, we did not talk about power relationships. Although it does not appear in an explicit way, the program encourages the rise of this discussion, regardless of business positions. (Respondent 2)
Notwithstanding, over the several differences between the participants (e.g., levels, areas), one particular difference stood out. Within a reunion concerning the present study, both researcher and advisor identified that the contexts in which each employee joined the organization was different, and that this difference was changing the way problems and decisions were framed and made over time. Previous literature already identified that power relationships affect the decisions within the organization (Vince et al., 2018), but none of them talked about this particular issue. This research defines this dynamic as *temporality dynamics*.

### 4.2.3 Temporality Dynamics

BNDES suffered a series of changes through time. Changes in the structure of the organization have often demanded huge workload for some areas, and the worries about achieving goals - which are now being measured and controlled in accordance with managerial guidelines brought into the organization with the support of diverse consultancy firms - overcome the discussions about self-reflection within the organization. Although this discussion proved to be relevant for the sustainability of the Bank and its restitution of development identity, as the most important development organization in the country, they do not point to measurable results. In other words, some employees agree with the importance of critical reflection and respective debates, but understand that they have to prioritize top-down demands in order to meet efficiency requirements. Over the year, the researcher realized that different participants were attending to different reunions. In this sense, the researcher asked why the total of employees enrolled in the program were not being present in most of the meetings of the program.

*The attendance of the participants enrolled in the program does not indicate a low level of interest in the project. A lot of people that were engaged had to leave the program, for several reasons.*

*(Respondent 1)*

In agreement with this statement provided by Respondent 1, Respondent 4 affirmed that she “had to leave (the program) due to new restructuring demands and
new assignments”. Respondent 2 stated that “although there are Bank members that think that these discussions are a waste of time, there was a huge interest in the mini-IMPM program”. The idea of commitment to development still exists inside the organization. The problem is that development questions demand time and engagement, and due to the over-dominance of managerial tools and mindset, given that the action learning program is not inserted in employee goals, participants rather accomplish measurable assignments when attending the program. This issue threatens the sustainability of the program, since employees rather accomplish measurable assignments:

*I believe that the program must address assignment goals. Employees have the opportunity to participate in the program, but their goals will not change because of that. To achieve a satisfactory quorum, these reflection reunions must be part of the daily routines.* (Respondent 3)

It is important to highlight that, due to the continuous insertion of managerial tools that are being used to command and control employees’ performance, individuals within the organization are constantly being pressed to achieve measurable results, pushing them away from engaging in different causes. The present context influences on employees’ political and emotional dynamics, in the sense that push them to change their decisions in order to attain to managerial assignments. This is what we define in this investigation as *temporality dynamics*. By investigating this new dynamic, this study identified a constant conflict between two “worlds” within the bank, one with new employees deeply influenced by the “modernization” of the organization, pursuing the achievement of measurable goals, and other with senior or more mature employees that are still worried about the decay of the “traditional” public administration and development, concerned with the sustainability of critical reflection over the bank contested decisions.

During a discussion in one of the meetings, a participant argued to the researcher that the increase of the number of organization members over recent years cannot be disentangled from the insertion of managerial tools. With the Bank receiving new members, questions that were previously easily solved, are now more
complicated, involving more people, and demanding more levels of the organization. To go along with this staff growth, the organization had many incentives to include these managerial tools and ideas in order to fulfill command and control requirements also imposed by the growing volume of capital mobilized in recent years. This combination of issues has deeply constrained the autonomy of employees in general and, in particular, the conditions of possibility for the continuation of historical compliance-resistance dynamics:

*It is not possible to dissociate the increase of the Bank staff over time with the rise of managerialism. I believe that managerialism entered to fill a blank, but the problem is that … especially as a result of the growing importance of the Bank for the Federal government managerial tools have been used as solution of all the problems of the organization.* (Respondent 4)

In personal interviews, more mature employees affirmed that over time, with the increase of Bank members in the staff, open discussions started to fade. Maybe because they do not feel comfortable to talk with people they do not know, or do not trust. At the end, narratives indicated that the continuous insertion of managerial tools through time is causing the decrease of these debates inside the Bank. This problem reinforces one of the main concerns of managers and academics that are ahead of the action learning program. With employees being hired within this context, action learning can move away from challenging the dominant system, being adopted to maintain the current scenario (Pedler et al, 2005), resulting in the rise of potential “Reflexive Managerialism”, with managerialism influencing on critical reflections. This have strong implications regarding DAM, mainly in emerging economies, in the sense that CDM intends to reject the high modernism underpinned by managerialism (Gulrajani, 2010) instead of reinforcing it. This new dynamic brings to the fore a different topic that was not addressed in the first moment, going beyond our action-oriented framework. The globalization of neoliberal practices are affecting organizations in different ways through time, creating a conflict between generations.
5. Conclusion

This investigation, as component of a broad collaborative academy-organization project, aimed to understand how a specific joint academy-organization management action learning program impacts political and emotional dynamics over individuals who deal with the broad context marked by resistance-compliance dynamics within the development-oriented realms of administration and management.

With the rise of an increasingly asymmetric and unequal context of US-led neoliberal capitalist globalization (Harvey, 2007), institutions and houses of knowledge started to question the value of Public Administration to society, individual and states, giving rise to the increasing managerialization of Development Administration through the neoliberal conversion of this contested and underinvestigated field of knowledge and practices into Development Administration and Management (DAM). DAM allegedly intends to help developing countries to achieve development and corresponding standards of civilization and modernity, claiming that Third World countries must follow US-led western standards. The continuous globalization of US-led neoliberal capitalism has led to a serious crisis within the realms of management education and research (Fotaki and Prasad, 2015) at the same time it has led academics and practitioners in different parts of the world to put forward alternatives in general and, in particular, a more democratic development administration (Gulrajani, 2010; Abdalla and Faria, 2018).

It has been mobilized by means of multiple dynamics of compliance-resistance, underpinned and in interaction with a modest but growing literature showing that diverse types and traditions of DAM both backfire and foster development (Lipton, 2017; Pieterse, 2000). By means of under-investigated and under-theorized compliance-resistance dynamics and hybridizations (Yousfi, 2014), emerging countries have managed to both internalize and resist the imposition of corresponding North-South transfer of knowledge and rules. This DAM investigation confirms in a particular way that within this broad context, different modalities of action learning – mobilized in rather different and interactive ways in the Global North and in the Global South – have emerged as potential challenge to US-led managerialism and respective decay of public administration at large.
Although extant literature already addresses this developed-developing countries relationship – e.g., post-colonial studies (e.g., Abdalla and Faria, 2017) and Global South literature (e.g., Alcadipani et al., 2012) – there is still a lack of studies regarding these resistance-compliance dynamics in so-called emerging economies within the multifarious field of DAM, an increasingly contested, but still overlooked by management research and education, field of knowledge and practices. Therefore, despite its rather modest scope the present research aims to contribute to Euro-American contemporaneous knowledge about the impact of action learning over participants by investigating the impact of a management action learning program in individuals’ political and emotional dynamics embedded within broad resistance-compliance dynamics within a large development organization in Brazil. In other words, this is a particularly relevant investigation in Brazil, and other emerging economies, for providing frameworks, findings and suggestions for both researchers and practitioners involved in action learning initiatives taking place in other state-owned organizations, together with non-governmental organizations (Roberts et al., 2005). As constituents of complex DAM systems, different types of organizations have been going through managerial reforms over recent decades within contexts marked by compliance-resistance dynamics, without much attention and support from researchers and academic institutions due to the virtual lack of interest on both action learning and action-oriented investigations. More particularly, there is a virtual lack of interest on DAM in Brazil.

This investigation shows that, despite many limitations, that action-oriented qualitative research with a focus on action learning – in which the researcher participates in several meetings and interacts with program participants in order to co-create findings due to collaborative academy-organization broad projects – might become a valuable and relevant mode of academic practice within the broad context of DAM in, for and from emerging countries. It is important to highlight that researchers and participants learn from each other given that both sides deal with overlooked compliance-resistance dynamics, as US-led global managerialization is impacting not only public organizations, but also academic institutions.

The main purpose of the program is to disseminate contents learned from the IMPM main program, by triggering resistance-compliance debates and action-oriented learning aimed to restitute development-oriented contents and knowledge into an
organizational realm of development administration in an emerging country. The joint organization-academic program encourages practitioners and academics who teach, research and practice management and administration to engage the collective co-creation of knowledge, through critical and non-critical reflections on knowledge and their practices.

Over the reunions throughout one year of both engaged and disengaged participation within multiple and overlapping realms, program enthusiasts fostered discussions about critical issues of the institution, highlighting that a critical reflection is essential to solve the current problems that the organization is facing. The continuous insertion of managerial tools is resulting in the decay of public administration, leading individuals within the organization to deal with resistance-compliance situations, affecting politics and emotional dynamics of diverse DAM constituents.

Analysis indicates that managerialism-public administration dynamics strongly impact political and emotional dynamics at the level of individuals, also at the level of respective subjectivities. Along the program, employees reported that managerialism artifacts, such as BSC, are pushing them to pursue anti-development measurable indicators, hindering them to engage in development practices and knowledge that are not easily measurable. Analysis shows that those managerial artifacts triggers not better organizations and better managers within the realm of DAM, but both destabilization and reinforcement of broad resistance-compliance dynamics. As it has been observed in other emerging countries, this type of administration drifts development organizations from original values. What is particularly interesting, we believe, is that this research shows that the investigation of emotional-political impacts over participants of action learning programs in emerging economies, in contrast with findings obtained by Vince et al. (2018), requires a broader conceptualization of management practice and learning and the engagement of researchers with action-oriented qualitative research. In sum, this research suggests that management action learning program and action research that go beyond North-South designs emerge as a valuable alternative not only to Euro-American knowledge on action learning but also for the provision of knowledge and development to society at large. In addition, the author highlights the importance of a new temporality dynamic. Finally, this investigation also sheds some light on generation gaps within the complex and
overlooked realm of DAM in Brazil and elsewhere. With the increasingly contested normalization of managerialism within the realms of management education and research, triggered by business schools, big consulting firms, and other development-oriented institutions historically committed to impact management, organizations, academic and non-academic institutions and subjectivities in developing and emerging countries from an on-going perspective of imperialism-colonialism (see Cooke, 2003), development organizations and academic institutions have to engage tradition-modernity dynamics raised by the divide between generations. This research shows this is a major critical issue for the co-construction of a more effective and democratic field of DAM in the future.
6. Limitations, Future Research and Implications for practice

Although the program has already proved to be making an impact, it is still going through some rearrangements. Due to agenda constraints, reallocations, changes in the schedule and similar problems, participants had to quit the program. Nonetheless, employees seemed to embrace the program idea.

Another limitation is that, by the time this researcher is writing the present document, the group's reunions are still happening. Hence, it was not possible to identify after-course results. Future research might look into feedbacks about the program, worrying not only about the impact results, but also into the sustainability of the program, one of the main concern of program enthusiasts.

Regarding the methodology, the usage of pseudonyms represents a strong limitation, since it reduces the power of details in the research. In addition to that, the discussions within the meetings involved several employees, hampering the identification of individual reports. To minimize this problem, to identify employees’ voices, participants’ interventions were presented in the italic source text.

This research contributes to understanding how the promotion of collaborative action-oriented learning impacts individuals and organizations within the realm of development administration and management, that are dealing with the rise of managerialism and the decay of public management within a broad spatial-time context marked by compliance-resistance dynamics. It also contributes to shed light on the academic-organization relationship. Indeed, managers of the Bank affirmed that the integration between academic concepts and daily corporative issues help to understand and solve innumerous problems, and that the management Action Learning program fills this gap, encouraging the interaction in a non-traditional collaborative co-creation of knowledge. In order to solve real-life problems, the joint organization-academic program encourages practitioners and academics that teach, research and practice management and administration to engage on the collective co-creation of knowledge, through reflections over their practices. With engaged inquiry within and across multiple sites, this research reinforces critics over the neocolonial imposition of management education and development, mainly in what regards emerging economies.
Over the mini-IMPM reunions, several employees asked about the present research, with a growing interest in the matters under investigation. Indeed, the interactions between researcher and participants collaborated to the co-creation of data. However, it is important to highlight that these participants were not only contributing with the study, but being constantly impacted by it. In other words, when discussing about the program with the researcher, employees become part of the action-research, getting involved and collaborating in the promotion of new alternatives and solutions for the problem identified. This is a strong implication of this action-research, since it impacts directly individuals who are involved in the study.

The researcher assumes that the dissemination and presentation of this study within BNDES, FGV and other institutions will draw attention to the overlooked resistance-compliance dynamics in the fields of development and education. Hence, this study expects to impact not only the focal organization, but also the field of DAM.
7. References


8. Appendix

Appendix A – Semi-structured interview:

1 – How did you hear about the program?

2 – How was your experience?

3 – How are people at BNDES reacting to the program?

4 – How did the insertion of Managerial Tools influence on the Bank decisions?

5 – Do you perceive any particular difference between different members regarding the managerial question? (Sex, Age, Level of power)

6 – Did you already perceive impact from the program?