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Refinements to the Study of the Day-to-Day Life in Organizations: Exploring a Neo-Institutionalist Approach to Doctors' Behaviour in Hospital Organizations

The evidence gathered has not yet produced a clear picture of how the institutional (i.e. macro) and behavioural (i.e. micro) relationship/link works for doctors in hospital organizations, in particular with regard to their reasons for being for or against organizational change driven by managerial values.

This article seeks to address this issue by looking at what structures the actions of doctors, in order to see possible reasons for the conflict and alliances among them and between them and managers.

Drawing on qualitative, in-depth research conducted in a hospital organization, with the focus on doctors from two wards (one surgery and one internal medicine), differences in their actions and discourses challenge the coherence associated, as a rule, with professional values and organizational culture. Rather than denying these influences/differences, we relate them to the way the medical professionals reflexively make use of their roles in situated circumstances. In sum, this presentation discusses not only the fact that the doctors' medical rationale is crisscrossed by a diversity of influences – ethics, management itself and the organizational culture and subcultures – but also that they make reflexive deliberations about themselves and that their personal interest(s) are defined in relation to specific contexts. Theoretically, the analysis is aligned with other work on critical realism, which is expected to refine the study of organizations as inhabited spaces by adding empirical accuracy to theoretical arguments in social theory on reflexivity.

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The Medical Profession Between New Limits and Values: Lessons from the Portuguese Case

The challenges of the growing exposure to the market and the neo-liberal policies generally adopted in the European countries to the governance of public services and the professions has been widely debated. One of the conclusions often referred to is the variety of outcomes across countries, particularly in the health sector, which therefore calls for comprehensive analyses focusing on such processes in different contexts.

This presentation seeks to address the situation of Portugal specifically referring the healthcare system. One the one hand, the place of health professions and their relationship with the State is still poorly understood in comparison with countries sharing the Beveridge model (e.g. UK, Sweden, Norway, Finland). On the other hand, Portugal was one of the European countries subjected to the conditions imposed by financial assistance programs with the institutions also known as the Troika, which resulted in tighter mechanisms to control both clinical and managerial procedures while public investment retracted considerably. These are usually considered as factors responsible for changing professional values and autonomy in healthcare organizations.

Based on a national scale survey to doctors (n=3442) collected in 2014, the aim of the analysis is to describe how doctors think their work has been affected by the policies applied during the bailout and to discuss possible implications to their autonomy. The doctors' response is consistent regarding greater administrative controls to their practice of medicine. However, we argue that this is not enough evidence to conclude as to new limits to medical autonomy and that medical professionalism actually can be reinforced in this context. In sum, theoretical conclusions are drawn in order to help framing this evidence as indicative of the interdependence between the State and medicine rather than simply assuming new limits to medical autonomy and deep changes in professionalism.

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Cash Transfer and Social Assistance Policies Devised As Means to Improve the Consume of the Poorest in Brics Countries

The institutional history, macro politics and the ideas supported by decision-makers of particular policy areas can promote shifts in policies that go beyond incremental changes. Ideas supported by sectorial policy communities, with enough political power to promote their proposals, usually generate only marginal adjustment in policies, since institutional legacy and macro politics tend

to exert decisive influence over policies. However, occasionally ideas can create fundamental change (Baumgartner, 2012).

The paper analyses the convergences and contrasts in policies promoted by governments of Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa – the Brics countries – aiming to integrate the poorest in a consumer society and to reduce socioeconomic inequalities, during the last 15 years. It highlights the role of cash transfer policies – that played a major role in Brazil, India and South Africa – and social assistance policies – more relevant in Brazil, Russia, China and South Africa – to make a comparison of the ideas – values, justifications, intended objectives – sustaining these policies in the five countries. It also examines major changes and tendencies in such policies in the period. The analysis places such policies in the broader framework; since each of these countries' governments has implemented distinct macro policies (in which cash transfer and social assistance played different role) aiming to fully integrate the poorest in a consumer society. The analysis is based in a systematic review of the literature and governments' documents on these themes.

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Social Assistance Policies in Brazil: The Role of a Policy Community Defending the Rights of the Citizens

The institutional history of a policy area, the macro politics and the actions of sectorial policy communities can promote shifts in policies that go beyond incremental changes. Communities refer to a limited and relatively stable number of members who share beliefs, values and a view about what should be the outcomes of policy (Baumgartner, 2013). The paper focuses on strategies of a policy community defending social assistance as a right of the citizen. Such strategies have led to structuring the Social Assistance Unified System (Sistema Único de Assistência Social - SUAS), set up in 2005, and to an impressive expansion of the social protection offered to Brazilian citizens. The research analyses: (1) interviews with decision makers in this policy area and members of the community, (2) documents and (3) the literature. It concludes that by 2005, social assistance ceased to aggregate a set of relatively disorganised actions promoted by 'charitable' individuals or organisations to become one of the most important areas of public policy in the country. It was the social area that expanded the most between 1995 and 2010 when one takes as an indicator federal government spending as a percentage of GDP. The growing importance of the area is partly due to strategic actions developed by a policy community that took advantage of windows of opportunity to advance institutional and policy changes that created a national system of social assistance and ensure the right to assistance for those in need.

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La Sociología De Alain Touraine y El Movimiento De Pobladores Chileno

La trayectoria de Alain Touraine ha estado estrechamente ligada a Chile. Su influencia intelectual fue decisiva para la conformación del campo de la sociología local, sea mediante la dirección de tesis de algunos de los más importantes investigadores chilenos o a través de la circulación de su teoría y método. Precisamente esa doble influencia se plasmó en la Intervención Sociológica, el método tourainiano de análisis de los movimientos sociales, realizada al movimiento de pobladores chileno entre 1985 y 1987 por un acuerdo entre CADIS (Francia) y SUR (Chile) y que concluyó que éstos no correspondían a un movimiento social, siendo incluso asimilables a la idea de un "anti-movimiento". En un contexto político en el cual se debatía si la salida a la Dictadura de Pinochet sería por una vía institucional o por una de movilización social, con protagonismo de los pobladores; algunos autores recientemente han afirmado que esta intervención sociológica contribuyó a consolidar la opción por una salida pactada al régimen, prescindiendo de los actores sociales. A partir del análisis crítico de este caso, esta comunicación pretende mostrar las tensiones existentes entre la teoría tourainiana centrada en los movimientos sociales y la investigación sobre los mismos, que terminaron por mostrar la distancia entre la construcción analítica y su expresión empírica.

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