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Logics in Implementation Studies:
a Critical Analysis of the Program for Gender and Racial Equity

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Tese apresentada à Escola de Administração de
Empresas de São Paulo da Fundação Getulio Vargas
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Contexto Subnacional

Orientadora: Prof. Dr. Marta Ferreira Santos Farah

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*To Amon and Iara,
for our story of love*

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RESUMO

Este estudo buscou compreender as lógicas que estruturam o Programa Pró-Equidade de Gênero e Raça. Partindo da perspectiva das Lógicas de Explicação Crítica (Glynos & Howarth, 2007) e em diálogo com a literatura de implementação, eu proponho uma estrutura teórica e analítica organizada em dois momentos. O primeiro explora as lógicas mobilizadas na formação do Pró-Equidade e as condições para sua emergência. O segundo analisa como essas lógicas foram mantidas, questionadas e transformadas ao longo da implementação, focalizando as ações da Secretaria de Políticas para as Mulheres. A análise qualitativa dos dados revelou diferentes lógicas estruturadas em torno dos papéis de mediador e de auditor assumido pelo Estado no escopo desse programa, assim como das potenciais vantagens de práticas de gerenciamento inclusivas. Nesse processo, ‘igualdade de gênero para todos’ funcionou com um significante vazio (Laclau, 2007; Laclau & Mouffe, 2001), agregando sentidos relacionados aos paradigmas de direitos e do mercado. Essa coalização foi questionada em relação ao quão inclusivo e efetivo é o programa. Por um lado, agentes políticos denunciaram os limites da noção de mulher adotada como beneficiária da política e o não envolvimento de importantes agentes no desenvolvimento do programa. Por outro, avaliações evidenciaram baixos resultados no engajamento do setor privado nessa iniciativa e na melhoria da participação das mulheres nas organizações certificadas. Nesse contexto, tanto a pluralização da política quanto a adoção de uma postura mais coercitiva por parte do Estado foram demandadas. Essas reivindicações levaram, contudo, a diferentes respostas. No primeiro caso, as críticas foram incorporadas, reforçando o arcabouço feminista constitutivo deste projeto político. No segundo, questionamentos foram amenizados, defendendo, em contrapartida, o papel cooperativo do Estado e os limites do programa em alterar o mercado de trabalho. A partir dessa análise, eu destaco como as características da secretaria são relevantes para se compreender as lógicas mobilizadas na formação e implementação do Pró-Equidade. A dimensão organizacional é ressaltada, portanto, como fundamental para se entender as lógicas que estruturam as políticas públicas.

Palavras-chave: Políticas Públicas, Abordagem Crítica, Implementação, Programa Pró-Equidade de Gênero e Raça.

ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the logics structuring the Program for Gender and Racial Equity. Drawing on the Logics of Critical Explanation (Glynos & Howarth, 2007) and in dialogue with implementation literature, I propose a theoretical and analytical framework organized in two research moments. The first inquires policy formation, exploring the logics mobilized in the creation of the Pro-Equity and the conditions for its emergence. The second investigates how these logics were sustained, challenged, and transformed during implementation, focusing on the actions advanced by the Federal Secretariat of Policies for Women. The qualitative data analysis revealed different logics structured around the cooperative and the auditioning role of the state in this program and the potential advantages of management practices oriented to social justice. In this process, ‘gender equality for all’ functions as an empty signifier (Laclau, 2007; Laclau & Mouffe, 2001) joining meanings related to the paradigm of rights and of the market. This coalition was questioned regarding its inclusiveness and effectiveness. On the one hand, political agents denounced the limits of the notion of women adopted as the policy beneficiary and the plurality of agents involved in the program’s development. On the other, evaluations showed the lack of results in attracting the private sector and in improving female participation within organizations. In this context, the opening of this initiative was vindicated alongside a coercive attitude of the state toward participants. These demands led, however, to different responses. In the first case, criticism was embraced, reinforcing the feminist frame underpinning this political project. The second was smoothed over, defending, in contrast, the cooperative role of the state and its limits in changing the labor market. From this analysis, I emphasize the relevance of the secretariat’s features in explaining the logics sustaining the formation and implementation of the Pro-Equity. The organizational dimension is, thus, crucial to understand the logics structuring policy processes.

Keywords: Critical Policy Studies, Implementation Studies, Program for Gender and Racial Equity, Pro-Equity.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CGTB	- <i>Central Geral dos Trabalhadores do Brasil</i>
CNA	- <i>Confederação da Agricultura e Pecuária do Brasil</i>
CNC	- <i>Confederação Nacional do Comércio de Bens, Serviços e Turismo</i>
CNCD	- <i>Conselho Nacional de Combate à Discriminação</i>
CNDM	- <i>Conselho Nacional dos Direitos da Mulher</i>
CNF	- <i>Confederação Nacional das Instituições Financeiras</i>
CNI	- <i>Confederação Nacional da Indústria</i>
CNPM	- <i>Conferência Nacional de Políticas para as Mulheres</i>
CNT	- <i>Confederação Nacional do Transporte</i>
CTB	- <i>Central dos Trabalhadores e Trabalhadoras do Brasil</i>
CUT	- <i>Central Única dos Trabalhadores</i>
FS	- <i>Força Sindical</i>
IBASE	- <i>Instituto Brasileiro de Análises Sociais e Econômicas</i>
ILO	- <i>International Labour Organization</i>
IPEA	- <i>Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada</i>
LCE	- <i>Logics of Critical Explanation</i>
MPT	- <i>Ministério Público do Trabalho</i>
NCST	- <i>Nova Central de Trabalhadores</i>
NGO	- <i>Nongovernmental Organization</i>
Planfor	- <i>Plano Nacional de Educação Profissional</i>
PNDH	- <i>Programa Nacional de Direitos Humanos</i>
PNPM	- <i>Plano Nacional de Políticas para as Mulheres</i>
PPIOT	- <i>Programa para Promoção da Igualdade de Oportunidades para Todos</i>
Pro-Equity	- <i>Program for Gender Equity or Program for Gender and Racial Equity</i>
PT	- <i>Partido dos Trabalhadores</i>
SDH	- <i>Secretaria de Direitos Humanos</i>
SEDIM	- <i>Secretaria de Estado dos Direitos da Mulher</i>
SEPPIR	- <i>Secretaria de Promoção da Igualdade Racial</i>

SPM - *Secretaria de Políticas para as Mulheres*

UGT - *União Geral dos Trabalhadores*

UN - United Nations

UN Women - United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

UNIFEM - United Nations Development Fund for Women

US - United States

WEP - Women's Empowerment Principles

SUMMARY

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1. Initial remarks

This study analyzes the logics structuring the Program for Gender and Racial Equity, a Brazilian public initiative promoted by the central government from 2005 to 2018. Drawing on the logics approach of critical explanation (e.g. Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2010; Howarth, Glynos, & Griggs, 2016) and in dialogue with implementation literature (e.g. Goggin, Bowman, Lester, & O'Toole Jr., 1990; Hill & Hupe, 2002; L. L. Lima & D'Ascenzi, 2013; O'Toole Jr., 2000; Schofield, 2001; P. L. B. Silva & Melo, 2000), I have developed a theoretical and analytical framework in two research moments. Firstly, I inquiry the social, political, and fantasmatic logics mobilized in the formation of this initiative, engendered by meanings and practices related to both the paradigm of rights and of the market. Secondly, I investigate how these logics were sustained or transformed throughout the program's implementation, focusing on the actions advanced by the Secretariat of Policies for Women. From the qualitative data analysis, this dissertation evidences how the secretariat's features align with historical and political conditions in explaining the emergence, change, and inertia of this policy.

Public policies to promote gender and racial equality emerged in Brazil during the 1980s, in a context of national democratization and resurgence of social movements (Bandeira, 2005; Farah, 2004; Jaccoud & Beghin, 2002). However, it was only in the middle-1990s that the Brazilian government start to develop initiatives attentive to gender and racial issues in the areas of employment and work more specifically. These policies were a response to a complaint submitted to the International Labour Organization (hereafter ILO) in 1992. Through this, social movements denounced the country's noncompliance to the International Convention concerning Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation (Leite & Souza, 2010). The initiatives created in the 1990s were expanded in the 2000s, especially after the creation of the Federal Secretariat of Policies for Women (*Secretaria de Políticas para as Mulheres*, hereafter SPM) and the Federal Secretariat to Promote Racial Equality (*Secretaria de Promoção da Igualdade Racial*, SEPPIR) in 2003. Acting as ministries, these secretariats sought to foment public policies to promote gender and racial equality in different areas of governmental intervention (Abramo, 2008; Leite & Souza, 2010).

Among the policies advanced, this study highlights the Program for Gender Equity (hereafter, Pro-Equity). Created in 2005 by the SPM in partnership with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) – currently the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) – and ILO (SPM, Brasil, 2005a, 2006, 2007c), the program aimed to tackle discrimination in the inclusion, remuneration, and promotion of women in the workplace (SPM, Brasil, 2011e). To do so, it used a certification process to encourage public and private organizations to establish inclusive initiatives in the areas of human resource management and organizational culture (SPM, Brasil, 2006, 2007c). The Pro-Equity sought to answer feminist vindications and the prescription of intergovernmental organizations regarding the urgency of state intervention to overcome inequalities at work (SPM, Brasil, 2004b, 2005a, 2006, 2007c; Monteiro, 2011). It was the main governmental initiative to promote gender equality in the formal labor market developed in the country since the 2000s (Abramo, 2008).

Since its launching, the Pro-Equity went through a series of changes in the design, instruments, and modes of operation adopted. The most profound transformation was introduced in 2011. In this reformulation, the intersection between gender and race (Crenshaw, 2002) became the structural axis of this policy, having its name changed for Program for Gender and Racial Equity (SPM, Brasil, 2011e). At this point, the program evidenced that, even though women are, in general, discriminated in the workplace, black women face even worse conditions. Black women have historically faced strong barriers to access the formal labor market in Brazil. Once in this space, they also frequently occupy undervalued and underpaid job positions (Brasil, 2015; Melo, 2005; Natividade, 2009; Yannoulas, 2002). Class inequalities crisscross this process as well, insofar poor and, in their majority, black women have less educational and social opportunities that could potentially lead to better insertion at work (Brasil 2015; IPEA, 2018). From this new perspective, the aim was, thus, to generally attend women through this policy, and especially those more affected by the articulation between gender and racial inequalities.

To accomplish this objective, the Pro-Equity was organized in editions with identifiable steps. It began with the voluntary application of big and medium organizations acting in public and private sectors. Once enrolled, a diagnosis was run on the social inequalities and management

practices in place at the involved organizations. This information supported the development of an action plan composed of initiatives in the areas of human resource management and organizational culture to be accomplished in around two years. The actions were then evaluated and the organizations with good performance were awarded with the Certificate Program for Gender and Racial Equity. Through this certificate, the SPM and the program's partners aimed to endorse the organizational commitment to building new paradigms in work relations oriented toward social equality. The certificated organizations were also invited to take part in a network to exchange information, experiences, and best practices related to the policy issue (SPM, Brasil, 2005a, 2011e).

Ethical and marketing arguments were used to justify the engagement of organizations in the Pro-Equity. In this process, gender and racial discrimination were seen not only as an obstacle to female insertion and promotion in the workplace but also to achieve business competitiveness. In this context, inclusive management practices were defended as an appropriate mean both to overcome social inequalities at work and to implement efficient management, leading to increment in productiveness in the participating organizations (SPM, Brasil, 2005a, 2011e). These benefits would be increased by the improvement of organizational reputation due to the certificate (Bello, 2014; Machado, 2013) and the participation in a distinctive business network engaged with gender and racial equality. Therefore, the program would reconcile the 'logic of the exercise of rights' with the 'business logic', committing to 'social justice, gender, ethnic, and racial equality, and decent work' (SPM, Brasil, 2011e:2, my translation) and, concurrently, stressing the potential advantages that organizations could achieve by joining the government in this initiative (SPM, Brasil, 2005a, 2011e).

The Pro-Equity has been an object of research in the areas of Public and Business Administration, Psychology, Social Service, and Sociology (Abramo, 2008; D. S. da Almeida, 2011; P. P. de Almeida, 2012; Costa, 2011; Garcia, 2011; Gonzalez, 2011; C. R. de O. Medeiros & Antonagi, 2014; V. de Oliveira & Signates, 2010; Ortiz, 2014; Pacheco Filho, 2014; E. L. Pinto & Midleg, 2012; Vieira, 2012). These studies approached especially the results achieved by the participating organizations, undertaking impact analyses mostly from a qualitative perspective. In a nutshell, they revealed that, although the program led to some

advancements, it did not overcome gender and racial discrimination within organizations. Given the barriers identified, the Pro-Equity is regarded as an ineffective initiative to promote equality in the workplace. Nevertheless, little attention has been drawn to the ways in which ambiguities related to different paradigms of action are negotiated throughout the development of this governmental policy. Ortiz' (2014) work is an exception on this, exploring the conflicting meanings supporting the Pro-Equity and the 'uncertainty zones' (Crozier, 1967) surrounding the SPM's choices during the development of this program.

This dissertation contributes to this debate by investigating the logics structuring the Program for Gender and Racial Equity. To do so, I adopt a critical perspective in policy analysis. Scholars in this area explore how power relations both shape and are reinforced by policy enterprises. Departing from post-positivist approaches, they stress the political and historical nature of social research, addressing the interests, values, and perspectives pervading policymaking processes (Fischer, Torgerson, Durnová, & Orsini, 2015). The development of critical studies has been boosted by the 'cultural turns' (Jessop, 2013) ongoing within the field, which emphasize the crucial role of language and meaning in policy inquiry (Fischer & Forester, 1993; Fischer & Gottweis, 2012; Jessop, 2013; Wagenaar, 2011; Yanow, 2007). In this context, interpretive perspectives¹ have been articulated with social theories to introduce a critical impulse in the investigation of governmental action. Research in this area has favored the analysis of political discourse, agenda setting, and policy formulation (Jessop, 2013). Implementation processes, however, have been less frequently approached in these studies.

Among the broader set of possibilities², this work follows the approach of the Logics of Critical Explanation (hereafter LCE) (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, 2008; Glynos, Howarth, Norval, & Speed, 2009; Howarth, 2008, 2010; Howarth et al., 2016; Howarth & Griggs, 2015). Drawing upon the poststructuralist tradition of thought, this perspective establishes a particular style of theory construction, proposing new ways to address problems in social

¹ Wagenaar (2011) introduces the main interpretative approaches and a variety of theoretical frameworks to explore meaning in policy studies.

² In the *Handbook of Critical Policy Studies*, Fischer et al. (2015) present a range of theoretical possibilities to analyze the policymaking process from a critical perspective.

science. These efforts are predicated on an alternative social ontology, which emphasizes the radical contingency and inherent incompleteness of social structures and subjects. From these ontological premises, it looks for advancing an explanatory logic along with a grammar of concepts to account for the production and contestation of hegemonic practices and orders, as well as the manners in which subjects are gripped by certain ideologies and discourses. It involves the use of the concept of logic as a basic unit of explanation, aiming to grasp the rules governing social practices and regimes and the conditions that make these rules possible (Glynos & Howarth, 2007).

A social science explanation of a complex set of practices, such as a public policy, comprises the analysis of three kinds of logics. First, social logics enable to characterize practices in a specific context, capturing their norms and ‘patterns’ (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Glynos & Stavrakakis, 2008; Howarth, 2008, 2010; Howarth et al., 2016). Second, political logics help to explain their institution and de-institution, approaching how social relations are structured, defended, or challenged (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2010; Howarth et al., 2016). And finally, fantasmatic logics account for the ways in which subjects are ‘gripped’ by certain practices, mobilizing affective bonds and libidinal investments in the construction and maintenance of political projects (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Glynos & Stavrakakis, 2008; Howarth, 2008, 2010). This perspective seeks to elucidate processes of social change and stability (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2008, 2010; Howarth et al., 2016), approaching ‘the structure, political dynamics and affective power’ (Hawkins, 2015:140) involved in the construction, sedimentation, and transformation of political projects.

Therefore, the study departs from the LCE theoretical foundation to comprehend the logics mobilized, sustained, and transformed in the development of the Pro-Equity. This main objective can be unfolded in the following specific goals:

- a. To present a critical framework to analyze policy implementation;
- b. To investigate the social, political, and fantasmatic logics mobilized in the formation of the program; and
- c. To analyze how these logics were sustained and transformed throughout the program’s implementation.

This work is organized around the specific goals enlisted. The first chapter advances a critical framework to investigate policy implementation considering its inherent relationship with policy formation and evaluation. It starts with the contextualization of implementation literature, referring to both international and national studies on this policy subfield. Thereafter, the LCE approach is introduced, highlighting its ontological and theoretical premises (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, 2008; Glynos et al., 2009; Howarth, 2008, 2010; Howarth et al., 2016; Howarth & Griggs, 2015). Departing from this perspective and in dialogue with the implementation scholarship, I discuss how statements coming especially from the integrative literature and national developments in this policy subfield are articulated according to the LCE's guidelines. In this process, elements emphasized by implementation studies provide a frame for the investigation, while the logics approach to critical analysis furnishes the concepts to be operationalized in research. Therefore, by articulating insights from the implementation research agenda, their content is also transformed, gaining new meanings according to the perspective adopted in this study.

Qualitative research was advanced in two interconnected moments. In the first moment, the characteristics and ambiguities of policy formation are explored. The analysis was supported by the problematization of gender (in)equality in the workplace as the object of research and the public problem under discussion in this study. Afterward, the recent trajectory of public policies for women in Brazil was retraced to identify the main historical and social conditions concurring to the emergence of the Pro-Equity. This theoretical and historical contextualization provided the means to apprehend the logics mobilized in the creation of this program. The analysis of official documents and interviews with agents involved in the program's development revealed different logics structured around the cooperative and the auditioning role of the state in this program, as well as the potential advantages of management practices oriented to social justice. In this process, 'gender equality for all' functioned as an empty signifier (Laclau, 2007; Laclau & Mouffe, 2001) joining meanings related to both the paradigm of rights and of the market. It sustained a promise that, through this program, it would be possible to guarantee benefits to the state, organizations, and women, reinforcing the commitment of subjects to this political project.

The second moment inquires policy change and stability, exploring how the logics structuring the Pro-Equity were sustained, challenged, and transformed during its implementation. In doing so, research focused on the experience advanced by the Secretariat of Policies for Women in the federal government. The analysis firstly situated the organizational context in which the program was developed. Hereafter, the Pro-Equity's design was detailed, evidencing the changes promoted during its ten years of development. The investigation revealed two axes of contestation. The first criticized the program's inclusiveness, stressing the limits of the notion of women adopted as the policy beneficiary and the non-involvement of crucial agents in its development. The second targeted the program's effectiveness, denouncing the lack of results in attracting the private sector and in improving female participation in certified organizations. In this context, the opening of this initiative was vindicated alongside a coercive attitude of the state toward participants. These demands led, however, to different responses. In the first case, criticism was embraced, reinforcing the feminist frame underpinning this political project. The second, in its turn, was smoothed over, defending, in contrast, the cooperative role of the state in the scope of this program and accepting its limits in changing the labor market.

By advancing this analysis, this dissertation emphasizes the relevance of the SPM's features in explaining the logics mobilized, sustained and transformed during the formation and implementation of the Pro-Equity. In the first research moment, organizational elements align with historical and social conditions to the emergence of a governmental initiative with these contours. In the second, they help to understand why particular contestations and challenges faced during implementation are addressed in the course of the program's execution, leading or not to changes in its instruments, modes of operation, and network of agents involved. In this process, the way the secretariat is organized and how governmental agents perceive its role in the progress of policies to promote gender equality in the country join material constraints in explaining the logics mobilized in the Pro-Equity. The organizational dimension is thus highlighted as crucial to approach the logics structuring policy processes.

2. Introducing a critical and integrative framework to analyze policy implementation

This chapter introduces the main theories used to comprehend the logics mobilized in the Program for Gender and Racial Equity. Firstly, the development of the implementation studies is contextualized, drawing attention to the debate between the top-down and bottom-up schools, as well as some attempts to integrate these perspectives into a more comprehensive approach. Afterward, the ontological and theoretical guidelines of the Logics of Critical Explanation are synthesized, stressing its post-positivist and critical bases. Departing from this perspective and in dialogue with implementation literature, the third section discusses how statements coming especially from the integrative scholarship and national developments in implementation studies are articulated according to the LCE's guidelines. Based on this, a critical and integrative framework is structured in two interconnected research 'moments'. The first moment explores the ambiguities and characteristics of policy formation, while the second focuses on processes of policy change and stability. This chapter is concluded by pointing out the methodological implications of the adoption of the LCE perspective, as well as the strategies followed in advancing this research project.

2.1. Contextualizing implementation studies

Implementation studies were first developed in the 1970s. Although research related to this theme was conducted before this period³, the mainstream of the discipline advanced after the publication of the Pressman and Wildavsky's influential book in 1973 (DeLeon & DeLeon, 2002; Hill & Hupe, 2002; Saetren, 2005, 2014). Afterward, this concept became institutionalized as 'a common denominator for the execution stage of policy process' (Saetren, 2014:88), examining the 'black box' of practices between policy formation and its

³As emphasized by Hill and Hupe (2002), policy implementation was a matter of academic concern before this 'label' was created. However, it is widely recognized that during the 1970s a new approach to the study of this phenomenon emerged, focusing on explaining and improving implementation processes (Barrett, 2004; Hill & Hupe, 2002; O'Toole Jr., 2000).

outcomes (Barrett, 2004; Hill & Hupe, 2002; Palumbo & Calista, 1990). The emerging research agenda was further expanded, using different approaches to explain and even improve ‘the way policy intention influences policy action’ (O’Toole Jr., 2000:283). The wide range of frameworks developed since then has been organized into different streams (e.g. Goggin et al., 1990; Hill & Hupe, 2002; L. L. Lima & D’Ascenzi, 2013; O’Toole Jr., 2000; Schofield, 2001; P. L. B. Silva & Melo, 2000). In this section, I follow Goggin's et al. (1990) proposal on generations of implementation studies, also observing the top-down/bottom-up debate that marked the field.

Like Pressman and Wildavsky's (1973) pioneering work, the first-generation of implementation literature investigated the reasons for the failure of governmental interventions in relation to their preestablished goals (Goggin et al., 1990). This scholarship directed attention to the relationship between policy and its outcomes, addressing the complexity of its execution (DeLeon & DeLeon, 2002; Sabatier & Mazmanian, 1979a; Schofield, 2001). However, it did not result in a more comprehensive theory of implementation (Sabatier & Mazmanian, 1979a; Van Meter & Van Horn, 1975). Instead, this research concentrated on the exploratory description of single case-studies (DeLeon & DeLeon, 2002; Sabatier, 1986; Saetren, 2005, 2014). In doing so, it assumed that policy stages form a rational and linear process, regarding implementation as a separate phase from policy formulation (Schofield, 2001). The focus on unsuccessful cases also led to criticism about the pessimistic tone adopted by this literature (Hill & Hupe, 2002; Sabatier, 1986; Saetren, 2005).

The second-generation engaged in the development of analytical frameworks for policy implementation (Goggin et al., 1990). Developed between the 1970s and 1980s, this literature advanced a more theoretical and empirical research agenda (DeLeon & DeLeon, 2002; Saetren, 2014; Schofield, 2001), based on both single case-studies and comparative analyses (Saetren, 2014). The efforts put forward during this period can be understood in terms of the debate between the top-down and bottom-up approaches and the attempts to integrate both perspectives. Following the first studies in the field, the top-down approach emphasized the monitoring of policy effectiveness, exploring the reasons for different implementation outcomes (Sabatier & Mazmanian, 1979b, 1979a; Van Meter & Van Horn, 1975). Among the

causes of failure, top-downers stressed: the ambiguity of policy goals; a multitude of agents involved; differences in values and interests inter and intra-organizations; the relative autonomy of implementers; and the inefficacy of administrative control and coordination (Barrett, 2004:252). The focus was, thus, oriented to command and control (DeLeon & DeLeon, 2002), exploring how policy goals are subverted during implementation (Pülzl & Treib, 2007).

The rational model underpinning the top-down research was problematized, defending, in contrast, the interaction between policy stages and the political character of implementation (Barrett, 2004; Barrett & Fudge, 1981). This perspective was also questioned for stressing conformance rather than coproduction and innovation in implementation. It resulted in a hierarchical approach (Barrett, 2004; DeLeon & DeLeon, 2002), which reflected the separation between politics and administration (Matland, 1995; Schofield, 2001) and took for granted the process of formulation and the policy goals (Hill & Hupe, 2002). On the other hand, top-downers argued that this model follows an ideal based on representative democracy (Fox, 1990; Matland, 1995). Accordingly, policy should be defined at the top, by elected and legitimate decision-makers, and executed by implementers as previously established (Matland, 1995). In this context, research should identify the causes of implementation gaps and suggest improvements, adopting a normative and prescriptive role (Barrett, 2004; Pülzl & Treib, 2007; Schofield, 2001).

From an opposite perspective, bottom-uppers approached local processes of implementation, exploring the nature of policy problems and how bureaucracy exercises discretion to achieve outcomes (Barrett, 2004; Barrett & Fudge, 1981; Lipsky, 1971, 2010). The political nature of implementation was emphasized, recognizing that policymaking continues in the disputes and negotiations put forward by implementers (Barrett, 2004; Barrett & Fudge, 1981; Lipsky, 1971, 2010; Pülzl & Treib, 2007). In this context, the bottom-up research was primarily ‘concerned with motives and actions’ (Schofield, 2001:251), examining the beliefs, values, and interests driving the behavior of individual and collective agents (Barrett & Fudge, 1981; Lipsky, 1971, 2010), as well as the interactions and networks composed by them (Hjern, 1982; Hjern & Hull, 1982; Hjern & Porter, 1981). It opened space for interpretive studies (Gains & Clarke, 2007; Yanow, 1990), focusing on meaning as a central feature of social

action (Wagenaar, 2011; Yanow, 1990, 2007). Moreover, this approach adopted a participatory model of democracy, considering the bureaucrat-citizen relationship and the values, perceptions, and interests of the latter (DeLeon & DeLeon, 2002; Fox, 1990; Pülzl & Treib, 2007).

Bottom-up studies were criticized for underestimating the influence of central government agents and policies in implementation (Sabatier, 1986; Schofield, 2001). Their explanatory and prescriptive capacity was also questioned (Matland, 1995), as well as the emphasis on the necessary policy subversion during implementation (Barrett, 2004; Fox, 1990). It raised concerns over accountability, governance, command, and control (Fox, 1990; Hill & Hupe, 2002; Schofield, 2001), discussing to what extent bureaucratic discretion goes against democracy and legitimate political decisions (Matland, 1995). Bottom-uppers argued, in response, that this approach concentrates on performance rather than conformance, observing what can be done in a specific context. In this process, performance is evaluated in a pluralistic fashion, assessing outcomes in relation to who has been affected and what is the influence of policy on these results (Barrett, 2004). Discretion is also acknowledged positively, advocating for autonomy in implementation processes (Barrett, 2004; Pülzl & Treib, 2007; Schofield, 2001).

The top-down/bottom-up debate was followed by attempts to synthesize both perspectives in an integrative approach during the 1990s and early 2000s (Goggin et al., 1990; Matland, 1995; Sabatier, 1986; Winter, 2003b, 2006). At this point of the international debate, the Brazilian academia also watched an increasing interest in implementation issues (C. A. P. de Faria, 2012a, 2012b). It followed the expansion of the policy field in the country in the 2000s (Farah, 2016; C. A. P. de Faria, 2012a), presenting similar characteristics of the broader area. In this sense, studies on implementation have been put forward in different areas of knowledge, focusing more on the empirical description of particular policies than on theoretical advancements in the subject (Farah, 2013, 2016; C. A. P. de Faria, 2012a; Pacheco, 2003). Moreover, though the top-down/bottom-up debate and the integrative literature have significantly influenced the national discussion, an expressive amount of works has analyzed implementation without referring to current theories in the subfield (C. A. P. de Faria, 2012a), what was identified internationally as well (Hill & Hupe, 2002; O'Toole Jr.,

2000). Despite these features, national studies as well as the integrative approach have contributed to point out key factors conditioning policy implementation.

Firstly, they stress the interactive character of policymaking. Thus, policy formation, implementation and evaluation are seen as dynamically interrelated, involving continuous learning and adaptation (Ckagazaroff, 2009; L. L. Lima & D'Ascenzi, 2013; Sabatier, 1986; P. L. B. Silva & Melo, 2000). Reflecting bottom-up premises (Barrett & Fudge, 1981; Hjern & Hull, 1982; Lipsky, 1971, 2010), this literature also regards implementation as a political process, marked by conflict, negotiation, compromise, and power discretion, through which policy content is transformed (Ckagazaroff, 2009; Hill & Hupe, 2002; L. L. Lima & D'Ascenzi, 2013; Najberg & Barbosa, 2006; P. L. B. Silva & Melo, 2000). However, it does not preclude the consideration of central agents and policies in the study. Instead, top-downers concerns, such as the influence of policy characteristics and ambiguities in implementation, are included as relevant elements to explain this phenomenon (L. L. Lima & D'Ascenzi, 2013; Matland, 1995; Sabatier, 1986; Winter, 2003b, 2006). It has moved scholars to the analysis of policy design, exploring how policy intention is operationalized through instruments and technologies (Winter, 2003b, 2006).

Research also highlights the relationship between federative-administrative layers and different agents in implementation (Hill & Hupe, 2002; O'Toole Jr., 2000). In Brazil, this discussion has received more attention after the 1988 Federal Constitution, which redistributed state competences between federative instances and involved multiple agents in policy development (Ckagazaroff, 2009; Lotta, Galvão, & Favareto, 2016; A. K. de Medeiros & Farah, 2014). Studies with this focus have recurred to frameworks on policy network (P. L. B. Silva & Melo, 2000), governance (Ckagazaroff, 2009; Pires & Gomide, 2015), and institutional arrangement (Lotta & Favareto, 2016; Lotta et al., 2016; Pires & Gomide, 2015), often emphasizing the role of nongovernmental agents in implementation (L. L. Lima & D'Ascenzi, 2013; O'Toole Jr., 2000). Following this approach, Sabatier (1986) proposes the use of the advocacy coalition frame to analyze how agents aggregate around a belief system and pursue common goals. Mechanisms to coordinate the agent's engagement and compliance to the policy have also been inquired (Bichir, 2016; C. A. P. de Faria, Nogueira, & Lopes, 2012; Menicucci & Marques, 2016). The emphasis shifts thus to the

quality of this relationship (A. D. Oliveira, 2013), addressing cooperation and conflict in pluralistic contexts (Ckagnazaroff, 2009; Grin & Abrucio, 2017; P. L. B. Silva & Melo, 2000).

Intra-organizational aspects are also identified as relevant to implementation analysis (Hill & Hupe, 2002; Schofield, 2001; Winter, 2003b). This element comprises organizational factors influencing the response of agencies to implementation demands, as well as how the terms and conditions of agencies influence the action of implementers and the bureaucrat-citizen relationship (Cavalcante, Lotta, & Yamada, 2018; V. da R. S. Ferreira & Medeiros, 2016; Hill & Hupe, 2002; L. L. Lima & D'Ascenzi, 2013; Lotta, 2018). In this process, research has emphasized the capacities of agencies to execute governmental interventions, focusing mainly on material and human resources (Loureiro, Teixeira, & Ferreria, 2014; C. Souza, 2017). The political capacity to articulate different agents in the policy process and to productively manage conflicts coming from a participatory approach has been also discussed (Loureiro et al., 2014; Pires & Gomide, 2015). Moreover, organizations have been regarded as political instances, shaped by norms, values, social relations, and power structures (Schofield, 2001). In doing so, research has privileged the use of (neo)institutionalist perspectives not always articulated with the mainstream discussion in the implementation subfield (Borges, Mario, & Carneiro, 2013; Dalfior, Lima, & Andrade, 2015; Dalfior, Lima, Contarato, & Andrade, 2016; Mendes & Aguiar, 2017).

Also reinforcing bottom-up premises (Barrett & Fudge, 1981; Lipsky, 1971, 2010), studies highlight the relevance of considering how implementers interpret the policy, their role in its execution, and their circumstances of action, as well as the interactions, practices, and strategies they develop to advance policies (Cavalcante et al., 2018; V. da R. S. Ferreira & Medeiros, 2016; M. L. de O. F. de Lima & Medeiros, 2012; L. L. Lima & D'Ascenzi, 2017; L. L. Lima, D'Ascenzi, Dias, & Bruscatto, 2014; Lotta, 2018; Mendes & Aguiar, 2017; Queiroz & Ckagnazaroff, 2010; Sabatier, 1986; Silva Neto & Passos, 2011). This emphasis has opened space to investigate cognitive elements and the role of ideas in implementation, stressing that policymaking in general is permeated by the interpretations of the agents involved, besides the material conditions constraining these processes (L. L. Lima & D'Ascenzi, 2013). The influence of meanings in implementation has received increasing

attention in the Brazilian policy field by exploring local experiences of implementation (M. L. de O. F. de Lima & Medeiros, 2012; L. L. Lima & D'Ascenzi, 2017; L. L. Lima et al., 2014; Lotta, 2018), contributing to the discussion on participative democracy (L. A. Ferreira & Araújo, 2006).

Finally, context is a relevant variable in these studies, evidencing that the elements influencing policymaking in general and implementation more specifically are not fixed but rely on political, social, and economic conditions (Ckagazaroff, 2009; DeLeon & DeLeon, 2002; Hill & Hupe, 2002; Matland, 1995; Menicucci, 2006; Sabatier, 1986; Winter, 2003b).

The recent literature, especially based on the integrative perspective, indicates that the top-down/bottom-up debate has been mostly surpassed, recognizing the strengths of both approaches. Nevertheless, it does not imply that disputes are resolved. There is still a broader disagreement on what implementation is and how to differentiate it from other policy stages (Hill & Hupe, 2002; Saetren, 2014; Winter, 2003b, 2003a, 2006). Assessments also emphasize that research has made little progress, especially in establishing a unifying theory in the field. Instead, it has resulted in a long list of variables and research models to be advanced (Hill & Hupe, 2002; Matland, 1995; O'Toole Jr., 2000; Schofield, 2001; Winter, 2003a, 2006). From a post-positivist standpoint, the ideal of a general theory itself has been questioned, stressing the limits on establishing causal laws or empirical generalizations in social sciences (Hill & Hupe, 2002; Saetren, 2014; Yanow, 2007). These questions, however, led to pessimistic evaluations, inquiring whether the field is facing an intellectual 'dead end' (DeLeon & DeLeon, 2002; John, 1998).

Given the criticisms, Goggin et al. (1990) propose a third-generation of implementation studies. The objective is to advance a framework which enables research in the field to overcome the conceptual and methodological problems identified in previous theories, as well as to predict implementation behavior and action more likely to take place in the future. To do so, the authors specify a set of theoretical hypotheses to be validated, observing the variety of implementation processes across time, agencies, and policy areas. Nevertheless, this approach has been questioned for being too ambitious and demanding (O'Toole Jr., 2000; Saetren, 2014). In this context, Saetren (2014:86) stresses that it should be regarded as 'an ideal type

analytical construct', characterized by clear specification of variables; explicit hypotheses derived from theoretical constructs to drive empirical efforts; more use of statistical techniques in addition to qualitative analysis; and more research based on comparative and longitudinal designs (characteristics extracted from Goggin (1986), Goggin et al. (1990) and Lester, Bowman, Goggin, and O'Toole Jr. (1987)).

These features also evidence the positivist standards underpinning the mainstream of implementation studies (Fox, 1990; Pülzl & Treib, 2007). In this sense, scholars advocate for 'objective' research, based on large 'n' studies and theoretically oriented deductive analyses. The goal would be to increase the number of observations and control of variables, building a more 'systematic' theory and providing the basis for empirical generalizations (Goggin et al., 1990; Winter, 2006). Nevertheless, these premises have also been questioned (Fox, 1990; Yanow, 1990), proposing, in contrast, the development of interpretive research in the policy field in general (Wagenaar, 2011; Yanow, 2007) and implementation studies more specifically (Gains & Clarke, 2007; Pülzl & Treib, 2007; Yanow, 1990). In this work, I present a step toward a critical and interpretative framework for the analysis of policy implementation as an interactive process. To do so, in the next section I introduce the logics approach of critical explanation (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, 2008; Glynos et al., 2009; Howarth, 2008, 2010; Howarth et al., 2016) on which this framework is based.

2.2. The Logics of Critical Explanation

To analyze policy implementation, in this study, I adopt the approach of Logics of Critical Explanation (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, 2008; Glynos et al., 2009; Howarth, 2008, 2010; Howarth et al., 2016; Howarth & Griggs, 2015). This perspective is grounded on 'the primacy of politics' and power, reaffirming the contingent and historical character of social relations (Laclau & Mouffe, 2001). Therefore, subjects and objects are not seen as the result of inner essences or causal mechanisms that exhaust their meaning and significance (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, 2008; Howarth, 2010). Instead, they are situated in a differential system within which their identities are contextually defined. This process involves political acts of inclusion and exclusion through which heterogeneous elements are articulated in particular

ways, differentiating an entity from and in relation to others (Howarth, 2010; Laclau, 2007; Laclau & Bhaskar, 1998; Laclau & Mouffe, 2001). In this sense, social structures and forms of life are exercises of power, deriving from the exclusion of some alternatives to the benefit of others (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, 2008; Howarth, 2010; Howarth & Griggs, 2012; Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000).

Based on this, the LCE reaffirms the discursive nature⁴ of social reality (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, 2008; Glynos et al., 2009; Howarth, 2008, 2010; Howarth et al., 2016; Howarth & Griggs, 2012). In this approach, discourse designates ‘an articulatory practice’ (Laclau & Mouffe, 2001:96) through which dispersed elements are linked in a way that partly signifies the elements and the resulting net. A discursive formation takes shape and significance in relation to others, an excluded outside that both constitutes its identity and threatens to subvert it (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, 2008; Howarth, 2000, 2008, 2010; Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000; Laclau, 2007). Thereby, the construction of any discourse presupposes social antagonism and the establishment of political frontiers within society (Laclau & Mouffe, 2001). This relational character leads to two ontological implications. Firstly, discourses are limited and incomplete entities: the ‘real’ cannot be reduced to discourse, something always escapes it (Laclau & Bhaskar, 1998). Secondly, political frontiers are inherently unstable and, hence, can be challenged and transformed (Laclau & Mouffe, 2001). In this sense, no social order can be fully sutured, presenting a constitutive ‘lack’ (Glynos, 2001; Glynos & Howarth, 2007, 2008; Howarth, 2008, 2010; Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000; Stavrakakis, 2007).

The incompleteness of social reality is the very condition of hegemony (Laclau & Mouffe, 2001). The category of hegemony accounts for the way the political emergence of practices and regimes is covered over, as well as the exclusions, repressions, and negations by which

⁴ The assertion that every object is discursively constructed is not related with the realism-idealism opposition or the discussion on the existence of a world external to thought. As stressed by Laclau and Mouffe (2001:108), “[a]n earthquake or the falling of a brick is an event that certainly exists, in the sense that it occurs here and now, independently of my will. But whether their specificity as objects is constructed in terms of ‘natural phenomena’ or ‘expressions of the wrath of God’, depends upon the structuring of a discursive field”. Thereby, what is questioned is not the existence of objects externally to thought, but their constitution as meaningful objects outside the discursive system within which they gained identity and significance (Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000; Laclau & Mouffe, 2001).

they are built (Glynos & Howarth, 2008). Howarth (2010) discusses two connected aspects of this notion. Firstly, hegemony is ‘a political *type of relation*’ (Laclau & Mouffe, 2001:139, emphasis in original) which leads to the ‘making and breaking of political projects and discourse coalitions’ (Howarth, 2010:310). It presupposes the existence of ‘empty signifiers’ (Laclau, 2007; Laclau & Mouffe, 2001) holding together antagonistic demands and identities in order to construct a more universal political project able to contest a social rule or practice (Howarth, 2010; Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000). This process of articulation involves a displacement mechanism through which the content of the components and the project itself are transformed (Laclau, 2007). Secondly, hegemony is a form of governance to install and safeguard a social order or practice (Howarth, 2010). This concept dialogues with the ideological dimension of social reality (more on this later in this section), elucidating the ways in which practices win the complicity and compliance of subjects (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2010).

At the center of this discussion is a negative notion of the subject and its modes of identification (West, 2011). According to this approach, social agents are ‘thrown into’ a system of meaningful discourses and practices⁵ that precedes them (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, 2008; Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000). By ‘immersing’ themselves in this reality, they identify with particular discourses which shape both their identities and practices. However, as these same discourses are incomplete entities, they can never fully determine the identity of the subject and the capacity to act (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, 2008; Laclau & Mouffe, 2001; West, 2011). In moments of dislocation, in which naturalized aspects of the social life are disrupted by an experience that cannot be symbolized within existing discourses and practices, agents are compelled to establish new identifications, opening space to novelty. These acts of identification are partially unconscious processes, which take place within a contingent set of possibilities, forged by the suppression of other alternatives (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, 2008). Therefore, the identity of the subject can never be complete, having also an inherent flaw (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, 2008; Glynos & Stavrakakis, 2008; Laclau, 2007; Stavrakakis, 2007; West, 2011).

⁵ Following the Lacanian tradition, the ‘system of meaningful discourses and practices’ is also called the ‘socio-symbolic order’ (Glynos & Howarth, 2008), ‘the symbolic’, or ‘reality’ (Stavrakakis, 2007).

From this ontological basis, Glynos and Howarth (2007) postulate four dimensions of social reality: the social, the political, the ideological, and the ethical. These dimensions are intertwined in practice, being foregrounded, backgrounded or articulated depending on the context. The social refers to the ongoing practices that agents accomplish in their daily lives, contributing to societal reproduction. Thus, this dimension is marked by routinized activities that do not frequently involve self-conscious reflexivity. The political⁶ comprises the public challenging or defending of social norms and practices in the name of an ideal. According to the LCE, even though questioning can be put forward privately, it is when it is brought into the public sphere that the political dimension comes to the fore (Glynos & Howarth, 2007). In this sense, the social and the political can be defined regarding the notion of public contestation (Arendt, 2007). When aspects of social relations are publicly problematized, the political dimension is foregrounded. Otherwise, when the public contestation does not emerge, the social dimension is foregrounded (Glynos, 2008; Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2008, 2010).

The ideological and the ethical, in their turn, can be understood in relation to the Lacanian notion of *jouissance* (enjoyment⁷, in English, and *gozo*, in Portuguese) (Glynos, 2008; Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2008, 2010). This concept denotes a ‘mode of being’ in which the subject, whether individual or collective, is invested in a fantasy⁸ (Glynos, 2008). The logic of fantasy operates through a narrative that promises a fulness-to-come when an obstacle

⁶ By adopting this notion, Glynos and Howarth (2007) seek not to reduce the political to the social. Thereby, they aim to avoid a kind of ‘politicism’ (Arendt, 2007), characterizing every social practice as a political one and thus precluding this concept of utility. This position, however, should not be confused with the naturalization of the private sphere. Conflicts within the private space are also socially and historically constructed, though they have not been approached in the public sphere at any time. Part of the social movement struggle is, inclusive, to articulate private problems as public demands, such as feminists have been doing regarding gender issues.

⁷ As reinforced in the third chapter, enjoyment is not a synonym of pleasure (Glynos, 2001; Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Glynos & Stavrakakis, 2008; Stavrakakis, 2007). According to Glynos and Howarth (2007:107): ‘Closely associated with the Freudian notions of libido and primordial loss, enjoyment is a category used in conjunction with a set of other terms like fantasy, desire, repression, and so on, to account for a symptom’s inertia. Thus, the notion of enjoyment captures a subject’s mode of being, whether individual or collective.’

⁸ As also stressed in the third chapter, fantasy does not designate an illusion or a false picture of the world (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2008, 2010). “Instead it structures a subject’s ‘lived reality’ by concealing the radical contingency of social relations, and by naturalizing the various relations of domination within which a subject is enmeshed” (Howarth, 2010:322).

is surpassed or foretells a disaster in the case it is not overcome (Glynos, 2008; Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2008, 2010; West, 2011). In Lacanian terms, a fantasy is impossible to realize, since the subject exists insofar as their desires remain unsatisfied. Nevertheless, this impossibility is experienced as a 'mere difficulty', nourishing the idea that the fantasy is achievable (Glynos, 2008). Thereby, the logic of fantasy structures the desires of the subject, providing, at the same time, an ideal to pursue and a barrier to the realization of this ideal (Glynos, 2001, 2008, 2014; Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Stavrakakis, 2007).

Given their function, no existence can be carried on without fantasies (Arnaud, 2002; Glynos, 2008; Glynos & Stavrakakis, 2008). However, subjects can deal with them differently. On the one hand, they can over-invest in a fantasy, presenting an ideological mode of *jouissance*. In this case, subjects tend to deflect counter-narratives, resisting novelty and the contingency of social relations (Glynos, 2008; Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Glynos & Stavrakakis, 2008; Howarth, 2008, 2010). The ideological dimension is present both in the creation of new practices and norms and in efforts to sustain the ones in place. In this sense, ideologies are not only committed to the maintenance of the *status quo* (Glynos, 2008; Glynos & Howarth, 2007). They also provide energy and direction to political projects of social change, offering benefits and enjoyment that affectively bond the agents around an ideal (Howarth, 2010). On the other hand, subjects can distance themselves from a fantasy, preserving an openness to acknowledge the undecidability of social relations and to welcome innovative practices. These cases, in their turn, are regarded as an ethical mode of being (Glynos, 2008; Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Glynos & Stavrakakis, 2008; Howarth, 2008, 2010).

Departing from these premises, Glynos and Howarth (2007) propose a middle-range style of theorizing, applying the concept of 'logic' as a basic unit of explanation. Resonating Foucault's (1999, 2008) notion of discourse, logics are defined as the rules governing social practices and regimes and the conditions that make these rules possible. A social science explanation involves the analysis of three kinds of logic. Social logics enable to characterize a practice in a specific social domain, capturing its norms and 'patterns' (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Glynos & Stavrakakis, 2008; Howarth, 2008, 2010; Howarth et al., 2016). These rules are not reified entities external to the studied phenomena. Instead, social logics are heuristic devices that help the analyst to figure out what is happening in a particular context (Howarth,

2010). They are thus multiple and contingent (Howarth, 2008, 2010), acquiring their meaning in particular contexts and in relation to other – often contradictory – social logics (Laclau & Mouffe, 2001). However, they are not completely reducible to empirical contexts as well (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2008). Social logics can be situated in broader paradigms which allow some cross-references, though this move requires forging new links with the context under analysis (Glynos & Howarth, 2007).

Political logics enable to explain the institution and de-institution of a practice or regime, approaching how social relations are structured, defended, or challenged (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2010; Howarth et al., 2016). Politics here does not designate a plurality of interests or a specific social domain (Howarth, 2010). Instead, it names a ‘practice of creation, reproduction and transformation’ (Laclau & Mouffe, 2001:153), evidencing the role of power in social relations (Howarth, 2010). This process can be explained through the interplay between the logics of equivalence and difference⁹ (Laclau & Mouffe, 2001). The logic of equivalence accounts for the linking of heterogeneous elements into a more or less coherent chain. In this process, both elements and the equivalential chain gain meaning in contrast with those negated, splitting the social into at least two antagonistic camps. The logic of difference, in its turn, refers to struggles to dissolve existing chains of equivalence in order to pluralize or open space for relegated elements (Howarth, 2008, 2010; Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000). In this sense, while the emergence of a practice involves the predominance of the logic of equivalence, the prevalence of the logic of difference leads to its questioning and potential de-institutionalization (Glynos & Howarth, 2007).

Fantasmatic logics comprise the way subjects are ‘gripped’ by a practice or regime (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2008, 2010; Howarth et al., 2016). They operate through the mentioned logic of fantasy (Glynos, 2008; Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Glynos & Stavrakakis, 2008; Stavrakakis, 2007), deflecting contestation or preventing them from arising. Hereupon,

⁹ The concepts of logic of equivalence and difference, as well as the logic of fantasy furtherly discussed, aim to explain the process by which social practices are instituted and de-instituted, in the first case, and how they achieve subject’s compliance and complicity, in the second. Therefore, they refer to principles of operation and functioning, stressing the role of these logics in the construction of social order and practices. On the other hand, the notions of political logics and fantasmatic logics (in plural) designates the various ways in which the logics of equivalence, difference, and fantasy manifest empirically (Glynos & Howarth, 2007).

fantasmatic logics are closely related to the ideological dimension of social reality and the subject's modes of *jouissance* (Glynos, 2008; Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000; West, 2011). By invoking them, this approach emphasizes that the efficacy of political and social logics relies upon their capacity to interpellate the agents and mobilize affective bonds, rendering them complicit (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2008, 2010). Therefore, this logic enables to understand how contestations are avoided, giving direction and energy to processes of social change, on the one hand, and contributing to the sedimentation and inertia of social practices, on the other (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Glynos & Stavrakakis, 2008; Howarth, 2010). Nevertheless, the ideological is only one mode of engagement with fantasy. Subjects can also present an ethical attitude, remaining open to the contingency of social relations (Glynos & Howarth, 2007).

The analysis of these three kinds of logic provides the means to capture the social, political, ideological, and ethical dimensions of social reality (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; West, 2011). They furnish theoretical and analytical tools to describe the studied phenomena, as well as to explain and potentially criticize the conditions that make this practice or regime 'works' (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2008). When considered in relation to 'the two faces of hegemony' (Howarth, 2010:317), these tools also enable to understand how a political project becomes hegemonic and how it is sustained and challenged throughout time. The first face explores the logics involved in the breaking of ongoing social norms or practices in the name of a new hegemonic order (Howarth, 2010). In this process, social logics characterize the contested practices and the alternatives defended. Political logics capture the inclusions and exclusions enacted in this dispute, evidencing how different and even contradictory social demands and identities are articulated into a broader political project. And fantasmatic logics grasp the fantasies questioned and those driving new political projects (Glynos & Howarth, 2007).

The second face, in its turn, discloses the ways in which hegemonic orders and practices are sustained and reproduced (Howarth, 2010). Here, once again, social logics help us to specify the characteristics of practices and their changing throughout time. Political logics explain how a practice is contested or defended. It involves processes of negotiation, bargaining, and compromise, through which hegemonic practices are constantly modified to maintain their

viability. Therefore, in these processes, ethical or ideological responses can be observed (Glynos & Howarth, 2007). Ethical investments can lead to the opening-up of a practice or order to new social demands and identities; while ideological moves involve the co-optation or neglect of social demands as well as the active suppressing of contestations (Howarth, 2010). Finally, fantasmatic logics enable to explore how subjects are gripped by fantasies, accepting and reinforcing particular practices (Glynos & Howarth, 2007).

The critical explanation of a complex social practice or a regime comprises the identification of a set of social, political and fantasmatic logics, connected under particular circumstances. From the analysis of their articulation, it is possible to elucidate processes of social change and stability (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2008, 2010; Howarth et al., 2016), approaching ‘the structure, political dynamics and affective power’ (Hawkins, 2015:140) involved in the construction and sedimentation of political projects. But how should these concepts be ‘applied’ in the investigation of policymaking processes and implementation more specifically? In the next section, I discuss how crucial insights from implementation studies are appropriated under the ontological and theoretical principles of the LCE, to further present the methodological strategy that guided the empirical analysis.

2.3. Approaching implementation processes from the LCE perspective

In this section, I discuss how key elements from implementation studies can be approached following the ontological and theoretical premises of the LCE perspective. This dialogue is established mainly with the integrative scholarship and the national developments on the implementation research agenda. By focusing on this literature, insights from both the top-down and bottom-up schools are considered, as well as some attempts to synthesize both perspectives into a more comprehensive approach toward policymaking processes. In this research, these insights are incorporated as general statements, which provide a frame to organize the empirical effort and to construct a minimum coherent narrative regarding the object under investigation. However, by articulating these elements, their content is also transformed, gaining new meanings under the guidelines of the LCE. It enabled to detangle the appropriated insights from the positivist basis predominant in implementation literature, as

well as to anchor the discussion on a critical and interpretive perspective derived from the poststructuralist tradition of thought. Nonetheless, before presenting the specific points addressed in this research, some observations are necessary.

Firstly, the insights retrieved from implementation studies are not exclusive of this subfield. Statements such as ‘policymaking is an interactive process’ or ‘power permeates the policy process’ go through policy studies in general, influencing the development of different approaches. Additionally, the points emphasized do not exhaust the set of fruitful insights advanced by implementation literature. As stressed in previous assessments, this subfield is highly heterogeneous, covering multiple theoretical and methodological approaches to explain how policy is put into action (Hill & Hupe, 2002; O’Toole Jr., 2000; Schofield, 2001). The mapping of the tenets of the implementation research becomes even more difficult if considered that an expressive amount of studies has been developed without using the label ‘implementation’ as such or establishing a direct dialogue with the main theories within the public administration discipline (C. A. P. de Faria, 2012a; Gains & Clarke, 2007; Hill & Hupe, 2002; O’Toole Jr., 2000). In this sense, from the contextualization presented in the first section, a set of elements was extracted due to their application to the analysis of the case under investigation.

The previous remark implies that the points addressed here do not constitute a research model. This observation can be unfolded in two other ones. Firstly, the elements considered and their appropriation under the LCE perspective were also guided by empirical reflections. Even though the narrative presented in this work follows a more linear path, departing from the theoretical frame to the empirical analysis, the research practice does not attend to the same order. Instead, some level of ‘disorder’ mark the process of study, involving a ‘to-and-fro’ engagement (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, 2008; Howarth, 2010) with data and the set of theories adopted to construct a minimum coherent narrative. In this context, the selection of the implementation elements and how they were appropriated to support data analysis and conclusions were not the logical beginning of the research path, but rather one of its points of arrival. This inherent connection with the empirical effort precludes the possibility of an identical application of this ‘frame’ in further studies. Nevertheless, given the level of abstraction and formalization of the concepts adopted, the theoretical discussion and the

methodological strategy can favor similar studies, requiring though adaptations and new links with the new research enterprise.

Secondly, in this work, the implementation elements are not causally connected, composing a systematic and mechanistic model. The search for the causal mechanisms driving policy outcomes and outputs has directed implementation literature since its beginning (Goggin et al., 1990; Hill & Hupe, 2002; Winter, 2003b, 2006). The utopian objective would be to reach a unified theory (Winter, 2006), which enables not only to generalize research findings but also to predict implementation results (Pülzl & Treib, 2007). Albeit important exceptions to this trend have gained space in policy analysis, such as bottom-up studies focusing on the agent's meanings and interpretations (Barrett, 2004; Barrett & Fudge, 1981; Gains & Clarke, 2007; Schofield, 2001), the insistence on finding the determinants of implementation attests the predominance of positivism in this subfield (Fox, 1990; Pülzl & Treib, 2007). In contrast, this research follows a post-positivist perspective, exploring the relevance of meaning in policy inquiry (Barrett, 2004; Gains & Clarke, 2007; Pülzl & Treib, 2007; Yanow, 1990, 2007). As discussed in the next section, it calls for an interpretive approach in which the explanation is deeply contextualized in relation to the self-interpretations of the agents (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, 2008).

Finally, by establishing such a tangent dialogue with the implementation literature, questioning can be raised regarding if this work is indeed an implementation study or even a contribution to this subfield. In response to that I argue that this research is aligned with the broader effort to understand how policy is put into action (Barrett & Fudge, 1981; O'Toole Jr., 2000). It focuses thus on the intricacies of the policy process, exploring how a governmental action is created, sustained, and transformed throughout time. In doing so, this study comes closer to the implementation agenda, albeit supported by a theoretical grammar not so frequently used in this subfield. In this context, the relevant insights retrieved from this scholarship evidence that many of the premises adopted in this research did not come from anywhere. Instead, they constitute established conclusions of implementation analysis, widespread within this subfield and around which some consensus is formed. It does not mean, however, that the approach presented here is 'superior' than others current in the field.

It is rather an alternative that, by departing from another standpoint, offers a different look into this object of research.

Given these remarks, the elements explored in this study are articulated as detailed in the following topics:

- a. Policymaking is an interactive process in which the boundaries between agenda setting, formulation, implementation and evaluation are blurred*

Implementation research, especially under the influence of bottom-up studies, has aligned with other perspectives in the policy field to problematize the limits of the stagist model ingrained in the policy cycle view. In this approach, the policy process is organized into phases, frequently considering the linear relation between agenda setting, formulation, implementation, and evaluation (Farah, n.d., 2011; John, 1998). However, the policy cycle advanced a simplistic account of the policy process (P. L. B. Silva & Melo, 2000), which reflected the Wilsonian separation between politics and administration (Schofield, 2001) and proved very distant of the practice of policy development (John, 1998). In an opposite perspective, bottom-uppers and synthesizers emphasize that implementation is ‘an integral and continuing part of the political policy process rather than an administrative follow-on’ (Barrett, 2004:253). It involves negotiations, bargains, and disputes through which the plan is constantly reconstructed (Barrett, 2004; Barrett & Fudge, 1981; Lipsky, 1971, 2010; P. L. B. Silva & Melo, 2000). In this context, policy constitutes an intention for those who seek to change behavior and practices, and a negotiated product of implementation and evaluation for those who execute it (Barrett, 2004).

By considering the intersecting relationship between policy stages, the intricacies of agenda setting, policy formulation, and central government’s decisions are taken into account to explain implementation processes. It resonates the appropriation of top-down concerns by integrative literature, stressing the relevance of introducing these elements in implementation studies without taking them for granted (Matland, 1995; P. L. B. Silva & Melo, 2000; Winter, 2003b, 2006). The same can be said regarding policy evaluation, a phase more clearly imbricated with implementation (Hill & Hupe, 2002; O’Toole Jr., 2000). In this sense, limits faced during policy execution can lead to reformulation, starting a learning process (Sabatier,

1986) in which decision-making is continuous (John, 1998). As pointed out by the integrative scholarship, this approach enables to analyze the development of governmental actions holistically, bringing more complexity and dynamism to the study. However, it also leads to challenges regarding the non-identification of a ‘clear’ object of research called ‘implementation’, requiring a broader investigation of the policy process (Hill & Hupe, 2002; Winter, 2003b, 2003a, 2006).

Following this perspective, this study was operationalized in two ‘research moments’. The first investigates the policy characteristics and the conditions that made this initiative possible. Thereby, it focuses on the processes of agenda setting and formulation, an initial stage of the policy development denominated by Hill and Hupe (2002) as ‘policy formation’. The second moment, in its turn, addresses policy change and stability. The emphasis is, thus, on the dynamic interplay between implementation-evaluation-reformulation, investigating, in this work, the initiatives advanced by the central government. Although chronologically distinguished, these moments are deeply connected. This interrelationship is theoretically approached with resource to the notion of logic, as developed in the LCE perspective (Glynos & Howarth, 2007). In this context, the objective of each research moment can be replaced as, firstly, to comprehend the logics driving the policy formation and, secondly, to examine how these same logics are sustained or transformed throughout policy implementation.

The separation between different moments brings a level of linearity to the study, introducing some order in the research process. It is worthwhile noticing, however, that, differently from the stagist model, these moments are not understood as discrete phases. Instead, their limits are blurred, being difficult to clearly distinguish implementation from formation and evaluation, as more directly explored in the second moment. Moreover, the division proposed was not pre-established, but rather resulted from the empirical analysis of the policy under investigation. In this sense, it relies on crucial events of the development of this governmental initiative, such as the launching of the program and the beginning of a new edition, as discussed in the methodological section. By emphasizing this, I assume that the empirical analysis of other cases will require a revision of these moments, linking it with the characteristics of the policy in question.

b. Power permeates the policy process in general and the policy implementation more specifically

The recognition of policymaking as an interactive and political process draws attention to how power permeates all the initiatives put forward in this process. Power is another dimension largely explored in implementation research (Ckagnazaroff, 2009; Hill & Hupe, 2002; L. L. Lima & D'Ascenzi, 2013; Najberg & Barbosa, 2006; P. L. B. Silva & Melo, 2000), especially by analyzing the relationship between collective or individual agents (Ckagnazaroff, 2009; Grin & Abrucio, 2017; Hill & Hupe, 2002; P. L. B. Silva & Melo, 2000; Winter, 2003a, 2003b), as well as the bureaucracy's action (Barrett & Fudge, 1981; Cavalcante et al., 2018; V. da R. S. Ferreira & Medeiros, 2016; L. L. Lima & D'Ascenzi, 2017; L. L. Lima et al., 2014; Lipsky, 1971, 2010; Lotta, 2018). In this context, concepts such as 'bargaining power' and 'discretionary power', among others, have been disseminated as key factors to understand the policy development.

Nevertheless, following the LCE premises, power is approached differently in this study. Accordingly, power designates 'radical acts of institution, which involve the elaboration of political frontiers and the drawing of lines of inclusion and exclusion' (Howarth, 2010:309). As discussed in the previous section, objects, subjects, and practices are the result of contingent exercises of power, involving the inevitable exclusion of alternatives and, consequently, some sort of hierarchy (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, 2008; Howarth, 2010; Howarth & Griggs, 2012; Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000). Based on this, power cannot be accounted as a game of interests or an empirical variable to be measured and even contained in the policy process. It is instead an ontological feature of the social order (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2008, 2010), permeating the development of policy initiatives as well. Like all social practices, policies and policy regimes derive from political struggles and decisions taken in an uncertain terrain, which foreclose other alternatives. And, although these institutional acts are often forgotten, they can always be reactivated and contested (Howarth, 2010; Howarth et al., 2016).

c. Policy characteristics influence implementation results

Also related to the connections between the policy stages, the integrative literature stresses the importance of considering the policy characteristics in understanding implementation. In this process, the policy idea is investigated to elucidate its relationships with implementation outcomes and outputs (L. L. Lima & D'Ascenzi, 2013; Matland, 1995; Winter, 2003b, 2006). The objective has been often to identify contradictions, ambiguities, and problems in the plan that can help to clarify why policies so frequently fail in delivering the expected results (Matland, 1995; Sabatier & Mazmanian, 1979a, 1979b; Van Meter & Van Horn, 1975). In a different perspective, the focus on the 'implementation gap' has shifted to what is actually done in the local sphere, incorporating the plan as one of the elements considered in putting policy into action (L. L. Lima & D'Ascenzi, 2013; P. L. B. Silva & Melo, 2000; Winter, 2003b, 2006). In doing so, policy formation becomes another object of inquiry, questioning how this process was shaped and the features of the plan itself. This attitude avoids taking the first moment of policy development for granted, as done in the first studies in the field developed especially under a top-down approach (Hill & Hupe, 2002; L. L. Lima & D'Ascenzi, 2013; Matland, 1995; Winter, 2003b, 2006).

Following these insights, the first research moment interrogates the process of policy formation, aiming to understand the characteristics of a public policy as well as the conditions that made this initiative possible. The focus is, thus, on 'the first face of hegemony' (Howarth, 2010), exploring how a policy is forged and how it achieves the complicity and compliance of a set of subjects (Howarth, 2010; Howarth et al., 2016; Remling, 2018). It comprises the analysis of the political, social and fantasmatic logics (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, 2008) driving the object under investigation. Political logics enable to explain the emergence of a policy, grasping the simplifications, exclusions, and omissions operated in this process (Clarke, 2012a; Glynos & Howarth, 2007). These political acts take place through the logics of equivalence and difference (Laclau & Mouffe, 2001). As discussed, the former refers to how heterogeneous elements are articulated, establishing new political frontiers; while the latter captures how these equivalential chains and frontiers are challenged and negotiated (Laclau, 2007; Laclau & Mouffe, 2001). 'Empty signifiers' (Laclau & Mouffe, 2001) are a

relevant category in this process, revealing how antagonistic elements are held together despite their contradictory character (Howarth, 2010; Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000).

Social logics, in their turn, help to characterize a policy, revealing its ‘patterning’ (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2010; Howarth *et al.*, 2016). It involves the identification of a contingent set of subject positions and objects, the relationship established between them, and the parameters supporting these relations (Glynos & Howarth, 2007). Finally, fantasmatic logics provide the means to evidence how a policy wins the compliance or complicity of agents (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, 2008; Howarth, 2008, 2010; Howarth & Griggs, 2012). It comprises the analysis of the ideological dimension of political and social practices, investigating, in the first research moment, the fantasies that give direction and energy to any political enterprise (Fotaki, 2010; Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2010). Here, it is worthwhile stressing that, as discussed by scholars in implementation studies, during its formation, the policy is still a ‘plan’, an ‘intention’ (Barrett, 2004; Barrett & Fudge, 1981; L. Lima & D’Ascenzi, 2013; O’Toole Jr., 2000). Therefore, it is composed of a set of ‘projected social logics’, pointing to idealized alternative practices to be concretely materialized (Glynos, Klimecki, & Willmott, 2015; Glynos, Speed, & West, 2015; Remling, 2018).

By adopting this approach, contradictions and ambiguities are not simply seen as ‘errors’ that can be prevented or corrected in well-developed policies. Instead, they are inherent to political projects in general and public policies by extension (Howarth, 2010). As evidenced by the notion of hegemony, political projects must incorporate heterogeneous demands and identities in order to achieve a more universal appeal and, thus, attract a broader audience (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2010). It involves setting up equivalences between antagonistic elements, obfuscating their contradictions and incompatibilities. The category of fantasy comes to reinforce this premise, evidencing that fantasmatically structured objects frequently oscillate between incompatible positions (Glynos & Howarth, 2007). It does not mean, however, that all policy is going to explicitly exhibit a high degree of ambiguity and contradiction, such as the initiative under analysis in this study. Conflicting features can be also subtler and more pervasive, requiring a detailed analysis to extract their contradictions.

d. Policy is (re)constructed throughout implementation

As discussed, policy literature emphasizes that formulation continues during implementation. In this context, the plan is seen as a potential to be negotiated and adapted according to the field circumstances (Barrett, 2004; L. L. Lima & D'Ascenzi, 2013). Following this insight, the second research moment addresses how policy intentions are put into action (Barrett, 2004; Barrett & Fudge, 1981; Gains & Clarke, 2007), focusing on how policy is sustained or transformed in the face of political contestations and challenges in implementation (Howarth, 2010; Howarth et al., 2016). Thus, it explores processes of policy change and stability, analyzing the struggles surrounding the policy design (Hill & Hupe, 2002; Winter, 2003b, 2006). In doing so, I depart from the premise that, to transform 'projected social logics' (Glynos, Klimecki, et al., 2015; Glynos, Speed, et al., 2015) into concrete social practices, policy intentions must be operationalized through a set of instruments (Winter, 2003b, 2006). This apparatus derives not only from technical knowledge but is also informed by interests, values, and different forms of (ir)rationality (Fischer & Forester, 1993; Fischer & Gottweis, 2012; Fischer et al., 2015). It has a performative character as well, being incorporated and having different effects in varied contexts (West, 2011).

In this work, policy change is related to dislocatory events and the consequent political investments through which its purpose, shape, and content are contested or defended (Howarth, 2010; Howarth et al., 2016). As introduced in the previous section, in moments of dislocation, in which naturalized aspects of social practices are destabilized, subjects find the potential to act differently (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, 2008). Dislocation is, thus, an ontological feature of the social, derived from its constitutive incompleteness (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Laclau & Mouffe, 2001). It implies that every social practice and identity can be subject to dislocatory events, leading to more or less authentic responses (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, 2008; Howarth, 2010). Nonetheless, by reiterating the public character of the political, Glynos and Howarth (2007) draw attention to processes established within the public domain. Although it is not argued that public contestations can result in major processes of social change, this notion risks to lose track of the demands and negotiations put forward at a more micro-level (West, 2011), which bring important impacts to implementation processes.

Therefore, in this framework, moments of dislocation can engender both private and public political practices with their different potential for social change. For instance, when considered implementation processes, the outcomes of the everyday execution are important sources of contestation, leading to incremental policy changes (Sabatier, 1986; Sabatier & Mazmanian, 1979b). In the contemporary Brazilian policy system, forums of societal participation constitute another relevant source of contestation. These forums include public conferences and councils in which governmental and nongovernmental agents gather to negotiate the guidelines of state action (Avritzer, 2017). These spaces augment social movement and parliamentary pressures for policy change, as well as influences from media (Sabatier & Mazmanian, 1979b, 1979a), specialists and organizations acting in the policymaking field (Sabatier, 1986). However, as emphasized, contestation does not necessarily lead to change, since subjects can have either an ethical or ideological response (Glynos, 2008; Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2010).

Given these remarks, in the second research moment, I analyze whether or not political contestation and dislocatory events lead to policy change. In this process, the social logics deployed in the first research moment are retaken as both the basis for the advancement of the policy as well as the target of questioning during implementation. Afterward, the dual function of political logics is explored. On the one hand, political logics enable to understand how the limits of a policy are contested and challenged, potentially leading to ethical responses (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2008, 2010). The logic of difference has an important function in this process, accounting for how hegemonic formations are disarticulated to include new social demands and identities into a more pluralistic political project (Herschinger, 2012; Howarth, 2008, 2010; Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000; Laclau & Mouffe, 2001). On the other hand, political logics grasp the cases in which the limits of a policy are defended, bringing the ideological dimension to the fore (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2008, 2010). Thereby, they also refer to efforts to contain or resolve contestation, reaffirming, in contrast, the purpose, shape, and content of a policy (Howarth, 2010).

This latter function is related to the role of fantasmatic logics in stabilizing and maintaining a policy. As mentioned above, the logic of fantasy provides a fantasmatic narrative that promises a fullness-to-come once an obstacle is successfully overcome or foretells a disaster

in case it is not (Glynos, 2008; Glynos & Howarth, 2007, 2008; Howarth, 2010). These narratives organize and shape political projects (Howarth, 2010; West, 2013), often presupposing ‘an impossible union between incompatible elements’ (Glynos & Howarth, 2007:147). In the second research moment, fantasmatic logics capture how ‘policy fantasies’ (West, 2013:653) are reinforced despite the challenges and contestations faced during the development of a governmental intervention (Glynos & Stavrakakis, 2008; Howarth, 2010; Howarth & Griggs, 2015). It draws attention to the affective dimension of social practices and relations, evidencing how subjects invest in particular political projects leading to their inertia (Glynos, 2014; Glynos & Stavrakakis, 2008; Howarth & Griggs, 2015; Stavrakakis, 2007). Therefore, by exploring processes of policy change and stability, I inquire into the ‘second face of hegemony’ (Howarth, 2010), revealing how political and fantasmatic logics operate to sustain and reproduce a policy.

e. Implementation is influenced by the values, beliefs, and interests of agents

The bottom-up research has also been incisive about the relevance of the values, beliefs, and interests of bureaucrats in shaping implementation results. Lipsky's (1971, 2010) work was seminal in this process, drawing attention to the role of the so called ‘street-level bureaucrats’ or the front-line governmental operatives responsible for delivering state services and policies directly to citizens. Recently, national studies have also stressed the role of ‘middle-level bureaucrats’, exploring the specificities of middle management professionals and their impact in policy delivery (e.g. Cavalcante et al., 2018). These studies have contributed to evidence the discretionary power involved in implementation, as well as the negotiations and coping mechanism put forward by these agents to deal with the challenges of their work (Barrett, 2004). It shifted the research focus to the local sphere of policy development, observing the multiple factors influencing the performance and behavior of agents in organizational settings (V. da R. S. Ferreira & Medeiros, 2016; L. L. Lima & D’Ascenzi, 2017; L. L. Lima et al., 2014; Lotta, 2018). It also concurred to acknowledge the central role of meaning in the construction of policy problems, solutions, and throughout the implementation chain (Gains & Clarke, 2007; Yanow, 1990, 2007).

In this study, meaning occupies a crucial role as well, constituting the basis for the analysis of the logics mobilized in the policymaking process (Howarth & Griggs, 2012). According to the LCE perspective, logics are contingent and finite entities, being always linked to a particular field of interpretations. However, although subject-dependent, they cannot be reduced to the self-interpretation of agents (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, 2008; Glynos et al., 2009; Howarth, 2008, 2010; Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000). Therefore, explanation requires a passage through contextualized meanings in order to comprehend the ‘broader, hegemonic patterns or logics’ (West, 2011:429) driving the object under investigation. In this process, social logics furnish a bridge between the characterization of the examined practices and its explanation, while political and fantasmatic logics provide the means for the critical exercise. The researcher’s task is, thus, to deploy the set of social, political, and fantasmatic logics sustaining the empirical phenomenon in a way that respects its singularity without being limited to a description of its specificities (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, 2008).

f. The intra-organizational dimension and the inter-organization relationship constitute important elements to explain implementation

Implementation studies have also contributed to insert organizations into the policy research agenda (Bozeman, 2013). Since Pressman and Wildavsky's (1973) work, organizational issues have been stressed as important factors to explain policy success and failure. These elements have been emphasized in top-down (Sabatier & Mazmanian, 1979a, 1979b; Van Meter & Van Horn, 1975) and bottom-up approaches (Barrett & Fudge, 1981; V. da R. S. Ferreira & Medeiros, 2016; Hjern & Hull, 1982; Hjern & Porter, 1981; Lipsky, 1971, 2010), as well as in the integrative literature (Hill & Hupe, 2002; L. L. Lima & D’Ascenzi, 2013; Matland, 1995; P. L. B. Silva & Melo, 2000; Winter, 2003b, 2006). The attention to this dimension goes against the predominant tendency in the policy field, which has mostly ignored organizations (Bozeman, 2013). Additionally, when considered, organizations are often approached by their capacities, considering especially how deficiencies in financial, human, and political resources lead to problems in implementation (L. L. Lima & D’Ascenzi, 2013).

Following this, in this framework, organizations constitute an important dimension to investigate how the logics underpinning a governmental initiative are built, maintained, and

transformed. In doing so, the discursive nature (Laclau & Mouffe, 2001) of organizations is stressed (Chia, 2000; Mumby & Stohl, 1991). As other objects in the social life, they are regarded as a contingent outcome of articulatory practices, through which objects, subjects, and relations gain meaning in relation to each other. This net is shaped not just internally, but also through the refusal of alternative elements, neglected or excluded in the organizational construction. In this process, organizations acquire even if precarious identities, that enable to distinguish them (Willmott, 2005). In the LCE terms, they present their logics (Glynos, 2008), that, although not separable from the context in which they are situated, also have particularities.

This approach draws attention to the symbolic facet of organizations (Arnaud, 2002; Cederström & Spicer, 2014; Cooper, 1986). They are spheres of (re)production of social practices, more or less routinized, which shape and give direction to everyday life within an organization (Glynos, 2008; Mumby & Stohl, 1991). Language and meanings perform a central function in this process, which goes way beyond communication (Chia, 2000; Heller & Rowlinson, 2019). Through them, organizational members develop a sense of belonging (Heller & Rowlinson, 2019). It does not mean that capacities and material constraints play no role in organizations, as they certainly do. Instead, this perspective recognizes that language is deeply embedded in material relations (Willmott, 2005), making impossible to distinguish these dimensions in practice. Therefore, organizations are also spaces where meaning is disputed around a reality that is always beyond grasping (Cederström & Spicer, 2014).

In this study, the Secretariat of Policies for Women is approached as the organization under investigation. In doing so, the trajectory of the secretariat is recuperated, detailing the SPM's objectives and structure, the mechanisms adopted to advance the gender mainstreaming strategy, and the limits faced in the promotion of its initiatives. The analysis also explores how the agents involved in the program's development perceive the role of the secretariat in promoting gender equality, distinguishing a more or less coherent identity. From this discussion, this dissertation stresses the relevance of the SPM's features in explaining the logics structuring the development of the Pro-Equity. In the first research moment, organizational elements align with historical and social conditions to the formation of a policy with these contours. In the second, they clarify why particular contestations and challenges

are addressed in the program's execution, leading or not to changes in its instruments, modes of operation, and network of agents involved.

g. Implementation, like the policy process in general, is a contextualized phenomenon

Finally, context plays a crucial part in explaining policy implementation from this framework. Research in the implementation field has already pointed out the relevance of the social, political, and economic context in analyzing such processes (DeLeon & DeLeon, 2002; Hill & Hupe, 2002; Schofield, 2001; Winter, 2006). As emphasized by Hill and Hupe (2002:5), “‘implementation’ is always connected to specific policies as particular responses to specific problems in society”. Interpretive and critical approaches in policy studies reiterate the contingency of policymaking (Fischer *et al.*, 2015; Wagenaar, 2011; Yanow, 2007), stressing that meanings are ‘situation-specific’ and, thus, ‘a meaning-focused policy analysis [...] is highly contextualized’ (Yanow, 2007:111). In this sense, and following the discursive perspective adopted in this study, the social and historical context is considered throughout all research (Glynos, 2001; Glynos & Howarth, 2007, 2008). It helps to understand not only the policy process but also the research practice and our place as a subject of knowledge (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, 2008), as highlighted in the following section.

2.4. Methodological implications and the strategy adopted

In the previous sections, I have made a first step toward a framework for the analysis of policy implementation from a critical and integrative perspective. Departing from the LCE approach and in dialogue with implementation literature, I stressed the main concepts to be operationalized throughout two interconnected research moments. From this articulation, I seek to establish an approach to analyzing how a particular policy has been formulated and how it has been maintained and transformed throughout implementation, focusing on the processes advanced in the central government. In doing so, the investigation of social, political and fantasmatic logics provides the means to develop a critical explanation, in which the contingency of social practices is reactivated. Therefore, the critical move is to evidence how a social practice – in our case, a governmental program – has been formulated and

implemented in a specific manner, excluding other possibilities (Glynos, 2008; Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Glynos *et al.*, 2009; Howarth, 2010; Howarth *et al.*, 2016; West, 2011).

Research developed under this approach is structured in five interconnected steps: problematization, retroduction, logics, articulation, and critique (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth *et al.*, 2016). It starts evidencing how a particular set of practices has become an object of academic and practical concern (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, 2008; Glynos *et al.*, 2009; Howarth, 2008, 2010; Howarth *et al.*, 2016; Howarth & Griggs, 2012). The problematization paves the way for the production of an explanation for the investigated phenomenon (Howarth *et al.*, 2016). It presupposes a ‘to-and-fro’ engagement with data through which a tentative hypothesis is retroductively built. Retroduction thus indicates a form of reasoning that moves from data to hypothesis and backward, in a circular movement in which the explanation cannot be fully detached from problematization. The goal is to render the phenomenon more intelligible, conjecturing an ‘as-much-as-possible’ persuasive explanation. This narrative must be ‘tested’ by a tribunal of scholars and lay-actors in the field, regarding its credibility, consistency, and exhaustiveness, among other criteria, to judge it as a candidate for truth (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2010; Howarth *et al.*, 2016).

In the LCE perspective, the conjuring up of a persuasive explanation involves capturing the assemblage of social, political, and fantasmatic logics driving the empirical phenomena (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth *et al.*, 2016). As previously discussed, logics cannot be reduced to the self-interpretations of agents, nor are independent of their beliefs, values, intentions, and reasons. Instead, this concept accounts for the rules governing a set of social practices, as well as the conditions that made possible their political and ideological emergence (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, 2008; Howarth, 2010; Howarth & Griggs, 2012). In this process, social inquiry must rely on the meanings produced by the agents engaged in the practices under study, aiming to grasp a wider net of social practices and patterns. It enables to retain the minimal hermeneutic insight, without producing a too particularistic analysis of social phenomena. However, if, on the one hand, logics are not reducible to empirical phenomena, on the other, they are not fully transcendental. Therefore, explanation involves the investigation of the logics underpinning the object under study in relation to the historical situation from which they emerged (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, 2008).

Based on these premises, social and political research does not look for a general theory or solid empirical generalizations, as often demanded by the mainstream scholars within the implementation subfield. Contingency and incompleteness, as ontological features of the social reality, shape and inform the research practice as well (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, 2008; Howarth et al., 2016; Howarth & Griggs, 2012; Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000). In this sense, the explanation is itself a process of articulation (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; West, 2011), through which a set of theoretical concepts and empirical analyses are constructed and linked (Laclau & Mouffe, 2001). It implies that problematization and retroductive explanation are not neutral activities. Instead, they involve exercises of judgment based on intuition and theoretical expertise, in which the researcher evaluates the elements to be considered and how they should be interrelated. The experimental explanation resulting from this process is, thus, partial, contingent and, consequently, contestable (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Glynos et al., 2009; Howarth, 2008, 2010; Howarth et al., 2016; Howarth & Griggs, 2012).

The articulation of theoretical concepts and empirical elements in a concrete context provides the means to move from contextualized self-interpretation toward a critical explanation of social phenomena (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, 2008; Howarth et al., 2016). In the perspective adopted, the critical move focuses on disclosing the role of power and politics throughout policy development, exploring how hegemonic practices and orders are produced and contested and how subjects are gripped by certain ideologies and discourses. In this process, political logics enable to explain the exclusions and negations operated in the institution or dissolution of a social practice, while fantasmatic logics reveal the role of ideologies and fantasies in the naturalization of hierarchies and subordinations. Therefore, an ethical critique is privileged, showing the non-necessary feature of any social formation and how subjects identify with it despite its precarious character. However, this critique does not preclude normative evaluation. Instead, normative assumptions operate since the characterization of the social logics driving the phenomena, identifying practices and relations as worthy of public contestation (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2008, 2010; Howarth et al., 2016; Howarth & Griggs, 2012).

This perspective favors the use of qualitative strategies, especially in single-case and comparative studies (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth *et al.*, 2016). As emphasized by its

proponents, the LCE is a ‘problem’-driven perspective, rather than ‘method’ or ‘technique’-driven. It implies that the selection of research strategies and techniques must follow the problematization and fit the purposes of the study (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, 2008; Howarth, 2010; Howarth et al., 2016; Howarth & Griggs, 2012). Following this, the trajectory of implementation of the Program for Gender and Racial Equity was qualitatively approached as the case under investigation in this study, focusing on the experience advanced by the SPM in the federal government. In this process, the broader research effort centered on the analysis of language and meaning as a constitutive part of social practices and relations (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Glynos et al., 2009). However, given the extension of this study, slightly methodological differences were advanced in each moment.

Official documents produced by the SPM along with interviews with agents directly involved in the program’s development composed the main source of data. The websites of the SPM and the National Press¹⁰ were used as the main sources for the collection of laws, official guidelines, minutes of meetings, marketing pieces, and reports. In total, 94 documents were analyzed, distributed according to Table 1:

Table 1. Number of documents analyzed distributed according to their type

Type of document	Total
Laws related to the SPM and the Program	23
Official guidelines for the SPM’s action	7
Minutes of meetings of the National Council of Women’s Rights	50
Marketing pieces	15
Reports on the Program’s results	4

Source: the author.

From the official documents, it was also possible to map the governmental and nongovernmental agents involved, the job positions they occupied, and their period of

¹⁰ The National Press is the agency of the federal government responsible for officially publishing all the matters regarding the federal state. The journals are available in www.in.gov.br.

participation in the program. This search resulted in 198 names, among the program's coordinators (4), Technical Analysts (18), consultants (6), and members of the advisory committees (170, between titular and alternate participants). Given this long list of possibilities, I prioritized the contact with the program's coordinators, analysts and consultants, as well as with titular members of the Pro-Equity and the Ad Hoc Committees, more active in the program's development, as furtherly discussed. Additionally, the first interviewees helped to identify the following ones, pointing to those agents that could mostly contribute to this research. Of 40 professionals contacted, 18 returned confirming their availability to take part in this research. The role occupied by the interviewees and their period of participation in the program's development are described in Table 2.

Table 2. Period of participation of interviewees in the program

Interviewee	1st Ed.	2nd Ed.	3rd Ed.	4th Ed.	5th Ed.	6th Ed.
Program Coordinators						
Technical Analysts						
Consultants						
Committee Members						

Source: the author.

The interviews were held between August and December of 2017. The reports were recorded and integrally transcribed with the explicit authorization of the participants. Analysis was based on excerpts of documents and interviews. Aiming to protect the identity of the participants in this research, interviewees were identified by their role in the program's development and their number in the order of interview (for instance, Coordinator 1 – first

coordinator interviewed, Technical Analyst 4 – fourth analyst interviewed, etc.). Thereby, their identification number do not coincide with the order in the previous Table, avoiding cross-reference.

To support the analysis of the program's characteristics, a database with some results achieved by the Pro-Equity was also built. Firstly, it included information on the program's participants, collecting: the number of organizations inscribed in each edition; the number of participants awarded *per* edition; the type of organization awarded, as described in Table 3; the sector in which the certificated organizations act; and the number of certificates they received during their participation.

Table 3. Criteria to classify organizations according to their type and specification

Type	Specification	Description
Public	Public institution	Organizations from the federal, state, and municipal executive, responsible for providing direct services to the population; organizations from the legislative power; organizations from the judiciary power; and public foundations and autarchies with non-economic ends.
	Public company with close capital	Organizations with economic ends, which capital is exclusively or mostly owned by the state. No part of their capital is negotiated in the stock market.
	Public company with open capital	Organizations with economic ends, which capital is mostly owned by the state and 49% or less of it is negotiated in the stock market.
Private	Private business with close capital	For-profitable businesses of single or collective property, with no shares negotiated in the stock market.
	Private business with open capital	For-profitable businesses of collective property, with shares negotiated in the stock market.
	Private institution	Non-profitable private enterprises.

Source: the author.

As evidenced in Table 3, these criteria refer to the public or private character of organizations engaged in the program. However, important differences are stressed in each group. On the one hand, among the public organizations, public companies with economic ends and shares negotiated in the stock market tend to be more included in the dynamic of the market. On the other hand, among the private organizations, non-profitable businesses can be more oriented to the public interest, especially when compared to the for-profitable ones. Also related to

their insertion or not in the dynamic of the market, the participation of organizations in other initiatives related to Corporate Social Responsibility and/or oriented to the promotion of gender equality in the workplace was mapped. The initiatives considered are described in Table 4. As emphasized, the possibility of participation in them depends on the type of organization detailed in the previous Table.

Table 4. Corporate Social Responsibility and gender equality initiatives mapped

Initiative	Description	Period considered	Potential participants
<i>Guia Exame</i>	Produced by the publisher <i>Abril</i> in partnership with the Research Center on Sustainability at the Getulio Vargas Foundation. This guide classifies organizations according to the development of practices and the achievement of goals related to social and environmental sustainability.	2016 Edition	Public companies and private organizations
<i>Guia Você S/A - 150 Best Businesses to Work</i>	Produced by the publisher <i>Abril</i> in partnership with the Institute of Management Foundation. This guide classifies organizations according to the development of practices and the achievement of goals related to the promotion of satisfaction and quality of life at work.	2016 Edition	Public companies and private organizations
Ranking Great Place to Work	Produced by the consulting group Great Place at Work and published by the <i>Época</i> Magazine. In Brazil, it results in national, regional, and sectorial lists. This ranking classifies organizations according to the development of practices and the achievement of goals related to the promotion of satisfaction and quality of life at work.	2016 National list	Public companies and private businesses
Ranking Great Place to Work – Woman	Produced by the consulting group Great Place at Work. This ranking classifies organizations according to the development of practices and the achievement of goals related to the promotion of women's satisfaction and quality of life at work.	2016 National list	Public companies and private businesses
BOVESPA's Business Sustainability Index (<i>Índice de Sustentabilidade Empresarial da BOVESPA</i>)	Produced by the São Paulo Stock Exchange in partnership with the Research Center on Sustainability at the Getulio Vargas Foundation. It selects organizations according to their capacity to create value to shareholders through management practices committed to social and environmental responsibility.	2016/2017 Selection	Public companies and private businesses with open capital
Dow Jones Industrial Average	Global index produced by the New York Stock Exchange in partnership with the consulting group ROBECOSAM. It classifies organizations according to their capacity to create value to shareholders through management practices	2016/2017 List	Public companies and private businesses with open

	committed to social and environmental responsibility.		capital
Global Compact	Developed by the United Nations, this initiative invites organizations to review their strategies and management practices according to the ten principle universally accepted in the areas of human rights, work, environment, and fight against corruption.	2017 List	All types
Women Empowerment Principles (WEPs)	Developed by the United Nations Women in partnership with the UN Global Compact. It supports organizations to develop management policies and practices that contribute to women's empowerment.	2017 List	Public companies and private organizations
WEPs Award	Developed by the United Nations Women – Brazil, in the scope of the WEPs. It aims at recognizing organizations well-succeeded in the implementation of the Women Empowerment Principles.	2014 and 2016	Public companies and private organizations signing the WEPs
Federal Program 'Corporate Citizenship' (<i>Programa Federal Empresa Cidadã</i>)	Developed by the Federal Government. It seeks to promote the extension of the maternity and paternity leave through the granting of taxes incentives.	2017 List	Public companies and private organizations

Source: the author.

It is important to emphasize that this database was not used to obtain statistical correlations or causalities. Instead, it contributed to evidence the characteristics of the participants in this initiative and to clarify those aspects in which the program fell short the expected results, complementing previous academic research and policy reports on the impact of the Pro-Equity. The results mapped in this and other works also furnished important elements for the conduction of the interviews with governmental agents. In this sense, these data were openly discussed with the interviewees, seeking to grasp the reasons for the modifications advanced and abandoned, the perceptions regarding the poor results achieved by this initiative, and how they impacted in terms of reviewing or not the program's design. In this context, the interviews revealed subtler and unofficial disputes, frequently overshadowed in official policy texts (Remling, 2018).

Based on these data, this study explored the logics mobilized, sustained, and transformed throughout the Pro-Equity's development. This endeavor did not follow previous established

techniques of analysis or the path made by research grounded in the LCE approach. It was rather crafted in a particular process of ‘comings and goings’ through which the narrative presented in this work was refined. It comprised different analytical exercises in each research moment, detailed in the following chapters. As furtherly presented, the analyses of policy formation, in the second chapter, and policy change and inertia, in the third, were preceded by the retaken of the main concepts used as well as the description of how they were operationalized in each research moment. Although risks being repetitive, this textual structure was preferred in the expectation of making the research narrative more didactic.

In synthesis, the analysis in the first research moment starts with the problematization of gender (in)equality in the workplace as the object under investigation. It involved its construction as a central object of research within the feminist academic debate, as well as a public problem in the Brazilian scenario which requires governmental intervention. In this context, affirmative action, diversity management, and gender mainstreaming were presented as emerging proposals to deal with this pressing issue, highlighting how they dispute the role of the state in fighting gender discrimination at work. Afterward, the investigation concentrated on the political, social, and fantasmatic logics structuring this policy. It comprised three analytical exercises. Firstly, I inquired the social and historical conditions that made possible the emergence of the Program for Gender Equity (Howarth, 2008, 2010). To do so, the trajectory of federal policies for women and to promote gender equality in the workplace was retraced, stressing how changes in the relationship between the state and civil society as well as features of the political project advanced by the PT once in the federal government were crucial to the development of a program with these contours.

Secondly, the program’s characteristics were explored, examining the social logics driving this initiative. To do so, data analysis focused on the regularities related to the content and purpose of the policy under investigation (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2010; Howarth et al., 2016). From official documents published during the first edition of the program and interviews with governmental agents directly involved in its formation, it was possible to apprehend three crucial elements around which meanings revolved: the role assumed by the state in promoting gender equality in the workplace; organizations and management practices as targets of political intervention; and women as the policy beneficiary. Different and even

contradictory meanings associated with the paradigm of rights and of the market were, thus, articulated in four social logics projected by this program. While the logic of cooperation and the audit logic were supported by distinct understandings on the role of the state in fighting gender inequalities at work, the managerial and the affirmative presented contradictory perspectives on organizations and management practices as targets of the policy intervention and women as its beneficiary.

Research moved, thus, to the investigation of the political and fantasmatic logics driving the program. It involved the identification of the empty signifier holding together antagonistic elements against a set of rival alternatives excluded or denied in this process (Howarth, 2010; Laclau, 2007; Laclau & Mouffe, 2001). It also comprised the capturing of the fantasmatic content driving subject's investments in this initiative, giving direction and energy to such practices (Fotaki, 2010; Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2010). As further discussed, in the scope of the Pro-Equity, 'gender equality for all' functioned as the empty signifier joining the set of social logics projected by the program. It sustained a promise that, through collaboration and negotiation, it would be possible to achieve benefits to all the agents engaged in the program, offering reasons and motivating the adherence to this initiative (Remling, 2018). This articulation gained substance against the rival logics of the patriarchy at work as well as the logics of state inaction or the state coercion.

It is important to reinforce, however, that at this initial point of the policy process, the program was still an 'intention' (Barrett, 2004; Barrett & Fudge, 1981; O'Toole Jr., 2000), pointing to 'imagined alternative practices' to be concretely materialized (Glynos, Klimecki, et al., 2015; Glynos, Speed, et al., 2015; Remling, 2018). In this context, the second research moment addresses how the program's intentions were put into action (Barrett, 2004; Barrett & Fudge, 1981; Gains & Clarke, 2007), exploring the experience advanced by the central government. As detailed in the third chapter, this analysis started with the investigation of the organizational context in which the program was developed. Based on the interviews with governmental agents, official documents, and previous studies, the trajectory of the secretariat was retaken, describing the SPM's objective and organizational structure, the mechanisms adopted to advance the gender mainstreaming strategy, and the challenges faced in promoting its initiatives. This discussion enabled not only to situate the Pro-Equity in relation to the

other programs and actions developed by the secretariat, but also to identify organizational features concurring to the program's change or inertia.

Hereafter, the Pro-Equity's design is analyzed, describing its instruments, modes of operation, and network of agents involved. At this moment, data covered both the interviews with governmental agents and official documents produced in the ten years of the program's development (2005-2015). From data analysis, it was possible to identify a core structure maintained over this period, as well as the changes advanced and discontinued in the program. Along with the investigation of the SPM's features, this analysis evidenced sources of contestation in the progress of policies for women and to promote gender equality generally and the Pro-Equity more specifically. In a broader level, it comprised institutionalized spaces of social participation, such as the National Conferences of Policies for Women and the National Council of Women's Rights. In the scope of the program, in its turn, the action of advisory committees augmented the daily disputes around the limits of this initiative.

Based on this set of data, the analysis focused on the effects of the moments of dislocation triggered by disputes around the program's limits and challenges faced during its implementation. In doing so, firstly the social logics grasped in the first research moment were resumed. The initial articulation was approached as the basis for the advancement of the program's initiatives and the target of questioning during its implementation. Political logics, in their turn, accounted for how contestation emerged and was managed in the policy process. Finally, fantasmatic logics enabled to evidence how the program sustained its 'grips' over a set of subjects, securing their passive or active consent or, at least, their complicity (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2008, 2010). The emphasis shifted, thus, to how subjects engage with the policy fantasies (West, 2011), experiencing an ethical or ideological mode of *jouissance* (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Glynos & Stavrakakis, 2008). It is important to stress, however, that in contexts of policymaking, an ethical response of agents does not necessarily lead to policy change. This process involves negotiation, compromising, and bargain (Howarth, 2010; Howarth & Griggs, 2012), demanding a series of dispositions to be put forward.

Data analysis revealed two axes of contestation during the program's execution. On the one hand, the Pro-Equity was questioned regarding its inclusiveness. Critique referred to both the notion of women supporting the construction of the policy beneficiary as well as the plurality of agents involved in the program's development. On the other hand, the ineffectiveness of this program was problematized, stressing its limits in attracting the business sector and in promoting structural changes in the participating organizations. Different answers were advanced in the face of criticism. In the first case, the SPM welcomed questioning, showing a disposition to incorporate changes in the program's design in order to make it more inclusive. This openness resulted in the deepest change addressed, including race as a structural dimension of the program and consequently renaming it as Program for Gender and Racial Equity. In the second, the secretariat deflected questioning, defending the logics sustaining this political project. It did not mean, however, that no change was promoted in the program's design. Instead, subtler and unofficial actions were developed to increase the program effectiveness.

By advancing this analysis, this study evidences the relevance of the organizational dimension in providing conditions to the creation, sustaining, and transformation of the Pro-Equity. In the first research moment, the SPM's features augment historical and political conditions for the emergence of a policy with these contours. In the second, in its turn, they help to understand why particular contestation and challenges are more easily embraced than others and why they result or not in changes in the program's instruments, modes of operation, and network of agents involved. In this process, the way the secretariat is organized and how governmental agents perceive its role in the progress of policies to promote gender equality in the workplace align with material constraints in explaining the logics mobilized in the development of the Pro-Equity.

3. Logics in the formation of the Program for Gender Equity

This chapter analyzes the logics mobilized in the formation¹¹ of the Program for Gender Equity. To do so, firstly, I detail the concepts used and their form of operationalization, describing how the theoretical tools proposed by the LCE are applied in this moment of the study. The analysis starts with the problematization of gender (in)equality in the workplace as the object under investigation. It involves a feminist critique of patriarchal relations and practices in the contemporaneity, as well as a debate on alternatives to deal with this pressing public problem. Based on this, in the third section, initiatives to promote social equality at work in Brazil are discussed. In this process, the context in which the program was developed is particularized in relation to changes in the relationship between the state and civil society as well as some features of the political project put forward by the Worker's Party (*Partido dos Trabalhadores*, PT) in the federal government from the 2000s. Given this contextualization, in the final sections, the social, political, and fantasmatic logics structuring the Pro-Equity are examined. This chapter is concluded emphasizing the relevance of organizational features in explaining why this policy became a viable option of governmental action.

3.1. Hegemony and power in policy formation

Discussions on hegemony and ideology are far from consensual in social and political studies. On the one hand, scholars announce the uselessness of these concepts in contemporary research. On the other, they emphasize the pertinence of these theoretical tools to analyze power relations in the social field (Glynos, 2001; Howarth, 2010). Even in the latter group, positions are not homogeneous (Glynos, 2001). Instead, there is a range of theoretical

¹¹ As discussed in the previous chapter, in this research I adopt the term 'policy formation' to designate the 'early' subprocess of policymaking (Hill & Hupe, 2002). It comprises both what is frequently denominated as agenda setting, when a public issue is recognized as a problem that deserves the state attention, as well as policy formulation, when a course of action is firstly designed and selected as a viable alternative of governmental intervention (Farah, n.d., 2011). This concept enables to differentiate formation from implementation and evaluation – accounted as the 'late' subprocess of policymaking – without reproducing the rational model underpinning the formulation-implementation division (Hill & Hupe, 2002). In this sense, this study resonates the bottom-up and integrative premise that policymaking continues during implementation.

frameworks in dispute, grounded in different ontological, epistemological, and political bases (Howarth & Griggs, 2012). In this work, I align with the second group, adopting a poststructuralist and discursive perspective to critically access how a public policy is hegemonically produced and sustained in a particular social and historical context. It involves the analysis of how social practices are articulated in a broader political project, as well as how it 'grips' subjects, securing their consent and complicity (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2010; Howarth et al., 2016; Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000).

To do so, I adopt Laclau and Mouffe's (2001) notion of hegemony. Accordingly, hegemonic practices are seen as an 'exemplary form of political activity' through which dispersed elements are articulated into a common project aiming to forge, challenge, or maintain a social order, regime, or practice (Howarth, 2010; Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000; Laclau & Mouffe, 2001). As discussed in the first chapter, this concept is composed of two aspects. Firstly, hegemony captures how disparate demands are linked into a political project able to partially or integrally contest a social practice or regime. Secondly, it refers to a form of rule or governance to sustain existing regimes or practices in time. The 'two faces of hegemony' are ontologically intertwined. Hegemony as a form of governance is a result of previous hegemonic struggles stabilized in a specific context. It also involves negotiation, bargaining, and compromise to safeguard and reproduce the practice or regime in place. On the other hand, the dispute for counter-hegemonic projects presupposes the existence of hegemonic rules to be defied and transformed. However, these aspects can be didactically separated to guide the empirical analysis (Howarth, 2010; Howarth et al., 2016; Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000).

This chapter focuses on the 'first face of hegemony' (Howarth, 2010), exploring how a public initiative, such as the Pro-Equity in the case of this study, is forged and becomes a viable option of governmental action. Here, policymaking is approached as a result of political struggles and decisions through which finite demands and identities are articulated to the detriment of others (Howarth, 2010; Howarth et al., 2016; Remling, 2018). This process involves the establishment of equivalences between dispersed and even contradictory elements – subjects, objects, and practices – into a more or less coherent chain (Howarth, 2010; Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000; Laclau, 2007; Laclau & Mouffe, 2001). Once

articulated, the included ‘elements’ become ‘moments’, gaining new meanings in relation to each other (Laclau & Mouffe, 2001:105). The resulting chain presupposes the institution of unstable political frontiers, dividing social relations by excluding other possibilities (Howarth, 2010; Howarth et al., 2016; Laclau, 2007). These divisions can take a more open contestatory form or a subtler one, providing reasons to subjects adhere to a hegemonic project at the same time that contain or disarm potential alternatives (Remling, 2018).

Based on these premises, and retaking the ontological debate presented, this perspective emphasizes the inherent incompleteness and radical contingency of political projects (Howarth, 2010; Howarth *et al.*, 2016). Equivalential chains cannot exhaust the discursive field, leaving aside denied alternatives (Howarth, 2010; Howarth & Griggs, 2012). In this sense, the policy process will inevitably draw limits between different and uneven social groups and their demands (Howarth & Griggs, 2012). It implies the exercise of power, necessarily involving exclusions, hierarchies, and subordination (Howarth, 2010). Additionally, though partially fixed, public policies and institutions are situated ‘systems of rules, norms, resources, practices, and subjectivities’ (Howarth, 2010:312), being (re)organized in different social and historical contexts (Howarth, 2010; Howarth & Griggs, 2012; Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000). The constitutive incompleteness and contingency of political projects make them vulnerable to questioning by rival political forces (Howarth, 2010; Laclau, 2007). As discussed later on, inconsistencies, exclusions, and blind spots are exposed in moments of dislocations (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2010), opening space for struggles on the limits of a policy.

The dynamic between the logics of equivalence and difference accounts for the complex process of policy formation and dissolution (Howarth, 2010; Howarth et al., 2016). The logic of equivalence outlines common aspects of dispersed elements (Laclau & Mouffe, 2001), associating them into a contingent coalition (Laclau, 2007). As mentioned, it presupposes the existence of social antagonisms and the construction of political frontiers, organizing demands within and outside the policymaking process (Herschinger, 2012; Howarth, 2010; Howarth & Griggs, 2012; Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000). Thereby, the logic of equivalence results in the simplification of the social field in two rival camps, weakening divergences in each side to deal with an adversary (Clarke, 2012a; Howarth, 2008; Remling, 2018). The

logic of difference, in its turn, emphasizes the divergence between elements (Laclau & Mouffe, 2001), disarticulating established chains of equivalence (Howarth, 2008; Howarth & Griggs, 2012; Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000; Remling, 2018). It leads to the complication of the social space (Clarke, 2012a; Howarth, 2008), multiplying differences to disarm oppositional movements (Glynos & Howarth, 2007), to incorporate new elements into an expanded order (Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000), or to compete for alternative social objectives (Hawkins, 2015).

The logics of equivalence and difference are not mutually exclusive, establishing a complex and permanent interaction (Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000). However, in this chapter, the role of the logic of equivalence in the ‘practice of coalition-building’ (Howarth, 2010:318) is highlighted. This process premises the existence of empty signifiers able to successfully link divergent and even contradictory demands and identities into a unified, even if precarious, political project (Howarth, 2010; Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000). According to Laclau (2007:36), ‘an empty signifier is, strictly speaking, a signifier without a signified’. In this sense, it does not have an essential meaning but rather is temporarily signified as an outcome of political competition. It implies that the system represented through an empty signifier is fundamentally unreachable since any attempt to fulfill its meanings will be partial and contingent (Laclau, 2007). Societies, thus, organize themselves around these impossible ideals (Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000), which paradoxically maintain their emptiness at the same time that promise fullness (Glynos, 2001). As discussed by Howarth (2008), signifiers such as ‘justice’, ‘democracy’, or ‘gender equality’ in the case of this study, go beyond any particular practice, being inherently flawed when actualized in a specific context.

Laclau (2007) stresses that what a hegemonic operation seeks is precisely to fill and sustain an empty signifier as the master of social order. In other words, it aims to turn an empty signifier into a nodal point, a privileged signifier able to structure a set of dispersed elements into a partially fixed system of moments (Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000; Laclau & Mouffe, 2001). Although contingent, this process is not arbitrary (Herschinger, 2012; Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000; Laclau, 2007). Uneven rival forces will dispute which particularity is going to function as a nodal point in a specific political scenario (Laclau, 2007). Once again, the constitutive role of power is emphasized (Herschinger, 2012; Howarth, 2010), taking into consideration

the hierarchies, tensions, and exclusions involved in these struggles. On the other hand, given the very emptiness of these signifiers, any hegemony will be precarious and vulnerable to attempts to reorder its contents (Laclau, 2007). This inherent contingency indicates that what content operates as a nodal point is not a theoretical abstraction, but rather an empirical inquiry. It demands the analysis of a social and historical conjecture to identify what, how, and why a particular project hegemonizes the political field in a specific context.

As previously discussed, in this work, I adopt the conceptual tools and methodological guidelines of the LCE (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2008, 2010; Howarth et al., 2016) to approach the experience of the Pro-Equity. The analysis of the logics mobilized in the formation of this policy starts with the problematization. In this first step, a theoretical and empirical object of investigation is constructed as a research problem (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth & Griggs, 2012). It involves a certain level of abstraction and complexity (Howarth et al., 2016), in which ontological presuppositions, discussed in the last chapter, and normative premises are present (Glynos & Howarth, 2007). In this study, gender (in)equality in the workplace is regarded as the object in question. Its construction as a research object departs from a feminist critique on the establishment of the patriarchal order in modernity, and the recognition of its recent destabilization in contemporaneity. However, given the focus on the governmental action, gender (in)equality is also approached as a pressing public problem. Therefore, affirmative action, diversity management, and gender mainstreaming are addressed as potential alternatives to deal with this issue, emphasizing how they dispute the role of the state in these different courses of action.

Afterward, the analysis concentrates on the political, social, and fantasmatic logics structuring the investigated policy. This process comprises three analytical exercises. Firstly, it inquiries into the social and historical conditions that made possible the emergence of this program (Howarth, 2008, 2010). Departing from previous research, I retrace the development of policies for women and to promote gender equality in Brazil, focusing mainly on actions advanced at the federal level. In doing so, the relationship between the state and civil society is discussed, distinguishing different patterns in the Brazilian democratic scenario. Features of the political project put forward by PT once in the federal government are also explored. By approaching it, the conceptual distinction between regimes and practices is retaken. A regime

can be understood as a set of hegemonic practices, as well as the new social structure resulting from it. Regimes have, thus, a structuring function, framing and ordering the practices by which they are constructed. This concept is defined in a high level of abstraction, making possible to analytically situate it at different levels. It demands a contextual analysis, relating a regime with the problem under investigation (Glynos & Howarth, 2007).

In this work, I assume that one isolated public policy does not constitute a regime. Instead, it is part of broader projects promoted by political parties along with other agents, such as social movements, specialists, intergovernmental organizations, and business enterprises. Taking the examined case as an example, as further discussed, the Pro-Equity is situated in the broader political regime headed by PT and partners in the federal state, as well as in the national trajectory of recognition of gender (in)equality as a public issue. Therefore, the notion of regime is used to designate the level of the set of policies developed by a government and the results of these hegemonic practices. A public policy, in its turn, comprises a range of practices advanced to delimitate and sustain a course of governmental action. It results from political struggles aiming to establish an alternative as the viable option of state intervention to the detriment of other possibilities neglected or refused in this process (Howarth, 2010; Howarth et al., 2016; Remling, 2018). It is important to stress, however, that, as a conflicting arena, governments can have initiatives more or less aligned with the ongoing hegemonic regime. Regimes are, thus, permanently in dispute, involving struggles and negotiations.

In the second analytical exercise, the program's characteristics are examined. It involves the investigation of the social logics (Glynos & Howarth, 2007) structuring this governmental initiative. Social logics are 'heuristic devices' which enable us to discern the 'patterning' of social practices, revealing their purpose and content (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2010; Howarth et al., 2016). They account for how dispersed elements are strategically articulated, gaining new meanings and significance in a partially fixed system of moments (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2008, 2010). This process premises the contingent establishment of nodal points able to hold together antagonistic demands and identities in an unstable 'totality' (Laclau & Mouffe, 2001). Thereby, political projects can be expanded, assuming a more universal function and, consequently, becoming representative of broader interests (Howarth, 2010). Although multiple and contextual (Howarth, 2008, 2010), social

logics are not entirely reducible to empirical phenomena. They can be approached as a function of paradigms, allowing some cross-contextual analysis. In this sense, social logics move between contexts, but not in an unproblematic manner, requiring from the analyst to forge new links with the situation under investigation (Glynos & Howarth, 2007).

Recent research on policy reform and new public policies has stressed the relevance of distinguishing ‘social logics’ from ‘projected social logics’ (Glynos, Klimecki, et al., 2015; Glynos, Speed, et al., 2015; Remling, 2018). Social logics refer to practices instituted and largely accepted in a field (Remling, 2018). They are thus related to more routinized and sedimented forms of action and interaction, contributing to the reproduction of the human and societal life (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Glynos, Klimecki, et al., 2015). Nevertheless, though new policies often question existing social practices to justify the relevance of governmental intervention, they are not instituted yet. Instead, they delimitate new values, meanings, and procedures to be put forward aiming to change social reality (Remling, 2018). Therefore, they propose ‘imagined alternative practices’, projecting new social logics to be concretely appropriated (Glynos, Klimecki, et al., 2015; Glynos, Speed, et al., 2015). This conceptual difference is useful in this moment of research. By exploring the formation of the program, the emphasis is on how it contests the *status quo* and competing alternatives of action to substantiate its pertinence, as well as how it projects new practices to change such a reality.

To apprehend the logics projected by the Pro-Equity, data mining focused on how dispersed elements gained meaning and significance once articulated into a particular project (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2008, 2010). To do so, interviews with governmental agents directly involved in the program’s formation and official documents published by the SPM between the launching of the program (2005) and the end of its first edition (2007) were initially assessed aiming to grasp regularities regarding the features of the Pro-Equity. This preliminary analysis revealed three central elements around which different and often ambiguous meanings revolved: the role assumed by the state in promoting gender equality in the workplace; organizations and management practices as targets of political intervention; and women as the policy beneficiary. Once identified, data was integrally revisited to collect and categorize excerpts related to each of these points, observing the elements included and those excluded or neglected by this political project. The mapping of the range of

interpretations and alternatives of action regarding the problematized phenomenon helped in this process, providing the basis for the identification of the elements involved in the policy formation.

The analysis of documents and interviews revealed four projected social logics structuring the Pro-Equity. As discussed in the following sections, this Pro-Equity gained substance by articulating antagonistic approaches to these elements, associated with both the paradigm of the market and of rights. Thereby, in the scope of the program, the state is represented as a mediator of interests and an auditor of organizations, respecting the autonomy of the participants while tries to intervene on their environment. Organizations, in their turn, are approached as technical and cultural spaces, that act as a rational agent seeking for opportunities in the market while reproduce social discrimination. In this context, management practices are seeing as both instruments to increase organizational return and, once reviewed according to the equality goal, a way to overcome exclusions. It requires to reconstruct the role of female workers in the production process, regarding them not only as a discriminated group but also as a source of new competencies. This coalition is sustained against a set of social logics in place and potential alternatives refused by the program.

It drives us to the third analytical exercise, in which the complex interplay between social, political, and fantasmatic logics is addressed. As previously introduced, political logics help to understand the exclusions and negations involved in the building of any political project (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2010; Howarth et al., 2016). In this sense, they account for the construction of political frontiers, differentiating the advocated policy from rival alternatives. Fantasmatic logics, in their turn, draw attention to how subjects are rendered complicity to a political project (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, 2008; Howarth, 2008, 2010; Howarth & Griggs, 2012). In the policy formation, these logics grasp the fantasies driving the subject's investments in a political enterprise, giving energy and direction to such practices (Fotaki, 2010; Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2010). Like already discussed, fantasies are narratives that cover-over the radical contingency of reality by promising an image of fullness once an obstacle is overcome (the beatific dimension) or foreseeing a disaster in the case it is not (the horrific dimension) (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2010). Once

successfully installed, these narratives grip subjects to the promised future, conferring them an identity (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Glynos & Stavrakakis, 2008).

The interplay between these logics is analyzed in two fronts. On the one hand, this chapter depicts how political investments destabilize ongoing social practices in order to introduce a new line of governmental action. The delimitation of a new public policy frequently involves questioning current hegemonic regimes, forms of state (in)action, and the fantasies in which they are sustained to justify its pertinence and relevance. It also includes the defense of a set of ideals, while targeting or discrediting alternative courses of action competing with the advocated policy. In this case, political logics can be more or less explicit, openly dismissing or implicitly disarticulating rival possibilities (Remling, 2018). By approaching the dynamic between social and political logics, it is possible to observe that, although the logic of equivalence comes to predominate in articulation, it does not preclude the role of the logic of difference (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Laclau & Mouffe, 2001). Remling (2018) adds that, in this process, the logic of difference overlaps the horrific dimension of fantasy. Therefore, the defense of a policy frequently involves stressing the threats to be avoided and/or protected from to achieve the desired future (Hawkins, 2015).

On the other hand, the analysis elucidates how this new line of governmental action is itself a product of fantasy (Fotaki, 2010; Howarth, 2010), conjuring up ‘an affective common sense amongst different forces’ (Howarth, 2008:15). Fantasies organize the affective dimension of subjects (Glynos, 2001; Glynos & Stavrakakis, 2008), structuring the way they invest in the world regardless of whether the fantasmatic content corresponds or not with an intersubjective understanding of reality (Glynos, 2014). By stressing the role of fantasies in hegemonic practices, this perspective does not deny the imposition of values and interests in political processes. On the contrary, it recognizes that policy struggles are also resolved by majority decisions in legislative and administrative forums, as well as by the will of leaders (Howarth, 2010). However, this approach seeks to highlight the way political projects conceal their incompleteness and smooth over the inevitable exclusions and contradictions by which they are engendered (Clarke, 2012b; Glynos & Howarth, 2007, 2008). In doing so, the beatific dimension of fantasy is stressed (Remling, 2018), showing ‘the Thing’ that must be strived to

reach the promised fullness (Hawkins, 2015). The ‘beatific fantasy of success’, thus, offers reasons and motivates adherence to the advocated course of action (Remling, 2018).

In the studied case, the coalition composed of the four projected social logics is forged firstly against the patriarchal social logic predominant at work. In this sense, the Pro-Equity aligns with the SPM’s criticism on the persistent social inequality in the workplace. In the scope of the program, gender discrimination is regarded as a result of unequal management practices, requiring the revision of current practices in order to overcome this reality. This project also questions the historical inaction of the Brazilian state in fighting the patriarchal *status quo*, claiming for a new attitude committed to promote social justice in the labor market. However, as indicated, it advocates for a specific kind of governmental intervention. The Pro-Equity subscribes to a cooperative mode of intervention, which does not superimpose the autonomy of the participating organizations. Therefore, it refuses alternative policies based on an interventionist logic, deflecting approaches which resort to legal instruments to coerce organizations to comply with gender equality standards. The political frontier established with the rival logic of state coercion is reinforced through the fear that a more conflicting approach would lead to resistance in organizations.

This horrific dimension is interrelated with the beatific side of the fantasy giving energy and direction to the investigated program. As detailed in the next sections, the Pro-Equity is sustained in a promise that, through a careful balance between cooperation and auditioning, the state would be able to induce inclusive management practices within the participating organizations, leading to improvements in both women’s lives and the organizational results. Therefore, through the advocated governmental initiative, it would be possible to achieve benefits to all the agents engaged in the program, offering reasons and motivating their adherence to this initiative (Remling, 2018). Based on this, the analysis points to the ideal of ‘gender equality for all’ as the empty signifier joining antagonistic meanings and practices related to the paradigms of rights and of the market. By advancing this discussion, this study evidences how the SPM’s features sum historical and political elements in providing conditions to the emergence of a policy with these contours.

The focus, steps, and goals of the first research moment are synthesized in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Focus, steps, and goals of the first research moment

Focus:	First face of hegemony, exploring how disparate elements are articulated in the formation of a public policy and how this initiative becomes a viable option of governmental intervention.
Steps	Goals and main concepts used
Problematization	To establish how an object of research has been approached in a field of investigation. Considering the focus on a public policy, it also involves the analysis of how this same object has been constructed as a pressing public problem.
Contextualization	To identify the political and historical conditions that contributed to the emergence of a public policy with specific contours and its selection as a viable option of governmental intervention. In this process, the difference between regimes and practices is retaken, using the first to designate the broader project advanced by political parties along with other hegemonic forces once in the government, and the latter referring to particular public initiatives promoted by these same forces in a specific context.
Characterization of the governmental initiative	Social logics enable to identify the elements articulated in a contingent political project. In this process, empty signifiers function as nodal points, joining together antagonistic elements despite their contradictions. In the analysis, differences between social logics and projected social logics are also considered, distinguishing the envisioned practices promoted by the policy from ongoing practices questioned by the political project or from projected practices defended by rival alternatives.
Interplay between social, political, and fantasmatic logics	Political logics account for how a particular policy gains substance and is distinguished from others through the establishment of political frontiers with established social logics and/or competing practices projected by alternative of courses of action. Fantasmatic logics enable to grasp the fantasy giving direction to the political project and providing benefits and affective attachments to subjects to engage with it. In this process, empty signifiers function as the inaccessible ideals pursued by agents in their political investments.

Source: the author based on the literature referenced in this section

Based on this, the following sections detail the historical, political, and organizational conditions to the creation of the Program for Gender Equity, as well as the logics sustaining in this policy.

3.2. Problematizing gender (in)equality in the workplace

This section problematizes gender inequality in the workplace, drawing attention to the Brazilian scenario and some alternatives that have emerged to deal with this problem in the national context. In doing so, I depart from Pateman's (1988) discussion on the emergence of a modern type of patriarchy in western countries from the seventeenth century. During this period, a new form of explaining the sexual distinction arose, identifying the biological body as the origin of these differences (Laqueur, 2001; Nicholson, 2000). Hereupon, 'male' and 'female' would have opposite rationalities (Bordo, 1977; Nicholson, 2000; Pateman, 1988). On the one hand, women were depicted as naturally fragile, emotional, and incapable of controlling their passions. On the other, men would be strong, rational, and disciplined (P. P. Oliveira, 2004). Once sexualized, these rationalities became hierarchical. Overvalued, the 'male' one was understood as a condition to participate in the public sphere, while the 'female' one would be a barrier to occupy this space. Thence, only men had the necessary attributes to enjoy civil liberty and equality, excluding women from citizenship (Pateman, 1988; Scott, 2005).

Perceived as naturally unable to participate in the public life, women were led to the private sphere and family (Badinter, 1985, 1991; Pateman, 1988). Characterized by the maternal bond, the romantic love, and the marital relationship (P. P. Oliveira, 2004), the private became the legitimate space for corporal, emotional, and sexual needs to be occupied and, mainly, provided by women (Puleo, 2004). Paradoxically, it was also depicted as an uncivilized and wild terrain, place of uncontrolled passions and 'irrationalities' (P. P. Oliveira, 2004). These contradictions extended to representations of care and the domestic labor (Fraser, 2003), seen as a sentimentalized and trivialized kind of work that, most of the time, is not recognized as a job and is unpaid (Dimen, 1997). Beyond the limits of the domestic field, there would be a civilized and equal world, to be occupied by men (Puleo, 2004). The public sphere was the place for politics and power, in which reason, control, competence, and responsibility are recognized as core dimensions of the 'authentic' masculinity (P. P. Oliveira, 2004). It would be also the terrain for the paid and valorized work, related to innovation, achievement, and abstract rationality (Dimen, 1997).

In this context, the separation and antagonism between public and private spheres deepened (Nicholson, 2000; Pateman, 1988), being the latter represented as politically irrelevant (Pateman, 1988). However, patriarchal relations pervade the civil society entirely, supporting the perceptions and the actual organization of social life¹² (Fraser, 2003; Puleo, 2004; Scott, 1986; Bila Sorj, 2004; Walby, 1990). As discussed by Harding (1993), the dichotomy between culture and nature resurges in other oppositions. Distinctions between mind and body, objectivity and subjectivity, reason and emotion, abstract and concrete, public and private, among others, crisscross and characterize the modernity. In science and broadly, the male is identified with culture and the female with nature. These opposite and incommensurable poles are organized hierarchically, establishing the feminine, its meanings, and activities as inferior. These dichotomies structure the fields of science, politics – including the public policies –, work, and even our way to see and experience the world.

Nevertheless, patriarchal structures have been destabilized in the last decades, with the inclusion, albeit partial, of women in spaces that used to be inaccessible (Louro, 1997; Matos, 2000; Melo, 2005). Matos (2000, 2001) points to macrosocial factors that have contributed to this process. Firstly, she highlights changes in the economic order due to the expansion of the capitalist market and the large-scale ingress of women in paid work. In Brazil, these changes started in the 1950s, with the increase in female participation in the labor market. It is worthwhile noticing that, before this period, black, poor, and peasant women had already fulfilled job activities outside the domestic sphere, such as in industries and agriculture. However, in the middle of the twentieth century, continuous occupation of other spaces was also observed, such as in offices, schools, and hospitals (Louro, 1997). This process was boosted by the transformation of professions and occupations during the 1970s and 1980s. It led to increments of female participation in activities traditionally seen as ‘men-exclusive’, such as engineering, advocacy, and management (Matos, 2000).

¹² Walby (1990) identifies six fields composed of specific patriarchal practices in contemporary western countries: the mode of production, relations in paid work, relations in the state, violence, relations in sexuality, and relations in cultural institutions. These fields embody effects of capitalism and racism as well. Given the scope of this study, the focus is on patriarchal relations in paid work, though I recognize that this field cannot be isolated from the others.

The second factor refers to the action of social movements, especially feminism (Matos, 2000, 2001). Feminist movements resurged in Latin American countries from the seventies (Matos, 2010; Melo, 2005; C. R. J. Pinto, 2003). Either in political struggles or from the development of engaged studies, they have put forward criticism on the naturalization of sexual differences, the oppression of women, and the subordination of feminine (Fraser, 2009; Louro, 1997; Rago, 1998). Likewise, these political actors have had an essential role in the achievement of institutional and political advancements in gender equality in the region (Matos, 2001; Rodrigues, 2003). Among the legal changes in Brazil, Rodrigues (2003) stresses: the universal suffrage in 1932; the removal of the principle of the civil disability of married women and the regulation of the right to work without previous permission of the husband in 1962; and the establishment of legal equality between men and women in 1988. As discussed in the next section, the 1980s also inaugurated the development of state policies for women and to promote gender equality in the country (Bandeira, 2005; Farah, 2004; C. R. J. Pinto, 2003), contributing to reduce social inequalities and to progress women's access to the public world.

The expansion of schooling is another factor that has concurred to transform the patriarchal *status quo* (Matos, 2000; Melo, 2005; Walby, 2004). Currently, young and adult women in Brazil have lower levels of illiteracy and are more represented in high schools and universities. These changes indicate significant advancements for girls and women, even if the access has not been equal to all groups and in all regions of the country (IBGE, 2014; IPEA, 2018). Technological changes are also pointed, especially the control of human reproduction (Matos, 2000, 2001; Melo, 2005). It favored the female insertion in the labor market and politics, concurring to increase women's participation in the public space. Matos (2000, 2001) adds the emergence of new scientific paradigms that incorporate dimensions such as relativism and contradiction, and problematize issues related to the private sphere, intimacy, and sexuality. The spread of these alternative views, as well as of ideas and practices of social movements, has been propelled by the informational revolution, multiplying sources, stimuli, messages, etc. Finally, the author emphasizes the increasing visibility of different models of family and the broader presentation of alternative gender and sexual identities in the public space.

However, if advancements have been achieved, barriers remain. Although dual categories such as women-men, female-male, homosexual-heterosexual, among others, have relatively lost terrain, the power continues to be organized hierarchically and even binarily (Matos, 2000). In this context, patriarchy was not merely replaced by new regimes. Instead, the contemporaneity is marked by a conflicting existence between traditional and progressive values, relations, and practices (Louro, 1997; Matos, 2000, 2001), in which subordinations are qualitatively transformed (Fraser, 2003). Hence, women continue to face problems to be effectively included in the labor market (Puleo, 2004; Walby, 2004). Despite the increase of female participation in the workplace, women are concentrated in sectors traditionally related to reproduction and care (Yannoulas, 2002), such as social and auxiliary services (IPEA, 2018), undervalued social and economically (Yannoulas, 2002). In all professional areas, they earn less than men (IPEA, 2018; Melo, 2005; Natividade, 2009; Yannoulas, 2002) and are underrepresented in management positions, though they have more years of schooling (Brasil, 2015; ILO, 2015).

Specific groups face even worse conditions. The generalized insertion of women in paid work has happened slowly for black, young, and women resident in rural areas (IPEA, 2018). Black women are also less represented in decision-making positions (Brasil, 2015) and over-represented in underpaid jobs (Natividade, 2009), constituting the majority among Brazilians with monthly income inferior to one minimum salary¹³ (IPEA, 2018). Additionally, they are concentrated in informal jobs, with limited access to benefits, labor rights, and social security (Melo, 2005; Natividade, 2009; Yannoulas, 2002). The poor female insertion in the workplace can be explained by the persistent sexual division of labor, articulated with racial and class inequalities (Walby, 1990). Women continue to be held accountable for the domestic space, especially those with lower incomes (Godinho, 2004; Hirata, 2004; Melo, 2005). They also frequently head low-income families, with dependents and without paternal co-responsibility. It concurs for the precariousness of life conditions, mainly among black women and those leaving in urban peripheries (Brasil, 2015).

¹³ In 2018, the minimum salary in Brazil was fixed in R\$ 954,00 per month, R\$ 31,80 per day, and R\$ 4,34 per hour (Brasil, 2017). Considering the exchange rate of R\$ 4 per US\$ 1, it amounts to US\$ 238,50 per month, US\$ 7,95 per day, and US\$ 1,09 per hour.

In this paradoxical context, initiatives have emerged in Brazil aiming to overcome gender inequalities. In this study, I highlight three alternatives that have been popularized in the country since the nineties: affirmative action, diversity management, and gender mainstreaming. The first one emerged in the United States (US) during the sixties, in the context of the Civil Right Movement. Led by the black militancy, this movement demanded the extension of civil rights and equal opportunities for all citizens. In response to these complaints, the government started to eliminate segregationist laws and to develop policies to promote social equality, reflecting a more active role in the guarantee of rights for discriminated groups (Moehlecke, 2002, 2004; Pate, 2000). The legal foundation of these initiatives, in its turn, refers to the broader international context. They are present in the United Nations (UN) treaties and conventions which reinforce the importance of the state action to overcome racism and sexism, among other systems of discrimination that deny citizenship to different groups. Along with national laws, these intergovernmental initiatives have influenced the development of policies to promote gender and racial equality in different countries (Hodges-Aeberhard, 1999), such as in the Brazilian case (D. S. da Almeida, 2011; Bandeira, 2005; Jaccoud & Beghin, 2002; Yannoulas, 2002).

Affirmative actions are generally understood as a special and temporary intervention aiming to promote equal opportunities to discriminated groups (Moehlecke, 2002; Yannoulas, 2002). This notion departs from the idea that social and economic structures preclude specific groups to have equal treatment in the public sphere, such as in education and at work (Moehlecke, 2004; Piovesan, 2008; S. A. dos Santos, Cavalleiro, Barbosa, & Ribeiro, 2008; Silvério, 2002). In this context, the formal equality¹⁴ would not be enough (Piovesan, 2005, 2008), demanding political intervention to ensure all individuals to compete in the same conditions or to achieve similar results (Hodges-Aeberhard, 1999). By analyzing these assumptions, Scott (2005) stresses that the affirmative action proposal is supported by an analytic of power. It questions the supposed neutrality of the state, requiring from governments the development

¹⁴ According to Piovesan (2005; 2008), the formal equality is the general and abstract equality assured by law to all individuals. The material equality, in its turn, refers to the distributive justice, guided by economic criteria. Finally, the substantive equality is related to the recognition of differences, guided by criteria such as gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, etc.

of policies to overcome inequalities structuring societies (Alvarez, 2004; Soares, 2004). In doing so, the subjects of rights are particularized in relation to their social conditions. It favors the development of specific interventions (Moehlecke, 2004; Piovesan, 2005, 2008) to promote social equality respecting the differences among groups (Piovesan, 2005).

Affirmative policies have disseminated since the 1960s. Nevertheless, it has not happened without resistance (Hodges-Aeberhard, 1999; Moehlecke, 2002; Pate, 2000). According to its opponents, this proposal constitutes a ‘reverse discrimination’, giving special rights to some groups. It would also contribute to intensifying conflict between groups and depreciating the beneficiaries, evidencing their lack of competence in achieving success by themselves. Finally, it would reinforce a false causality between belonging to a group and having specific abilities, questioning manifested mainly when minority members are selected to public offices and job positions (Moehlecke, 2002; Piovesan, 2008; Scott, 2005). Scott (2005) discusses that the controversy surrounding affirmative action results from its paradoxical character. To promote the inclusion of some subjects in the general notion of the individual¹⁵, this proposal emphasizes their characteristics as members of discriminated groups, stressing their biological, ethnic, cultural, and economic specificities. However, these features are precisely what exclude these groups of citizenship. Thereby, while affirmative action reinforces the universal ideal of the individual, it questions this structuring notion of the modern legal and judicial systems, putting its viability at risk.

In this context, a series of judicial processes against affirmative policies took place in the US from the 1980s. These lawsuits led to criticism regarding both their legal premises and effectivity (Hodges-Aeberhard, 1999). In this scenario of contestation, the diversity management emerged. Initially developed by US researchers and managers, this proposal was further appropriated in Brazil, especially by multinational subsidiaries (Fleury, 2000; Hanashiro & Carvalho, 2005). Pragmatically oriented, it seeks to offer a managerial alternative to deal with both the workforce diversity and demands for increments in business

¹⁵ This notion refers to the liberal ideal prevalent in modernity that all individuals are equal under the law, having the same rights and duties (Scott, 2005). It is related to the formal equality previously discussed (Piovesan, 2005, 2008).

competitiveness. The diversity management comprises a set of management tools and practices, aiming not only to include members of minority groups in organizations but also to add value to business (Fleury, 2000). The notion of diversity that supports this proposal is multiple (Hanashiro & Carvalho, 2005). However, it is often seen as a mix of people with different attributes (Alves & Galeão-Silva, 2004; Prüggl, 2011) to be applied in the production process to contribute to organizational performance (Thomas Jr, 1990).

Diversity management supporters frequently assume that this proposal is fairer and more effective than affirmative policies in the workplace (Alves & Galeão-Silva, 2004). According to them, these programs are grounded in meritocratic principles, avoiding privileging specific groups for 'being in the right place at the right time' to the detriment of their competence (Thomas Jr, 1990). They would also be more adherent to the business reality, seeking 'natural' outcomes from the 'normal' course of business action (Hanashiro & Carvalho, 2005), rather than quick results expected, but not sustained, by coercive affirmative policies. The limits of affirmative policies regarding the conflict between groups and the devaluation of beneficiaries are also emphasized, as well as the risk of demotivating employees not covered by these policies (Thomas Jr, 1990). Thomas Jr (1990) adds that, in a context of crescent heterogeneity among workers and intense competition for resources, affirmative action would be obsolete. In this scenario, a heterogeneous workforce would be necessary to guarantee better human resources. Therefore, social inclusion at work would not be a public problem regarding social justice, but rather a question of business survival.

Among the advantages of diversity management, Cox and Blake (1991) stress: reduction of turn-over and absenteeism; higher satisfaction and motivation at work; attraction and retention of human resources, especially among excluded groups; benefits in the understanding of and in the relationship with consumers; improvement of organizational reputation; and increase in flexibility and innovation. On the other hand, the neglect of diversity would lead to adverse effects, such as loss of competitiveness, a decrease of cohesion among employees, and more significant rates of turnover and absenteeism (Cox & Blake, 1991). In this context, the challenge would be to develop managerial tools and practices which enable to both mitigate the disadvantages and expand the advantages of diversity, leading to competitive value (Conceição & Spink, 2013; Hanashiro & Carvalho, 2005; Prüggl, 2011; R. de F. C. da Silva &

Luna, 2004). It would involve the adoption of a ‘less ideological and more strategic’ focus (Fleury, 2000:25), shifting from a perspective centered in groups historically discriminated to another that includes all the identities that can offer inputs to organizational performance (Thomas Jr, 1990).

However, the optimism regarding this proposal has not been followed by concrete results in overcoming inequalities in the workplace (Conceição & Spink, 2013; G. de C. M. Santos, Rodrigues, Dutra, & Costa, 2008). Diversity policies have not had much space in Brazilian companies (ETHOS, 2016; Sicherolli, Medeiros, & Valadão Jr, 2011). Research also reveal that, although incorporated in organizational narratives, these programs have had little effect in fighting discrimination in the workplace due to the non-appropriation of an ethical reflection, the low commitment of managers, and the prejudice ingrained in organizational structures and practices (A. P. R. Diniz, Carrieri, Gandra, & Bicalho, 2013; Saraiva & Irigaray, 2009). By analyzing the bases of diversity management, Alves and Galeão-Silva (2004) also emphasize that it denies the social conflicts surrounding the issue. This proposal depoliticizes the discussion on inclusion, displacing the problem from a political and social struggle to an apolitical and functional variable. Thereby, it subordinates the insertion of discriminated groups to the instrumental rationality, appropriating social differences as another resource to be managed in organizations.

Concurrently with the mentioned initiatives, feminist movements have also problematized the role of the state in reinforcing injustices and promoting gender equality (Fraser, 2009; Walby, 2005). Along with intergovernmental organizations, these political agents have advocated for a strong governmental action to guarantee women’s rights (Bandeira, 2005; Walby, 2005). These claims were internationally propagated after the development of the gender mainstreaming proposal in the 2nd UN World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995 (Bandeira, 2005; Miranda, 2012; Papa, 2012; Reinach, 2013). Gender mainstreaming can be understood as a strategy¹⁶ to commit state policies and agencies to the goal of gender equality

¹⁶ The concept of strategy adopted in this work is broader than that used by Rittenhofer and Gatrell (2012:204). Here, strategy comprises both the ‘problem and analysis of need’ – the gender mainstreaming definition as a policy, according to them – and ‘a plan of action to achieve goals’ – referred by the authors as the notion as a strategy.

(UN, 1995). Its scope of intervention goes, thus, beyond the field of employment, seeking to challenge and transform the whole governmental action. In this sense, it addresses issues such as violence, productive and reproductive work, cultural institutions, sexuality and women's health, among others (Bandeira, 2005; Papa, 2012; Reinach, 2013; UN, 1995). Given its relevance, this strategy has been crucial in reviewing employment policies as well (Rittenhofer & Gatrell, 2012).

The gender mainstreaming proposal has popularized since the 1990s, being appropriated by public administrations globally (Prügl, 2011). In this process, its concepts and practices are transformed due to cultural and institutional elements (Walby, 2005). Therefore, its incorporation involves a conflicting reconstruction, in which a range of meanings and practices are disputed in different contexts (Marcondes, Diniz, & Farah, 2018). Among the controversies surrounding this political enterprise (Marcondes et al., 2018; Rittenhofer & Gatrell, 2012; Walby, 2005), the 'sameness/difference' debate is especially relevant to this study. In the sameness position, women are regarded as having the same concerns as men, though they receive less favorable treatment. In this context, this position suggests the adoption of equal opportunity policies to integrate women in existing paradigms. By contrary, the difference approach stresses that ongoing, and often male-centered, practices reinforce gender discrimination. Thus, equality must pass through the transformation of current paradigms to effectively attend women's concerns as a discriminated group (Rittenhofer & Gatrell, 2012; Walby, 2005).

This conflict retakes the discussion on affirmative and transformative perspectives to achieve social justice (Fraser, 2003, 2009, 2010). As discussed, affirmative policies question exclusions operated in liberal contexts, denouncing how equal participation is denied to different groups (Scott, 2005). In doing so, they redress the uneven outcomes of modern societies without challenging the social structures underpinning them (Fraser, 2003). The focus is, thus, on the problems in the application of liberal principles, rather than in the principles themselves (Fraser, 2010). These initiatives have, however, been criticized for their marginal impact, seeking incremental changes which do not contend mainstream rationalities and practices (Rittenhofer & Gatrell, 2012). The transformative approach advances precisely on criticism regarding the principles sustaining hegemonic paradigms, contesting how they

are a primary source of injustices (Fraser, 2003, 2010). This perspective has fueled positive actions aiming at more radical changes in institutions and practices (Rittenhofer & Gatrell, 2012). Nevertheless, the relationship between gender equality practices and the mainstream is itself permeated by conflicts and negotiations, through which both tend to change simultaneously (Walby, 2005).

Given this introduction, I finish this section by emphasizing how these different approaches compete for the role of the state toward gender equality. Affirmative action stresses the need for political intervention to promote social justice, calling governments and other agents to act (Hodges-Aeberhard, 1999; Piovesan, 2005, 2008). It is generally based on liberal rationality (Scott, 2005), aiming to accommodate its beneficiaries in hegemonic paradigms (Fraser, 2003, 2010). Diversity management, in its turn, reinforces a neoliberal standpoint, delegating to the market the solution to the social inequality problem (Conceição & Spink, 2013; Prügl, 2011). In this process, it resignifies group characteristics as potential ‘portions of human capital’ (Prügl, 2011:81) to be strategically used in the production process (Alves & Galeão-Silva, 2004; Fleury, 2000; Thomas Jr, 1990). Finally, gender mainstreaming is centrally focused on transforming the state according to the goal of gender equality (Prügl, 2011; Rittenhofer & Gatrell, 2012). It is premised on the idea that governmental organizations, policies, and practices are not gender neutral (Walby, 2005), demanding revision and reconstruction. The degree of change achieved is still an empirical question, to be examined in each case.

Based on this problematization, this study analyzes how different and even contradictory elements are articulated in the formation of the Pro-Equity. To do so, in the next section, I interrogate the historical and political conditions that made possible the emergence of this program to further analyze the logics mobilized by this initiative.

3.3. Promoting equality in the Brazilian labor market

This section explores three key historical and political conditions that contributed to the emergence of the Program for Gender Equity. Firstly, it stresses the relevance of the action of social movements and intergovernmental organizations in including gender and racial issues

in the state agenda. Secondly, it approaches the spread of the logic of the market in civil society as an important element to the development of initiatives that seek to reconcile the promotion of social rights with business advantages. Thirdly, it retakes the political project advanced by the PT once in the federal government as a driver to progress a policy regime aiming at social inclusion without threatening the structures of the capitalist order. The narrative presented follows a chronological approach, emphasizing the central events and practices concurring to the policy formation. In doing so, the focus is on landmarks of the organization of social movements in the last decades, public policies fomented by the federal government after democratization, and initiatives recently developed to promote social equality at work. In this sense, it constitutes one possible narrative regarding the struggles, progress, and backlash in this area, which does not seek to exhaust the complexity of this discussion.

The development of the first state actions to promote gender and racial equality in Brazil traces back to the political disputes initiated in the 1970s and deepened in the 1980s (Bandeira, 2005; Farah, 2004). The military dictatorship, started in 1964, was characterized as a period of violence and political oppression, in which social manifestation was prohibited and criminalized (Gohn, 2000; Rocha, 2008). Formal channels for dialogue and negotiation between civil society and the state were also closed, letting social movements and other agents with no licit alternatives to present their demands (Rocha, 2008). Concurrently, with the global oil crisis in 1974, the ‘Brazilian Economic Miracle’ began collapsing, evidencing the limits of an industrial model of development that led to growing social and economic inequalities (Alvarez et al., 2003; Gohn, 2000). In this context, despite the authoritarian regime, new political forces emerged in Brazil and other Latin-American countries facing similar political and economic conditions (Alvarez et al., 2003; Cardoso, 2008; Gohn, 2000; Rocha, 2008).

The political efforts started in the 1970s paved the way for the Brazilian democratic transition during the 1980s. In this process, the first governmental agencies to promote gender and racial equality were created in different federative levels (Bandeira, 2005; Farah, 2004; Jaccoud & Beghin, 2002; E. L. Pinto, Andrade Jr., & Luz, 2009). These institutions were followed by pioneering policies, focusing on women’s health and domestic violence, in the case of gender

issues (Bandeira, 2005; Farah, 2004; Papa, 2012), and the appreciation of the cultural heritage, regarding racial matters (Jaccoud & Beghin, 2002). The Federal Constitution of 1988 was a landmark in this process, stressing equality and non-discrimination among its principles and securing legal advancements in the workplace regulations. In this context, significant changes were introduced in the national system of social protection (Furlin, 2010; E. L. Pinto & Midleg, 2012; Teixeira, 2014; Yannoulas, 2002), providing the means to structure more equalitarian and universal employment policies. However, these initiatives were not attentive to gender and racial issues (Leite & Souza, 2010).

These advancements resulted in part from the engagement of political agents such as social movements, neighborhood associations, and political parties (Alvarez et al., 2003; Conceição, 2013; Gohn, 2000; Rocha, 2008; Yannoulas, 2002). They were also influenced by international treaties, conferences, and conventions. Although gender and racial issues were mostly neglected during the dictatorship, in this period, Brazil adhered to the UN conventions on the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination, in 1969, and against women, in 1979. It took part as well in the UN World Conference on Women, in 1975, and the Conferences against Racism, in 1978 and 1983, committing to actively combat gender and racial inequalities. Regarding the workplace, the country had also subscribed to conventions promulgated by the International Labour Organization (ILO), especially the number 100 about equal pay and the number 111 regarding non-discrimination at work, ratified in 1951 and 1965 respectively (Bandeira, 2005; Jaccoud & Beghin, 2002; Teixeira, 2014; Yannoulas, 2002).

The democratic scenario favored a new kind of relationship between the state and civil society. From the previous attitude ‘against the government’, social movements progressively shifted to a relationship ‘concurrently with the state’ (Alvarez et al., 2003; Dagnino, 2004; Gohn, 2000). It did not necessarily mean an alignment with governmental positions and guidelines, but rather a disposition to engage with the collective development of public policies and democratic institutions (Dagnino, 2004; Gohn, 2000). Therefore, despite conflicts regarding the autonomy of social movements (Alvarez, 2009), the articulation between these political actors, the state, and intergovernmental institutions deepened in the 1990s (Dagnino, 2004). The preparation for the UN Conferences contributed to this process, promoting a

crescent specialization within social movements and alliances with governments and international agencies (Alvarez, 2009; Alvarez et al., 2003). In a context of economic crises, structural adjustment in social policies, and backlash in the state expenditures, the responsibility for providing public services also began to be transferred to nongovernmental organizations (NGO), impacting in their goals and functioning (Alvarez, 2009; Dagnino, 2004; Gohn, 2000; Rocha, 2008).

The so-called 'Third Sector' became, thus, more heterogeneous, composed of both 'activist' NGOs, coming from the autonomist and participative culture of the 1970-1980s, and 'pragmatic' NGOs, acting strategically from more instrumental rationality (Gohn, 2000:24). Thereby, the process of 'NGO-ization' did not imply a simple increase in the number of more structured non-profitable organizations. Instead, it 'entailed national and global neoliberalism's active promotion and official sanctioning of particular organizational forms and practices' within civil society (Alvarez, 2009:176). Fueled by the state, intergovernmental agencies and financial institutions, the more pragmatically oriented NGOs moderated their political positionings and became professionalized (Alvarez, 2009; Alvarez et al., 2003; Dagnino, 2004; Gohn, 2000). At the same time, the discourse of capitalism 'with a human face' arose as an alternative to deal with social issues (Alvarez, 2014). In this sense, notions such as 'participation' and 'citizenship' were resignified, shifting to a more private perspective centered on the social responsibility of individuals and businesses (Dagnino, 2004).

These ideas contributed to disseminate practices of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in the country. However, the Brazilian CSR did not share strict neoliberal principles like its US counterpart. The political engagement of national entrepreneurs and businesspeople also arose in the 1980s, contesting the verticalism of industrial syndicates and promoting the association with social movements and political parties committed to democratic principles (Peña, 2014). Initially presented as the business association National Business Thought (*Pensamento Nacional das Bases Empresariais*), these agents concurred to spread an approach toward economic development articulated with the promotion of democracy and the universalization of human rights (Bianchi, 2001). In the late-1990s, the Ethos Institute of Enterprise and Social Responsibility (*Instituto Ethos de Responsabilidade Social*) was created aiming to advance the national CSR agenda. Other organizations concerned with the social activity of firms also

expanded their scopes of action, such as the ABRINQ Foundation (*Fundação ABRINQ*), and the Brazilian Institute of Social and Economic Analysis (*Instituto Brasileiro de Análises Sociais e Econômicas*, IBASE).

Peña (2014) stresses that CSR activities were not locally perceived as an advancement of neoliberal governance. They were rather seen as instruments to reinforce the civilian control over firms and to consolidate human and political rights (Cappellin & Giuliani, 2004). In this context, the first Brazilian certification programs emerged, aiming to engage private enterprises with sustainable development. In 1995, the ABRINQ Foundation launched the Certificate ‘Business Friend of the Child’ (*Selo Empresa Amiga da Criança*) to recognize organizations committed to child and adolescent rights and the elimination of child labor. It was followed by the IBASE Social Report (*Balanço Social IBASE*), created in 1998 to encourage businesses to disclose information on their social activities and to compare the performance of participants (Ortiz, 2014). A range of initiatives with similar goals was also put forward in the 2000s nationally and internationally. Intergovernmental organizations had a crucial role in this process, disseminating global governance standards through programs such as the Global Compact and, more recently, the Women’s Empowerment Principles (WEPs).

The process of ‘NGO-ization’ did not eliminate more autonomous actions (Alvarez, 2014). NGOs were important centers of knowledge production in the 1990s, contributing to disseminate political discourses (Alvarez, 2009). Together with other political agents, they also sustained a critical attitude toward the Brazilian government, denouncing flaws on the provision of local services and in the construction of democracy. The complaint regarding the noncompliance to the 111 ILO’s Convention was exemplary of this kind of action. Presented by unions and the black movement to ILO in 1992 (Leite & Souza, 2010), this claim made visible inequalities in the labor market, also stressed in political demonstrations, such as the ‘Zumbi dos Palmares¹⁷ March against Racism and in favor of Citizenship and Life’, performed in 1995. By that time, activists delivered a report to the president Fernando Henrique Cardoso, proposing a program to overcome racial inequalities in different areas. In

¹⁷ Zumbi dos Palmares or Zumbi was one of the most important leaders in the fight against slavery in Brazil during the XVII century.

response, the president publicly recognized the existence of racism and committed to developing initiatives to surpass this reality (Conceição, 2013; Jaccoud & Beghin, 2002).

Alongside this, a crescent awareness about the intersection between gender, racial, ethnic and class inequalities emerged in Latin America (Alvarez, 2009, 2014; C. R. J. Pinto, 2003). Lesbian, black, and indigenous women promoted regional and national encounters, contributing to the recognition of intersectional differences. They also stressed how the burden of neoliberal policies and the economic crisis fell especially on poor women, charging them the responsibility to individually overcoming poverty (Alvarez et al., 2003). This process was articulated with an intense mobilization to participate in the 4th UN World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995 (Papa, 2012). Afterward, the National Council of Women's Rights (*Conselho Nacional de Direitos da Mulher*, CNDM) presented to the president a platform of action to make effective the commitments assumed by the Brazilian state at the conference (Delgado, Cappelin, & Soares, 2000). As discussed in the previous section, another consequence of the Beijing Platform was the dissemination of the gender mainstreaming proposal. In the national context, the strategy concurred to the creation of institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women's rights in different executive levels (Bandeira, 2005; Papa, 2012; Reinach, 2013).

This political scenario stimulated the promotion of seminars on alternatives of state intervention to overcome gender discrimination at work. The objective was to create awareness among businesspeople, unions and governmental agents, contributing to spread inclusive initiatives in the national labor market. These events resulted in the international seminar 'Women at work: international experiences on affirmative action', held in 1997. By discussing these experiences, Delgado et al. (2000) stress that, in Europe and the US, policies to promote gender equality started by eliminating the discriminatory content of laws and creating new judicial instruments that affirm equality as a principle. Nevertheless, after that, it was clear that 'the coercive and moral force of punitive legal mechanisms' was not enough (Delgado et al., 2000:12, my translation). The overcoming of inequalities demanded a broader approach, going beyond quotas systems and aiming to change management practices (Ortiz, 2014). In this context, they introduced initiatives to encourage the development of inclusive managerial devices, seen as instruments to increase competitiveness as well (Laufer, 2000;

Olgiati, 2000; Voets, 2000). As further discussed, these ideas inspired the development of the Pro-Equity.

Likewise, the context of political contestation led to the development of the first national public initiatives to overcome gender and racial inequalities in the workplace. In 1995, the federal government published the National Plan on Professional Education (*Plano Nacional de Educação Profissional*, PLANFOR), the first public policy to explicitly address discrimination at work in Brazil. It was followed by the National Program on Human Rights (*Programa Nacional de Direitos Humanos*, PNDH), considered the landmark of a more active governmental action in the promotion of gender and racial equality in the workplace (Leite & Souza, 2010). The first Cardoso's mandate (1995-1998) also marked the beginning of a more direct action of ILO for the development of policies in this area. In this period, the organization promulgated the Declaration on Fundamental Rights and Principles at Work (ILO, 1998) and launched the Decent Work Agenda, aiming to promote a work environment with quality, social protection, and guarantee of rights (Abramo, 2015).

In the second Cardoso's mandate (1999-2002), gender and racial equality were indirectly approached in the government planning through the objective of promotion of rights of discriminated groups. Policies focused on domestic violence, with the development of two national programs to address this issue (Leite & Souza, 2010). Regarding the workplace, initiatives were advanced autonomously by ministries and other public agencies (Bandeira, 2005; Conceição, 2013; Jaccoud & Beghin, 2002; Moehlecke, 2002). However, these actions did not count with institutional mechanisms to articulate and expand them (Bandeira, 2005; Jaccoud & Beghin, 2002). In 2001, the constitutionality of affirmative actions was also declared in Brazil (Jaccoud & Beghin, 2002), paving the way for the establishment of programs to include black and poor students in public universities (Piovesan, 2005, 2008). It was concurrent with a timid introduction of diversity management practices in the country, promoted mainly by North American multinationals (Alves & Galeão-Silva, 2004; Fleury, 2000).

Racial issues also gained more space within the governmental agenda. The mobilization for the UN World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Related

Intolerance, in 2001, contributed to this process (Conceição, 2013; Jaccoud & Beghin, 2002). The preparation for Durban involved the promotion of subnational pre-conferences and the First National Conference against Racism and Intolerance to discuss and organize demands (Jaccoud & Beghin, 2002). As a result, in 2001, the National Council to Combat Discrimination (*Conselho Nacional de Combate à Discriminação*, CNCD) was created attached to the Secretariat of Human Rights in the Ministry of Justice (Jaccoud & Beghin, 2002). After pressure from the feminist movement and the female legislature caucus, the State Secretariat of Women's Rights (*Secretaria de Estado dos Direitos da Mulher*, SEDIM) was formed in the same ministry in 2002 (Papa, 2012). These agencies aimed to advance policies on racial and gender issues, respectively. Nevertheless, the lack of resources and their creation at the end of the second Cardoso's mandate compromised their results (Conceição, 2013; Papa, 2012).

The initiatives put forward during the Cardoso's government evidence the progressive incorporation of gender and racial issues in the government agenda (Bandeira, 2005; Jaccoud & Beghin, 2002; Leite & Souza, 2010). Nonetheless, a new momentum for the development of these policies was created with the election of the President Luiz Inácio 'Lula' da Silva in 2003. Lula's election was part of a broader political context in Latin America, characterized by the rise of leftist forces articulated around the opposition to the neoliberal regime and the anti-globalization movement (Alvarez, 2009, 2014). In Brazil, along with the Worker's Party (*Partido dos Trabalhadores*, PT), social movements and unions had more space to influence the federal government (Rocha, 2008). It was followed by the vast expansion of institutional spaces of participation at the federal level (Avritzer, 2012, 2017; Avritzer & Souza, 2013; Petinelli, 2017; Rocha, 2008). These changes contributed to a closer, although always tense, relationship between social movements and the state, as well as transformations in policies and institutions advanced by the government (Pinheiro, 2015).

By analyzing the PT's project, Singer (2009, 2010) stresses that it sought to build a strong state, committed to diminishing social inequalities without threatening the capitalist order. This project was a result of changes in the characteristics of the political party – at least among its majority faction –, shifting from a socialist position to a more social-democratic perspective (Iasi, 2006) and pragmatic disposition (Singer, 2010). Formed during the final

decade of dictatorship, the PT initially affirmed a ‘class discourse’, featured by the commitment with democratic principles and the goal of rupture with the capitalist economic system (Iasi, 2006). However, in the 1990s, it started a long path through a sort of ‘restoration’. In a neoliberal context of a shrinking state, high unemployment rates, and risk of losing social and labor rights recently achieved, the strategy focused on institutional advancements, aiming to expand the party representation within the executive and legislative fields. It demanded a more electoral approach, making alliances with parties at the center of the political spectrum without compromising its political project (Singer, 2010).

The Open Letter to the Brazilian People, published in the peak of the presidential race in 2002, was a cleavage in this process. From this moment, Lula’s campaign turned to a moderate political discourse, stressing the relevance of the foreign capital and business enterprises in the country, and the commitment to preserve economic stability and fiscal responsibility (E. Diniz, 2011; Singer, 2010). Based on this, the program ascertained the maintenance of rules and contracts already established, calling for a national mobilization among the government, businesspeople, and workers (Singer, 2010, based on Lula’s Campaign Program). This conciliatory position was reinforced by the selection of José Alencar, a politician from the Liberal Party and owner of one of the largest textile firms in the country, to be vice-president candidate in the PT slate (E. Diniz, 2011). It also counted with the crescent endorsement of leftist businesspeople and NGOs connected to businesses to the campaign (Peña, 2014), as well as political alliances with the center and right-wing parties (Singer, 2010). Once elected, the gathering of antagonist forces passed through the placement of business representatives, among other agents, into the state bureaucracy. It was also facilitated by the expansion of institutional spaces for social participation, allowing different agents to negotiate (Peña, 2014).

These guidelines contributed to the establishment of the *lulismo*, a new political regime composed of practices seen as unreconcilable until then (Singer, 2009). On the one hand, orthodox macroeconomic policies were put in place, preserving the Cardoso’s approach to maintain economic stability (Peña, 2014; Singer, 2009). On the other, Lula’s administration advanced initiatives to establish an active industrial policy and to build an assertive foreign-trade strategy aiming to secure a more autonomous role to the nation in international markets

(E. Diniz, 2011). These efforts were combined with policies to foster the domestic market, benefiting the lower-income population, as well as progressist initiatives seeking to promote popular participation, guarantee social rights, and protect discriminated groups mostly ignored during the past years of democracy (Singer, 2009). In this context, the PT consolidated itself as the ‘party of the poor’, characterized by a popular project that was not entirely incongruous with capitalist interests (Singer, 2010).

This context offered potential opportunities to introduce gender perspectives in the governmental action (Matos, 2010). In January 2003, the Secretariat of Policies for Women (*Secretaria de Políticas para as Mulheres*, SPM) was created (Presidency, Brazil, 2003b). After claims from the black movement (Abramo, 2008), in March, the Secretariat of Policies to Promote Racial Equality (*Secretaria de Políticas de Promoção da Igualdade Racial*, SEPPIR) was also institutionalized (Presidency, Brazil, 2003c). The establishment of a governmental agency dedicated to gender issues followed a regional and local trend. Organizations with this design had already been set in city halls (Alvarez, 2004; Godinho, 2004; Papa, 2012) and in other Latin-American countries (Abramo, 2008; Furlin, 2010). This process began especially after the 4th UN World Conference on Women, held in 1995, in which states committed to establishing agencies to foment and coordinate policies to promote gender equality (Papa, 2012). However, Brazil innovated by creating a secretariat dedicated to racial and ethnic issues (Abramo, 2008).

Following the recommendations of the Platform of Beijing, the SPM adopted the gender mainstreaming strategy to develop its initiatives (Bandeira, 2005; SPM, Brasil, 2004b; Furlin, 2010; Miranda, 2012; Yannoulas, 2002). As discussed, this proposal aims to reorient governmental actions and programs according to the principle of gender equality. In this sense, the goal was to engage different sectors, powers, and federative layers with the combat of inequalities, implementing a more integrated, effective, and democratic action (Bandeira, 2005; SPM, Brasil, 2004b; Melo, 2005; Papa, 2012). In the case of the SEPPIR and the Secretariat of Human Rights (*Secretaria de Direitos Humanos*, SDH), the mainstreaming was adapted as a strategy to include racial equality and human rights in the main course of state action. Therefore, the objective of these agencies was to formulate, coordinate, and articulate

the introduction of these issues in the development of policies by other areas and agencies in the government (PR, Brasil, 2003b, 2003c; Yannoulas, 2002).

This institutional context favored the inclusion of gender and racial issues in the national planning (Abramo, 2008; Bandeira, 2005; Leite & Souza, 2010; Natividade, 2009). Gender and racial mainstreaming were affirmed as one of the objectives of the state, along with the promotion of social equality and sustainable economic development with job creation and income distribution (Bandeira, 2005; SPM, Brasil, 2004b, 2008a; Leite & Souza, 2010). It reflected a new governmental positioning as the main responsible for initiatives to overcome inequalities (SPM, Brasil, 2004b, 2008a; Leite & Souza, 2010). In this context, the Policies to Promote Gender and Racial Equality gained importance (Bandeira, 2005). To operationalize them, the secretariats articulated conferences of public policy with the development of plans to promote gender and racial equality. In these cases, the conferences provided the broader principles and guidelines, as well as proposed and evaluated the initiatives advanced in each sector, detailed in the national plans (Marcondes et al., 2018).

New initiatives emerged during this process. Policies attentive to gender and racial issues were developed in different areas, such as professional education and training of rural, urban, and domestic workers (Leite & Souza, 2010; Natividade, 2009; Ortiz, 2014); first insertion in the workplace, especially in areas traditionally occupied by men (Ortiz, 2014); promotion of female entrepreneurship (Natividade, 2009); document regularization, technical assistance, and funding for women working in rural areas (Ortiz, 2014); expansion and structuring of the childcare service (Marcondes, 2013, 2015); and extension of the period of maternity and paternity leave through fiscal incentives to business employers (PR, Brasil, 2016a). The guarantee of equal labor rights to domestic workers was another advancement resulting from the advocacy of the SPM within the legislature (Ortiz, 2014). These programs often emphasized actions oriented to poor and black women, as well as women suffering from domestic violence or in prostitution. It reflected the broader strategy of promoting economic autonomy as a way to deal with other pressing social issues, such as poverty and violence.

Regarding the formal workplace, the SPM and SEPPIR advanced training programs to public managers to develop policies in this area (Leite & Souza, 2010), as well as campaigns to

foment business practices committed to racial equality (Ortiz, 2014). Also in this period, the Public Ministry of Work launched the Program to Promote Equal Opportunities to All (*Programa para Promoção da Igualdade de Oportunidades para Todos*, PPIOT) (Conceição, 2013; Teixeira, 2014), while the SPM created the Program for Gender Equity. These programs aimed to combat social discrimination in the access, maintenance, promotion, and remuneration at work. Nevertheless, though, in general, they approach a similar public problem, the PPIOT and the Pro-Equity adopted different courses of action to deal with it. In the following sections, the logics structuring the Pro-Equity are discussed, referring to its divergences with the PPIOT to elucidate the conditions of possibility for the emergence of the program under investigation.

Through the contextualization of initiatives to promote gender equality in the workplace, three historical and political conditions are grasped as relevant for the development of the Pro-Equity. As further discussed, firstly, the program relied upon the national trajectory of consolidation of democracy and promotion of social rights. Social movements and intergovernmental organizations played a crucial part in this process, advocating for active governmental intervention in coping with social issues. Secondly, its approach traces back to the spread of the logic of the market within civil society, resulting in initiatives with similar features in the area of work. Finally, the Pro-Equity can be situated in a broader political regime advanced by the PT once in the federal government. Marked by the promotion of social inclusion without threatening the capitalist order, this regime privileged a conciliatory relationship with the business community. In the following sections, I explore the logics projected and refused by the policy under investigation. In doing so, I evidence how the SPM's features add to these historical and political conditions in making the Pro-Equity a viable course of action.

3.4. Social logics in the formation of the Program for Gender Equity

This section examines the social logics projected by the Pro-Equity. Based on official documents and interviews with governmental agents, four logics were identified: *a.* the affirmative logic, related to a feminist approach to inequalities in the workplace, which

requires political intervention in uneven organizations to deal with this pressing public problem; *b.* the logic of cooperation, based on the representation of the state as a ‘mediator’, responsible for inciting and propagating inclusive management practices; *c.* the audit logic, sustained on the representation of the state as an ‘auditor’, responsible for measuring and evaluating the results achieved by the participating organizations; and *d.* the managerial logic, grounded on the idea that organizations compete for better positions in the market and naturally follow opportunities to be best placed toward stakeholders, consumers, and workers. By analyzing these logics, I retake the previous problematization of alternatives to deal with gender inequalities in the workplace. The objective is, thus, to evidence how the program articulates conflicting elements related to the affirmative action, diversity management¹⁸, and gender mainstreaming proposals.

The Pro-Equity was created in 2005 by the SPM in partnership with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) – currently the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) – and ILO (SPM, Brasil, 2005a, 2006, 2007c). This program aimed to recognize social rights established by the Brazilian Federal Constitution (SPM, Brasil, 2006, 2007c) and to fulfill international commitments, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and the ILO’s Convention n. 100 and 111 (SPM, Brasil, 2005a). Its development also sought to address the demands brought up in the First National Conference on Policies for Women (*1ª Conferência Nacional de Políticas para as Mulheres*, I CNPM) and incorporated in the First National Plan of Policies for Women (*1º Plano Nacional de Políticas para as Mulheres*¹⁹, I PNPM). Therefore, the Pro-Equity was

¹⁸ Ortiz (2014) also analyzes how the Pro-Equity resources to meanings related to affirmative action and diversity management. The author departs, however, from a different theoretical frame, approaching these proposals as different discursive fields. Parallels with her analysis are stressed in the course of this work.

¹⁹ The I PNPM was composed of four strategic areas: 1. autonomy, equality at work, and citizenship; 2. non-sexist and inclusive education; 3. women’s health, sexual and reproductive rights; 4. coping with violence against women. It also comprises a section dedicated to the management and monitoring of the plan (SPM, Brasil, 2004b).

part of the government priorities²⁰ related to women's autonomy, equality at work, and citizenship (SPM, Brasil, 2004b, 2005a, 2006, 2007c).

The main program's objective was to contribute to overcoming gender inequalities in the workplace. To do so, it fomented the development and propagation of inclusive practices in the areas of human resource management and organizational culture (SPM, Brasil, 2006, 2007c). Its specific goals were:

1. To contribute to eliminating all forms of discrimination in the access, remuneration, promotion, and permanence in employment;
2. To make employers aware and encourage them to develop management practices to promote equal opportunities between men and women within organizations;
3. To publicly recognize organizations committed to Gender Equality in the workplace;
4. To create the 'Program for Gender Equity' network; and
5. To build a database composed of management best practices to promote Gender Equality at work. (SPM, Brasil, 2005a:335, my translation).

The Pro-Equity was organized in biannual editions. The cycle started with the calling for the voluntary subscription of interested organizations. Once enrolled, each participant performed an organizational diagnosis, aiming to identify the gender inequalities and managerial practices in place. This diagnosis founded the development of an action plan composed of initiatives in the areas of human resource management and organizational culture. The execution initiated by the public formalization of the plan between the SPM and the direction of the organization. Afterward, the secretariat, with support from specialists, monitored the implementation of the actions, pointing to corrections and improvement opportunities in this process. In the end, the results were evaluated, and the organizations with good performance received the Certificate 'Program for Gender Equity' related to the edition. This award was a symbol of the organizational commitment to social equality at work. It could be used in marketing actions and advertisements, as well as was propagated by the SPM and the program's partners (SPM, Brasil, 2005a, 2006). In the next chapter, I explore the program's design and its changes throughout time.

²⁰ Priority '1.3. To promote non-discriminatory work relationships, with equal pay and access to decision-making positions' (SPM, Brasil, 2004b) 47, Action '1.3.18. To create and implement a process to certificate business organizations and other institutions committed to women's rights' (SPM, Brasil, 2004b) 49.

As mentioned, data analysis revealed four projected social logics (Glynos, Klimecki, et al., 2015; Glynos, Speed, et al., 2015; Remling, 2018) structuring this program. The affirmative logic is based on a feminist view of patriarchy in the workplace. It departs from the idea that gender inequalities structure the productive and reproductive work. Thereby, organizations are characterized by the sexual division of labor and knowledge, segregating women to low-level and underpaid job positions often associated with human reproduction and ‘feminine’ values (SPM, Brasil, 2004b, 2004a, 2006, 2008c). Based on this, the supposed neutrality of management practices is questioned, calling for a new approach committed to gender equality in the workplace (SPM, Brasil, 2006). It would involve the denaturalization of the traditional organizational culture and practices, supported by oppressive power relations and ‘masculine’ values, such as the hierarchical distance between the top and bottom levels, competition, and domination (SPM, Brasil, 2006, based on Dias, 2003). This process of questioning would open space for the development of inclusive practices and the construction of new subjectivities, contributing to the promotion of equal opportunities in these spaces (SPM, Brasil, 2006).

This approach toward gender inequalities in the workplace can be related to both affirmative action and gender mainstreaming, reflecting the ‘sameness/difference’ conflict (Rittenhofer & Gatrell, 2012; Walby, 2005) mentioned before. In this sense, the Pro-Equity is grounded on the quest for social justice that supports both proposals, demanding governmental intervention to cope with unequal social structures ingrained in organizations. In this process, it reinforces a feminist frame also shared by the mainstreaming strategy, committing to the promotion of equality between men and women (Bandeira, 2005; Walby, 2005). However, in doing so, the program seeks to reconcile a transformative perspective with an affirmative approach (Fraser, 2003, 2009, 2010). On the one hand, it advocates for the change of existing management paradigms, reorienting current practices according to the gender equality goal. On the other, it defends a dialogue with businesses modes of operation to integrate women in the workplace. Hereupon, the policy reinforces the importance of localized and temporary policies to promote equal opportunities (SPM, Brasil, 2006), a central element in the affirmative discourse emergent in Brazil since the 1990s (Delgado et al., 2000; Ortiz, 2014).

Following the latter position, the strategy adopted in the program privileged the cooperation between the involved agents instead of the state coercion. Based on international cases, it emphasizes that the path for inclusion in the workplace initiated by the change of discriminatory laws and the establishment of legal procedures to increase diversity in organizations (SPM, Brasil, 2006), such as the affirmative policies first developed in the US during the 1960s (Moehlecke, 2002, 2004; Pate, 2000). Nevertheless, in the current scenario, another approach would be necessary, focusing on the development of projects to change the traditional practices ongoing in the workplace (SPM, Brasil, 2006). This perspective was also reinforced on discussions put forward during the 1990s, referring once again to the affirmative proposal disseminated in Brazil in this period (Delgado et al., 2000). The noncoercive course of action would be even more critical if considered the diagnosis of the public problem addressed. As discussed by an interviewee:

[...] obviously, we were dealing with a tough issue. Because the way that images of men and women are established in society, all the stereotypes surrounding the view of what a man is, what a woman is, etc., obviously, they are going to be repeated in the labor market. As an important instance of social relations, it is going to reproduce them, and behaviors and attitudes are going to be materialized deeply influenced by these stereotypes. And this is very hard to change. We that work in social sciences, we know how hard is to change attitudes, behaviors, especially those established in time and naturalized in relations. [...] And the government coming with a lot of rules would not work, a lot of: 'In the first year, you must achieve this level. In the second, you must achieve this another'. And, for me, it was an advantage, because we would have time to mature with each organization and each organization would have its time [...] It is not easy, you cannot have an immediate view of this process. You cannot want things to happen too fast. (Technical Analyst 2)

Therefore, the Pro-Equity departed from the idea that gender inequalities result from cultural elements ingrained in organizations. The traditional stereotypes and prejudices would not be surpassed by an isolated coercive action, requiring a continuous process of negotiation and change (Technical Analyst 2). It would demand an approach articulated with the management language and practices, enabling to overcome resistances and gradually introduce innovative practices within organizations (SPM, Brasil, 2006). In this sense, it is possible to trace the first parallels between this policy and the diversity management. As mentioned, one of the arguments in favor of this proposal is the option for a course of action more adherent to the business reality. It would seek for 'natural' and progressive results (Hanashiro & Carvalho, 2005) coming from the regular business line of action, rather than the quick outcomes sought

by affirmative policies (Thomas Jr, 1990). These characteristics were also emphasized when the limits between the program and coercive alternatives to deal with gender inequalities at work are affirmed, as further discussed.

In this context, the state is represented as a ‘mediator’, encouraging and supporting the development of inclusive management practices (SPM, Brasil, 2006). As emphasized by the Consultant 3, the program adopted an innovative approach, resourcing to the dialogue with organizations to advance internal policies committed to gender equality.

What I believe was important was precisely to dialogue with organizations so they could play an active role in the dynamic of gender equality. It was an extremely innovative view. In other words, instead of developing general policies, we are going to talk directly with organizations. [...] So, we worked with this concept that businesses should actively take part in establishing an internal policy. I believe this is the program’s richness. It is to involve the companies, especially the area of human resources, to create this policy within organizations. And it was a real advancement. (Consultant 3)

This representation draws attention to the second logic identified. The logic of cooperation is firstly related to the moderate role of the state in the program’s development. In this sense, the voluntary character of the Pro-Equity was stressed, evidencing the autonomy of participants in engaging with the policy and defining the priorities and actions to be pursued. It would favor the adherence of the program to management actions already in place, avoiding disruptions and contributing to boosting the results (SPM, Brasil, 2006). The moderate relationship was reinforced by the confidentiality of the data furnished by organizations and the absence of sanctions in case of a waiver or unsatisfying performance (Ortiz, 2014). Secondly, this logic involves the cooperative relationship between the participating organizations, promoting the exchange of ideas and practices. This exchange was stimulated through workshops with the participants (SPM, Brasil, 2006). It can also be related to the program’s objectives regarding the creation of a network between the participants and a database of best practices to be adopted by other organizations (SPM, Brasil, 2005a).

The logic of cooperation establishes an ambiguous relationship with the audit logic. In the third logic identified, the state is represented as an ‘auditor’, responsible for measuring and evaluating the quality of the actions developed and the results achieved in the scope of the

program. It implies a less moderate governmental action, requiring from participants better performances to deserve the certificate. As stressed by a governmental interviewee:

We, from the secretariat, we inspected [the organizations]. Thus, we demanded from them and evaluated what they were doing, the way they were doing, and so on. We used to promote meetings in the secretariat for the organizations, to participate, to share information, to follow how they were doing, to help everybody, etc. But it was also a moment of inspection because it was our role to make them accomplish the action plan. (Program Coordinator 1)

However, although expected in a policy shaped as a certification process, the audit role was also a source of tension between the secretariat and the participants. Hereupon, it should not put at risk the logic of cooperation, reinforcing the non-compelling position of the state in the Pro-Equity. This conflict is explicit in the following interview excerpts:

[To demand more from participants] was very hard politically. [...] This theme used to be taboo, it was not discussed. [...] in general, [the SPM] did a certain moderation and this discussion was not made [...] it was a severe conflict. Thus, in the end, only when the organization did not manifest any interest at all in the program, that we would not give the certificate to them. If the organization had made any little effort, the private or public organization, any little effort, they would receive the certificate. (Committee Member 4)

We knew, more or less, the limits we had, how much we could ask from organizations. We departed from the premise that it is really hard the state to change the logic of the market. And it was something always reinforced [by the SPM]. (Committee Member 1)

Given these characteristics, the Pro-Equity was identified as an ‘inductive policy’ (SPM, Brasil, 2006, 2007c; Ortiz, 2014). In a paradoxical action between the cooperation and the auditing, the program sought to incite an organizational behavior committed to gender equality. To do so, it resorted to an award as an incentive to animate the engagement of organizations (SPM, Brasil, 2006, 2007c). In this process, it emphasized the potential gains for participants in terms of increments in performance and organizational reputation. Thereby, inclusive management practices were represented as both a strategy to overcome inequalities and an instrument to improve business performance (SPM, Brasil, 2005a, 2006). The strategic approach in human resource management was thus stressed (SPM, Brasil, 2006, based on Becker et al. 2003), explicitly referring to the diversity management proposal as an alternative to reconcile social justice and market advantages (SPM, Brasil, 2006). The certification is another element from the management field incorporated in the program (Bello, 2014), relating to the CSR initiatives (Ortiz, 2014).

The emphasis on the market benefits substantiates the fourth logic structuring this policy. In the managerial logic, discrimination is not seen only as a barrier to women's participation at work, but also as 'what precludes the capitalization of the capabilities of half of society, women, and compromise the competitive potential of national economies' (SPM, Brasil, 2008c:3, based on World Economic Forum, 2005, my translation). Thereby, the program sought to create awareness about the losses that gender inequality can cause to business as well. Among the prejudices of a traditional model of management, it stressed: the distance between the directive and operational levels, leading to lack of clarity about the corporate objectives; a decrease in productivity and cohesion, especially among discriminated employees; and the loss of productivity by not incorporating a 'female' way of management, based on care and persuasion (SPM, Brasil, 2006). Furthermore, this approach is implicitly based on the idea that, once identified a business opportunity, organizations would seek to take advantages to be best placed in the market. Therefore, in the face of the potential benefits of gender equality, organizations would engage in the development of inclusive practices, pursuing the same goals as the policy.

The managerial logic can also be apprehended from the discussion on the distinctiveness of organizations well succeeded in the program. The certificate was presented as an attribute of prominence, distinguishing the participant as an institution committed to gender equality (SPM, Brasil, 2005a, 2008c). However, if the distinction of the certificated organizations was highlighted, it did not necessarily put the cooperation among the agents involved in the policy at risk. The potential polemic with the logic of cooperation was minimized by reinforcing that the participants do not compete between themselves (SPM, Brasil, 2006). As discussed in interviews:

[...] the organizations did not compete between them, because they departed from very different baselines. So, it was not like that. Each organization competed with itself. It should have its starting point as a reference. (Technical Analyst 2)

What is the main objective? It is that organizations see themselves. The program is for the inside of organizations, not for the outside. It is a program for organizations to see themselves and recognize gender differences within each organization. Thus, the gender inequalities within each organization. (Program Coordinator 1)

Accordingly, the program's objective would not be to compare performances, but rather to support an analysis of the advancements achieved by each organization singly (SPM, Brasil,

2006, 2007c). It contributed to distinguishing an ‘us’, composed of the prominent organizations awarded by the program, from ‘them’, the other organizations not involved with this sensitive issue and with which ‘we’ are competing.

The ambiguities between these projected social logics can be understood regarding how conflicting key elements are reconstructed in the scope of this political project (Howarth, 2010). In other words, contradictions and tensions can be grasped by looking into how dispersed ‘elements’ become ‘moments’ (Laclau & Mouffe, 2001), gaining new meanings and significance in this articulation. Figure 2 synthesizes the set of ‘moments’ joined in the examined policy.

Figure 2. Projected social logics articulated by the Pro-Equity

The role of the state	The logic of cooperation Reinforces the moderate role of the state, respecting the autonomy of organizations. The government is represented as a ‘mediator’, supporting the development of inclusive management practices and encouraging the exchange of knowledge between participants.	The audit logic Stresses the audit role of the state, responsible for guaranteeing the quality of the participation of organizations in the program. The government is represented as an ‘auditor’, measuring and evaluating the actions developed and the results achieved by the participants.
Organizations and management practices as targets of intervention	The managerial logic Based on a managerial perspective, it regards organizations as a technical space that compete in the market. Once Gender Equality is seen as a potential opportunity to increase competitiveness, organizations would seek to take advantages by reviewing their management practices.	The affirmative logic Based on a feminist critique of patriarchy in the workplace. Organizations are characterized as uneven social and cultural spaces, marked by the sexual division of labor and knowledge. It requires the revision of management practices, committing them to Gender Equality goals.
Women as the program’s beneficiaries	Women are a source of potential competencies to be used in the production process.	Women are a discriminated group, precluded from equal participation in the workplace.

Source: the author

These projected social logics can be regarded as a function of broader paradigms. On the one hand, the affirmative logic can be situated in the paradigm of rights, mobilizing elements of both affirmative policies and the mainstreaming strategy in a feminist frame through which patriarchal relations at work are contested. Departing from criticism on gender inequalities ingrained in organizations, it defends political intervention to create equal opportunities for women as a discriminated group. It would pass through the revision of existing management practices, committing them to the goal of gender equality. In this paradigm, gender equality is, thus, an objective to be actively pursued to achieve social justice, requiring from the state an audit posture toward the participants. On the other hand, the managerial logic can be associated with the paradigm of the market. Resonating diversity management arguments, it reinforces a representation of organizations as a technical space which seeks for economic and symbolic gains. In this scenario, gender equality would mean an opportunity to improve competitiveness, integrating women as a potential source of competences to be used in production.

The resulting chain of equivalences overshadows the contradictions among the moments linked in this articulation (Laclau, 2007; Laclau & Mouffe, 2001). In this sense, it weakens the differences between conflicting pictures about the role of the state in pursuing social change, organizations and management practices as targets of intervention, and women as the policy beneficiary. In this process, the empty signifier 'gender equality for all' works as a nodal point (Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000; Laclau & Mouffe, 2001), able to hold together antagonistic meanings and demands related to the paradigms of the rights and of the market. Thereby, the program would constitute 'a political strategy to introduce the difference in public management and also to potentialize the economic and financial character of organizations' (SPM, Brasil, 2006:12, my translation), promising benefits to all the agents involved. The logic of cooperation plays a crucial part on this. It augments the idea that through collaboration and negotiation it is possible to create awareness about the social and economic advantages of gender equality in the workplace. Once committed to this issue, organizations would pursue the same objectives as the policy. The SPM and specialists' advisory along with the cooperation between the participants would favor this process, boosting the program's results.

The analysis enables to observe how the logic of equivalence operates in joining heterogeneous elements (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2008, 2010; Laclau & Mouffe, 2001). Through this articulation, this political project gains particularity, distinguishing itself from other alternatives. It does not mean that these logics are exclusive of the object under investigation. As discussed, although multiple and contextual, social logics are not fully reducible to empirical phenomena, allowing cross-contextual analyses (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2008, 2010). In this sense, they can be apprehended in other initiatives with similar features or be articulated with other elements in a new empirical situation. However, the linking of disparate elements is just one part of the practice of ‘coalition building’ (Howarth, 2010). This process also involves the creation of political frontiers (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2008, 2010), through which competing possibilities are contested and refused. It premises the work of the logic of difference in disarticulating alternative courses of actions and demands (Howarth, 2008; Laclau & Mouffe, 2001; Remling, 2018), as well as a fantasmatic content giving energy to the political project (Fotaki, 2010; Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000), investigated in the next section.

3.5. (Dis)Articulating social, political, and fantasmatic logics in the Pro-Equity

This section addresses the interplay between social, political, and fantasmatic logics in the formation of the Program for Gender Equity. In doing so, I retake the functions of the logics of equivalence and difference in explaining how political frontiers are raised, distinguishing this political project from others. The logic of fantasy is also recalled to evidence the fantasmatic narrative supporting and giving energy to the policy under investigation. This discussion is concluded by identifying the conditions that made possible the construction of the Pro-Equity. In this process, the organizational dimension is added to the historical and political elements explored in the third section of this chapter to explain the emergence of this program as a viable public policy to cope with gender inequalities in the workplace. Therefore, both the SPM’s mission, instruments, and way of organizing, as well as the limits faced by the secretariat in advancing its actions are stressed in explaining the centrality of cooperation in the development of this policy.

The first approach toward empirical data showed how dispersed elements were linked in the formation of the Pro-Equity, composing a more or less coherent chain, in which one moment gained meaning and significance in relation to the others. This articulation was also distinguished in opposition to other social logics, sedimented in the practice of agents or projected by rival political projects (Remling, 2018). In this study, three social logics are contested as alternative courses of (in)action to be actively avoided or defeated in coping with gender inequalities at work. By stressing a feminist critique, the program firstly questions the patriarchal logic ongoing in the labor market (SPM, Brasil, 2004b, 2006). This social logic structures more routinized and sedimented work relations and practices, compromising the effective inclusion of women in the workplace.

Departing from this foundational critique on the public problem in question, the program contests alternative forms of governmental (in)action toward gender inequalities in the workplace. On the one hand, it criticizes the logic of nongovernmental intervention, demanding the urgent state action in fighting inequalities at work (SPM, Brasil, 2004b, 2006). The contextualization of the development of public policies in this area gives some clues of why this political frontier is demarked. In doing so, the SPM establishes clear differences with the previous pattern of state (in)action in promoting gender equality in general and in the workplace more specifically, stressing the ambition of introducing a new approach. This contestation provides the means to justify not only the development of the Pro-Equity but the SPM action as a whole, delimitating the agency's goals and functions.

On the other hand, this political project refuses a coercive logic projected by rival alternatives defended to deal with gender inequalities in the workplace. In this sense, by stressing the cooperative role of the state in advancing this initiative, governmental agents and official documents emphasize that this program did not consist in a governmental imposition, deeply questioned in neoliberal contexts. It would be rather a process of negotiation, reinforced by the confidentiality of data and the absence of sanctions (Ortiz, 2014) by engaging in the Pro-Equity.

The logics projected and contested by the policy can be synthesized as in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Social logics projected and contested by the Pro-Equity

Contested social logics		Social logics projected by the program		Contested social logics
The role of the state	The logic of nongovernmental intervention It is characterized by the nongovernmental intervention in the market issues due to refusal or negligence. Frequently supported in a neoliberal perspective, this logic delegates to the market the solution to social problems.	The logic of cooperation Reinforces the moderate role of the state, respecting the autonomy of organizations. The government is represented as a 'mediator', supporting the development of inclusive management practices and encouraging the exchange of knowledge between the participants.	The audit logic Stresses the audit role of the state, responsible for guaranteeing the quality of the participation of organizations in the program. The government is represented as an 'auditor', measuring and evaluating the actions developed and the results achieved by the participants.	The logic of the state coercion Emphasizes the importance of state intervention in the market and other institutions in order to deal with pressing public problems. It is frequently associated with a more radical and interventionist approach.
Organizations and management practices as targets of intervention	The patriarchal logic Based on patriarchal values and representations, it increases gender inequality in the workplace by neglecting its existence or actively reinforcing it. It is often supported by a technical representation of organizations, guided by neutral practices.	The managerial logic Based on a managerial perspective, it regards organizations as technical spaces competing in the market. Once gender equality is recognized as an opportunity to increase competitiveness, organizations would seek to take advantage by reviewing their management practices.	The affirmative logic Based on a feminist critique of patriarchy in the workplace. Organizations are characterized as uneven social and cultural spaces, marked by the sexual division of labor and knowledge. It requires the revision of management practices, committing them to Gender Equality goals.	
Women as the program's beneficiaries	Women are not seen as a discriminated group or are actively excluded at work.	Women are a source of potential competencies to be used in the production process.	Women are a discriminated group, precluded from equal participation in the workplace.	
Political frontier		Political frontier		

This articulation contributes to set up a fantasy of ‘union’, calling organizations to act together with the government in pursuing an equalitarian workplace. In this sense, the fantasmatic narrative underpinning this policy can be understood as a chain of causal relations and actions leading to a more harmonic outcome. It starts by the state offering to organizations the possibility of obtaining a certificate of their commitment to gender equality. This certificate would lead to more efficient use of human resources and a better organizational reputation, securing competitive advantages. Seeking to seize this opportunity, organizations would voluntarily engage with the program. The cooperative relationship between the state, specialists, and the participants along with the risk of not receiving the award would induce the development of inclusive management practices. These practices would result in improvements for female workers, favoring their inclusion; organizations, enhancing their position in the market and their productivity; and the government, advancing gender equality in the workplace. Therefore, the program would result in a win-win game (Machado, 2013) in which conflicts are minimized and the participating organizations have ‘nothing to lose’ (Ortiz, 2014:175).

The harmonic outcome is, thus, the ‘Thing’ (Hawkins, 2015) to be pursued in achieving gender equality for all. The beatific side of this fantasy is interrelated with its horrific side. In this sense, as emphasized by the interviewees, the policy must avoid an approach of confrontation, settling the expectations and limits of the organizations. In doing so, the risk of non-engagement of participants would be minimized, giving the opportunity to start the chain of causality discussed. The need to avoid this potential threat is present in the following excerpts:

We had to show to organizations that they would not have any kind of cost. Of course, they would invest the cost of the time of employees dedicated to the program, but an extra expense... They would not have to pay more money than they usually do. Because, if not, the organization do not participate. If the program did not have the thing about the organization not having extra expenses, that they would not have to apportion an investment in money, they would not participate. (Program Coordinator 1)

Sincerely, if I would change something [in the program], I believe I would make it more rigorous. But it was another thing that used to lead to an eternal debate. Because if the program became more rigorous, it would not give the award to the organizations and, so, they would be discouraged to participate. (Committee Member 1)

By retaking the previous discussion on the promotion of gender equality in the workplace in Brazil, it is possible to identify some central historical conditions for the development of a policy with these contours. Firstly, policies to advance social equality can be situated in the national trajectory of consolidation of democracy and promotion of social development in course since the 1980s. This path has not been linear, facing drawbacks in the 1990s, period of the ascension of neoliberalism in Latin America. Nevertheless, it has counted with the active engagement of political agents, which have pressured the state to effectively address social inequalities. Intergovernmental organizations have had a significant role in this process, pairing with social movements on claims for inclusive policies, as well as providing technical support for the development of these initiatives. In this context, the Pro-Equity can be seen as one effort among other governmental initiatives to advance gender equality in different areas, which seeks to attend feminist demands and international recommendations regarding the promotion of social justice at work (Monteiro, 2011).

The purpose of reconciliation between paradigms, in its turn, can be traced back to the spread of the logic of the market among the civil society. As discussed, it resulted in more pragmatic and marketing-centered initiatives, such as the certification processes developed in the country since the 1990s and disseminated in Latin America and the Caribbean from the 2000s. Costa Rica and Mexico were pioneers in this movement, creating similar programs in 2002. They were followed by ten countries in the region, gathered in the Community of Certificates on Gender Equality (*Comunidad del Sello de Igualdad de Género*). Promoted by the United Nations Development Program, this community seeks to exchange knowledge and best practices between the participating nations (PNUD, 2018). After the Pro-Equity, in 2007, certification mechanisms were also developed within Brazil by the state government of São Paulo (São Paulo, 2018) and the city council of Salvador (Salvador, 2018). Once again, it is possible to observe the role of intergovernmental organizations in the propagation of these policies (Ortiz, 2014). As emphasized by an interviewee:

There was an international context in which the costs of this [gender inequalities] were evaluated, of the existence of highly discriminatory businesses and their impact on productivity. You do not include people that can, who have... you do not fully use your workforce, in a more economic view. [...] There was intense pressure, including international and from the financial market. Because there was a worry with the UN millennium objectives, a set of things that contributed, the international treaties made from the 1990s. A lot of things had changed. And a certain standpoint from the UN, since these more significant events in the 1990s, that inequality was a

major obstacle to development and that development must have two fronts: the economic and the social. The economic progress without social development would not produce results. (Technical Analyst 2)

ILO was a relevant agent in this process, providing technical support for the development of the Pro-Equity (SPM, Brasil, 2006). As stressed by Razavi and Miller (1995), the World Bank, the UN agencies in general and ILO more specifically have helped to foster a ‘market realism’ into gender equality initiatives, appealing to economic arguments to redress social justice. Ortiz (2014) adds that, by that time, UNIFEM was already discussing the creation of a certification process. Nevertheless, this kind of program was regarded as difficult to implement, since the UN establishes strict criteria to partner with business enterprises. In this sense, the development of a new policy by the SPM in partnership with UNIFEM opened an opportunity to launch an initiative with these characteristics (Ortiz, 2014). Recently, the UN Women took part in the creation of another certification program in Brazil, the WEPs Award (UN, 2018).

Thirdly, the Pro-Equity can be regarded as an initiative in line with the broader political regime (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2010) advanced by the PT once in the federal government. As discussed, the *lulismo* introduced a range of practices to diminish social inequalities without fundamentally disturbing the capitalist order (Peña, 2014; Singer, 2009, 2010). To do so, it brought together antagonist forces into a ‘labor-capitalist pact’ (E. Diniz, 2011:65), marked by a conciliatory relationship with the business community (E. Diniz, 2011; Peña, 2014; Singer, 2010). However, it did not happen without tensions and contradictions, as manifested by an interviewee:

[By discussing the limits in demanding transformative actions from the participating organizations] I thought it was too much to give the certificate to one organization. But it would be so complicated if I had said I would not give it, that I did not say anything. Everybody noted that it was not appropriate to award this participant, that it was too much, that we should not give, that they did not have actions for that, but nobody said anything. It would create such a political problem. [...] It was clear at that moment that the pure and simple adhesion of organizations to do this [the interventions proposed by the program] would be difficult. Especially in a PT’s government, in which the agreement between the businesspeople and the government was too fragile. It was a hate and love relationship between this sector and the government. Thus, it created a major embarrassment. (Committee Member 4)

Therefore, this political context helps to explain the emphasis on an approach that does not directly confront the ‘business as usual’. As emphasized by Rittenhofer and Gatrell (2012),

the equal opportunities agenda is frequently more acceptable to organizations than more radical proposals, avoiding conflicts.

Finally, from data analysis, the SPM's features emerged as another relevant dimension to understand this course of action. These characteristics were evidenced when the Pro-Equity was compared to the Program to Promote Equal Opportunities for All. The PPIOT was created in 2005 in answer to the complaint regarding racial discrimination at work, presented by the black movement to the Public Ministry of Work²¹ (*Ministério Público do Trabalho*, MPT) in 2003. The program's objective was to promote affirmative actions for discriminated groups in the private sector. Developed in partnership with ILO, the Ministry of Work and Employment, national research institutes, and nongovernmental organizations dedicated to racial issues, the PPIOT was structured in two phases. Firstly, private organizations were contacted to voluntarily celebrate a collective consent agreement, committing to review their human resource management practices in order to create an equalitarian workplace. In the case of refusal, the MPT would sue these organizations (Conceição, 2013; Conceição & Spink, 2013), legally compelling them to adopt affirmative actions. The nonfulfillment would lead to the payment of fines and compensations for moral damages (Conceição, 2013).

The interviewees emphasized that the PPIOT's coercive approach is what distinguishes it from the Pro-Equity:

It was an entirely different approach, a completely different bias. Including, [the PPIOT] used to impose that fines, that, let me say so, punishments. Because the [organizations] that did not comply with that minimum parity... that thing, they used to have methods, they used to have limits, etc. In our case, the philosophy was another. (Technical Analyst 2)

The main difference between the programs, in my view, was that the MPT had a perspective of threat, a legal threat [...] In the SPM, the challenge was to join efforts, to create awareness. They also had a perception that it must not... it must be done gradually, that the organizations would not voluntarily revolutionize themselves so much. (Committee Member 3)

Organizational features, in their turn, help to explain these different perspectives:

²¹ The Public Ministry of Work is a branch of the Federal Public Ministry. Its objective is to inspect the accomplishment of the labor law when the public interest is involved. To do so, the MPT acts as a prosecution office in cases of nonfulfillment of social rights legally established in the country. It can also promote actions to protect rights and interests of discriminated groups in work relations (MPT, Brasil, 2018).

[The MPT] wanted to change the ‘face’ of organizations and they had instruments for that. [...] They wanted to: ‘Look, we want that organizations reflect the place where they are. So, [the organization] is here in Brasília, where half of the population that has a high school degree is women, we want that the organization has the same percentage. And we have to do this in the decision-making positions as well.’ They had this objective and the instruments reflected that. Therefore, it was like that: [two programs] acting on the same object, with the same goals, but with different purposes and a very different force to operate. The different strategies can be explained by the nature of institutions, the possibilities they had. The MPT would not develop an action emphasizing campaigns, seminars, etc., as the SPM used to do. (Consultant 1)

I believe [the programs] are the paths of each institution that is putting it forward. It is the reading that each institution makes of reality. (Program Coordinator 1)

Therefore, on the one side, there is the MPT, ‘an institution that accuses’ (Committee Member 3). It has not only the proper instruments to put the investigation forward (Program Coordinator 1), but also the ‘force’ to confront organizations in creating an equalitarian workplace (Committee Member 3, Program Coordinator 1). A coercive action would be, thus, proper of this organization, responsible for inspecting the accomplishment of labor laws and prosecuting in the case of nonfulfillment of rights legally established 2018 (MPT, Brasil, 2018). On the other side, there is the SPM, an institution responsible for promoting gender mainstreaming in public policies (Bandeira, 2005; Marcondes et al., 2018; Papa, 2012; Reinach, 2013). In the national case, this proposal was sustained on ‘the horizontal and non-hierarchical articulation, aiming to influence the design, formulation, execution, and evaluation of the set of public policies’ (SPM, Brasil, 2004b:85, my translation). Therefore, the articulation would be proper of this organization, seeking a gradual change in social practices, including in the labor market.

The SPM’s way of organizing was also appropriated in the program. By promoting equal opportunities at work, the Pro-Equity concentrated less in the results achieved by organizations than in the process of management itself. Differently from quotas systems, which establishes parameters to be accomplished – for example, 30% of female participation in decision-making positions until 2020 –, this policy targeted especially the processes to reach these outcomes – how to review the practices of promotion to guarantee the increase of female participation in decision-making positions. As discussed, this ‘look in the inside of organizations’ can be related to the gender mainstreaming proposal, calling the agents to rethink how their practices have uneven effects in men and women and, otherwise, how they could contribute to more equalitarian society (Rittenhofer & Gatrell, 2012; Walby, 2005).

Another evidence of this overlapping is the frequent use of the term ‘gender mainstreaming’ (SPM, Brasil, 2010b, 2011b, 2013a) to designate what the participating organizations do in the scope of the program, despite the fact that this strategy is often seen as a ‘specialized tool of the policy world’ (Walby, 2005:338) with little expression within the private sector (Prügl, 2011).

As discussed in the next chapter, from the analysis of the program’s design, it is also possible to identify similarities between the way the Pro-Equity was developed within organizations and the way the SPM structured its action within the state. It indicates that, through the program, the SPM projects its logic of organizing, propagating the gender mainstreaming beyond government’s frontiers. By articulating elements of this proposal, critical incitement is introduced in the policy, providing a feminist frame to it. In this sense, although resonating an integrationist perspective (Rittenhofer & Gatrell, 2012; Walby, 2005) for female inclusion in the existent capitalist market, this initiative also sought to transform the patriarchal logic sustaining traditional work relations. Nevertheless, the relationship between the mainstream and the program’s efforts toward gender equality was permeated by conflicts. As mentioned in previous interview excerpts, the SPM did not have the ‘instruments’ nor the ‘force’ to advance these changes. In the next section, I retake this discussion, evidencing how these limits led to the creation of an incentive – the certificate – with low possibility of actually inducing an inclusive attitude within organizations.

Paradoxically, the program is also presented as a manner to avoid the limits of the governmental articulation, as explicit in the following excerpts.

I believe that the SPM had always struggled between its role as an executor and as an articulator. And, in the area of work, it was different. For instance, in the areas of education, health, social assistance, that are areas of policies relatively strong, that are presented as universal, with governmental systems in place, etc., the possibility of [the SPM] executes some action is reduced. In the area of work, the policies of work and employment in Brazil have always been very fragile. Thus, I believe it opened the opportunity for the SPM to have its own program, without depending on the articulation with the Ministry of Work and Employment and any other governmental agency. (Consultant 2)

The SPM was not an executing area in the federal government; we did not have direct action. Our action was always of coordinating, encouraging, promoting, in this level, of supporting the efforts the government would develop. Thereby, I believe that in this sense, the program was expressive in the area of work. (Technical Analyst 2)

In this sense, on the one hand, the Pro-Equity sought to disseminate mainstreaming practices in public and private organizations as a path to promote gender equality in the workplace. On the other, it represented an opportunity to develop an initiative without the articulation with other governmental agencies, avoiding the challenges it brings. It increased the viability and relevance of this program within the SPM when compared with other actions developed in the same area. The limits and the fragility of the SPM added to this. According to the interviewees:

Obviously, the SPM was not able to execute a big program to promote equality in the workplace in general: 'let's end all inequalities!'. In this context, the Pro-Equity emerges like this: what the SPM was able to do, based on the idea of a pilot project, first with public organizations, afterward expanded and being used as an example. Including because, when the program was growing too much, the secretariat faced difficulties to manage it. [...] The secretariat was not able to, by itself, with its resources, even when it had more physical, financial, and human resources, it was not able to evaluate the action plan of 500 organizations, if 500 organizations had adhered to the program. Therefore, indeed the program was created with this character of being an example, as a pilot and as a first governmental action to promote the culture of equality in organizations. (Consultant 2)

This program had a meager cost for the SPM. Because, in fact, all the work dealt with values, principles, and the internal policy of organizations. The promotion of trips to monitoring and the trips of our consultants were the most significant expense. So, the program did not require a very high cost. And why am I telling you this? Because the secretariat used to have a very low budget, especially during its first years. Afterward, it raised a little bit, but never, ever it would be like, it would compare to the traditional sectors. Thus, the program established itself by force within the area of work. It was the more significant action in the sub-secretariat on the area of gender equality in the workplace. (Technical Analyst 2)

Therefore, although contingent, the articulation of these logics within the Pro-Equity and the refusal of the contested ones were not arbitrary (Herschinger, 2012; Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000; Laclau, 2007). It relied on historical, political, and organizational conditions which made possible the emergence of a policy with these contours.

In the next chapter, I explore how these logics were reinforced or transformed throughout the implementation of the program.

4. Fantasies in the change and inertia of the Program for Gender (and Racial) Equity

In the previous chapter, the emphasis was on how the fantasmatic narrative of ‘gender equality for all’ operated as a vector in the formation of the Program for Gender Equity, pointing to the desired practices and actions. In this chapter, the focus shifts to how it accounts for the resilience of practices proposed in the scope of the program, despite the numerous challenges and political contestations experienced during its implementation. To do so, firstly, I detail the main concepts used and their forms of operation, stressing the categories of fantasy and *jouissance* as central to approach policy change and inertia. The analysis starts by the contextualization of the organizational context in which the program was developed, evidencing the organizational structure of the SPM, as well as its mechanisms to advance the gender mainstreaming strategy and the limits faced in this endeavor. After that, the Pro-Equity’s design is explored, identifying a more stable core and the changes promoted during its ten years of implementation. Based on this, the fourth section examines how the logics driving the program were sustained, contested, and transformed in this process, impacting or not in the program’s reformulation.

4.1. Fantasy in policy change and inertia

This chapter discusses policy change and inertia, drawing attention to the affective dimension of this process. Therefore, the emphasis is on how a set of social practices and relations is reproduced or transformed throughout time (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, 2008; Howarth, 2008, 2010), addressing the ‘second face of hegemony’ (Howarth, 2010). As stressed in the previous chapters, the concept of hegemony adopted in this work seeks to account for the way through which political projects are forged, sedimented, and transformed (Howarth, 2008, 2010). This process involves the linking of dispersed elements into a political project or coalition capable of contesting a particular norm, practice, or policy, as well as the covering-over of the emergence of the alternative defended. In this sense, this notion also aims to capture how regimes, policies, and practices hold sway over a set of subjects, guaranteeing their compliance and complicity to a common political project (Glynos, 2001; Glynos &

Howarth, 2007, 2008; Howarth, 2008, 2010; Howarth & Griggs, 2012, 2015; Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000).

The notion of fantasy is central to this discussion. Here, the term does not designate an illusion or false consciousness. Instead, fantasies provide a narrative that conceals the contingency of social life (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2008, 2010), being intrinsically related to the ideological dimension of reality (Glynos, 2001, 2008; Glynos & Howarth, 2007). Retaking previous discussions, the LCE perspective is grounded on the radical contingency of social relations (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, 2008; Howarth, 2008, 2010). On the one hand, this ontological premise introduces a sense of the impossibility of society, assuming that any social structure and form of life is marked by a constitutive lack which precludes them from attaining a full and closed identity (Laclau, 2007; Laclau & Bhaskar, 1998; Laclau & Mouffe, 2001). On the other, it stresses that these precarious identities are relational constructions, which cannot be reduced to any set of essential rules (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2010; Laclau, 1990). In this context, the analysis of ideology does not seek to disclose the true substance underneath falsifications of reality, but rather to evidence how the non-substance constitutive of any society is made invisible (Glynos, 2001; Laclau, 1991).

The category of fantasy operates through a particular logic in which the subject's being is implicated (Glynos, 2008). According to the Lacanian psychoanalysis, humans and other animals initially share unmediated relation to the natural need and its satisfaction. However, by entering in the socio-symbolic order²², humanity loses this prerogative. From this point, every need must be articulated in language as a demand to the Other that can attend or frustrate it. Since no word can fully represent the pre-symbolic need, the entrance into 'reality' installs a fundamental distance between need and demand. This passage also implies the subject's dependence to the Other, whose recognition, approval and love gain supreme

²² In this perspective, the socio-symbolic order is frequently designated as 'reality'. It corresponds to the set of objects and identities symbolically constructed and articulated into an imaginary totality. The notion of reality is opposed to the 'real', which refers to what remains outside the field of social construction, what escapes symbolization. The gap between the real and the reality cannot be overcome, forming two incommensurable states. However, they are not disconnected. The real shows itself through the inconsistencies and limits of reality (Stavrakakis, 2007).

value. From this dynamic, the subject of desire emerges. This subject is ‘forced’ to look for their satisfaction within a socially constructed reality, to soon realize that no identification or relation can restore the pre-symbolic fulfillment. Desire is, thus, inherently unsatisfiable (Stavrakakis, 2007). But this impossibility is also what maintains desire alive: the permanent frustration reinstalls the lack, demanding new investments to achieve it (Glynos & Stavrakakis, 2008; Stavrakakis, 2007).

The subject of psychoanalysis is built around this radical split (Fotaki, 2010; Glynos, 2001; Glynos & Stavrakakis, 2008; Stavrakakis, 2007). Through continuous and ultimately failing attempts of positivizing this lack, human beings give any consistency, albeit precarious, to the social order and their identities. Fantasies operate at the center of this process by offering an object-cause of desire (Stavrakakis, 2007), which embodies, at the same time, a promise to fulfill the constitutive void and an impediment to its realization (Glynos, 2001, 2008; Glynos & Howarth, 2007). This impossibility is however experienced as a ‘mere difficulty’, creating the expectation of its achievement and stimulating the quest for satisfaction (Glynos, 2008). Thus, the fantasy’s function is not to enact the accomplishment of desire (Glynos, 2001), but to provide a frame to the subject’s investments in certain signifiers (Glynos, 2001, 2014; Glynos & Stavrakakis, 2008; Stavrakakis, 2007). Based on this, this perspective stresses the crucial role of lack and fantasy to our existence, preserving desire as the constitutive aspect of human subjectivity (Fotaki, 2010; Glynos, 2001, 2008).

When successfully installed, a fantasmatic narrative grips the subject to an existing or promised practice or order via *jouissance*²³ it procures (Glynos, 2001; Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Glynos & Stavrakakis, 2008; Howarth & Griggs, 2012). This concept designates ‘the enjoyment a subject experiences in sustaining his or her desire’. However, since desire is fundamentally unsatisfiable, *jouissance* implies sustaining it dissatisfied (Glynos, 2001:201). Therefore, it comprises both ‘satisfaction and its own negation [...], pleasure in displeasure’ (Stavrakakis, 2007:78). This ‘satisfaction in dissatisfaction’ activates the motor of desire,

²³ In this work, the original term is preferred to its version in English, since the translation ‘enjoyment’ is often misunderstood as ordinary pleasure. As emphasized in the Lacanian approach, *jouissance* involves pleasure in displeasure (Stavrakakis, 2007), being frequently experienced as suffering (Glynos, 2001; Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Glynos & Stavrakakis, 2008).

fueling the production of meanings, identities, and practices (Glynos & Stavrakakis, 2008; Stavrakakis, 2007). It also comprises a level of reproduction of certain representations and relations (Glynos, 2008), accounting for the inertia in the subject's modes of being (Glynos, 2001; Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Glynos & Stavrakakis, 2008).

The overinvestment in a fantasmatic narrative is, however, only one mode of experiencing *jouissance* (Glynos, 2008; Glynos & Howarth, 2007, 2008; Glynos & Stavrakakis, 2008; Howarth et al., 2016). The 'enjoyment of closure' (Glynos & Howarth, 2007:151) is related to an ideological form of identification, in which subjects deny and cover over the inherent lack of identities and practices (Glynos, 2008; Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Glynos & Stavrakakis, 2008; Howarth, 2008, 2010). It is, thus, imbricated in the fantasy's function of closure, promising to suture the radical contingency of social life (Glynos, 2001, 2008; Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Stavrakakis, 2007). By contrast, in the 'enjoyment of openness' (Glynos & Howarth, 2007:151), subjects remain sensitive to the constitutive character of reality. It reflects an ethical mode of identification, in which creativity becomes prominent (Glynos, 2008; Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Glynos & Stavrakakis, 2008; Howarth, 2008, 2010). Therefore, although ethics is also linked to the logic of fantasy, this mode of being involves the traversing of fantasies in the name of an, even if constrained, authenticity (Glynos, 2008; Glynos & Howarth, 2007).

The emergence of an ethical mode of *jouissance* premises the occurrence of a moment of dislocation, in which the inherent lack of social structures and identities is rendered visible. In these situations, routinized practices and identities are disrupted by an experience that cannot be symbolized through available discursive means and representations, leading to an identity crisis. In the face of this, subjects are compelled to identify anew in order to fill the void exposed, opening space for the construction of new discourses and representations (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, 2008; Howarth, 2008; Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000). Thereby, dislocation provides the conditions for agents act differently, emerging as active political and ethical subjects (Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000; Stavrakakis, 2007). Nevertheless, these (re)actions are always a possibility. Subjects can also develop an ideological response to these events aiming to avoid them to become a source of new constructions. Furthermore, these answers are situated in specific contexts, in which the 'selection' of an alternative involves the repression or exclusion of others. Thus, any form of closure will be contingent and

consequently vulnerable to further dislocations (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, 2008; Howarth, 2008).

When transported to the collective level, the notions of fantasy and *jouissance* give insights to understand how imaginary promises of a fullness-to-come fuel and sustain an order, practice or policy (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2010). As mentioned, political projects often focus on the delivery of ‘good life’ or ‘equal world’, imaginizations of a future in which fictions such as ‘harmony’ and ‘union’ would be achieved (Clarke, 2012a; Glynos & Stavrakakis, 2008). The fantasmatic content of policymaking constitutes a central stimulant for its development (Fotaki, 2010), providing energy and direction to these political enterprises (Glynos & Howarth, 2007). On the other hand, it accounts for the policy inertia (Glynos & Stavrakakis, 2008; Howarth, 2010; Howarth & Griggs, 2015), leading to the reproduction of certain courses of action – despite their documented failure – and the rise of a defensive rhetoric by those who identify with its ideals. Additionally, if fantasies offer something to pursue, they also set up impediments to its achievement. Thereupon, these imaginary pursuits cannot be easily translated into feasible solutions, often attempting to reconcile ambiguous goals and, thus, concurring for policy failure (Fotaki, 2010).

In this sense, by incorporating these categories, this perspective draws attention to the affective dimension of policymaking in general and policy change and inertia more specifically (Fotaki, 2010; Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2010; Howarth et al., 2016; Howarth & Griggs, 2012, 2015). As widely accepted between policy analysts, especially among those dedicated to implementation studies, public policies fail. Fotaki (2010) emphasizes that what unites hegemonic explanations in the field is the focus on various political and practical obstacles to the policy development, approaching it as a rational process. Subjectivity, in its turn, is frequently incorporated in terms of rational or cognitive reflexivity, when considered at all (Fotaki, 2010). By contrast, the adopted approach search for the ‘irrational’ dimension of these processes, giving new meaning to, often unconscious, emotions, passions, and affect mobilized in political and social life (Glynos, 2014; Glynos & Stavrakakis, 2008; Howarth & Griggs, 2015; Stavrakakis, 2007).

Nevertheless, the investigation of fantasies in policy processes demands some theoretical adjustments. Retaking the discussions in the first chapter, the LCE perspective draws attention

to political contention put forward in the public space. As discussed, Glynos and Howarth (2007) develop a model composed of four dimensions to ontologically support the analysis of social phenomena: the ideological and the ethical, linked to the category of dislocation and the modes of *jouissance*; and the social and the political, defined regarding the notion of public contestation. By public contestation, the authors designate ‘the contestation of the norms which are constitutive of an existing social practice (or regime) in the name of an ideal or principle’ (Glynos & Howarth, 2007:111). Accordingly, the social dimension accounts for the cases in which the contingency of sedimented practices and relations has not been registered in the mode of public contestation, while the political is related to situations in which subjects reactivate the contingency of social practices and relations by publicly challenging or defending them. As detailed by them:

The ‘public’ in ‘public contestation’ thus captures for us the minimal notion of contesting social norms in a particular site or space where persons addressed are publicly recognized as taking on official roles. This concept of the public is helpful – perhaps essential – in enabling us to distinguish between social and political practices, in which the latter are defined as having a distinctively public import. More precisely, political issues and demands are those which in principle are of concern to all who participate in the process of deciding about the affairs of the communities they inhabit (Glynos & Howarth, 2007:115).

In this context, they emphasize that this notion is based on the idea that political aspects are interrelated to the articulation of grievances as public demands, ‘rather than simply in private conversation’ (Glynos & Howarth, 2007:122). It does not mean that moments of dislocation cannot be experienced in private life, leading or not to new modes of being and practices. However, if these experiences are processed in the private sphere, they remain as social and, otherwise, if brought to the public space, they are characterized as political. By insisting on this distinction, Glynos and Howarth (2007) aim to avoid a sort of politicism, in which every social relation is seen as political, precluding the category of utility. The authors also stress the relevance of the political, given its crucial role in shaping social practices and bringing novelty to the social world.

This dualism between the social and the political posits some difficulties to implementation research. Firstly, as emphasized by West (2011), by adopting this notion of political, this perspective risks to overlooking the localized micro-politics of a practice. Departing from Mol (2002), the author argues that, although political logics are of primary interest in situations of public contestation, “there is a more subtle negotiation, management and coordination of

tensions between multiple ‘realities’ that is potentially missed” (West, 2011:424). Following the bottom-up approach in implementation studies (Barrett & Fudge, 1981; V. da R. S. Ferreira & Medeiros, 2016; Lipsky, 1971, 2010; Lotta, 2018), in this work, this level of ‘reality construction’ (West, 2011) is seen as crucial to understand how policies change in the face of contestation experienced during implementation.

Moreover, the identification of what would be a ‘proper’ public contestation is far from trivial. For instance, Glynos and Howarth (2007) mention that ‘off the record’ and, frequently, unofficial complaints, such as those shared between employees or directed to their managers, constitute social practices, in which dislocations are processed privately or informally. Political practices, in their turn, involve the public articulation of grievances as demands, presenting official and unofficial features, among other characteristics. In this sense, they have often an official side, being addressed by agents in their official role, but can also have an unofficial aspect, resisting official public disclosure. How to distinguish an ‘off the record’ social practice from an unofficial political practice remains, however, a challenge. The authors suggest resolving it by revealing the link between the unofficial practice and a publicly and officially articulated discourse to characterize both as political. The examples of these ‘links’ are, nonetheless, situated in the macro level, such as in the analysis of Thatcherite policies (quoting Smith, 1994), being difficult to transport to localized instances, like the everyday of a governmental agency as explored in this study.

In this context, I propose to replace the category of ‘public contestation’ with the notion of ‘reactivation’ (Laclau, 1990; Laclau & Mouffe, 2001), a concept also explored in Glynos and Howarth’s (2007) work. According to Laclau and Mouffe (2001:xi), ‘[t]he moment of reactivation means nothing other than retrieving an act of political institution that finds its source and motivation nowhere but in itself’. Drawing on Husserl, Laclau (1990) discusses that, in the moment of the institution of the social, its contingency is revealed, evidencing the exclusions and negations operated in this process. However, ideological work leads to ‘forgetting the origins’, concealing the contingent nature of social life. In this context, moments of reactivation seek to disturb the sedimented character of these practices, disclosing antagonistic alternatives repressed in their institution. As I read it, this concept sustains the distinction between the social and the political, avoiding the mentioned ‘politicism’ (Glynos & Howarth, 2007) without enclosing the political dimension in the public space. In this sense,

it enables to consider more micro level disputes, although considering their different impacts in political struggle.

By advancing this theoretical change, questioning emerges regarding the potential relations between the ontological dimensions. For example, it is possible to assume that the social would be necessarily articulated with the ideological, while the political could be associated with both the ethical and the ideological. Nevertheless, as already stressed by Glynos and Howarth (2007), these ontological dimensions should not be seen as a typology as such. Instead, they are a constitutive part of all regimes, practices, and policies, coming to the fore according to concrete circumstances. Furthermore, in multifaceted practices such as the implementation of a public policy, this process is frequently much more dynamic and messier, scaping any attempt of a 'two *per* two' matrix categorization. As the studied case corroborates, these dimensions emerge and are articulated in a very complex way (West, 2011), being in a continuous flux in which their boundaries are blurred (Glynos & Howarth, 2007).

Departing from this theoretical frame, the following sections investigate change and inertia in the development of the Pro-Equity, focusing on the SPM as the *locus* of inquiry. This analysis was operationalized in three interconnected steps. Firstly, I explore the organizational context in which the program was developed, evidencing some particularities of the SPM's way of organizing. Based on official documents, interviews with governmental agents, and previous studies in the field, the trajectory of the secretariat is recuperated, detailing its objectives and structure, the mechanisms adopted to advance the gender mainstreaming strategy, and the limits faced in the promotion of its initiatives. In this process, the place of the Pro-Equity among the other programs and actions fomented by the SPM is also discussed, stressing its centrality in the area of women's autonomy. By analyzing these issues, it was possible to identify some organizational characteristics concurring to the program's development. Thereby, the emphasis on the affective dimension does not exempt the investigation of other elements (Howarth & Griggs, 2015), observing the multidimensionality of this process.

Afterward, the program's design is examined. From official documents, a core structure was identified, as well as the changes promoted in the program and those abandoned throughout its ten years of implementation. The changes advanced were approached as possible responses

to contestation and challenges faced in the program's execution, pointing to potential points of dispute regarding its design. The analysis of the program's design along with the SPM's structure also enabled to identify sources of contestations in the development of policies for women and to promote gender equality in the country. As further discussed, in a broader level, institutionalized spaces of social participation, such as the National Conferences of Policies for Women and the National Council of Women's Rights in the studied case, constituted relevant instances for social movements express their demands and evaluate ongoing state initiatives. It impacted the development of actions in the SPM in general and the program's design more specifically. In the level of the Pro-Equity's arrangement, in its turn, committees composed of governmental agents and specialists were also significant spaces to debate the program's limits and propose potential improvements.

Finally, attention is drawn to how the logics sustaining the Pro-Equity were contested and defended, leading or not to changes in the policy. Central in this process was the identification of the political contestations raised by different agents throughout the program's development. As emphasized by Howarth and Griggs (2015), policy change is frequently connected to political contention and contingent crisis, through which inconsistencies, tensions, and various exclusions inherent to governmental action are exposed. In the studied case, spaces of social participation attached to the secretariat's structure or engaged in the program's development summed to the everyday negotiations and disputes experienced during implementation. The interviews with governmental agents involved in this process were the primary source of data in mapping these contestations, especially those subtler and unofficial contentions. Official documents also contributed to the analysis, notably reports of national conferences, council's meetings, and SPM's workshops, as well as evaluation reports on the program's results published by the SPM and other organizations.

Once identified the points of contestation, the analysis moves to the effects of the moments of dislocation triggered by political contestation and challenges faced in implementation. The interplay between social, political, and fantasmatic logics is retaken to explain this complex dynamic. In doing so, firstly, the social logics underlying the Pro-Equity are resumed. In this chapter, the initial articulation is approached as the basis for the advancement of the program's actions, as well as the target of questioning during its implementation. Political logics, in their turn, help to explain how contestation emerged and was managed in the

development of this initiative. On the one hand, they account for criticism toward the program's limits and failures (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2008, 2010). As discussed in the previous chapters, the logic of difference has an important role in this process, disarticulating hegemonic formations and identities and, thus, potentially leading to the expansion of political projects (Herschinger, 2012; Howarth, 2008, 2010; Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000; Laclau & Mouffe, 2001).

On the other hand, when working in tandem with fantasmatic logics, political logics enable to explain how questioning is deflected, favoring the reproduction of practices with fewer challenges (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2008, 2010). Additionally, fantasmatic logics provide the means to analyze how policy sustains its 'grip' over a set of subjects, securing their passive or active consent or, at least, their complicity (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2008, 2010). In this sense, they capture how meanings and practices articulated in the formation of the Pro-Equity are maintained, renegotiating contestation and criticism about the program's limits. It involves the reinforcement of former identifications and affective attachments, which also function as drivers to the analyzed political project (Howarth, 2010). In doing so, the focus shifts to how subjects engage with the fantasies underpinning the program (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Glynos & Stavrakakis, 2008), referring to the modes of *jouissance* previously discussed. Accordingly, agents can hold on to current modes of being and practices, reinforcing the policy's fantasmatic content; or to welcome questioning, opening space to reviewing their fantasies and practices (Glynos & Howarth, 2007).

However, in the context of policymaking, an ethical response of agents does not necessarily lead to policy change. This process involves negotiation, compromising, and bargain (Howarth, 2010; Howarth & Griggs, 2012), comprising a set of strategies and tactics to channel demands without fundamentally altering the policy (Howarth, 2010). The creation of new procedures and instruments also relies on the organizational context, demanding a series of dispositions to be put forward. In this sense, various developments can be observed. Firstly, political and organizational constraints can preclude political contestation to become a source of modification in the policy. Demands can also be partially addressed or even co-opted, resulting in the misappropriation of vindications and differences. Finally, they can be integrally incorporated, contributing to the pluralization of the political project. Despite its form, the process of incorporation of new elements into an established political project always

involves displacement mechanisms, changing the incorporated element once articulated in the new chain of signifiers (Howarth, 2008, 2010).

From data analysis, two axes of contestation were identified. The first focused on the inclusiveness of the Pro-Equity, questioning the notion of woman supporting the construction of the policy beneficiary and the plurality of agents engaged in the program's development. The second pointed to its ineffectiveness, problematizing the limits of this political project in attracting private corporations and the low results achieved in the organizations. These contestations led, however, to different responses in the secretariat. In the first case, governmental agents showed an openness to welcome criticism and a disposition to advance changes in the program's design. The second contestation, in its turn, was actively bed down, assuming a defensive rhetoric regarding the limits of this initiative. Nevertheless, despite the public deflection of questioning, some subtler changes were advanced to deal with the problems raised. By analyzing the changes addressed or not in the Pro-Equity, I show how organizational features of the SPM functioned as important conditions in the reinforcement of the logics driving this political project.

The focus, steps, and goals of the second research moment are synthesized in Figure 4.

Figure 4. Focus, steps, and goals of the first research moment

Focus:	Second face of hegemony, exploring how the logics mobilized by a public policy are sustained or transformed in the face of political contestation and challenges experienced during implementation
Steps	Goals and main concepts used
Analysis of the organizational context	To situate the organizational context in which the policy was developed, inquiring the goals, structure, mechanisms to advance the initiatives in place, and the limits faced in their implementation. It enables to apprehend both the place occupied by the investigated initiative within the set of policies developed, as well as the organizational features that concurred for its change or inertia.
Analysis of the policy design	To identify the instruments, modes of operation, and network of agents involved in the implementation of the policy. Along with the previous step, this analysis enables to identify potential sources of political contestation summing to the everyday challenges faced throughout implementation.
Interplay between social, political, and fantasmatic logics	<p>Social logics help to understand the articulation underlying the political project in dispute by different political agents.</p> <p>Political logics account for how contestation on the policy's limits and failures raises and is managed during implementation. In this process, points of contestation are approached as potential triggers of moments of dislocation. In the face of these moments, an ideological or ethical mode of <i>jouissance</i> can be observed, leading or not to changes in the policy's content.</p> <p>Fantasmatic logics enable to grasp how the policy sustain its 'grip' over the subjects, securing their engagement with the political project. In tandem with political logics, it explains how questioning is deflected, resulting on the reproduction of meanings and practices.</p>

Source: the author based on the literature referenced in this section

Based on this, the following sections investigate change and inertia in the implementation of the Program for Gender Equity.

4.2. The Secretariat of Policies for Women in the Federal Government

This section examines the organizational structure of the SPM, detailing its objective and composition, the mechanisms advanced to develop and coordinate its programs and policies, and the limits faced in this process. This analysis aims not only to particularize the

organizational context in which the Pro-Equity was developed, but also to provide the means for understanding how the logics supporting this program were contested, transformed, or reinforced throughout implementation. Firstly, it enabled to clarify the SPM's features and constraints, which functioned as relevant conditions for the program's formation, as discussed in the previous chapter, as well as for its inertia and change, as furtherly explored. Secondly, it helped to identify institutional spaces of social participation which functioned as sources of contestation about the national policy for women, with important impacts on the development of the initiative under study. Finally, by specifying the SPM's way of organizing, it was possible to consubstantiate the argument already presented regarding how, through the Pro-Equity, the secretariat projected its logic of functioning, propagating the gender mainstreaming beyond the government's frontiers.

The SPM was created in 2003, beginning of the first Lula's mandate (2003-2006). At the moment of its institution, the former State Secretariat on Women's Rights, established within the Ministry of Justice in 2002, was dismissed (PR, Brasil, 2003b). After facing a deep institutional and funding crisis in the 1990s and early-2000s (Papa, 2012), the National Council of Women's Rights (hereafter, CNDM), created in 1985 also in the Ministry of Justice (Bandeira, 2005; Farah, 2004), was incorporated to the SPM (PR, Brasil, 2003b). Like the Secretariat of Human Rights (PR, Brasil, 2003b) and the Secretariat for the Promotion of Racial Equality (PR, Brasil, 2003c), among other federal agencies (PR, Brasil, 2003b), the SPM was attached to the Presidency of Republic and had the status of a Ministry. Its competencies were:

1. To directly and immediately advise the President on the formulation, coordination, and articulation of policies for women.
2. To develop and implement educational and anti-discriminatory campaigns of national character.
3. To elaborate a gender planning that contributes to the action of the federal government and other federative levels aiming to promote equality.
4. To articulate, foster, and execute cooperation programs with national and international, public and private, organizations dedicated to implementing policies for women.
5. To promote the monitoring of the implementation of affirmative laws and the definition of public actions with the objective of fulfilling agreements, conventions, and action plans subscribed by Brazil in relation to women's rights and the fight against discrimination (SPM, Brasil, 2003a:13, my translation).

Initially, the SPM was composed of the Secretariat's Cabinet and three sub-secretariats: Planning of Policies for Women (PR, Brasil, 2003a; SPM, Brasil, 2003a), responsible for the coordination of the first edition of the Pro-Equity, among other initiatives (SPM, Brasil, 2006,

2007c); Monitoring of Programs and Thematic Actions; and Institutional Articulation (PR, Brasil, 2003a; SPM, Brasil, 2003a). The CNDM, in its turn, acted as a collegiate body to advise, support, monitor, and control the secretariat's activities, as well as to articulate with social movements and organizations involved in the promotion of women's rights (PR, Brasil, 2003b; SPM, Brasil, 2003b). Despite its drawback in the 1990s, this council has been one of the most relevant institutional spaces for the contestation of state initiatives developed in the area of gender equality, with expressive action since the 1980s.

As discussed in the previous chapter, the SPM elected the gender mainstreaming proposal as a strategy to introduce equality goals into the main course of governmental action (Bandeira, 2005; Marcondes et al., 2018; Papa, 2012; Reinach, 2013). In the national case, this strategy was organized around five main objectives:

1. To introduce concepts and practices related to gender mainstreaming into the governmental policies.
2. To improve the integration between sectorial agencies in the definition and approach toward gender mainstreaming.
3. To increase the level of articulation between institutions and other agents involved in the gender mainstreaming management.
4. To identify opportunities of sectorial investment in activities related to gender mainstreaming.
5. To disseminate knowledge regarding this theme in various governmental and nongovernmental spaces and forums (SPM, Brasil, 2004b:85-6, my translation).

This strategy was characterized by the non-hierarchical articulation with other agents, seeking to influence the formulation, execution, and evaluation of the set of public policies. In doing so, the SPM initially privileged the induction of gender equality initiatives within federal institutions, including other ministries and agencies in the executive, as well as the legislative and judicial power. By engaging with them, the secretariat did not aim to replace the role of these organizations in the development of public policies, but rather to reorient their modes of action according to gender equality goals. Therefore, the SPM articulated, coordinated, and supported the development of universal and focused policies, aiming to guarantee the universality of public services associated with the promotion of the access of women in social, political, economic, and cultural dimensions. This effort also involved the engagement with other federative levels and social movements. It contributed to strengthening the subnational executive mechanisms for the advancement of policies for women and the councils of women's rights established in cities and states (SPM, Brasil, 2004a, 2004b).

To operationalize this strategy, the SPM articulated the promotion of conferences of public policies with the development of national plans of policies for women (Marcondes et al., 2018). The conferences of public policy are broader institutionalized spaces of social participation (Avritzer & Souza, 2013; C. H. L. de Souza, Cruxên, Lima, Alencar, & Ribeiro, 2013). In these instances, representants of the state and civil society gather to negotiate a public agenda in a governmental area (Ramos, 2013). The majority of them is summoned up by the executive power (C. H. L. de Souza et al., 2013) and is promoted in interconnected stages, in which cities, states, and the union are involved. Through this process, the participants elect the representants to join in the state and national stages, as well as define the local resolutions to be discussed in the next phase. It enabled the construction of a process of social participation from the local to the national sphere, considering the multiplicity that characterizes the country (Avritzer, 2012; Avritzer & Souza, 2013; C. H. L. de Souza et al., 2013). However, the concrete effect of these conferences is heterogeneous, varying in how their results impact the development of public policies and the establishment of laws (Avritzer & Souza, 2013).

By comparing national conferences promoted during the first Lula's mandate, Petinelli (2011, 2013) stresses that the conference of policies for women had a significant influence in the construction of the federal governmental agenda, being its proposals largely incorporated in initiatives in this area (Petinelli, 2015). Held in 2004, the first national conference provided the basis for the development of the National Policy for Women and the First National Plan of Policies for Women (hereafter, PNPM) (SPM, Brasil, 2004b, 2004a). The national policy laid down the broader guidelines for the advancement of public initiatives for women and to promote gender equality in the long term. Based on this, the national plan established the concrete goals and actions to be implemented in the period of each government (SPM, Brasil, 2004b, 2008a; Marcondes et al., 2018; M. C. F. da Silva, 2018). The 1st PNPM was organized in four strategic areas²⁴ with a deadline of implementation of three years, when the second conference was promoted (SPM, Brasil, 2004b). The first edition of the Pro-Equity was launched in this context (SPM, Brasil, 2005a), as the most relevant initiative to address the

²⁴ 1. Autonomy, equality at work, and citizenship; 2. Non-sexist and inclusive education; 3. Women's health, and sexual and reproductive rights; 4. Coping with violence against women. It also comprised a discussion regarding the management and monitoring of the plan (SPM, Brasil, 2004b).

PNPM's priority of 'promoting nondiscriminatory work relations, with equal pay and access to decision-making positions' (SPM, Brasil, 2004b:41, my translation).

To inspect and evaluate the initiatives developed, the secretariat created the Committee of Articulation and Monitoring of the PNP. This Committee was composed of the SPM, responsible for its coordination; the CNDM; and sectorial agencies involved in the execution of the plan. It was also supported by a Technical Committee composed of members of agencies of planning and the Institute of Economic and Applied Research (*Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada* or IPEA). The process of articulation and monitoring involved the support to policy development through training of public servants in gender, race, and human rights; the production, organization, and dissemination of data on gender and racial issues; and the creation and strengthening of executive mechanisms for the advancement of women rights in the subnational level (SPM, Brasil, 2004b). From the analysis of the Brazilian experience, Marcondes et al. (2018) argue that this first period set the basis of the gender mainstreaming strategy in the federal government. It comprised the establishment of institutionalized spaces of social participation associated with the creation of instruments to guide the state action and mechanisms to manage, articulate and monitoring the policies developed.

The following National Conferences on Policies for Women (hereafter, CNPM) aimed at evaluating the actions developed in the scope of the national plans and reviewing the priorities and guidelines for the next period (Marcondes et al., 2018). In this sense, they became another important space for questioning the initiatives in course, with impact in different policies. The 2nd CNPM was promoted in 2007, the first year of the second Lula's mandate (2007-2010) (PR, Brasil, 2007; SPM, Brasil, 2007a). In response to its demands, the 2nd PNP included six new strategic areas²⁵ of intervention and a chapter dedicated to budget planning and management (SPM, Brasil, 2007a, 2008a). It sought to attend criticism regarding the low

²⁵ 1. Women's participation in position of power and decision-making; 2. Sustainable development in the rural field, the city, and forests, with guarantee of environmental justice, social inclusion, sovereignty, and food security; 3. Right to land, decent housing, and social infra-structure in the rural and urban fields, considering the traditional communities; 4. Non-discriminatory culture, communication, and media; 5. Coping with racism, sexism, and lesbophobia; 6. Coping with generational inequalities that impact women, with special attention to the young and elderly. It also comprised discussions regarding the management and monitoring of the plan, as well as the budget planning (SPM, Brasil, 2008a).

visibility of particular themes and groups in the national policy, as well as the lack of funding to effectively put forward the SPM's initiatives (SPM, Brasil, 2007a). The expansion of areas and actions in the second plan led to the enlargement of the Committee of Monitoring and Articulation, adding representants of other sectorial federal agencies, subnational executive mechanisms to advance women's rights, and civil society with participation in the CNDM. To improve the mainstreaming strategy, the SPM also stimulated the creation of internal committees of gender within the federal agencies, the institutionalization of municipal and state secretariats and councils to promote women's rights, and the development of subnational plans of policies for women (SPM, Brasil, 2008a).

Another change was the crescent prominence given to initiatives to cope with violence against women. In fact, since the first Lula's mandate, the federal intervention prioritized this strategic area. This focus sought to attend a pressing demand of the feminist and women's movement since the democratization. It also followed governmental efforts in course since the creation of the CNDM (Bandeira, 2005; Blay, 2003; Farah, 2004; Papa, 2012; L. de Souza & Cortez, 2014) and deepened especially after the approval of the Maria da Penha Law (*Lei Maria da Penha*) (PR, Brasil, 2006) in 2006 (Papa, 2012; L. de Souza & Cortez, 2014). It led to the development of the National Compact to Cope with Violence against Women (*Pacto Nacional pelo Enfrentamento à Violência contra as Mulheres*) in 2007 and a sequence of normative guides, which reorganized the service of protection and assistance to survivors of domestic violence in the country (SPM, Brasil, 2011d, 2011c; Papa, 2012). Following these changes, in 2009, the SPM was restructured, including the sub-secretariats to Cope with Violence against Women; Planning and Internal Management; and Institutional Articulation and Thematic Actions, responsible for the coordination of the second and third Pro-Equity editions, among other initiatives (PR, Brasil, 2009).

The 3rd CNPM followed the procedures of the second one (SPM, Brasil, 2011a). Held in 2011, beginning of the first mandate of the President Dilma Rousseff (2011-2014), this conference was organized under strong political pressures for the reduction of the federal bureaucracy and the consequent dissolution of the mainstreaming secretariats – the SPM, the Secretariat on Human Rights, and the Secretariat for the Promotion of Racial Equality – or their union in a broader ministry (CNDM, Brasil, 2011). In this context, the participants demanded the maintenance of the SPM associated with the creation and strengthening of

subnational secretariats and councils of women's rights, as well as the promotion of conferences on policies for women in cities and states (SPM, Brasil, 2011a; Marcondes et al., 2018). The focus on replying the federal initiative in the subnational level aimed to reorient efforts to enhance the institutionalization of public policies in the area, contributing to their sustainability and effectiveness despite the existence or not of a national secretariat dedicated to this issue (Marcondes et al., 2018).

This period was also marked by the commitment to strengthening actions related to women's economic autonomy, going beyond the development of the Pro-Equity (Ortiz, 2014). The 3rd CNPM drew attention to this discussion, stressing the political, cultural, and social dimensions of autonomy besides the common economic focus related to the productive work (CNDM, Brasil, 2011; SPM, Brasil, 2011a). This emphasis impacted in the restructuring of the secretariat in 2013, resulting in the creation of the Sub-Secretariat of Policies of Work and Women's Economic Autonomy, responsible for a broader set of initiatives dedicated to the domestic work, the participation of women in positions of power, the sexual division of time, the urban and rural work, among others. At that time, the SPM's structure was also formed by the Secretariat's Cabinet, the Executive Office, and the sub-secretariats of Institutional Articulation and Thematic Actions, and to Cope with Violence against Women (SPM, Brasil, 2013d; Ortiz, 2014). In response to the constant threat of extinguishing or funding the mainstreaming secretariats (CNDM, Brasil, 2011), in 2013, the SPM became a ministry²⁶, having, among its competences, the responsibility for the execution and monitoring of the Program Women Living without Violence (*Programa Mulher: Viver sem Violência*), and the coordination, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the PNPM in the national territory (SPM, Brasil, 2013d).

The approval of the Constitutional Amendment number 72 in 2013 was an important outcome of this endeavor. Popularized as the Project of Constitutional Amendment 'Female Domestic Workers' (*Projeto de Emenda Constitucional das Domésticas* or *PEC das Domésticas*), it defended the equivalence of labor rights between domestic and other urban or rural workers

²⁶ Recalling previous information, at this moment, the SPM shifted from a secretariat attached to the Presidency of Republic with status of ministry to a ministry. Despite its formal and symbolic character, it is not so clear what this change implied to the daily functioning of the secretariat.

(A. do C. N. Brasil, 2013). Until 2013, Brazilian domestic workers were not covered by some rights, such as pre-established working hours, regulated night shifts, paid extra-hours of work, and pension (Girard-Nunes & Silva, 2013). At the time of the amendment's approval, this inequality impaired more than 6 million workers, especially women, 92% of this group, and, among them, black women, 59% of the total (IPEA, 2018). This scenario was even worse if considered the high level of informality in this sector (Girard-Nunes & Silva, 2013). The Constitutional Amendment came to deal with this pressing problem. Presented by the executive power to the legislature, this initiative counted with the active participation of the SPM in articulating the involved agents. Besides these actions, the management of cooperation agreements with city councils, states, and nongovernmental organizations was another action promoted by the sub-secretariat. Less prominent were initiatives related to the decent work agenda and in the area of sports.

However, despite the efforts to pluralize programs and actions related to women's economic autonomy, the Pro-Equity remained as the flagship policy in the SPM, concentrating an expressive proportion of the secretariat's budget²⁷ and human resources destined to this area – even though they were not enough to advance some improvements during the program's implementation, as further discussed. Some program's characteristics favored this visibility. As stressed by Abramo (2008), the Pro-Equity was the most relevant federal initiative to promote gender equality in the formal labor market in the 2000s. The Technical Analyst 1 added that its clear goals, actions, and results contributed to highlighting the program in instruments of strategic planning, as well as in official documents and communications presented by the SPM representants. The direct impact within the field of intervention, without the mediation of another federal agency or federative level, was also emphasized, enabling to publicize the program's achievements as accomplishments of the SPM. Finally, as a policy headed by the secretariat, it provided more autonomy to the agent's actions, avoiding the trouble caused by the gender mainstreaming strategy, as discussed.

We tried to give space to other initiatives, but at the end, when the minister needed a more concrete action, some data, some policy result in the area of economic

²⁷ The largest budget in the area of women's economic autonomy was destined to funding cooperation agreements with states, city councils, and NGOs. In these actions, the SPM was responsible mainly for formalizing the agreement, passing along the resources, and inspecting the expenses.

autonomy, the Pro-Equity was highlighted. [...] In the SPM's strategic planning, when you had to define the actions, goals, etc, at this moment we faced the difficulty of creating a concrete policy in other themes [related to economic autonomy] very important for us. In the end, the Pro-Equity was a program already established, and it would continue to have results. So, it was a necessary item in all the instruments of planning and all the materials we used to produce to expose a little of what we have done. Hence, we did not have a policy so robust, that was indeed a program. It was central within the policy of autonomy. And, in a certain way, it combined the potential to real intervening in other agents, to get out of the public administration and to project ourselves in the private labor market. The other policies were not able of doing this. Because when you are working in a city council, for example, you are dealing directly with the citizen, with the community. In the federal government, you do not do this. We were much more normative. Our relationship was much more with other public agencies. Thus, the interaction with different agents [...] to talk about the labor market, and have this dialogue with employers, not only public employers but private too. Of all our actions, the only one that effectively provided this bridge was the Pro-Equity (Technical Analyst 1).

Research on the first decade of the national policy for women points to the creation of the SPM as the main institutional advancement regarding the promotion of gender equality in the country (Abramo, 2008; Bandeira, 2005; Furlin, 2010; Leite & Souza, 2010; Miranda, 2012; Pinheiro, 2015). The initiatives put forward by the secretariat also had important impacts on the progress of the gender equality agenda within the state. Among the positive results, the evaluations of the national plans emphasized: the greater incorporation of the gender and racial mainstreaming strategies into the governmental budget, planning, policies, and institutions; the crescent rapprochement with other executive levels and agencies, as well as with social movements and civil society organizations; the stimulus to the creation of mechanisms to advance women's rights in states and city councils; the increase in the number of councils on women's rights in different federative levels; and the development of public policies for women and to promote gender equality in various areas of governmental intervention, considering the differences and inequalities among women (SPM, Brasil, 2007a, 2008a).

Nevertheless, problems were also identified. During the CNPMs, participants stressed the incipient institutionalization of the national policy for women and initiatives associated; the insufficient incorporation of the gender and racial mainstreaming into the federal government; and difficulties in articulating policies in the subnational level and with other powers (SPM, Brasil, 2007a, 2008a, 2011a). These difficulties were related to limits of the gender mainstreaming strategy, as emphasized in the following excerpt:

There was a huge resistance [in other ministries] to dialogue, to develop joint actions, joint strategies, and also in the legislative action. Thus, we used to be very lonely in our interventions. To solve this problem, there was an intersectoral committee of public policies for women, coordinated by the secretariat. [...] And this instance existed precisely to achieve this synergy, this sum of forces in gender policies – gender, racial equality, and human rights, which were crosscut themes. To guarantee the effective mainstreaming of these issues, we needed instances and an institutional arrangement that would favor it. This arrangement was idealized to be composed of this central committee and sectoral committees within the federal agencies. [...] But ten years later there were agencies without committees and the meetings of the central committee were ineffective and came to few decisions. (Technical Analyst 1)

The delicate relationship with the city councils and states was another facet of this problem. As mentioned, one of the SPM's achievement was to stimulate the creation of mechanisms to advance women's rights in states and city councils. In 2014, there were 680 mechanisms in the country, 24 in states (89% of the total) and 656 in cities (11,8% of the total). The existence of this sort of institutional device was regarded as critical to the successful implementation of the national policy of women (SPM, Brasil, 2015), replying the structure envisaged in the federal level. However, the secretariat did not count with a law or similar instrument that distributed competencies, establishing the role of each federative instance in the development of this policy (CNDM, Brasil, 2013) – a national system of public policy such as the ones in operation in the areas of health and social assistance. It imposed a fragile relationship with these agents, depending on the will of the political leaders in charge to advance initiatives in the area. Moreover, the mechanisms established in states and city councils usually faced even worse conditions of functioning than the SPM to develop these initiatives.

The SPM did not count with a national system of policies for women, as it was demanded. The absence of such a legal system, a national norm, made the SPM very dependent on city councils to advance joint actions. The SPM was a federal agency with no capillarity in the state and municipal level and no legal norm to support this relationship, such as in the cases of SUS and SUAS. We have all the laws in the areas of health and social assistance, everything that supports, that enforces, let me say, city councils to execute policies in these areas. The SPM did not have this. So, the secretariat had to sustain a good relationship with city councils, because it relied on them. And this relationship was always delicate. (Committee Member 1)

As implied in the discussion on the relationship with subnational instances, the lack of power of the SPM in articulating with other agents used to aggravate the limits of the gender mainstreaming strategy. By recalling the experience of the approval of the Constitutional Amendment n. 72, the interviewee added:

A lot of our initiatives did not have an effect precisely because we were not able to achieve this projection within the federal government. For example, the case of the domestic work, it was embraced by the Minister and Chief of Staff in the Presidency. So, once this agency incorporated this initiative, we were able to advance it. Besides that, it was just to dispute the recognition of the agenda within the government. But, policies for women, to promote gender equality, human rights, they are like this. (Technical Analyst 1)

The low budget dedicated to the SPM's activities and policies also contributed to the poor execution of the actions in the area (CNDM, Brasil, 2005, 2006, 2010a, 2010b, 2014; SPM, Brasil, 2007a, 2008a, 2011a). It compromised the availability of financial and human resources to the development of initiatives, as well as the retaining of staff. As stressed by the Committee Member 1, besides the work overload, the high turnover 'made difficult to build memory. We always needed to retake the processes almost from zero'. Finally, the evaluation put forward during the conference stressed the non-advancement of some pressing public problems, like the voluntary termination of pregnancy and the articulation between family and work (SPM, Brasil, 2007a, 2008a, 2011a). These limits have also been asserted by academic research on this topic (Bandeira, 2005; Furlin, 2010; Leite & Souza, 2010; Natividade, 2009; Papa, 2012). In the area of work more specifically, studies emphasize the small number of policies to socialize care and to mitigate the double burden, focusing mainly on the expansion of the childcare system (Leite & Souza, 2010; Ortiz, 2014). Additionally, the majority of initiatives oriented to the formal labor market focused on programs of vocational training and qualification, existing few initiatives to directly intervene in work organizations (Ortiz, 2014).

These limits enhanced in the context of institutional, political, and economic instability that marked the second mandate of Dilma Rousseff (2015-2016). During the ministerial reform in 2015, the mainstreaming secretariats were finally merged in the Ministry of Women, Racial Equality, and Human Rights (PR, Brasil, 2015, 2016b). Afterward, the president was submitted to a process of impeachment, being removed from the office in August of 2016. Amid this turbulent process, the 4th CNPM was promoted. However, the following political conditions precluded the advancement of its proposals. During the government of Michel Temer, the recently created Ministry of Women, Racial Equality, and Human Rights was extinguished, and the secretariats were incorporated into the Ministry of Justice and Citizenship (PR, Brasil, 2016d, 2016c). After a deep budget contingency in this Ministry, the funding for these agencies was withdrawn (MJC, Brasil, 2016), compromising, even more, the development of policies in these areas of gender, race, and human rights. From May 2017,

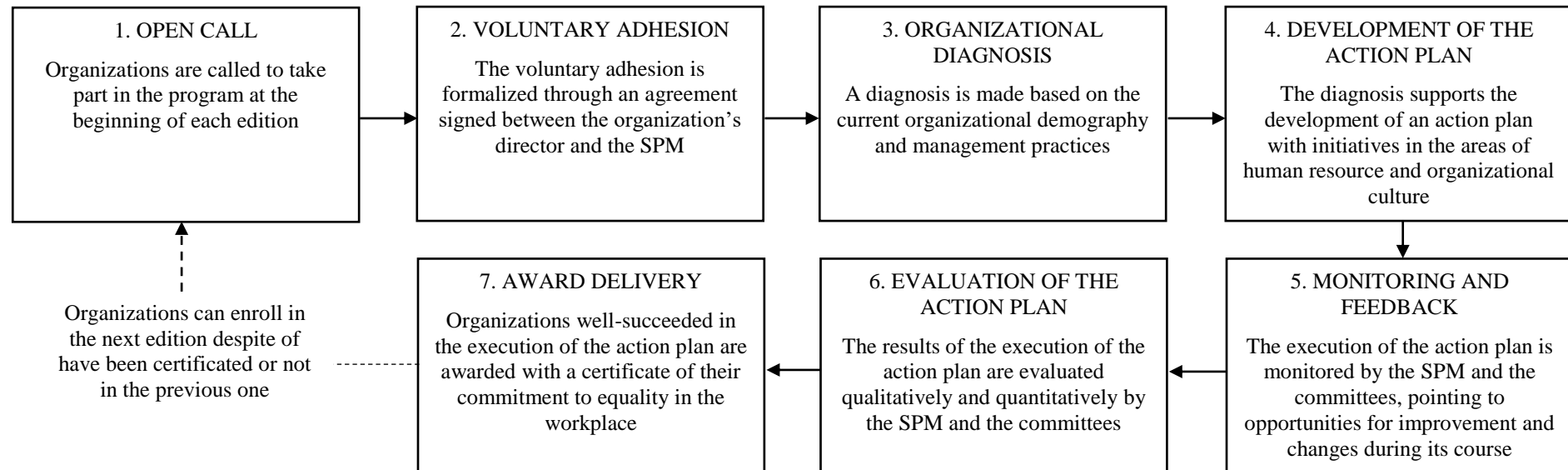
the secretariats became part of the Secretariat of Government in the Presidency of Republic (PR, Brasil, 2017c, 2017b), however, without significant action. It undermined the continuity of the sixth Pro-Equity's edition, with no updates about its development until the end of 2018.

4.3. The design of the Program for Gender (and Racial) Equity

This section explores the design of the Pro-Equity, inquiring both its initial arrangement and the structural changes promoted and abandoned during its development. This analysis revealed a core structure maintained during its ten years of implementation, despite other more or less profound modifications put forward in this period. Four main features characterized the Pro-Equity's core: 1. the organization of the program in editions, 2. its voluntary character, 3. the use of a certificate as an induction mechanism, and 4. the coordination by the SPM in partnership with other organizations and the support of committees composed of representants of government, intergovernmental organizations, civil society, and specialists. However, as this and the following sections evidence, even these structural characteristics comprised some minimal changes throughout implementation, in order to make the program more inclusive or effective.

The program was organized in editions composed of identifiable stages, systematized in Figure 5.

Figure 5. Stages in the program's cycle



The cycle started with the open call for organizations to participate. In the first edition, the Pro-Equity was dedicated to public companies (SPM, Brasil, 2005a, 2006). From the second one, the program was expanded to big and medium organizations from the private and public sectors, including public institutions with non-economic ends, such as city councils, state secretariats, and ministries (SPM, Brasil, 2008c). As discussed in the previous chapter, the adhesion of organizations was voluntary, with the absence of sanctions in case of a waiver or unsatisfying performance. It was formalized through an agreement signed by the SPM and the chief of the organization or its legal representant (SPM, Brasil, 2005a).

Once enrolled, the participants must officially compose an Internal Committee for the Management of the Pro-Equity, responsible for proposing, developing, and coordinating the initiatives to be advanced (SPM, Brasil, 2008c). The work of the committee supposed the engagement of managers and employees from all the organizational sectors, especially from the areas of human resources, marketing and communication, ombudsmen's office, and technical ones. Its objective was to create awareness on gender and racial issues and their impacts on people's lives; to share information about the organizational profile, motivating members to involve with the discussion on gender, race, and equality at work; to train employees on themes related to the program, starting with the instruction of the internal committee; and to introduce changes into the organizational routines aiming to construct equalitarian workplace (SPM, Brasil, 2011e, 2011b, 2013a). In this sense, the committee sought to sensitize and train managers and employees to identify and transform managerial processes that could reinforce inequalities. This change in the attitude of organizational members would lead to the revision of practices in place, contributing to the progressive overcoming of discrimination at work (Monteiro, 2011).

The role of the internal committee resembles the action of the Committee of Articulation and Monitoring in the government, as well as the sectorial committees established within federal agencies. As discussed, in the national trajectory, the gender mainstreaming strategy comprised the constitution of a central committee to coordinate the relationship with other agents and sectors. The SPM, through the Committee of Articulation and Monitoring, was responsible for articulating, monitoring, and evaluating the development of initiatives to promote gender equality by other governmental agents. From 2008, the creation of committees within federal agencies was also stimulated to facilitate the relationship with the secretariat and its intervention. The program, in its turn, replied this strategy in the micro level of organizations, holding the internal committee

accountable for articulating and monitoring the development of actions by other organizational sectors. In both experiences, the objective was to induce agents or areas to transform their practices, aiming at equalitarian public policies and institutions, in the first case, and inclusive management practices and workplace, in the second. This similarity concurs for the argument advanced in the previous chapter regarding how the SPM projected its way of incorporating the gender mainstreaming strategy through the program.

The resemblance in the modes of operation also resonates the approximations already evidenced between gender mainstreaming and diversity management. As argued by Prügl (2011), both strategies are based on gender and cultural knowledge pragmatically adapted to governmental ends and interrelated with management issues. In both cases as well, the objective is to strategically deal with difference, even if they do it in different ways. On the one hand, gender mainstreaming focuses on the negative side of difference, affirming that supposedly gender-neutral actions lead to discrimination and injustice. On the other, diversity management stresses the positive side, inviting managers to take advantage of the benefits it can offer to business success. Despite this contrast, the building of 'new selves' sensitive to difference emerges as fundamental to advance both strategies (Prügl, 2011). In this context, it is not random that the federal and the organizational committees had their activities centered in training and data dissemination, beyond the articulation role in trying to make this knowledge shape new public and private initiatives.

In the scope of the program, the creation of this 'shared awareness' would begin by the initial analysis of each organization. To do so, firstly, the internal committee must fulfill an organizational profile on the current workforce demography and the managerial practices in use. Based on this, a diagnosis was made to identify existing gaps and discriminatory practices. It would also contribute to the recognition of social inequalities frequently naturalized within organizations and the losses caused by discrimination (SPM, Brasil, 2006). The diagnosis provides the basis for the development of an action plan composed of initiatives in the areas of human resource management and organizational culture. Actions and projects in human resource aimed to promote equal opportunities in the access, maintenance, and promotion of women in the organization. The area of organizational culture, in its turn, sought to change habits and values collective shared in the workplace, reinforcing a corporate identity committed to gender and racial equality (SPM, Brasil, 2016). The two areas were integrated by different axes of intervention, as detailed in Table 5.

Table 5. Axis of intervention per area

Areas	Axis of intervention	Objective
1. Human resource management	1.1. Recruitment and staffing	To overcome the sexual division of work in the recruitment and selection of women which result in female's exclusion of the labor market, especially in the case of black women, and in their segregation in less valued job positions related to feminine and the reproductive work.
	1.2. Training and development	To stimulate the access and maintenance of women in the organization through education, as well as to make managers and employees aware of gender and racial issues.
	1.3. Promotion and career plans	To increase women's participation in positions of power and decision-making, as well as to achieve equal pay between men and women.
	1.4. Health and safety programs	To prevent risks and harms to worker's lives with attention to women's specificities as well as to their physical and psychological health. Also includes changes in policies that can create barriers to women's access and maintenance in job positions traditionally seen as 'male'.
	1.5. Benefits and compensation policies	To guarantee the benefits and compensation policies established in the law, as well as to promote the adoption of voluntary programs that contribute to the maintenance of women at work and their quality of life.
2. Organizational culture	2.1. Mechanisms to fight discriminatory practices based on sex, race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation, and the moral and sexual harassment	To adopt practices to prevent and combat discrimination and harassment, including training, as discussed in the axis 1.2, and instruments to deal with the events occurred within the organization.
	2.2. Practices to train and create awareness on gender equality in the organizational relationship chain	To influence other organizations that integrate the relationship chain to adopt practices committed to gender and racial equality in their work environment.
	2.3. Internal and external institutional marketing and advertisement	To replace the organizational communication as an instrument to reinforce gender and racial equality values within and outside the participant.

Source: the author based on SPM, Brasil (2005a, 2011e, 2016).

The action plan was proposed by the participant and evaluated by the SPM. At this moment, the SPM verified the coherence of the initiatives and suggested improvements (Abramo, 2008). Once defined, the director of the organization must formalize the plan with the SPM. The organization had between twelve and eighteen months, depending on the edition, to execute the action plan.

During this process, the SPM monitored the accomplishment of the activities. It involved the periodic report of the initiatives developed and the limits faced, as well as the presentation of evidence of the conclusion of pre-established goals. It also included the promotion of monitoring meetings, technical-pedagogical workshops, and *in loco* visits to follow up the execution of the plan (SPM, Brasil, 2011e, 2011b). In the end, the SPM evaluated, with the support of the program's committees, the results achieved by each participant. Organizations well succeeded in the execution of the plan received a certificate on their commitment to gender equality in the workplace. All the participants could enroll in the next edition without prejudice of having been certificated or not in the previous one (SPM, Brasil, 2005a).

The use of a certificate as a mechanism to induce the commitment to an equalitarian workplace was the third core feature of the Pro-Equity. As discussed, in this policy, the state acted as a 'mediator', promoting and supporting the development of inclusive management practices. This idea assumes that organizations are not neutral spaces. Instead, their way of organizing, hiring, training, and promoting can contribute to reproduce or change uneven work relations (SPM, Brasil, 2006). In this context, organizations were stimulated to transform their shared values and management practices, contributing to gender equality in the workplace (SPM, Brasil, 2006, 2007c). The certificate and its benefits in terms of improvements in the reputation and productivity were the primary incentives to organizations take part in the program. The competition among organizations to be better placed toward stakeholders would be another motivation in this process, establishing cases of success to be followed in the market. Following this expectation, in the first edition, strong public companies in the Brazilian scenario were actively involved in the program, aiming to encourage other agents to engage in the Pro-Equity (SPM, Brasil, 2006).

Finally, the fourth core feature of the Pro-Equity was its coordination by the SPM. Until the third edition, the program was developed in partnership with UNIFEM and ILO. Its management also counted with the assistance of interdisciplinary committees. Initially, it was supported by the Committee Program for Gender Equity, composed of specialists on the themes of gender and work, as well as representants of governmental agencies²⁸, intergovernmental organizations²⁹, and civil

²⁸ The SPM, responsible for the committee's coordination; the Ministry of Planning, Budget and Management; the Ministry of Work and Employment; and the Public Ministry of Work (SPM, Brasil, 2005b, 2005c). In the second edition, a representant of the General Attorney Office was added to the committee (SPM, Brasil, 2007b).

society³⁰ (SPM, Brasil, 2005b, 2005c, 2007b). The committee's objective was to advise the program's coordination (SPM, Brasil, 2005a, 2005b, 2005c) on the evaluation of the action plans and organizational diagnosis; the development and monitoring of initiatives put forward by the participants; the identification of improvement opportunities to increase their performance; the evaluation of the results; and the decision regarding the award (SPM, Brasil, 2005c). In the second edition, the Ad Hoc Committee was created (SPM, Brasil, 2008b). Composed of members of university research groups on gender issues in different Brazilian states, this committee aimed at qualifying the monitoring and evaluation of the action plans developed by the participating organizations (SPM, Brasil, 2008c, 2008b, 2013f).

In 2011, the Pro-Equity passed through its deepest revision, stressing the relevance of the intersection between gender and race. As a result, it was renamed as the 'Program for Gender and Racial Equity', and the Secretariat for the Promotion of Racial Equality (hereafter, SEPPIR) became another strategic partner in the program's development. Both the committees were also enlarged. The Committee Program for Gender Equity, renamed as the Technical-Institutional Committee, included representatives of 14 federal agencies³¹, six trade unions³², five business associations³³, the CNDM, ILO, the UN Women, and four specialists on the themes of gender, race, and work (SPM, Brasil, 2011f, 2011e). It was responsible for advising the coordination in the analysis and approval of the adhesion proposals, as well as in the evaluation of results and award granting (SPM, Brasil, 2011f, 2011e, 2011b). As discussed in the following excerpts, the idealized

²⁹ The United Nations Development Fund for Women and the International Labour Organization (SPM, Brasil, 2005b, 2005c).

³⁰ The National Council of Women's Rights (SPM, Brasil, 2005b, 2005c).

³¹ The SPM, responsible for the committee's coordination; the Secretariat of Policies to Promote Racial Equality; the Secretariat on Human Rights; the Ministry of Planning, Budget and Management; the Ministry of Work and Employment; the Public Ministry of Work; the Ministry of Development, Industry, and Foreign Trade; the Ministry of Justice; the Ministry of Culture; the Ministry of Education; the Ministry of Science, Technology, and Innovation; the Ministry of Health; the Ministry of Social Security; and the Ministry of Mines and Energy (SPM, Brasil, 2011f).

³² The *Central Geral dos Trabalhadores do Brasil* (CGTB); the *Central dos Trabalhadores e Trabalhadoras do Brasil* (CTB); the *Central Única dos Trabalhadores* (CUT); the *Força Sindical* (FS); the *Nova Central de Trabalhadores* (NCST); and the *União Geral dos Trabalhadores* (UGT) (SPM, Brasil, 2011f).

³³ The *Confederação Nacional do Comércio de Bens, Serviços e Turismo* (CNC); the *Confederação da Agricultura e Pecuária do Brasil* (CNA); the *Confederação Nacional da Indústria* (CNI); the *Confederação Nacional das Instituições Financeiras* (CNF); and the *Confederação Nacional do Transporte* (CNT) (SPM, Brasil, 2011f).

function of this committee was to reinforce the mainstreaming strategy with other federal agencies and to maintain permanent contact with relevant agents in the area of work, with an updated reading of the labor market. Through the engagement of these agents, the SPM also sought to confer legitimacy to the initiative, raising support of political agents in the area.

We used to have 32 members [in the Technical-Institutional Committee]. The idea was to expand the program to the ministries concurrently to the SPM's work in creating committees of gender within each federal agency. So, we used to join these [actions]. (Program Coordinator 4)

The Technical-Institutional Committee involved various agents, both from the government, other ministries, and from unions and business associations. It intended to discuss real life. For instance, what the actual demand in the labor market is, what is happening in the labor market. Because we had a discourse from the government that did not come from anywhere. It is based on a reading of reality. But it was also important to stay in touch with this reading of reality regularly, involving other representants from work sectors, other categories, and also other ministries. We could not ignore the Ministry of Work, for example. (Technical Analyst 4)

The Ad Hoc Committee, in its turn, involved new research centers dedicated to racial issues (SPM, Brasil, 2011f, 2011e). It accounted for the analysis of the action plans, the monitoring of implementation, the evaluation of the results achieved, and the support in the decision regarding the award (SPM, Brasil, 2011f, 2011e, 2011b, 2013c). The expected role of this committee was to support technically and scientifically the program's development. To do so, it counted with experts in the themes of gender, race, and work. These agents, although having different trajectories and inserted in various research fields, also used to share a theoretical and political feminist background, being committed to overcoming inequalities in the workplace. Thus, through this instance, the SPM sought both to qualify the implementation and to confer academic and political legitimacy to the program, raising support of researchers and, also, militants in this area, as evidenced in the following excerpts. From the fifth edition, these activities were shared by the Committee of Specialists, composed of four professionals and militants in this field. It is worthwhile noticing that the participation in these committees was considered 'provision of relevant public service' and, hence, was not remunerated (SPM, Brasil, 2007b, 2008b, 2011e, 2011b).

So, [the Ad Hoc Committee] aimed to bring the ongoing academic discussion, this academic and theoretical construction, to both the program and the organizations that did not use to work with this [gender and racial equality]. (Program Coordinator 4)

The Ad Hoc Committee aimed to qualify the program [...] This program was not only a program from a left-wing government, that wants everybody to become feminist. Prejudices that people used to share about the SPM and that government. It [gender inequality in the workplace] is a worry not only in this government. It is also a worry

among researchers that have been discussing it for years. So, I believe it [the committee] aimed to qualify in this way. Because there was a discourse that goes beyond the political discourse, about more equality for women and black women. And, so, it means: 'Look, there are studies, it is not just a governmental discourse. There are studies, research, we have stories to tell, because it happens, it has been happening for a long time... [We have stories to tell] about how it happens differently in public organizations, private organizations, according to the region.' Therefore, I believe the Ad Hoc Committee had this function of qualifying that and also to provide qualified support for both the participating organizations and for us [in the SPM]. (Technical Analyst 4)

As evidenced in the following section, these committees were important spaces for questioning the program's limits. Along with the national council and conferences, they favored the expression of multiple agents regarding the policy development, contributing to its improvement throughout implementation. However, as furtherly discussed, these spaces did not have the same impact in the (re)construction of the Pro-Equity. In the case of the national spaces of social participation, the conferences introduced relevant issues related to the notion of women supporting the SPM's actions in general, leading to structural changes in the program's approach. Data regarding the national council, in its turn, revealed that its discussion concentrated mainly in other themes and initiatives, having few mentions to the Pro-Equity in the studied period. The Ad Hoc Committee was also more determinant in the changes promoted when compared with the Committee Pro-Equity. Problems in the operationalization of the gender mainstreaming strategy precluded the later committee to have a more active presence in the program's development.

Additionally, despite their active role, contestation raised in these spaces did not necessarily lead to actual modifications in the Pro-Equity's design. Like the next sections aim to evidence, this process relied on organizational conditions, such as the SPM's role in the promotion of the policy and the material constraints faced, which favored or not policy change.

4.4. Fantasies in motion in the Pro-Equity's development

In the following sections, I analyze the program's change and inertia. In doing so, the emphasis is on how the logics underpinning the Pro-Equity are disarticulated by political investments, leading or not to reformulations in the initial program's design. Retaking the previous chapter, the analysis of official documents and interviews with governmental agents involved in the program's formation revealed four 'projected social logics' (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Glynos, Klimecki, et al., 2015; Glynos, Speed, et al., 2015; Remling, 2018) articulated under the empty signifier 'gender equality

for all'. This ideal operated as a nodal point (Laclau & Mouffe, 2001), holding together ambiguous representations regarding the role of the state in this policy, organizations and management practices as targets of intervention, and women as the policy beneficiary.

On the one hand, the logic of cooperation stressed the state's role as a mediator, reinforcing a non-compelling approach in progressively inducing organizations to achieve the expected program's results. It also included the promotion of a collaborative relationship between the participating organizations, encouraging the exchange of knowledge. On the other, the audit logic represented the state as an 'auditor', responsible for measuring and evaluating the quality of actions developed in the scope of the program. Ambiguities were also established between the affirmative and the managerial logic. Based on a feminist perspective, the affirmative logic questioned gender inequalities ingrained in organizations, denouncing women's exclusion and segregation in this field. It led to political pressures for active political intervention aiming at overcoming this pressing problem. The managerial logic, in its turn, emphasized the potential benefits of gender equality initiatives, identifying women as a source of competencies to be used. In this context, organizations were called to take advantage of this opportunity, contributing to their productiveness and reputation.

Supporting this articulation was a promise that, through a cautious action between mediation and auditing, the state could promote awareness on the social and economic gains of gender initiatives and, consequently, commit the participants to the quest for the policy goals. The fantasmatic narrative underpinning this endeavor was accounted in terms of a chain of causal relations and actions toward policy delivery. It started by the state creating a certificate on gender equality, which could contribute to more efficient use of human resources and better organizational reputation. Seeking to seize this opportunity, private and public companies would voluntarily engage in the program, initiating a cooperative relationship through which inclusive managerial practices would be developed. These practices would result in improvements for female workers, favoring their inclusion; organizations, enhancing their position in the market and their productivity; and the government, advancing gender equality in the workplace. Therefore, 'gender equality for all' functions as the 'Thing' (Hawkins, 2015) to be pursued in order to achieve both social justice and competitiveness.

The logic of fantasy was, thus, sustained in ideals like ‘union’ and ‘harmony’, engaging the state, female workers, and organizations in a ‘win-win’ game, in which the latter has ‘nothing to lose’ (Ortiz, 2014:175). As identified in other policies (Remling, 2018), the program’s emphasis was on the beatific dimension of the fantasmatic narrative. According to Remling, (2018), when the policy problem is more or less clear among its audience, the political work tends to shift to justifying the governmental course of action as the most appropriate response to the public issue. In this process, images of a prosperous future which would offer enjoyment can be more effective in achieving the compliance of a set of agents to the defended policy. However, it does not preclude the presence of a horrific side. In this sense, it was possible to identify a fear among the interviewees that a coercive attitude would discourage the involvement of the participants. It would make the chain of causality infeasible, compromising the execution of the Pro-Equity and, thus, returning to a previous reality when the state used to do nothing, or very little, to cope with gender inequalities in the workplace.

The next sections explore how the projected social logics and the fantasmatic narrative sustaining them were contested throughout the Pro-Equity’s implementation, leading or not to changes in the program’s instruments, modes of operation, and network of agents involved. Data analysis revealed two axes of contestation. The first focused on how inclusive this initiative was, regarding both the notion of beneficiary and the plurality of agents involved in its development. The second questioned the policy effectiveness, stressing its limits on the involvement of organizations and the poor results achieved. These criticisms were followed by different reactions, registering an openness to contestation and a disposition to change, in the first case, and a deflection of questioning and tendency to policy inertia, in the second.

4.4.1. Feminist struggles in the program’s change

As mentioned, the first axis of contestation surrounded criticism regarding how inclusive the Pro-Equity was, questioning especially the construction of its beneficiary. This critique was oriented not only to the program but to the SPM as a whole, problematizing the notion of women supporting the set of initiatives advanced by the secretariat. In the scope of the Pro-Equity, the contested notion composed one of the elements articulated by the affirmative logic, approaching women as a discriminated group in the workplace. In this context, the supposed universality of the term

‘women’ was denounced, stressing that it leads to the privilege of hegemonic groups, such as white, heterosexual, and middle-class women. This contention reenacts a central struggle within the feminist field (Alvarez, 2014; Alvarez et al., 2003), debating how class, race, ethnicity, and age, among other systems of oppression, intersect gender hierarchies resulting in particular experiences of discrimination and exclusion (Crenshaw, 2002). The notion of women supporting the managerial logic, in its turn, was not a target of contestation, being indirectly questioned through criticism regarding the ineffectiveness of the program, as discussed in the following sub-section.

Disputes about the construction of the policy beneficiary adopted by the SPM were vocalized mainly in the national conferences. These claims were strongly articulated in the 2nd CNPM when black women and lesbians required attentiveness to their demands, as well as effective initiatives to cope with the institutional racism (SPM, Brasil, 2007a, 2008a) that pervades private and public organizations. Concurrently, age and generational inequalities were stressed, drawing attention to the uneven experiences between young and elderly women, especially in the labor market and health. These worries should be reflected in the national plan, establishing concrete proposals to deal with discriminations due to the intersection between sexism, racism, lesbophobia, and ageism. In answer to this, two new strategic areas dedicated to these themes³⁴ were introduced in the second national plan on policies for women (SPM, Brasil, 2008a, 2010a).

It is worthwhile noticing that different axes of oppression, mostly regarding race and ethnicity, had been already mentioned in the 1st CNPM (SPM, Brasil, 2004c) and the 1st PNPM (SPM, Brasil, 2004b). However, from the second conference, social movements demanded clear initiatives to attend specificities of groups, especially of lesbians and black women (SPM, Brasil, 2007a, 2010a; Marcondes et al., 2018), a claim not completely fulfilled in the 2nd PNPM. Instead, the plan established objectives, goals, and priorities to guide actions in the other strategic areas (SPM, Brasil, 2008a), leading to questioning regarding the effectiveness of this approach. In the area of work more specifically, the relevance of considering the articulation between the different axes of

³⁴ ‘Coping with racism, sexism, and lesbophobia’ and ‘Coping with generational inequalities that impact women, with special attention to the young and elderly’ (SPM, Brasil, 2008a).

oppression was reinforced in the priority and action³⁵ related to the Pro-Equity (SPM, Brasil, 2008a), but no substantive change was introduced in the program's design.

In response to this, in 2009, the Committee of Articulation and Monitoring of the PNPM created the Workgroup to the Reinforcement of Actions to Cope with Racism, Sexism and Lesbophobia. This workgroup aimed at proposing strategies to effectively implement the mainstreaming of race, ethnicity, and sexual equality in the governmental actions and policies. Composed of representants of the mainstreaming secretariats and civil society, it published recommendations to governmental agencies and institutions in all the federative levels. These guidelines and proposals objectivated to make visible and deconstruct the racism, sexism, and lesbophobia ingrained in state institutions and practices. The publication in the last year of the second Lula's mandate was also seen as an opportunity of pointing to potential improvements in the next federal government (SPM, Brasil, 2010a). It paved the way for the incorporation of relevant changes in the first year of Dilma Rousseff's mandate. As described by a governmental interviewee:

So, we had the conference, the plan, and, after, the repercussion of the plan that did not have any action, that did not have any real effect in that strategic area [related to racism and lesbophobia]. And the social movement questioning the secretariat, demanding more effective actions. [...] the social movements, the black women, they used to say: 'We arrive here at the SPM, and you talk about women, but you do not talk about black women. We arrive at the SEPPIR, they talk about black people, but they do not talk about women. So, we do not have where to go; we do not have space in the federal government.' Thus, at that moment, the minister created this workgroup. After this discussion, in everything in the SPM, the racial issue showed up much stronger because we had this commitment, this internal and permanent reflection, that the workgroup mobilized within the secretariat (Consultant 1).

The reinforcement of the racial and ethnic dimensions in the Pro-Equity was highlighted among the suggestions of the workgroup (SPM, Brasil, 2010a) (:42-3). In this context, the Program was restructured during its fourth edition, becoming the Program for Gender and Racial Equity. Like in the case of the national plan (SPM, Brasil, 2004b), the first editions of the Pro-Equity had already addressed racial issues (SPM, Brasil, 2005b, 2006, 2010b). However, by stressing this dimension in its name, the program sought to prioritize the strong inequalities suffered by black women in the labor market. In this sense, it emphasized the deep discriminations and exclusions experienced by

³⁵ Priority '1.6. To promote non-discriminatory work relations due to sex, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, generation, or disability, with equal pay and access to decision-making positions.' Action '1.6.1. To implement the Program for Gender Equity, considering race, ethnicity, generation, and sexuality.' (SPM, Brasil, 2008a:50, my translation).

this group in organizations, considering especially the articulation between gender, race, and class inequalities. As mentioned, the SEPPIR was also pointed as a core partner of the SPM in this program, along with ILO and the UN Women (SPM, Brasil, 2011e). These changes led to an approach more visibly committed to address racial issues within the organizations participating in the Pro-Equity, as discussed by an interviewee:

Indeed, [the racial dimension] used to be considered, even during the third edition when we had not included yet 'race' in the name of the program. But, when you make it official in the name, with gender and race, it brings a bigger impact. [...] [The theme] used to show up in the goals that organizations proposed, but it was not so debated, it was not so problematized. From the fourth edition, it received more attention: 'Are we really doing right about this theme? Are we introducing it properly in the action plans? And how do we make people identify themselves? Are they compelled to inform their race? Where should we put this?' Thus, it was interesting, because from that we started to address the theme in workshops. I believe it was good to the program, to its development, to its evolution (Technical Analyst 3).

Nevertheless, if, on the one hand, the incorporation of the racial dimension was celebrated as an achievement in the program's development, on the other, it was a source of conflicts (Ortiz, 2014). Questioning surrounded the risk of the intersectionality between gender, race, and ethnicity be assimilated as a diversity issue, depoliticizing this discussion and the consequent initiatives. As debated in the previous chapter, the diversity perspective celebrates plurality, stressing the potential benefits that identities and differences between groups can provide (Fleury, 2000; Thomas Jr, 1990). In doing so, this approach often leads to an apolitical action (Alves & Galeão-Silva, 2004), neglecting hierarchies and discriminations that mark uneven societies. As emphasized by the minister of the SEPPIR during the 2nd CNPM:

Frequently, the term diversity is banalized. Companies can create the day when each worker would go with your team's shirt as if it were diversity; when each worker would bring their traditional dish as if it were diversity by itself. But we are not talking about customs nor individual choices. We are talking about the necessity of introducing ethnic and racial issues into the policies for women with the objective to reinforce diversity. We are talking about structural problems, we are saying that women are not all equal, that white women have had an economic and social privilege to the detriment of indigenous, black, and gypsy women that have not had the same opportunities in the political agenda in this country (SPM, Brasil, 2007a) (:46-7, SEPPIR Minister).

The diversity perspective could also deviate the focus of the program from women, its main beneficiary:

We used to have a lot of problems with the intersections too, excluding race. [...] In the sense that [the organizations] were thinking it was a diversity program, considering diversity broadly. And, so, we had to say to the organization: 'Look, it is not like that. I know, there are a thousand of certificates and diversity initiatives that encourage diversity,

but it is a program of gender and race. Thus, I want women and black women. Do you want to work with disabled people? Ok. But you cannot propose action to disabled people in general' (Committee Member 1).

As suggested by the Committee Member 1 and also stressed by Ortiz (2014), this change could also deviate the focus of the program from women, including black men as a beneficiary of this initiative. In this sense, questioning regarding the articulation between the different axes of oppression in the SPM's actions in general and the program more specifically was embraced but with reticence. Interrelated to these worries is frequent criticism about how the intersectional approach can comminute initiatives in the field, losing sight of structural power dimensions in an uneven society, such as gender, class, and race (Hirata, 2014), a discussion further explored.

Another aspect problematized within the SPM was the neglect of the class dimension in the scope of the Pro-Equity. As discussed by the Technical Analyst 4, in the secretariat, there was a shared assessment that the program, despite its significance, achieved a particular part of society:

We [in the SPM] have always done this self-criticism about how all the time, the budget, all the things we used to direct to the Pro-Equity, we were channeling to a specific class. That we were not able to make the program access the women that were most in need, that are in the informality, unemployed, etc. So, we had this self-criticism that hurt us, but we were not able to resolve it completely (Technical Analyst 4).

In this sense, as a program oriented to medium and big organizations in the formal labor market, which ultimate goal was to increase women's participation in decision-making and leadership positions, the Pro-Equity favored a privileged fraction of female workers, composed mainly of white and high or middle-class women. Thus, it set aside a large amount of black and poor women, historically segregated to informal and precarious job positions. However, differently from the other contestations, this issue was seen as an inherent limitation of the program, which could be attenuated but not overcome. The attempts to develop other initiatives in the area of women's autonomy, discussed earlier, aimed to deal with this problem, addressing the complexity of this theme by going beyond the Pro-Equity.

Although with less emphasis, a second point of contestation was also addressed regarding the inclusion of new agents in the program's development. Firstly, it comprised the involvement of representatives of state ministries and agencies. As discussed, the Pro-Equity counted with the support of a committee composed of governmental members since its beginning. This committee was expanded throughout time, passing from four representants of state's agencies in the first

edition (SPM, Brasil, 2005b, 2005c) to fourteen in the fifth one (SPM, Brasil, 2011f). However, criticism was oriented to the non-involvement of representatives of workers and employees in the program's development.

The unionists that had been developing work with feminism, with the discussion on the female work, they also demanded this [the participation of representatives of unions in the program's development] to the Minister and, so, we expanded [the committee]. So, it is tripartite. There were government, businesses, and workers. Thus, the employers also had to participate, and they did it through business associations. (Program Coordinator 4)

This limit was emphasized especially in consideration to the tripartite character of committees in the Ministry of Work and Employment, which involved members of the state, unions, and business associations (PR, Brasil, 2003b). Thus, in the review promoted in the fourth edition, representatives of these organizations were included in the Technical-Institutional Committee. An expansion in the number of members was also observed in the Ad Hoc Committee, with the inclusion of new specialists in all editions, and especially in the fourth one, when the racial thematic was incorporated in the program (SPM, Brasil, 2011f).

The changes put forward indicate an openness to questioning regarding how inclusive this initiative was and a willingness to review the program to attend this issue. In this sense, the attitude of governmental agents in this axis of contestation can be associated with an 'enjoyment of openness' (Glynos & Howarth, 2007). As discussed in the theoretical section of this chapter, an ethical mode of *jouissance* (Glynos, 2008; Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Glynos & Stavrakakis, 2008; Howarth, 2008, 2010) involves the questioning, even if partially, of the fantasy sustaining a political project. In doing so, subjects tend to loosen up previous identifications, giving space for new relations and practices (Glynos, 2008; Glynos & Howarth, 2007). However, in the studied case, it does not implicate the traversing of the fantasmatic narrative underpinning the program. As the analysis has been evidenced, an ethical and political subject sensitive to women's demands is an important part of the feminist frame structuring the Pro-Equity. Therefore, in this case, the openness to criticism on the policy beneficiary and the agents involved taps into the agent's identity as feminists, committed to the construction of equalitarian world, as well as attuned to the discussions that mark this political field of action and reflection (Alvarez, 2014).

This identity was institutionally reinforced in two levels. Firstly, it permeated the organizational mission and goals. As discussed, the SPM sought to advance public policies for women, aiming to overcome gender inequalities and to promote social justice (SPM, Brasil, 2003a, 2004b). These

commitments were affirmed in the premises and guidelines of the National Policy for Women, intending to orient not only the SPM's action but the initiatives of all the governmental mechanisms with these characteristics in the country. In this sense, this instrument stressed the SPM's engagement with gender equality considering the differences among women, and its subscription to the ideal of social participation and accountability, guaranteeing the involvement of the feminist and women's movements in the development of the state's action (SPM, Brasil, 2004b, 2008a, 2013b). The promotion of social participation and democratic relations was also seen as a driver in the progress of the gender mainstreaming strategy, including these voices in the process of policymaking (SPM, Brasil, 2004b; Marcondes et al., 2018).

Retaking discussions on the last chapter, the emphasis on social participation was in line with the PT's project in the federal government as well. It contributed to a closer relationship with social movements, favored by the vast expansion in the number of institutionalized instances of participation in different areas of governmental intervention (Avritzer, 2012, 2017; Avritzer & Souza, 2013; Rocha, 2008). It also counted with the placement of members of organizations of social movements into the public bureaucracy, enhancing the influence of these agents in the state's action (Peña, 2014). In the area of gender equality, this approach was characterized by the presence of the feminist and women's movements in the national conference; the reorganization of the National Council of Women's Rights; and the insertion of activists into the governmental workforce to deal with the demands related to the development of policies for women and to promote gender equality. Also known as *femocrats*, these bureaucrats frequently had multiple associations, being part of organizations of social movements, political parties, universities, and research centers, among others (Pinheiro, 2015).

In this context, the feminist identity was also reinforced in an individual level. Apart from being technical experts acting in the development of public policies, the agents directly involved in the SPM's activities recognized themselves as feminists with multiple associations. Hence, in the interviews, references to theoretical discussions from the feminist and gender studies were often used to support the arguments presented. It was also frequent the use of terms like 'black feminist', 'academic feminist', 'left-wing feminist', and 'feminist from the party' to designate themselves or other members, as well as to belittle someone as an outsider in the feminist field by refusing their positions. The re-enactment of crucial feminist struggles in the disputes regarding the governmental policies is another indicator of this identity bond, as seen in the questioning of the notion of women

underpinning the SPM's initiatives. Thereby, the openness to contestation coming from the feminist and women's movement and the attentiveness for the contingency of practices in this field exerted their force from the subject's investments in a feminist political position, reinforcing their intellectual, political, and affective attachment to this identity.

Nevertheless, or precisely because of its fantasmatic content, the receptive attitude toward contestation and the consequent changes addressed in the program did not achieve the expected results. Limits were firstly related to problems on the implementation of intersectional policies. According to the Committee Member 1, the SPM faced a perpetual conflict around what to prioritize in intersectional initiatives, as if the intersectionality would necessarily involve choosing between the gender or racial dimension.

We had few actions on race, and, at some point, that discussion always came: race or gender, or race and gender? As if they were two separate issues. We lived that conflict a lot, and the people from SEPPIR used to criticize the attitude in the SPM, that we were not more demanding, in the sense of requiring more actions of this kind. Thus, you can imagine all the contradictions that have existed in decades within the feminist movement regarding the intersections between gender and race, all of them used to arise there all the time. These discussions almost on what comes first, the egg or the chicken, do you know? Even it emerged. But, all the debate on intersectionality, they were present all the time, in all the meetings. About this difficulty of really promoting an intersectional policy in all its nuances. (Committee Member 1)

The lack of knowledge in the secretariat about how to develop intersectional projects was also pointed as a barrier to advance this kind of action. As discussed by the Technical Analyst 4, the articulation between gender and racial issues 'was always a challenge, because we used to have much more knowledge to deal with gender than race. There were a lot of people worried about this issue, genuinely worried, but, as SPM, we had more facility to deal with gender'. In this sense, one of the reasons for the limited incorporation of the racial dimension in the program was related to the SPM focus on gender issues. It would create a certain 'bias' in analyzing the reality from a gender perspective, often neglecting or poorly addressing other axes of oppression, as evidenced by the Technical Analyst 1.

[...] gender prevailed over the racial issue. I believe it happened precisely because the program was developed in the secretariat of women, of policies for women. It was a program of the SPM that did not have an everyday articulation [with the SEPPIR] [...] In the landmarks [such as the launching of a new edition, the events with the participants, the committee's meetings, and the award delivery], the SEPPIR was always present, but in the daily monitoring of the program, it was not. The program was indeed much more monitored by the program's team than the interinstitutional committees. Therefore, the 'look' was more accurate to gender than to racial issues. I mean, there was not an agent there

insistently observing and watching over this dimension of the program. (Technical Analyst 1)

As suggested in the previous excerpt, the emphasis on gender issues could be potentially mitigated through the involvement of SEPIIR in the daily activities of the program's development. However, this involvement did not happen. (Ortiz, 2014). Again, limits in the articulation and the low resources received by the crosscut secretaries prejudiced this process:

The Pro-Equity was one of the themes that the SEPIIR acted more strongly from the fourth edition because we had incorporated gender and race. But, in fact, it occupied a supporting role. They did not participate as the head of the program as the SPM used to be. (Technical Analyst 3)

[...] the execution was not together. In theory, precisely because of this lack of knowledge from our part [in the SPM], the SEPIIR should fulfill exactly this function, but... And, seriously, it was hard. Sometimes, when I look, when I think about these issues in the program, I believe we did too much with too little, because we did not have any structure, the team had been always too small. And the SEPIIR suffered from this much more than us. The SEPIIR had always been much smaller, the smallest between the secretariats, what is very symptomatic. (Technical Analyst 4)

The Technical Analyst 1 adds that the SPM faced problems to build articulations even within the secretariat. The extra costs of gender mainstreaming in terms of the time spent to make decisions and initiate the operation led to similar difficulties experienced by other federal agencies. In this sense, in the SPM as well as in other public organizations, this strategy conflicted with a more pragmatic approach, focused on achieving results in a short time.

We faced the same problems within the SPM that we used to have with other public agencies. It was one of our biggest complaints. We were not able to articulate even within the SPM. Because it [the articulation] has many implications. Because if you do this, you slow down the process, you remain to debate the policy issue for an extended period. [...] The more decision-makers or consultancy instances you consider within an arrangement, more you delay the execution. Or you will need a lot of agents with the same shared view. Somehow, the program was very centralized in the secretariat. Thus, it was not so submitted to the evaluation of other instances, other agents. (Technical Analyst 1)

The implementation of intersectional actions was also troubled in the participating organizations, as identified by Vieira (2012). According to agents involved in the program's monitoring and evaluation, racial issues were not incorporated in many initiatives, especially in those that go beyond the creation of awareness between managers and employees. As discussed in the next section, the focus on training and campaigns was a problem experienced throughout the program's implementation, whether in relation to gender or race. However, the development of structural

actions related to race in human resource management was even more difficult, aggravated by the lack of data and knowledge about how to develop this kind of initiative.

Including, there were cases in which the organizational register became one of the actions in the plan, because in their record they did not have any data about race. They did not know how many black men and women they used to have in the organization. Because they used to show, and I believe they still show, a strong reaction against this thing of asking the inclusion of data related to race in their register. 'But this is discrimination!' They thought if you include, question, make a person to answer about their race, color or race, it would be discrimination. So, you can see how many mistakes interfered in this process of organizational self-knowledge. The organization did not know its reality. (Technical Analyst 2)

One of the difficulties was that the organizations implemented a series of actions related to gender, but absolutely nothing related to race. [...] But it was something that the coordination knew. For instance, I commented: 'But we have nothing related to race here [in the action plan]!'. [The answer from the SPM]: 'Indeed, the organizations had not been able to suggest something in this area yet'. Thus, [the SPM agents] were conscious of this difficulty and they said: 'Yes, we need to work with the organizations so that they can implement it slowly. But it is like this: the organizations have no idea about what to do to cope with race inequalities, they do not have proposals, they do not have programs.' Therefore, it was something visible. (Committee Member 2)

Tensions between the development of universal and focalized initiatives were also stressed. According to the Program Coordinator 2, some initiatives, such as the adaptation of equipment and the availability of childcare, can only be designed for 'women in general', making their intersectional dimension less visible. However, these actions, in principle, would beneficiate black women as well, requiring more sensitiveness and recognition of critics. This tension also applied to other axes of oppression, like the LGBT+ discrimination, frequently addressed in actions such as extension of benefits to homosexual couples.

There was confusion because when you looked at the action plan, you would say: 'Oh, but there is only one action to black women'. But you should say: 'No, wait. Look, when you are talking about the nursery, it is for white and black women. When you are talking about proper uniforms, it is for white and black women. When you are talking about male and female toilets, you are including white and black women. When you are talking about paternity leave, it will also benefit white and black women.' So, there was a difficult on this, because, somehow, they [the critiques] used to demand more visibility [to actions oriented to black women] than we were able to give. (Program Coordinator 2)

These obstacles to implement intersectional initiatives led to resistance among organizations to the inclusion of this dimension in the program. Accordingly, the participants doubted if this change would jeopardize their chances to receive the certificate, as discussed by the Technical Analyst 3:

In the workshops that the SPM used to do, we introduced: 'Look, now we are going to consider the racial issue too'. The organizations became a bit apprehensive, from what I saw. Like this: 'Is it going to be harder to have the certificate? How is it going to work?'

So, it was received with a bit of suspicion. I believe they understood it would be harder. Even because the racial issue always brings a whole difficulty of people assimilating well some concepts, etc. (Technical Analyst 3)

Limits of articulation were also identified in the operationalization of the Technical-Institutional Committee. Although the demand for inclusion of new agents had been answered, the low engagement of the participants compromised the work done by this Committee. As mentioned in the following excerpts, the representatives changed a lot throughout time, jeopardizing the continuity of the activities. This problem was aggravated by the participation of members placed in low-rank positions within ministries and agencies, without the necessary authority to make decisions and put forward the actions in the scope of the program. These factors also reduced the potential of this committee in contributing to the implementation of the gender mainstreaming strategy.

If these instances [committees to articulate federal agencies] worked... [...] But they did not have an effective result. Mainly because the participants in these instances used to have little capacity to open space for these issues [gender related] within their agencies. Thus, it was a very fragile arrangement, very weak. (Technical Analyst 1)

The Technical-Institutional Committee was really poor. A different participant used to come to each meeting. It was the committee with the worst engagement [in the program]. Including, I proposed to create a different committee because this one did not help indeed. (Program Coordinator 1)

In this context, the Technical-Institutional Committee did not become a tool to strengthen the program's effectiveness and the relationship between the SPM and other federal agencies. Instead, as the Technical Analyst 1 stresses, the secretariat faced difficulties in establishing partnerships and joint actions with other public agencies which could favor the development of the Pro-Equity. The unproductive relationship between agencies was not a particularity of the program, being also observed in other initiatives promoted by the SPM, as evidenced in previous research on the gender mainstreaming experience in the federal level (Marcondes et al., 2018; Papa, 2012; Reinach, 2013).

We used to have a better dialogue with the intergovernmental organizations than with many federal ministries. With the latter, we did not have at all. Including, [the program's coordinator] tried to create bilateral agendas with other agencies so they could know the program. [...] Departing from that, we sought to make them do something. Some actions could have been adopted if we had synergy between the agencies. For instance, to articulate the program with other federal programs that used to have business organizations as the beneficiaries or an involved part. [...] To promote the interaction between these actions would have been entirely possible. [...] Effectively, we did not have any solid partnership in this sense. (Technical Analyst 1)

On the other hand, the Ad Hoc Committee was described as a space of intense engagement by the participating specialists. The governmental interviewees stressed that the researchers were actively involved in the program's development, giving feedback on possible improvements, as well as technically supporting the phases of diagnosis, analysis of the action plan, monitoring, and evaluation. Some participants, including, followed the program since its beginning, helping to maintain a memory of its trajectory. However, this committee also faced problems to have its suggestions incorporated. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the SPM acted as a mediator between this committee and the organizations involved in the program. In this process, the secretariat 'filtrated' critiques, especially those regarding the limits of the logic of cooperation. Thence, demands for more effective actions from organizations were frequently deflected in this process, as discussed in the following excerpt.

Indeed, some organizations had more difficult to accept, in making some changes, but the SPM had always performed a role in trying to make a broader articulation. Generally, we [in the committee] had a role as specialists in providing a technical report about something, and the SPM acted as a mediator on these issues. And the secretariat was always trying, almost in a negotiation process with the organization, in the cases when they had more trouble in accepting some changes. And we knew more or less the limits of what we could ask to be changed too. From a certain moment, we departed from a kind of premise that it is tough for you, as the state, to change the logic of the market. And it had always been made explicit for us. Some participants used to have more difficulty in being flexible with this, in accepting some actions, and so they put more pressure. Other had less trouble with this. But, in general, we all knew that we should suggest more significant changes when they were strictly necessary. (Committee Member 1)

In this context, a more rigorous attitude from the committee was discouraged. According to the Technical Analyst 3, this posture was even avoided, since it could be a deadlock in the program's execution. As discussed by the interviewee, 'the designation of the members of the Ad Hoc Committee was already planned in the sense of not including someone that could, maybe, bring an irreconcilable divergence'. The creation of the Committee of Specialists, in the fifth edition, also followed this orientation of being more aligned with the SPM's guidelines and conscious of its limits in the development of the Pro-Equity. As pointed by the Technical Analyst 4:

The Committee of Specialists had people that had already worked with the program. [...] Thus, it was a relationship of knowledge that the researchers [in the Ad Hoc Committee] did not have. They had more experience with the institutional dynamics and challenges [than the Ad Hoc Committee]. Not always the researchers had the dimension of how it was in the SPM, how it was regarding the government, how it was with the CEOs and directors of organizations, like the Committee of Specialists used to have. Therefore, sometimes we had to talk with the members of the Ad Hoc, to explain ourselves. Because sometimes they required some advancements that we could not do. And we could not do them due to very concrete reasons, related to budget, political issues, institutional issues, etc. So, we had to

explain ourselves sometimes. And I believe that in the Committee of Specialists we did not have it so much. We had a relationship in the same place. Everybody was more understanding about the role, the limits, and the dynamics that the SPM used to have. (Technical Analyst 4)

The deflection of the committee's contestations draws attention to the second line of contestation identified, in which the moderate role of the SPM and the commitment to market principles are affirmed in the program's inertia.

4.4.2. Moderation and market affirmation in the program's inertia

The second axis of contestation comprised criticism regarding the effectiveness of the Pro-Equity. It, firstly, questioned the limits faced in attracting private organizations. As mentioned, the first edition of the program was dedicated to public companies³⁶, prevailing the involvement of organizations from the mining and energy sectors. This major participation can be associated with both market and political incentives. During the 1990s, this sector was restructured, losing the monopoly over demographic areas. It led to a crescent pressure for efficiency between its companies, as well as for the compliance with quality and social responsibility standards (Abramo, 2008). Concurrently, as part of the preparation to participate in the 1st CNPM, the Ministry of Mines and Energy (MME) composed the Permanent Committee of Gender to promote social equality actions in the area. This initiative was boosted by the active involvement of Dilma Rousseff, head of the ministry at that time (Abramo, 2008; SPM, Brasil, 2006). As stressed by interviewees, the minister worked together with the head of the SPM, Nilcéa Freire, in the proposition of this policy, accompanying her in international trips to visit similar experiences. This articulation was strategically seen as the most favorable to the first years of the program, organized as a pilot project in the beginning.

³⁶ It includes public companies with economic character with exclusive or shared capital. While in the former the state is the exclusive owner of capital, in the latter the capital is shared between the state, which holds the main part and acts as the controlling shareholder, and minority agents. This smaller part can be also negotiated in the stock market in the case of companies with open capital.

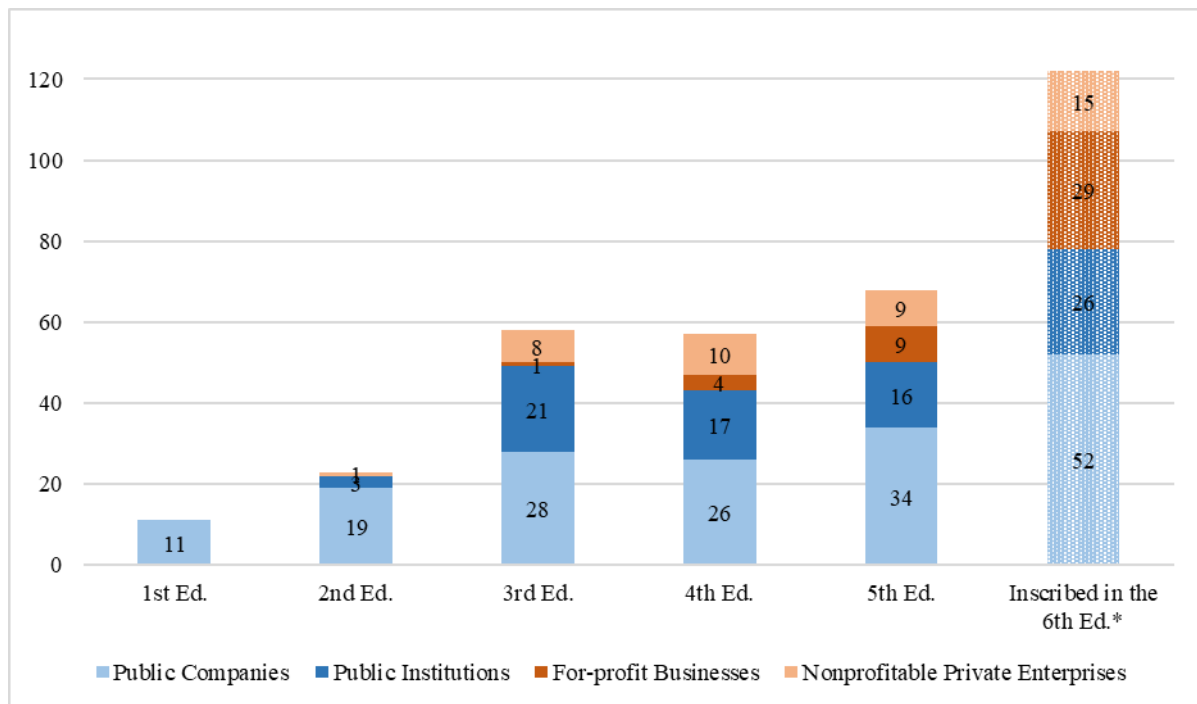
From the second edition, the program was opened to the participation of big and medium³⁷ organizations in the private³⁸ and public³⁹ sectors. It led to an increase in the number of participants, celebrated as an accomplishment in the Pro-Equity. However, this growth was followed by two unanticipated outcomes. Firstly, a significant number of public organizations from the executive, legislative, and judicial powers applied to the program, especially city councils and state secretariats. Secondly, the expected engagement of private businesses did not happen, as assumed in the chain of causal relations supporting the Pro-Equity. Instead, the program reached a significant number of public companies and their private investment funds, propelled by the influence of the big public enterprises involved since its first edition, such as Eletrobras and Petrobras.

³⁷ The size is defined according to the number of employees in the organization *per* sector. In the industry, a medium organization employs between 100 and 499 workers, while a big one employs more than 500. In the trade and services sectors, a medium organization employs between 50 and 99 workers, while a big one employs more than 100 (SEBRAE, 2013).

³⁸ Among the private organizations, it included for-profit businesses, as well as non-profitable private enterprises.

³⁹ Besides the public companies and the public enterprises with shared capital, it comprised organizations from the federal, state, and municipal executive, responsible for providing direct services to the population. Also known as organizations of the 'direct public administration', they cannot have an economic end nor administrative and budgetary autonomy, being submitted to the federative sphere they are part. The program also accepted public foundations and autarchies with non-profitable ends. Part of the 'indirect public administration', they have administrative and budgetary autonomy to perform activities previously established by the law, like the public companies and enterprises. Finally, it was opened to organizations from the legislative and judicial powers.

Figure 6. Number and types of organizations certified per edition and enrolled in the 6th edition



Source: the author based on research data.

* This graphic considers the number of certified organizations from the 1st to 5th edition, and the number of organizations inscribed in the 6th edition. On the one hand, there is no reliable data on the list of subscribers in the first five editions, precluding a proper analysis of the type of organization engaged in the program. On the other, the 6th edition has not been finalized, so there is no available list of certified organizations in this period.

The high involvement of public institutions in the program was a subject of controversy. According to the interviewees, the Pro-Equity was designed to the for-profit sector, guided by the market dynamic. In this sense, public institutions presented more problems to attend the program's guidelines, since they did not have similar procedures of organizational culture and human resource management. These problems were worsened by the potential change of the local government during the edition. The Brazilian municipal elections intercalate the presidential and governor polls, happening in the middle of the federal and state mandate. Hereupon, it potentially involves a change of government in the course of a program's cycle. If the new local government was aligned with the party in the federal government – in this case, the PT –, the probability of the city council leaves in the middle of the process was reduced. However, when an opposed party coalition had won the election, the chances of the organization quitting the program increased significantly, compromising the work done so far. Besides that, the high participation of this kind of organization was seen as an

obstacle to the involvement of private businesses, since the policy could be labeled as an initiative for the public sector.

The fragility of executive mechanisms to promote gender equality in general adds to that. As discussed by an interviewee, some city councils engaged in the Pro-Equity expecting to strengthen its relationship with the federal government in general and the SPM more specifically. Nevertheless, they did not have the political conditions to negotiate with the other local public agencies to promote the initiatives demanded by the program.

Because of this relationship with the SPM in other spaces, [the city councils] thought it would be interesting to participate and they took part [in the program], they also wanted to join. And one thing pulled the other. But they were not able; the majority realized they were not capable in the middle of the process. Simply, they did not have any condition. Mainly because, as it was in the most cases, the program was headed by the mechanism to promote women's rights, and these mechanisms did not have any space within the municipal government to propose and make the changes the program stimulated. Thus, they used to give up due to the lack of political conditions, of power to really intervene in the municipal management as the program required. (Committee Member 1)

Ortiz (2014) adds that, according to the SPM's agents, public institutions would have different work relations. This particularity would make even more difficult the advancement of actions promoted by the program, as discussed by the Program Coordinator 3.

No information [related to the program] says that it is oriented to city councils. The goals are also too hard for a city council achieve. Let me say, the Pro-Equity is not for public institutions. It is for public companies, but not for city councils which have a four years mandate, the majority of the job positions is commissioned, etc. It is another logic of employment. (Program Coordinator 3)

Although there was some consensus about the problematic engagement of public institutions, their participation was not prohibited. Firstly, the interviewees stressed the risk of creating a political problem with city councils and state secretariats by precluding their engagement. As previously discussed, the SPM relied on these agents to put forward a set of initiatives to promote gender equality. Their effective engagement with the secretariat's projects was regarded as one of the crucial elements to the successful implementation of the National Policy for Women in the local sphere (SPM, Brasil, 2015). However, the country does not count with an institutional device to distribute the competences among federal instances in this area of public policy, leaving this arrangement to be negotiated case by case. This institutional condition led to a fragile relationship between the SPM and the local mechanisms to advance women's rights, in which 'to just say "no!" [to their participation in the Pro-Equity] could harm other relations that the SPM had with the city

councils and states in other areas, such as violence' (Committee Member 1). In this context, the creation of different processes of certification, one dedicated to public and private companies and another for public institutions, emerged as a possible solution to this problem. However, this change was not carried out by the secretariat.

The maintenance of public institutions can also be related to how the program's goals were defined. As underlined by the Technical Analyst 1, the SPM must give visibility to the program's actions, publicizing its achievements. However, the secretariat faced limits to access reliable information on the change promoted within the organizations. In this context, the number of participating and certified organizations was defined as the index to evaluate the Pro-Equity's results.

We needed to give visibility to the program, but we still had a significant restriction to gathering data, managerial information, achieved results, not only through our monitoring of the program but also from the participating organizations. [...] We used to have data on the number of participants. So, how many participants we had; how many we were able to attract between two editions; how many participants were able to execute the action plan; and, among the actions, which were proposed. And, the latter was much more a qualitative analysis than a quantitative one. [...] Thus, as the only measurable data we had was the number of participants, then it was the data we used in the planning instruments. (Technical Analyst 1)

This index was associated with the constant pursuit for the expansion of the program. The Committee Member 1 stresses that there was political pressure to increase the number of participants in the Pro-Equity. According to the interviewee, the enlargement of the program would contribute to legitimize it in the national scenario, attracting new candidates to take part in this initiative. It should involve the increase not only in the number of participating organizations but also in their plurality, retaking the necessity of engaging public and private companies.

Thus, we had these two things: a will between the main political leaders that the program should be enlarged, added to the fact that to a certification program have a national reach, to more organizations want to participate in it, you need to expand it. It is not enough to be restricted to a particular group. (Committee Member 1).

The establishment of the number of organizations as the index to evaluate the Pro-Equity along with the constant pursuit for enlarging it created a sort of 'vicious cycle', through which, in each edition, it became more difficult to restrain the participation of public institutions without harming the achievement of the program's goals. This guideline was followed, though, by questioning regarding what the actual purpose of the initiative was. On the one hand, the expansion in the number of participants could bring visibility and legitimacy to the Pro-Equity. On the other, it deviated the

program from its primary objective: to overcome discrimination within organizations. As discussed by the Technical Analyst 1, one of the debates surrounded the necessity of moving ‘from the narrative that we are going to infinitely expand the program to the narrative about which effective result we seek through this initiative’. Additionally, the increase in participation could jeopardize the process, precluding closer monitoring and advisory during implementation. As further discussed, the increment in the number of organizations led to changes in the monitoring to fit the SPM’s resources.

The contrast between public and private companies was also problematized. According to the interviewees, the alignment with the federal policies was the main motivation for the involvement of public companies. As emphasized by the Technical Analyst 4, ‘there was a sort of silent agreement that these organizations should have a bigger commitment to the governmental policies, because they have a specific role as public companies’. This attitude would contribute to sustaining a good relationship with the presidency, showing that these agents were watchful and supportive of the federal initiatives developed. Private businesses, in their turn, would be guided by marketing ideals, related to productivity and competitiveness. In this sense, interviewees emphasize that these organizations did not have a ‘genuine’ (Committee Member 3) engagement with the program, but rather a more pragmatic involvement oriented to the potential benefits of this participation. As also stressed in the following excerpts:

It is different with the private businesses because you need to dialogue with the mode of production and consume. It is different from the alignment in the public sector. Thus, for instance, in talking with a business organization about the relevance of taking part in the program, it cannot be only because we firmly believe that we need to have equalitarian relations for women and black people in the labor market. We must develop an argument that dialogues with them too, with their need to consumption and production, the market needs of private businesses. (Technical Analyst 4)

Private companies used to have another relationship [with the program]. [...] Some private businesses used to participate in four or five programs on gender equality. So, they even dedicated internal sectors to work with these initiatives in the organization, precisely to receive the awards. Thus, they develop the program in another rhythm, in their rhythm searching for more prizes. These [awards] give them value, project them in the market. (Program Coordinator 3)

This particularity of private organizations would apply especially to the kind of businesses that the program used to attract. As suggested by the Program Coordinator 3 and exemplified in the Table 6, the private businesses involved in the Pro-Equity used to have previous participation in other initiatives to promote social and environmental sustainability. The engagement with different

initiatives in the field would indicate an effort of these organizations to assume the commitment to the social responsibility approach as a differential of their brand, in order to take advantage from the benefits of this market position.

Table 6. Percentage of participation in other initiatives committed to social and environmental sustainability per type of organization

Initiatives committed to social and environmental sustainability	Public Organizations			Private Organizations		
	Public Institutions	Closed Public Companies	Opened Public Companies	Non-Profitable Private Enterprises	Closed For-Profit Businesses	Opened For-Profit Businesses
Total*	44	28	25	19	13	18
Global Compact	0%	18%	76%	11%	54%	33%
Women Empowerment Principles (WEP)	0%	25%	60%	21%	69%	44%
WEP Awards	n/a	7%	28%	11%	54%	17%
Federal Program ‘Corporate Citizenship’ (<i>Programa Federal Empresa Cidadã</i>)	n/a	57%	56%	16%	31%	67%
Ranking Great Place to Work	n/a	0%	0%	0%	23%	11%
Ranking Great Place to Work – Women	n/a	0%	0%	0%	15%	6%
<i>Guia Você S/A</i>	n/a	0%	4%	5%	31%	22%
<i>Guia Exame</i>	n/a	0%	8%	5%	31%	22%
Association in the Ethos Institute	n/a	14%	24%	11%	46%	33%
<i>Índice de Sustentabilidade Empresarial da BOVESPA</i> (BOVESPA's Business Sustainability Index)	n/a	n/a	76%	n/a	n/a	50%
Dow Jones Industrial Average	n/a	n/a	8%	n/a	n/a	22%

Source: the author

* This table considers organizations certified from the 1st to 5th edition and inscribed in the 6th edition.

In this context, the low engagement of businesses in the program did not lead to questioning regarding the limits of the managerial logic in attracting private organizations. On the contrary, the assessment was that marketing elements were not strong or explicit enough in the program. Thereby, the reinforcement of the paradigm of the market was defended as a tool to deal with these limits. It involved the development of a strategy that associated the emphasis on the benefits of the certificate along with the mapping and capturing of leader corporations of different sectors to join the Pro-Equity. By adopting this strategy, the SPM invested in the competition and mimetic isomorphism within sectors as a manner to influence the involvement in the policy. It was considered a promising approach,

not only because the participating private business promotes the program, but also because it sets a parameter in the market, a parameter of competitiveness between business organizations. So, the more we had businesses 'with the big name' [in the program], more we believed that to participate in the program would become an element of competition, of qualification of organizations between them. [...] I believe the most tangible impact pursued [in the program] was to establish the certificate as a goal in the business world. And we know, in this world it makes a difference (Technical Analyst 4)

This approach was also emphasized in the program's documents from its second edition (SPM, Brasil, 2008c), advocating for the positive impacts of gender equality practices in the work environment, productivity, and innovation, as well as the addition of value in the Business Social Report and the organizational reputation (SPM, Brasil, 2008c, 2011e, 2011g, 2011b, 2013a). They also stressed that the program would

enable the permanent use of worker's knowledge and competencies that organizations must apply in their collective processes of learning, aiming at adapting themselves to the market challenges and building an innovative and socially fair economy. Organizations also have the opportunity of benefiting from the ongoing social and cultural transformation between new segments of consumers worried with the social, economic, and environmental conditions in which the purchased goods and services are produced in the perspective of fair and sustainable trade (SPM, Brasil, 2011e:2, my translation).

In this context, organizations were called to 'share with the state the task of mitigating inequality and oppression' (SPM, Brasil, 2013a). However, despite the emphasis on its potential benefits, the program was not able to expand beyond organizations that had already appropriate the narrative of 'social sustainability'. As discussed by the Program Coordinator 1, 'generally, the private businesses which took part in the program already have a bias. [...] These organizations, when they go to the program, I would not say they were worried, but they had already understood that the market had put a focus on this issue of Gender Equality'. As previously showed, the for-profit

businesses engaged in the program are more involved in initiatives with similar features than the other types of organizations. It is reinforced by the fact that, among the 31 businesses certified in the program and inscribed in the sixth edition, only two had not taken part in any other certification process or initiative mapped in this research. By contrast, all the public institutions and nine of 19 non-profitable foundations were not engaged in other actions in this area. It also indicates that the involvement of these organizations in the program was promoted more by the influence of the SPM and strong public companies than by the promises of benefits from this participation.

Another pressing problem faced in the Pro-Equity's implementation was the poor results achieved by the participating organizations. Previous assessments on the program's results stress that it was not able to promote structural changes regarding the development of innovative managerial practices and the transformation of the organizational demography. During their participation, organizations prioritized actions to create awareness on gender and racial issues, as well as to disseminate information and inclusive values in the workplace (SPM, Brasil, 2010b, 2013f). The predominance of this kind of action was also stressed by the interviewees as one of the limits faced in the Pro-Equity:

Indeed, few organizations were able to reach this point. The majority did not arrive in affirmative actions, recruitment and selection processes. It was not something that we usually saw. [Pretending to be one of the participants:] 'Awareness! Let's work with awareness! Let's promote the women's day!' [This kind of action] was widespread, but the most necessary and hard change was difficult to see. It was rare. (Technical Analyst 3)

Initiatives related to organizational culture included training and campaigns on the issues emphasized in the program and revision of the institutional communication. They contributed to raising a discussion on the theme and to denaturalizing inequalities experienced in the workplace (Abramo, 2008; Gonzalez, 2011; C. R. de O. Medeiros & Antonagi, 2014; V. de Oliveira & Signates, 2010; Vieira, 2012). In some cases, these actions also led to relevant changes in this area, with the inclusion of gender and race dimensions in the institutional register and the promotion of studies on organizational demography and current management practices. Therefore, they concurred to surpassing a primary lack of data in many participants, providing the bases for substantive actions (Abramo, 2008; SPM, Brasil, 2010b).

Although less frequently, more structural actions were also adopted in the area of human resource. Case studies on the program's implementation within participating organizations highlight improvements such as the foundation of institutional centers responsible for the development of

initiatives in the area (Abramo, 2008; SPM, Brasil, 2010b; V. de Oliveira & Signates, 2010; Vieira, 2012); the establishment of organizational ombudsmen, ethics committees, and codes of conduct to address incidents of discrimination and harassment (Abramo, 2008; SPM, Brasil, 2010b; V. de Oliveira & Signates, 2010); the inclusion of gender equality clauses in collective negotiations and agreements (SPM, Brasil, 2010b); the increase of funding to actions related to the program (SPM, Brasil, 2010b; V. de Oliveira & Signates, 2010); the adaptation of equipment and uniforms (V. de Oliveira & Signates, 2010); the creation of health programs sensitive to gender and racial differences (Abramo, 2008; V. de Oliveira & Signates, 2010); and the promotion of management training for women (V. de Oliveira & Signates, 2010). Some organizations even established goals to increase the participation of women and black people in decision-making positions (Abramo, 2008); reviewed their recruitment, selection, and promotion policies (C. R. de O. Medeiros & Antonagi, 2014; E. L. Pinto & Midleg, 2012); and expanded maternity and paternity leaves beyond the minimum period foreseen by the law (SPM, Brasil, 2013f).

However, those actions were not enough to substantially change the organizational scenario. Despite presenting a higher percentage than companies not engaged in the program (SPM, Brasil, 2013f, 2013a), certified organizations have low female participation in positions of power and decision-making (SPM, Brasil, 2013f, 2016; C. R. de O. Medeiros & Antonagi, 2014; Monteiro, 2011; V. de Oliveira & Signates, 2010; Vieira, 2012). Following the national reality, black women are the most discriminated group in the participants. They are less present in the workplace and, when hired, are segregated to low-income and operational positions (SPM, Brasil, 2013f, 2013a, 2016; V. de Oliveira & Signates, 2010; Vieira, 2012). Differences in the average income also persist within these organizations, harming especially black women (C. R. de O. Medeiros & Antonagi, 2014; Vieira, 2012). These limits were observed in public and private organizations, despite the emphasis on the differences between them. As stressed by an interviewee, patriarchal and racist work relations pervade and persist in all the labor market, precluding the program to achieve efficient results.

Regardless of being a public or private organization, the structure of work we have in our society is quite the same. Of course, you are going to have differences in the access, labor rights, etc. But our structure of work is indeed very similar in all places. It is too hierarchical, male, and white. Thus, the work dynamic by itself, the essence of it that is ingrained in all organizations, it was what in the end we had more difficult to deal. To get into this structure and to truly change it. But it was also a dream far too big. (Technical Analyst 4)

The mention regarding the structural change in organizations as a ‘dream far too big’ (Technical Analyst 4) recalls the controversy surrounding the logic of cooperation. Insofar the program had been implemented, it became clear that the certificate would not be enough to induce the envisaged transformations in organizations. As stressed by the Committee Member 1, ‘the organizations were not necessarily so worried about receiving the certificate’. It led to pressure, raised especially by members of the Ad Hoc Committee, to move from a moderate to a more rigorous attitude toward the participants. However, as already emphasized by the Committee Member 4, this theme was a ‘taboo’ within the SPM. In this sense, this contestation was actively deflected or bed down by the secretariat, reinforcing its place as a mediator in this process. Nevertheless, as further discussed, it did not prevent the SPM to address some attempts to, at least, attenuate this problem.

The conflict around the logic of cooperation and the different reactions it raised became explicit when the secretariat tried to introduce categories of certificate to encourage organizations to promote more profound changes in their management practices. The official documents restructuring the Pro-Equity and calling organizations to take part in the fourth edition establish that the participants would be certified according to their achievements. The bronze certificate would be awarded to the participant that had fulfilled initiatives to create awareness among the workforce in all the organizational levels. The silver one would be handed to participants that had also made structural changes in recruiting, staffing, and training practices; reviewed their health and security programs, and benefit policies; created mechanisms to cope with sexual and moral harassment; and adopted the inclusive communication and advertisement within and outside the organization. Finally, the gold one would be granted to participants that, in addition to the previous actions, had achieved structural transformations in their plans of promotion and career, as well as in practices to create awareness among members of the relationship chain of production and distribution (SPM, Brasil, 2011e, 2011g, 2011b).

The adoption of these categories led to questioning within the SPM regarding its incongruence with the program’s premises, inducing competition between the participants:

There was an occasion when the SPM tried to put organizations that were in a level as bronze, others as silver, etc. I believe it is absurd. The organizations did not compete between them, because they departed from very different baselines. They compete with themselves; they had their own starting point as reference. (Technical Analyst 2)

On the other hand, there was a worry that this change would discourage organizations to take part in the program:

A lot of organizations would not like to have won a bronze award while others had won another award. So, it would create a mood of dissatisfaction with the program, because 'I' received bronze, and another organization received gold. It would not be good for the program [...] and maybe would discourage organizations because they received bronze and not gold. (Technical Analyst 3)

In the face of these issues, the categories of certificate were not applied, being abandoned in the course of the fourth edition. Additionally, the SPM reinforced in the following edition that the program does not seek to foster competition between the participants, but rather to promote an internal analysis (SPM, Brasil, 2016).

Therefore, this axis of contestation, differently from the previous one, is marked by fewer changes in the program in response to the contestations raised. In the first case, although there was a relatively shared consensus regarding the problems in the participation of city councils and states, it did not result in reformulation of the rules of engagement or the program's design. Here, institutional constraints, such as the delicate relationship with public institutions and the demand for an increasing number of participants in the program, operated as the main reason for not advancing the required modifications. However, some subtler changes were addressed in the course of implementation, as reported by the Committee Member 1:

It came to the point when it was not possible to continue. We saw it was too difficult for [the city councils and state secretariats] to participate because they did not have a profile for this. So, we started to call these organizations trying to persuade them to not enroll in the program, but a lot of them did not give up and continued the participation. And it was tough to say 'no!' for them, for [all those reasons]. (Committee Member 1)

Therefore, despite not officially excluding public institutions of the program, the SPM unofficially discouraged them to take part in the program.

By contrast, in the second case, the pertinence of the contestation was itself problematized, reducing a productive impact in the program's development. In this context, on the one hand, it was possible to observe resignation between the agents engaged in the process, accepting the poor results as an inherent limitation of the program, as reported by the Consultant 1 and the Consultant 2 in the following excerpts. Like discussed, these limits were related to deficiencies in the SPM action along with the impossibility of going beyond the logic of cooperation, as also suggested by the

interviewees. In the face of this, agents frequently resignify the official policy goals, affirming that the program was a symbolic initiative which has never sought to accomplish higher results in terms of women's inclusion in the workplace.

I believe this program would never change decision-making boards, to change this scenario. It did not have the capacity for this. Never, not even if we had developed it for 15 years. However, within what was proposed, it achieved some symbolic results by disclosing a reality that was invisible. (Consultant 1)

I believe that, regarding its impact, [the program] was not relevant and it has never had this pretension. It would not be a program executed through voluntary adhesion by the SPM, with all its limits, that would change the reality of women in the labor market. It has never had this pretension and could not have this result. But I believe that when seen as a pilot program, a first governmental initiative to incite this discussion within the corporate workplace, it had an important function. (Consultant 2)

This resignation was also followed by the reinforcement of the political frontier between the logic of cooperation and the logic of the state coercion. As stressed by the Technical Analyst 4, the Ad Hoc Committee questioned the lack of results of organizations consecutively certified by the Pro-Equity. According to this committee, organizations with continued participation in the program should show progressive results. In these cases, the SPM should demand more of participants, requiring the development of bolder actions in the areas of human resources and organizational culture. This critique was, however, bed down, highlighting the SPM's role as a mediator in this process.

[The lack of results] became an issue, because some researchers believed that if the organization has been participating for a longer time, it must advance more. That it must be incisive and, maybe, it was also our will and the will of everybody that share the demand for changing the structure of work relations, of really changing this dynamic that is the most of time oppressive. But we [in the SPM] always had to mediate it. It was a view that I believe the SPM, that used to follow the organizations more closely than the researchers, had: 'Look, it is all right! We also think that they need to change more, advance more, but they have not been able to do this. And I will not exclude this organization of the program, because they have not been able to deliver yet. We can talk, we try to find a way, to identify what kind of action they can do to advance more, but we cannot oblige them to do'. (Technical Analyst 4)

Despite the assessment on the inherent limitation of the program, agents insisted in a potential to be fulfilled. In this sense, they adopted a defensive rhetoric (Fotaki, 2010), stressing that, although its impacts were limited to the participating organizations, the Pro-Equity was a relevant initiative to advance symbolic and material improvements. They also emphasized the importance of sustaining a perseverant attitude toward the program, continuing the work done to achieve incremental results. It would be more important if considered the public problem addressed by the program. As discussed

in the precious chapter, the Pro-Equity departed from the diagnosis that patriarchal stereotypes and prejudices ingrained in organizations would not be surpassed by an isolated coercive action, demanding a continuous negotiation. As stressed by the interviewees:

It was a process of creating awareness. It is what I most consider in this work. It was very stimulant for us too, who were in the public policy, from this side, trying to develop things. And these experiences [well-succeed within the organizations] convinced me that we should not be coercive in this process. Because you do not accomplish anything, you do not achieve any follower to your idea if you impose it. You need to persuade them. (Technical Analyst 2)

I believe it was a very relevant policy that fulfilled its role. Because issues on gender equality, [...] they are 'ant job'. You need to show people every day how things can be different, how they must be different. That there is a problem in reconciling work and family. That it is a women's burden and should not be like this. Anyway, a whole issue of cultural change that is complicated, very slow, and this kind of policy contribute to overcoming it. It is almost like a grain of sand in the beach. (Committee Member 2)

Once again, this attitude potentially reflects the grip of the fantasmatic narrative underpinning this policy. Notwithstanding or precisely because of all the problems in the articulation process, agents kept believing that articulation would deliver its promise of creating awareness and uniting the state, managers and employees around the goal of gender equality. As showed by the Technical Analyst 2 excerpt, this belief was reinforced by examples of success in which organizations were able to advance more when compared with other participants. These cases sustained investments in the program's promises, reinforcing the affective bond of agents with this political project, as exemplified in the following excerpts.

These facts [cases of success] kept me very optimistic. I used to love this program, as you might have seen by my way of speaking. It was a program that I embraced with a lot of enthusiasm, a lot of passion, I loved attending monitoring activities and see [the advancements an organization had done]. [...] It was exciting because it was a real process of awareness. (Technical Analyst 2)

I am passionate about this program, even with all its failures. I believe all programs have shortcomings, and that [the Pro-Equity] had advancements. (Program Coordinator 1)

It was fantastic. Each day that I am away from the SPM, I realize how it was a great achievement. Interfering in work relations, talking about equal pay and division of time with people in business companies. I believe it was a significant advancement. Thus, in these more than ten years of the program, the time I worked with it, everything that I learned and researched, I believe this policy had enormous potential. We discussed and dreamt that the program could be a much more grandiose thing, with a real impact in the labor market. (Technical Analyst 4)

In this sense, these experiences reinforced the beatific side of the fantasy, affirming its promise as still a possibility with some obstacles to surpass. However, although less evident, the horrific side

was also important in sustaining this course of action. It permeated especially the discussions on the introduction of categories of the certificate, the bolder move made by the SPM in the direction of reinforcing the audit logic and approximating of a more coercive position. In this case, the fear of non-engagement of private businesses provoked the return to the previous model of operation, contributing to the policy inertia.

Between the beatific and the horrific side of the fantasy, more timid modifications were advanced to drive the participants toward structural actions. From the second edition, equal pay and female participation in decision-making positions were highlighted as the focal point of intervention (SPM, Brasil, 2008c, 2011e, 2011g, 2011b, 2013a, 2016). Special themes were also pointed to be addressed by organizations, such as care and the division of time (SPM, Brasil, 2013e). Finally, mechanisms to restrain implementation were developed, such as the creation of instruments to collect data and evaluate the organizational reality pre and post participation; and the reformulation of the action plan, detailing how to develop the initiatives and propose goals and indexes of verification. One important move in this direction was the standardization of ten actions *per* plan, with at least one initiative *per* dimension of intervention and two complementary actions (SPM, Brasil, 2013a). As discussed by the Program Coordinator 3, this change sought both to push organizations beyond the promotion of training and campaigns. The close monitoring was seen as a relevant step in the implementation of these improvements, driving organizations toward the expected results.

Instead of giving a gold, silver, or bronze certificate, that would create discomfort in society... This thing of ranking which can deliver more or less, since these organizations present different conditions to execute the action plan. Thus, we thought: 'Let's focus on ten well developed and diversified actions.' Because we used to receive an action plan with more than 30 topics, and half of them was to promote debates, to watch a movie, do you know? These actions help to change people's minds, but we also wanted that the internal committee could step in the female participation, in the hiring of black women, in the hiring of women to top rank positions, in the promotion of women for directive boards... Thus, instead of ranking actions, we opt for demanding the development of actions in all the axis of intervention and not only in training. (Program Coordinator 3).

Nevertheless, once again, the lack of resources in the SPM limited these actions, impairing the monitoring process. According to official documents, the monitoring involved visits *in loco* and interviews with members of the internal committee to follow up the results achieved (SPM, Brasil, 2006, 2010b, 2013f). From the second edition, it was clear that the SPM would not have enough human and financial resources to fulfill these activities. The creation of the Ad Hoc Committee in

this edition was, in part, an attempt to deal with this problem, involving a set of experts to act voluntarily in the program. However, with the crescent growth of participation, complying with all the monitoring steps became impracticable. In this context, in the fifth edition, the involvement of the Ad Hoc Committee was reduced. Instead, the program provided a list of research centers on gender, race, and work to be consulted in the case of the participants wanted advice. The *in loco* visits were also limited to a set of organizations defined by the SPM (SPM, Brasil, 2013a). As described by the Committee Member 1:

The secretariat concluded that the way we were working with the Ad Hoc Committee would not fit. From the moment we had a large number of participants, the SPM would not have the resources to make the monitoring as it used to be, with a lot of trips. The available resources would not be enough. There was also some inefficiency in this process, because we needed to share and manage the work between the specialists. So, until everybody had done everything, returned to the SPM, until you had done everything... it was the internal management of the committee that made us realize that it was easier to work with a smaller group. (Committee Member 1)

It was costly to bring people [the committee members] from all the country. We could not afford it always. So, we had to change a little bit this dynamic, insofar the budget availability changed (Program Coordinator 3)

Initially, we have more money. So we used to do monitoring *in locus*, which was really interesting. Afterward, in the final years, we started to do this through computer, email, phone... And, you know, it is not the same. (Committee Member 5)

To attenuate the impacts of remote monitoring, the SPM promoted more workshops, stimulating the organizations to exchange knowledge and experience. These events were also moments of feedback to the participants and resolution of doubts. In the sixth edition, the period of execution of the action plans was also expanded, favoring more contacts with the organizations. Additionally, the Committee of Specialists was created to facilitate the analysis of the actions proposed and the evaluation of results.

In this context, organizational features constituted a relevant dimension to comprehend the process of change and inertia in the scope of the Pro-Equity. On the one hand, they contributed to reinforcing the feminist frame underpinning the program, as well as the moderate and articulatory role adopted in the development of this and other initiatives in the area. On the other, organizational constraints functioned as important limits not only in advancing some improvements identified during implementation but also precluding the modifications introduce of having actual impacts.

5. Final remarks

This study investigated the logics underpinning the formation and implementation of the Program for Gender and Racial Equity. Departing from the logics approach of critical explanation (e.g. Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2010; Howarth et al., 2016) and in dialogue with implementation literature (e.g. Goggin et al., 1990; Hill & Hupe, 2002; L. L. Lima & D'Ascenzi, 2013; O'Toole Jr., 2000; Schofield, 2001; P. L. B. Silva & Melo, 2000), I have proposed a theoretical and analytical framework structured in two research moments. The first focused on the characteristics and ambiguities of policy formation, exploring the social, political, and fantasmatic logics mobilized in the creation of the Pro-Equity and the conditions that contributed to its emergence. The second inquired policy change and inertia, evidencing how the logics projected in policy formation were sustained, challenged, and transformed throughout the program's implementation. In doing so, the Secretariat of Policies for Women in the federal government was elected as the *locus* of investigation.

The qualitative analysis of official documents and interviews with agents directly involved in the program's development revealed four social logics projected by this initiative. These logics were supported by different perspectives on the role of the state in fighting inequalities in the workplace; organizations and management practices as intervention targets; and women as the policy beneficiary. First, the logic of cooperation put the state in a mediator role in advancing improvements within organizations. Second, the audit logic assumed a stricter governmental attitude in demanding and evaluating the progress achieved by the participants. Third, the affirmative logic reinforced the relevance of intervening in organizations to overcome patriarchal relations through introducing management practices committed to social equality. Finally, the managerial logic emphasized the potential advantages that inclusive management practices and female competencies would provide to organizational productiveness and reputation.

'Gender equality for all' functioned as an empty signifier in joining the four social logics projected by the Pro-Equity. It articulated divergent meanings and practices related to both the paradigm of rights and the market into a more or less coherent articulation. The logic of cooperation had an important part in this, promising that, through a careful balance between cooperation and auditioning, this program would deliver benefits to all the agents involved. This articulation also gained substance by opposing a different set of social logics and projected alternatives that were

questioned in the course of policy formation. Firstly, the patriarchal logic structuring work relations was denounced, evidencing the continuous exclusion and segregation of women in the workplace. From this fundamental criticism, alternatives to deal with this pressing public problem were also challenged. On the one hand, the program criticizes the pattern of state inaction which had predominated in the country. On the other, it refused the option of state coercion, affirming, instead, a conciliatory attitude toward organizations in the quest for gender equality at work.

The logics structuring the Pro-Equity retake conflicting elements from the proposals of affirmative action, diversity management, and gender mainstreaming. From affirmative action the program appropriates the commitment to guaranteeing equal opportunities in the workplace. From diversity management, in its turn, it retakes the instrumental approach toward gender equality. In this context, the program advocates for the use of inclusive managerial practices as devices to increase organizational competitiveness. Finally, from gender mainstreaming, the program incorporates the questioning on the uneven social structures ingrained in the organizational environment and practices, requiring their revision according to gender equality goals. This coalition led to a governmental initiative seeking to provide advantages for both women as a group excluded or segregated in the labor market and organizations as partners in this political project. In doing so, the Pro-Equity adopted instruments and modes of operation associated with the gender mainstreaming strategy as developed by the SPM, projecting these practices beyond governmental frontiers.

By retracing the trajectory of public policies for women in Brazil, it was possible to apprehend three historical conditions concurring to the emergence of a policy with these contours. Firstly, the Pro-Equity is inserted in the national trajectory of recognition of gender equality as a public problem which requires state intervention. Social movements, especially feminism, and intergovernmental organizations had an important role in this, demanding governmental action to deal with this gender issue. The Pro-Equity also traces back to the spread of the logic of the market within civil society, with the development of similar initiatives from the 1990s. Finally, it can be situated in the broader political project advanced by the PT once in the federal government, marked by a commitment to promote social inclusion without threatening the capitalist order and a conciliatory relationship with business organizations. Additionally, research data showed the relevance of the organizational dimension in the creation of this program. Therefore, the SPM's organization and its perceived role in advancing policies for women augment material constraints in explaining why the Pro-Equity was selected as a viable course of governmental action.

The organizational dimension also accounted for this program change and inertia. This discussion was supported by the investigation of the organizational context in which the Pro-Equity was developed, as well as by detailing how the program's design was transformed in the course of its ten years of execution. The data analysis revealed two axes of contestation in the course of implementation. The first questioned the inclusiveness of this initiative regarding the notion of women underpinning the construction of the policy beneficiary and the involvement of representatives of workers and businesses in the program's development. The second criticized the ineffectiveness of the Pro-Equity, stressing the lack of results in attracting the private sector and in advancing structural changes within the participating organizations. In this context, the pluralization of the program was vindicated along with a more rigorous attitude from the government in pursuing actual changes in the labor market. However, these demands were followed by different responses. In the first case, questioning was welcomed, while in the second criticism, it was smoothed over.

The opening to questioning regarding the inclusiveness of the Pro-Equity was related to the feminist frame structuring the SPM's action in general and the program more specifically. This identification was reinforced in the organizational and individual level, affirming the double commitment of agents as members of the secretariat and as feminist militants to gender equality and democratic ideals. The deflection of criticism regarding the program's effectiveness, in its turn, traces back to the market ideals engendering this political project and the role assumed by the state in the scope of this initiative. The managerial logic was thus highlighted to attract more business organizations to the program. Additionally, the request for a stricter attitude toward the participants was actively bedded down, even though some subtler actions were advanced to induce structural changes within organizations. In this context, the mediator role of the SPM was asserted, emphasizing the relevance of continuous articulation to progress actions in the labor market. Organizational constraints added to these elements in explaining the lack of answers to the problematic engagement of public institutions and the limits faced in addressing the changes promoted in the program's design.

Therefore, the analysis of the case contributes to evidencing the relevance of the organizational dimension in investigating the logics structuring the development of a governmental initiative. As emphasized in the theoretical chapter, the implementation literature (e.g. Ckagazaroff, 2009; DeLeon & DeLeon, 2002; Hill & Hupe, 2002; Menicucci, 2006; Schofield, 2001; Winter, 2003b) and the LCE approach (e.g. Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2010; Howarth et al., 2016) converge in stressing that the policy process is a highly contextualized phenomenon. Empirical

analyses grounded on the LCE more specifically (e.g. Clarke, 2012b, 2012a; Fougère, Segercrantz, & Seeck, 2017; Glynos, 2014; Glynos, Speed, et al., 2015; Hawkins, 2015; Herschinger, 2012; Remling, 2018; West, 2013) have reaffirmed that social practices, such as public policies, are not fixed but rely on social and political conditions. This dissertation contributes to this debate by showing the importance of organizational features in understanding such phenomena. In this sense, insofar research moves from the macro level political dynamic to the micro level context of policy formation and implementation, the symbolic facet of organizations augment material, human, and political constraints in explaining the logics mobilized, sustained and transformed in policymaking.

The theoretical and analytical framework advanced in this dissertation presents three main potentialities when considering the mainstream of implementation theories discussed. Firstly, it avoids the rational model underpinning the top-down perspective, adopting, in contrast, an interactive approach to policymaking (Barrett, 2004; Barrett & Fudge, 1981; L. L. Lima & D'Ascenzi, 2017; P. L. B. Silva & Melo, 2000). As pointed out, if, on the one hand, it enables to investigate the policy process holistically, on the other, it also leads to challenges regarding the non-identification of a 'clear' object of research called 'implementation', requiring a broader investigation of the policy process (Hill & Hupe, 2002; Winter, 2003b, 2003a, 2006). Secondly, taking the insight from the bottom-uppers, this framework is based on a post-positivist perspective, exploring the relevance of meaning in policy inquiry (Barrett, 2004; Gains & Clarke, 2007; Pülzl & Treib, 2007; Yanow, 1990, 2007). It calls for an interpretive approach in which the explanation is deeply contextualized in relation to the self-interpretations of the agents (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, 2008).

Thirdly, in this framework, the interpretative perspective is articulated with LCE ontology and theory in order to put critical incitement on the analysis of public policies and policymaking processes. Therefore, this research focuses on understanding the role of power and politics throughout policy development, exploring how hegemonic practices and orders are produced and contested and how subjects are gripped by certain ideologies and discourses (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2010; Howarth *et al.*, 2016). In this process, this approach seeks to go beyond 'thick descriptions' of the values, interests, and behaviors of the agents, grasping the wider net of logics in which these meanings and practices are intertwined. Thus, the particular grammar and conceptual tools related to the notion of logic provide the means to move from contextualized self-interpretation toward a critical explanation of policymaking (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, 2008).

However, this framework also presents some limits in advancing policy inquiry. Firstly, the narrative presented in this study is one of the possibilities regarding the development of the Pro-Equity. As discussed in the first chapter, research founded in the LCE premises does not look for a general theory or solid empirical generalizations, as frequently demanded by scholars within the implementation subfield. Instead, it recognizes that contingency and incompleteness, as ontological features of the social reality, shape research practices as well (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, 2008; Glynos et al., 2009; Howarth et al., 2016). Thereby, the explanation also constitutes an articulation (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; West, 2011) inherently partial and contingent (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Glynos *et al.*, 2009; Howarth, 2010; Howarth *et al.*, 2016). Nevertheless, the concepts and categories of analysis used in this framework as well as empirical reflections can be applied or inspire future studies. Their use remains a possibility since new theoretical and empirical links are established with the new research enterprise.

Additionally, empirical analysis concentrated on the central government as the *locus* of study. Therefore, it did not follow all the process of implementation, leaving aside the experiences of organizations involved in this program. It opens space for new research exploring how the logics structuring the Pro-Equity are installed in different organizations. In this sense, I suggest that further research could focus on localized experiences of implementation (Barrett, 2004; Barrett & Fudge, 1981; Schofield, 2001). The notion of displacement can contribute to advance this enterprise, referring to the inevitable resignification of discursive elements when appropriated in a different domain (Laclau & Mouffe, 2001). This analysis would also require immersion in organization studies, retaking from this literature fruitful insights to approach how the logics projected by this governmental initiative are put into action within the participating organizations. More broadly, this dissertation would also benefit from larger incorporation of organizational theory, seeing as one of the limitations of this study and a further step to be advanced to improve the research results.

Finally, questioning can be raised on the normative contributions of this analysis to the development of the Pro-Equity or similar initiatives. In response to that, I argue that it was not my objective to evaluate the program's results. As discussed in the first chapter, contradictions and ambiguities are part of political projects and, thus, cannot be simply prevented or corrected in the course of 'good' policymaking (Howarth, 2010). Policies are also frequently sustained in fantasies, which involve the ambition of reconciling incompatible identities and demands (Fotaki, 2010; Glynos & Howarth, 2007). In this sense, they are mostly destined to fail (Fotaki, 2010). From my

engagement with the SPM and the Pro-Equity, I would add that the professionals dedicated to put the secretariat and its action in motion made their best of an almost impossible situation. Despite the relative openness to gender issues in the governmental agenda, the SPM faced strong resistance from traditional institutions along with a continuous lack of material, human, and political resources to advance its initiatives. Thus, I agree with the interviewees that they have accomplished too much with too little. The recent backlash against national policies focusing on gender, race, and human rights also gives us a dimension of how much Brazil has lost in terms of public initiatives committed to social equality.

In this context, I conclude this dissertation retaking Fotaki's (2010) notes about the implications of this perspective to tackle public problems. According to the author, by appropriating the notion of fantasy, this approach recognizes the necessity of dealing with the imaginary dynamic underlying policymaking (Fotaki, 2010). As emphasized in the course of this work, the formation and implementation of public initiatives also involve affective attachments and the desire to achieve the unachievable (Fotaki, 2010; Glynos, 2014; Howarth, 2008; West, 2013). It does not imply that this process disregards calculating and political rationality, but rather that it also mobilizes unattainable ideals. To accept the imaginary structuration of policymaking processes can open the possibility to acknowledge their inherent instability and conflicting nature. A policy 'reflective of its context and of itself' tend to not easily adopt simplistic solutions (Fotaki, 2010:715). In doing so, it is crucial to sustaining an ethical attitude (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Howarth, 2008, 2010), remaining receptive to contestation and approaching failure as an opportunity to create more realistic policies. A self-reflective, participative, and inclusive policymaking process is, thus, the better response to the inherent limits of the public action (Fotaki, 2010).

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