

POLICY CREATION TO POLICY MANAGEMENT: DEVELOPMENT OF THE BRAZILIAN NATIONAL GOVERNMENT AS A ‘GATEKEEPER’.

Marcus Walsh Führung^(a)

DE LA CREACIÓN A LA GESTIÓN DE POLÍTICAS: DESARROLLO DEL
GOBIERNO NACIONAL BRASILEÑO COMO “GATEKEEPER”

DA CRIAÇÃO À GESTÃO DE POLÍTICAS: DESENVOLVIMENTO DO
GOVERNO NACIONAL BRASILEIRO COMO “GATEKEEPER”

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(a) Departamento de Ciencia Política de la Universidad de Bremen, Alemania
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8352-7224>
mawalsh@uni-bremen.de

ABSTRACT

The incorporation of National Public Management (NPM) in Brazil has challenged the centralizing role of the national government as a policy creator, due to the NPM decentralized structure in implementing administrative policy. The author hypothesizes that the introduction of such a decentralized model into the Brazilian national government creates a contradiction to its traditional centralizing role as a policy creator, and forces it to take on the role of a policy manager. This hypothesis is backed up by a research design that relies on process tracing analysis of primary and secondary sources on Brazilian administrative policy in the NPM model, and on documentation of neoliberal pressures from the international community to demonstrate the convergence of political discourse. The following analysis will demonstrate the pressure from these political forces on the Brazilian national government to maintain its political legitimacy. This pressure has led to re-centralization by the state in the domestic administrative policy discourse, while the implementation of the NPM model and thereof resulting neoliberal policies introduced by the international community have created an administrative decentralized environment. Consequently, the implementation of the NPM model has led to fragmentation domestically and challenged the policy agenda of the national government in the centralization of the decision-making process around fiscal and political agendas, while decentralizing the implementation of administrative policies following the NPM model with a neoliberal agenda. These findings suggest a need to examine the role of the national government as “Gatekeeper”, particularly in regards to changes toward institutional relationships.

KEY WORDS: Gatekeeper, national government, National Public Management (NPM), Brazil.

RESUMEN

La introducción del modelo de Gestión Pública Nacional (GNP) en Brasil ha representado un desafío para el carácter centralizador del gobierno nacional, considerando la naturaleza descentralizadora que supone dicho modelo para la implementación de la política administrativa. Este trabajo plantea la hipótesis de que la introducción de un modelo descentralizado en el gobierno brasileño genera una contradicción para el ejercicio de su papel tradicional como creador de políticas centralizadas, lo cual obliga al gobierno de este país a asumir un nuevo rol como administrador de políticas. Esta hipótesis se soporta en un diseño metodológico basado en el análisis del rastreo de proceso de fuentes primarias y secundarias acerca de la política administrativa propuesta así como en documentación sobre la presión neoliberal ejercida por la comunidad internacional para demostrar la convergencia del discurso político. El siguiente análisis demostrará la presión de tales fuerzas políticas sobre el gobierno brasileño para mantener su legitimidad política, lo cual ha llevado a la recentralización del Estado en su discurso sobre la política administrativa nacional. Por otro lado, la adopción del modelo GNP y de las políticas neoliberales introducidas por la comunidad internacional, han propiciado un entorno administrativo de carácter descentralizado. En consecuencia, la implementación del modelo ha conducido a una polarización interna, poniendo en riesgo la agenda política que busca la centralización del proceso de toma de decisiones en torno a asuntos fiscales y de política pública; sin embargo, a su vez, ha generado la descentralización en la adopción de políticas administrativas de base neoliberal. Estos hallazgos demuestran la necesidad de examinar el papel del gobierno nacional como Gatekeeper, particularmente en lo que respecta a cambios en las relaciones institucionales.

KEY WORDS: Gatekeeper, Gobierno nacional, Gestión Pública Nacional (GPN), Brasil.

RESUMO

A introdução do modelo de Gestão Pública Nacional (GPN) no Brasil representa um desafio para o caráter centralizador do governo nacional, considerando a natureza descentralizadora que esse modelo supõe para a implantação da política administrativa. Este trabalho propõe a hipótese de que a introdução de um modelo descentralizado no governo brasileiro gera uma contradição para o exercício de seu papel tradicional como criador de políticas centralizadas, o que obriga o governo desse país a assumir um novo papel como administrador de políticas. Essa hipótese está apoiada num desenho metodológico baseado na análise do rastreamento de processo de fontes primárias e secundárias sobre a política administrativa proposta pelo modelo, bem como em documentação sobre a pressão neoliberal exercida pela comunidade internacional para demonstrar a convergência do discurso político. Esta análise demonstrará a pressão dessas forças políticas sobre o governo brasileiro para manter sua legitimidade política, o que tem levado à recentralização do Estado em seu discurso sobre a política administrativa nacional. Por outro lado, a adoção do modelo GPN e das políticas neoliberais introduzidas pela comunidade internacional tem propiciado um contexto administrativo de caráter descentralizado. Em consequência, a implantação do modelo tem conduzido a uma polarização interna, colocando em risco a agenda política que busca a centralização do processo de tomada de decisões em torno de assuntos fiscais e de política pública; contudo, por sua vez, tem gerado a descentralização na adoção de políticas administrativas de base neoliberal. Esses achados demonstram a necessidade de examinar o papel do governo nacional como Gatekeeper, particularmente no que diz respeito a mudanças nas relações institucionais.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Brasil, Gestão Pública Nacional (GPN), Gatekeeper, governo nacional.

Introduction

In Latin America, Brazil has gone further than other countries in the implementation of National Public Management (NPM) reform. Argentina, Uruguay, Mexico and Colombia have advanced in the general procedural reform only, for example, by creating the standardization of public competition systems and personal confidence criteria (Bresser-Pereira, 1998; Silva-Dias *et al.*, 2013). In Brazil, the implementation of NPM reform has taken a dialectical functionalism approach in policy interactions between the Brazilian national government and supranational organizations, such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (Fadul & de-Souza, 2005). The aim of functionalism is to address organizational and managerial difficulties in the public sector by engaging in the process of reform through the transformation of administrative structures. Above and beyond, NPM reform has applied the neoliberal strategy of decentralization to the administrative structure of the state, with the subsequent outcome of democratization as evidenced in the adoption of procedures such as diplomacy and healthcare in specific jurisdictions. The ability to implement administrative policy in a pluralistic, political and institutional environment influences legislative developments regarding policy reform towards the NPM model. This external impact of NPM on Brazil provides an advantage for the adoption of its role as “Gatekeeper”¹.

1 For more information on NPM reforms in Brazil see Oszlak (2001).

In the “Gatekeeper”, the state uses its political power and maintains legitimacy through the following mechanisms: 1) capturing most of the gains from capitalism; 2) keeping the size of the winning coalitions small; and 3) retaining a monopoly over the transfer of gains for the members of its winning coalitions (Corrales, 2004). The foundation for the definition of the “Gatekeeper” is the existence of a coalition of governmental elites in the state with the authority to make binding decisions and redistribute administrative resources to society by monopolizing the transfer of gains. Despite these reforms, the author feels the introduction of NPM into the Brazilian state also comes with its downsides, where governmental elites gain access to create personal wealth through bribery (Balbinotto-Neto & Garcia, 2006; Matias-Pereira, 2005, 2010, 2013, 2014; Svensson, 2005). In particular, it has placed constraints on the national government in implementing administrative reform as this has created winners and losers who challenge the political actions of the national government.

The purpose of this review is to investigate factors that have led to the role of the Brazilian national government as “Gatekeeper”, thereby causing an increasingly abandonment of its traditional role as policy maker, and assuming the role of a policy manager. The following question is used as the basis of the study: What is the effect of the incorporation of NPM on the Brazilian national government’s role as “Gatekeeper”?

This analysis hypothesizes that the adoption of NPM and decentralized administrative policy by the Brazilian national government challenges the centralizing role of the state by allowing elites to extract resources for their own gain. Special attention will be given to the external forces of supranational factors and their neoliberal administrative policy agendas on the reconfiguration of the role of the government as “Gatekeeper”, a role that the government has been pressured to take on in an effort to preserve, secure, and enhance its legitimacy. While the aim of this review is not to address the hegemonic role of Brazil and its possible rise or fall in the new world order², it is the agenda to illustrate political

² See, for example, Kennedy (1989), who illustrates the historical cyclical nature of the rise and fall of countries.

power from the international community to invoke political change on the national level in Brazil.³

In analyzing the politics resulting in the implementation of NPM as a driving force in Brazil's transformation of the state into a "Gatekeeper", the author's research is based on the theory "Islands of Persuasion and Discourse" developed by Nicole Deitelhoff (2009). In this context, the Brazilian state competes for autonomy with federal institutions with the goal of distributing goods through an NPM decentralized structure. In order to understand the political dynamics of the relationship between NPM and the Brazilian state, this analysis is based on the examination of secondary sources and on process tracing of primary texts. These sources show that, with the emergence of NPM policy in the domestic economy, the national government has been able to marginalize other actors (e.g. financial institutions, the business sector, regulatory agencies) in the government, thereby demonstrating the political power of governmental elites. Thus, the "Gatekeeper" is not just important because it shapes political outcomes, but because it demonstrates prior conflicts between institutions and actors. These conflicts have manifested themselves in the spending of energy, resources and political capital by governmental elites, leading to the design of the "Gatekeeper". As such, these conflicts demonstrate the importance of this study and are the basis for its justification. Furthermore, by focusing on the "Gatekeeper" in its struggle for political power to maintain a monopoly of bureaucracy in a decentralized structure, this analysis goes beyond policy and, thereby, expands on current literature which merely analyzes the state and administrative policy (Abrucio, 2007; Bresser-Pereira, 1998; Matias-Pereira, 2010, 2013, 2014). It will also be shown in this review that multilateral agreements between partner countries and Brazil's federalist structure form a conflictual relationship between governmental structures and, thus, constitute internal conditions leading to the involvement of the Brazilian national government as "Gatekeeper". Finally, it will be described how the effects of NPM influence the role of the Brazilian national government as "Gatekeeper" and policy

³ See, for example, Posner (2014), who demonstrates an institutional perspective of countries and their political power and the changing dynamics of power in the international community.

manager. This political shift in power from policy maker to policy manager has changed the dynamics in policy reforms and political economy priorities, the result of which is a competitive political environment between international institutions to expand on neoliberal policy by reaching out to other state and nonstate actors such as international organizations and domestic institutions.

Brazil as the “Gatekeeper” State:

Neoliberalism and NPM

For greater political legitimacy, a pluralistic political environment in Brazil pressures the “Gatekeeper” to take on the role of policy manager between international and domestic interests. In this context, political legitimacy is defined as the people’s recognition and acceptance of the validity of a system and its rulers (Lipset, 1959). Political legitimacy is enhanced through the adoption of international norms, allowing the state to promote the practice of rule of law, accountability, transparency, and Human Rights. This is enforced by nonstate actors (NGOs and civil society) who pressure for an agenda set by public interest to counter interests of state actors, who support an economic policy that favors a neo-liberal trade and investment agenda. At the same time, in Brazil, this conflictual discourse between nonstate and state actors assures greater legitimacy in institutional relationships because both actors have to come together in order to develop agreements on the functionality of neo-liberal policy. At this point, the national government takes on the functional role as policy manager in the form of “Gatekeeper”.

The “Gatekeeper” concept was chosen for this analysis of the Brazilian national government to illustrate the authority and political power in maintaining NPM policy and its political consequences. As a result, the adoption of NPM leads to alliances of domination between the state and governmental elites that allow the consolidation of power through self-interest (Rueschemeyer & Evans, 1985). This permits the coalition in the “Gatekeeper” to create a unified political agenda for governmental elites through the redistribution of administrative resources to resist conflict from dominating interests. The tension between governmental elites, bureaucratic networks and society causes the state to be an

actor that exhibits social dominance out of self-interest (Cardoso & Faletto, 1979). Therefore, in Brazil, the “Gatekeeper” maintains sovereignty and facilitates governmental elites and coalitions to undertake the role of the state. In the case of the state and NPM, it is the redistribution of administrative resources and the availability of services to its citizens what facilitates legitimacy between the two entities.

After two decades of military rule, social regional disparity pressured the legislature to change the 1998 Brazilian Federal Constitution toward increasing competency to the federal states for more legislative power (República Federativa do Brasil, 2014a; Samuels & Abrucio, 2000). For example, in the state of Maranhão, the reform agenda proposed through a Complementary Act and ratified in 2003 has given subnational governments more autonomy over regulatory policy. The intention of the amendment was to create greater efficiency in implementing policy to conform to the incorporation of neoliberal economic reforms, as a response to pressure from the international community toward developing countries.

The incorporation of neoliberal reforms in Brazil aims at a “Managerialism” approach to complement a “market-based model”. Managerialism within NPM is defined as a framework of norms and tools based on approaches to solve economic and social problems (Imasato, Martins & Pieranti, 2011). The aim of Managerialism reform has been to introduce welfare services, privatization, deregulation and decentralization, which has led to the national government’s role as “Gatekeeper”. This is exacerbated by international pressures which have forced Brazilian technocrats and bureaucracies to conform to decentralized legislative standards due to the inefficiencies in providing service to civil society. Administrative reforms of decentralization have limited effects on attaining policy outcome. Intentions to reform the political structure to a decentralized model are based on resources and processes of efficiencies. To facilitate efficiencies, scholarly discussions in Brazil on administrative decentralization have pointed out existing inefficiencies on a macro level in an effort to address them (Andrews, Comini & Vieira, 1999; Bresser-Pereira, 1997; Diniz, 2000).

NPM as a market-based management model is based on the relationship between experts and political bureaucrats. The aim is to give experts greater discretion over policy reform and to provide greater services to its citizens. Above and beyond, the implementation of NPM policies and international neoliberal economic policy forces the Brazilian national government to compete for political legitimacy. Hence, the adoption of the neoliberal normative policy agenda by the national government has become a domestic political agenda for the country. Due to domestic economic instability and the inability of Brazilian institutions to address political demand, the national government is forced to align with supranational institutions, such as the World Bank, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). With this in mind, for the Brazilian national government to utilize international economic and political resources, the implementation of NPM policies become a necessity.

The incorporation of the international economic ideology intensifies the national government's dependency on supranational institutions and challenges the state's existing role as a unifying political force in creating policy. Therefore, NPM structural policies weaken the state's ability to act as a policy maker, in turn, pressuring it to take on the functional role as policy manager. As a result, the domestic demand for public policy relevance in the international sphere is expressed through institutional competition for a decentralized governance structure. Furthermore, by maintaining a linear bureaucratic structure, Brazilian subnational governments demonstrate the importance of consolidating political autonomy and legislative competencies. In addition, the lack of regional incorporation of the NPM structural method has forced the national government to recentralize legislative competencies in an effort to portray itself to the international community as legitimate .

This has led to a political competition between the Brazilian state and nonstate actors to control the consolidation of the decentralized governmental structure, creating a fragmentation between national and subnational policy agendas. The result is a new power structure between the political discourse and the economic agenda in a normative framework. Within this framework, international and domestic governing bodies are created to

utilize the national government as a facilitator and, thereby, provide its legitimacy to act as “Gatekeeper” in order to balance a normative agenda. The dialectical process between centralization and decentralization has caused behavioral consequences for the “Gatekeeper”, as demonstrated in the direct demand of NPM and neoliberal policies on the Brazilian state to consolidate and maintain political power. To maintain political power, the national government as a “Gatekeeper” incorporates a functional approach to construct institutional relationships and public policy and, in doing so, emphasizes the importance of maintaining legitimacy. It also demonstrates the political stagnation that has occurred through constitutional reform, and the discontent of citizens with political parties. The functional approach allows the “Gatekeeper” in Brazil to build consensus within the national government through adopting neoliberal and NPM policies.

External Pressures on the Brazilian National Government in the Reconfiguration of its Role as Policy Maker to “Gatekeeper”

Two factors play a role in defining governance in emerging democracies. One is the implementation of an economic, social, and development agenda instituted by managerial organizations (UNDP, 1997; World Bank, 1994), which enables the national government of Brazil to transfer standardized global norms from the international community to the domestic sphere, and, thereby, grants itself the power to facilitate international social and economic development goals (Rhodes, 1997). The second factor describes governance as the sharing of authority in the public management of institutional relationships between state and nonstate actors by introducing measures such as regulation of relationships, collective and operational rules, as well as constitutive choice rules (Jupille & Snidal, 2005; Kiser & Ostrom, 1982; Ostrom, 1999). The Brazilian state chooses one factor over another based on the level of self-interest and the access to foreign capital that provides political leverage for the national government.

In the governance structure, these two factors illustrate institutional relationships based on multilateral actions rather than a single state institution. The development of multilateral relationships in the international community is defined by a top-down approach and imposes global norms that may not be beneficial to the political agenda of the national government. This strategy has created a gap in how academics view the effects of administrative policy with a neoliberal agenda on the state (Kay & Gwynne, 2000). Ostrom (1998) illustrates the positive effectiveness of a pluralistic rule-based governance structure as a result of multilateral agreements. On the other hand, while multilateralism demonstrates the behavior of actors through negotiations, it does not show the effect of policies on various governmental sectors and generates ambiguity in political discourse (Keohane, Macedo & Moravcsik, 2009; Mansfield & Reinhardt, 2003). The transparency of a normative discourse in the creation of public policy within a governance structure defines political mechanisms through the definition of the “Gatekeeper”. It further demonstrates an international structural dimension of institutional relationships which forces the national government to play the role of “Gatekeeper”.

Political Science views the traditional role of the national government as the centralizing political force in developing and implementing the bureaucratic structure. In this process, domestic and international governance structures reflect a network of institutional relationships based on a normative framework. The result is the formation of a cluster of institutional relationships into small groups, which construct a political environment based on policy outcomes. In this context and regarding international cooperation, small groups acting in a governance structure become the focal point for the national government (Uzzi, 1997; Uzzi & Spiro, 2005). The interaction amongst institutions allows the development of institutional relationships regarding norms, shared goals, and differentiated roles of members (Harrington & Fine, 2000). Institutions gather around policy topics that illustrate the technical interaction amongst state and nonstate actors. Small group networks generate adverse effects by developing group thinking, internal and external rivalries, and failure to respond to external events (Barnett & Finnemore, 1999).

Therefore, the “Gatekeeper” leads to the institutional political strategies of “nesting” and “institutional overlapping”, and has an effect on the creation of a normative agenda. To identify institutions between a single regime and international agreements, the relationships amongst international institutions are in its infancy (Young, 2011). Scholarly studies have addressed institutional interactions by examining hierarchical and nested regimes that analyze the structure of norms and international rules embedded in a global system (Howse, 2000; Keohane & Nye, 2000; Young, 2011). International regimes illustrate cooperation as a functional approach to discuss issues relating to a regime framework. Furthermore, institutional relationships demonstrate the strategic nature of policy-making in related fields, which affect the objectives of public policy in specific international arenas. Institutional actors within institutional relationships incorporate “forum shopping” as a litigation strategy to develop regional precedent for legal obligations and dispute settlements in multilateral agreements (Mansfield & Reinhardt, 2003; Sutherland *et al.*, 2005). This causes both state and nonstate actors to seek forums out of political interest. Depending on the size and scope of the institution, the degree of forum seeking varies, increasing the impact on multiple institutions (Walders & Pratt, 2003). The outcome is the evolution of rules and agreements within institutional relationships, and explains the variables in selection of policy concerns such as barriers to entry to institutional relationships and voting rules (Bhagwati & Panagariya, 1996; Davis & Bermeo, 2009; Goldstein, Rivers & Tomz, 2007; Neumayer & Spess, 2005; Srinivasan, 1998). The differentiation of policy agendas of in international and domestic institutions causes the utility of the “Gatekeeper” to manage the implementation of economic and political regulation.

This, however, challenges the legitimacy of the Brazilian national government as manager of policy agendas (e.g. fiscal and regulatory policy), and forces it to prioritize policy when multiple institutions overlap (Uzzi, 1997; Uzzi & Spiro, 2005). This overlapping is the result of supranational factors, such as World Bank policies, neoliberal forces, NPM, and the Washington Consensus, which are the outcome of emerging governance structures from the international community. Therefore, external

pressure from the governance structure forces the Brazilian national government to take on the role as “Gatekeeper”.

The Evolvement of the Brazilian National Government as “Gatekeeper”

As much as supranational factors execute external pressures on the Brazilian state, they also represent institutional tools and, as such, the internal conditions leading to the evolvement of the role of the national government (Martin & Simmons, 1998). The power of the international community to create and implement policy through a neoliberal decentralization model has resulted in a loss of regulatory power for Brazil’s national government as policy maker. Neoliberal economic policy exacerbates regulation, and the functional adoption of decentralization in Brazilian federal states leads to an administrative fragmentation. The result is neoliberal policy expansion through a competitive political discourse between domestic actors for greater autonomy in policy implementation. This is shown in the State’s Reform Plan (1995) which requires competition between public managers and patrimonialism practices (República Federativa do Brasil, 1995). However, this competition is incompatible with the administrative system⁴. Hence, the differentiation in institutional political discourse leads to greater complexity in the political domestic agenda, and represents the impact of the institutional process on state and nonstate actors.

Consequently, the administrative management agenda of Brazil’s institutions emerges, and commonalities within the federal states lead to interaction between national and subnational governments, thus providing greater political legitimacy. The main objective of the Brazilian NPM model is to produce greater efficiency and more accountability in public management, as seen in institutional reforms of regulatory, executive, and social organizations⁵. For the bureaucratic state to legitimize its actions

⁴ For more information on public management reform and patrimonialism practices, see Restrepo-Botero (2000).

⁵ See Ferreira (1999) and Marconi (1999) for more information on civil service in the Brazilian reform process.

under NPM policy, it must develop resource redistribution policies to ensure a relationship between governmental elites and society. At the point that governmental agencies create an NPM policy, there is a normative and policy backlash in form of western free market pressures that question the domestic political and economic environment. In addition, as governmental elites implement political reforms and economic incentives, the state is able to consolidate information and knowledge through NPM policy and is now in a structural position to create efficient bureaucratic structure. To maintain political stability between governmental elites, the “Gatekeeper” develops mechanisms that allow the state to maintain its autonomy. Accordingly, this analysis will illustrate the development of the “Gatekeeper” as a result of decentralized administrative reforms in the market economy.

The core of the “Gatekeeper’s” legitimacy is the ability to attract and direct a stream of information while staying focused on its political interest (Metoyer-Duran, 1993). Therefore, the functional relevance of policy will be evident where the “Gatekeeper” creates political power. Literature states that the political power of the “Gatekeeper” is defined by several schools of thought: Positive, Weberian, and Pluralist (Foucault, 1978; Lukes, 2005; Weber, 1947). In explaining the structural nature of institutionalism, this analysis is based on a “Positive School” approach that focuses on interaction between the “Gatekeeper” and institutions, and the subsequent results of indirect mechanisms for interaction (Barzilai-Nahon, 2008). In this sense, the “Positive School” demonstrates how individual interaction with a group provides alternative choices for actors within a system. In institutional interaction, the political power of actors lies in the consolidation of political discourse and in the ability to impose normative definitions on other actors (Bache, 1997; Shoemaker, 1991). Institutional political power held by state and nonstate actors is two-fold: It focuses on the origins of policy discourse by granting one actor the ability to change policy discourse over another actor (Bachrach & Baratz, 1970; Dahl, 1957; Polsby, 1963); and it furthers the promotion of institutional interests by allowing the “Gatekeeper” to act on decisions with the intent to challenge institutional power or impose norms in the interest of the “Gatekeeper”.

Regulatory reform is accomplished through an administrative rule-making structure that exercises legislative desecration through the consolidation of and competition for public participation, regulatory policy, delegation of legislative powers, and technical policy creation (Desposato & Scheiner, 2008). In consequence, the evolution of public policy leads to a competing institutional relationship between neoliberal and domestic political agendas in Brazil.

State and nonstate actors demand national governments to incorporate global ideals through the institutionalization of norms. In Brazil, a liberal ideology has promoted the privatization of the state for the purposes of efficiency in the use of political and economic resources. In the 1980s and 1990s, the institutionalization of norms was debated in the Baker Plan launched by the IMF and the World Bank in order to define neoliberal reform and restructure the size of the government. As a result, international actors support the idea to sequence the implementation of neoliberal policies by starting with a civil service reform agenda before public management reforms⁶. This pressure creates competition between actors for political space held by the national government as “Gatekeeper”, as seen in the interaction between institutional relationships. These relationships are centered on state power and depict the national government as an actor to facilitate technology, strategies, and governance instruments, depending on their points of interest. The incorporation of strategic instruments initiates the Brazilian national government to develop universal legitimacy for state and nonstate actors in the political community. The differentiation of actors has redefined state power and the role of the national government.

Brazil’s national and subnational governments have developed a domestic policy comprised of international norms and domestic political interest that favors the decentralization of governance structure. The standardization of NPM and neoliberal policy forces the Brazilian national government to be a manager rather than a creator of domestic and international policy. In this framework,

⁶ For more information on sequencing of public management reforms, see Shepherd and Valencia (1996).

the competition between supranational institutions (such as the World Bank, OECD, UNDP) and the “Gatekeeper” for administrative political autonomy in national and subnational governments is the basis for policy discourse. This competition is brought about by the imposition of decentralization policy as spelled out in the Washington Consensus.

The Washington Consensus

The impact of the Washington Consensus on Brazil is directly related to the historical connection of United States military and trade interventions in Latin America⁷. Furthermore, military interventions set the path for a favorable political discourse, as well as economic opportunities for the Brazilian elite. According to Gore (2000), the agenda of the Washington Consensus is to restructure political, economic and social institutions, by transforming national economies and societies from a developing to a developed status through the mobilization and allocation of resources. The policy creation of the Washington Consensus is viewed as a “universal convergence” toward a macroeconomic discipline (Williamson, 1999), which is an attempt to summarize the reform agenda in Brazil (Williamson, 1993). Therefore, the Washington Consensus is interpreted as a paradigm shift to change the framework from state-planned economies to free market reforms and, thereby, changes the worldview of economic policy (Kuhn, 1970). In the 1980s, the “Consensus” was adopted in Brazil’s normative framework to implement development processes within national and international relationships.

The normative framework now encourages a mutually supporting relationship centered on nationalism, aid policy, and historic development issues. Before the implementation of the Washington Consensus, Brazilian development policy was formed based on structuralist and dependency theories (Kay, 1989), which emphasized the importance of external factors on development policy and suggested to not solely rely on national development

⁷ For an extended discussion on the impact of the Washington Consensus in Latin America, see Gore (2000), Grugel *et al.* (2008), and Williamson (1993).

processes. For example, “while structuralism argued in favor of an inward-directed development policy largely through import-substituting industrialization (ISI), dependency theory proposed a new international economic order and, in one of its strands, a transition to socialism as a way out of underdevelopment” (Kay & Gwynne, 2000, p. 50). Accordingly, the normative economic internationalism approach developed in Brazil integrates the policies of the Washington Consensus. In normative policies, the Liberal International Economic Order (LIEO) helps define new approaches in development practices (Gilpin, 2001).

New normative policy approaches consist of a commitment to free markets, private property, individual incentive, and government involvement (Gore, 2000). These new approaches have evolved from a *laissez-faire* liberalization of external and domestic relations into a policy advocating liberalization of external trade and the recognition of the legitimacy of state intervention in the case of market failures (Gore, 2000). Normative policy is formulated by two types of arguments: The intrinsic ethical superiority of economic liberalism, and theoretical-empirical analyses which demonstrate that conformity to LIEO norms would lead to better outcomes (Gore, 1996). These arguments explain the benefits of liberalization of trade and the evolution of macroeconomic policy internationally. In this regard, there are two important challenges to the policy proposed in the Washington Consensus. The first is presented in the Human Development Report (HDR) and the Human Development Indicators (HDI) by the UNDP, which question the free market approach in the Washington Consensus (Gore, 1996, 2000). The second challenge from the “Southern Consensus” perspective highlights the need for underdeveloped regions to undertake industrialization and catch up with the developing world (Armijo & Faucher, 2010).

This is prevalent in Brazil’s policy developments towards neo-structuralism, in the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), and has been further developed by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD, 2015). These organizational policy developments cause friction between institutional actors and the Washington Consensus paradigm of normative internationalism and methodological nationalism (Gore, 2000), as evident in the top-

down economic growth strategy of the Washington Consensus led by outside experts (Craig & Porter, 2003). At the same time, it is the United Nations (UN) agenda to introduce a contradictory trade and development model around a people-centered approach and equal participation between developing and donor countries. In turn, the opposition from the UN towards the Washington Consensus and its implementation by the developing world pressures the World Bank to incorporate the amendment of a human development policy into the Washington Consensus (McCloskey, 1988; Waelbroeck, 1998).

Supranational policies imposed on Brazil lead to a fragmented state over the perceived negative outcome of public policy on society. For this reason, economists conclude that the Washington Consensus should be abandoned before the introduction of policy shows signs of economic instability in the international communities and other Latin American countries. As a result, Brazil has been able to change the coercive economic political instruments of the Washington Consensus through deliberation of the UN. The people-centered approach developed by the UN has created greater pluralism within the international community on economic policy (Grugel, Riggirozzi & Thirkell-White, 2008).

During Latin America's Peso Crisis in the 1980s, national governments in the region "decentralized" institutions by incorporating Washington Consensus reforms to combat economic and social fallout. This strategy has evolved to an "economic liberalization coupled with formal liberal democracy" (Harriss, Stokke & Törnquist, 2004). The OECD (1997) states that Latin American countries have implemented diverse decentralized policy initiatives such as development policy, environmental management, welfare, and credit provision. Likewise, decentralization aims to empower local governments and civil society by improving competition, efficiency, equity, and bureaucratic policy (Manor, 1999; Samoff, 1990; Schneider, 2003). At the same time, Ribot and Larson (2005) illustrate how governmental ministries of central governments assign insufficient or inappropriate powers and construct policy frameworks that serve their own interests. The fundamental aspects of decentralization consist of discretionary powers without the presence of accountable representative authorities (Almeida, 2006; Ribot & Larson, 2005). Also, the main goal of decentralization is the participation of the private

sphere in the political discourse (Agrawal, 1998). Within the decentralized structure, civil society institutions create pressure by developing local democratic institutions to encourage governmental institutional compromise (Ribot, 2004).

The challenge for the national government in introducing neoliberal reforms enables regional governments to assert their own political legitimacy. Habermas (2006, p. 413) state that the “deliberative paradigm offers as its main empirical point of reference a democratic process, which is supposed to generate legitimacy through a procedure of opinion and will formation that grants (a) publicity and transparency for the deliberative process, (b) inclusion and equal opportunity for participation, and (c) a justified presumption for reasonable outcomes (mainly in the view of impact of arguments on rational changes in preference)”. In Brazil, national and subnational governmental institutions within a multi-level governance structure have formulated a political rhetoric connecting the origins of decentralization to the rise of democratization (Diamond & Tsalik, 1999; Falleti, 2010). The promotion of decentralization in Brazil has been illustrated as a historical process, leading to a shift in economic policy, debt crises and democratization (Hooghe & Marks, 2003, 2009). The implementation of decentralization policies is a direct result of national and subnational state structures. This has allowed the Washington Consensus to leave lasting effects on the current bureaucratic structure and has created an environment that promotes further decentralization of policy implementation by the national government to adhere to international pressure.

The Effects of Governmental Structures on the Brazilian National Government in its Role as “Gatekeeper”

Since the 1990s, the state has been unsuccessful in leaving behind the bureaucratic models of public management due to the focus on the relationship between the state and society in a multilevel governance structure (e.g. national government, federal state, and municipalities) (Abrucio, 2007; Bresser-Pereira, 1998; Matias-

Pereira, 2010, 2013, 2014). To create more efficiency in the public management model, the state has increased the involvement of society and has emphasized a decentralized systematic model. The decentralized process is evident in the federal constitution, which stresses the accountability of the public management model by reinforcing the legality of the state through the Public Ministry (República Federativa do Brasil, 2014a; Rocha, 2001; Schwartzman, 1988). Therefore, the decentralization process provided public management opportunities to access local municipalities by delivering goods and services. At the same time, the state has implemented two managerial models, the State's Reform Plan (1995) and the "presidential coalition model", to create more autonomy for the Executive Branch and to allow for the prioritization of policy preferences. For example, the prioritization of policy has been based on sectoral redistributive policies to give the executive flexibility to raise taxes, to use coercive administrative policy for internal order and external security, and to manipulate fiscal policy for social and economic goals (Klering, de-Campos-Soares-Porsse & Guadagnin, 2010). The presidential coalition was the model of choice for public managers in the Da Silva government, and was continued by Dilma Rousseff's administration to place systemic control over the bureaucratic apparatus. The main aim by both administrations was to distort administrative reforms and slow down administrative modernization (Matias-Pereira, 2013, 2014).

The "Gatekeeper" in the Brazilian government has been able to hijack managerial reforms and generate political fragmentation in the state by reinforcing institutional consolidation through a Brazilian public administration machine (Paes-de-Paula, 2005). This has allowed the "Gatekeeper" to create reforms by consolidating public services and to gain access to political and economic resources. During the Da Silva and Rousseff administrations, the state did not create social controls through public management but used the market to commoditize public services (Paes-de-aula, 2005). This, in turn, re-oriented public management by changing states' capacities for national development and creating institutional accountability (Cardoso-Jr., 2011).

As services in public management have expanded through the orientation brought on by market pressures, the "Gatekeeper" has been able to create a winning coalition through a patrimonialism

model that has expanded through the administrative machine (e.g. creation of ministries, secretaries, state-run companies, etc.), political party support and strategic political interests of ministries, in order to maintain the winning coalition of the executive. This allows the public management to be co-opted by special interests and allows the governmental elites in the coalition to transfer economic and political gains to its members (Matias-Pereira, 2013, 2014).

The Brazilian national government in its regional and international politics has become an actor with limited capability to push its domestic policy agenda due to administrative and economic constraints. Actions of the Executive Branch have not challenged the restricted role of Brazil in the domestic arena. Thus, its role has become that of a “Gatekeeper”, who is in charge of consolidating the political power through administrative and economic reforms, by giving domestic actors access to political and economic resources and meeting international economic growth expectations. The “Gatekeeper” framework allows the Executive Branch and governmental elites to maintain a state-centric approach by focusing on the *status quo*.

In da Silva and Rousseff administrations, the “Gatekeeper” played a functional role in the centralization of political power through access to capital for governmental elites, thereby affecting political outcomes. The impact of administrative decentralization in Brazil has led to the adoption of the neoliberal policy mechanism known as NPM. The shift from administrative centralization to decentralization enables a legislative body to create legislative mechanisms. In addition, the back-and-forth process between centralized and decentralized structures highlights where political relationships and when institutional policy processes occur. The changing role of the national government in Brazil is the result of the shift from centralization to decentralization and the change in perception of strategic mechanisms in the idea of “actorness”. At the same time, the process of decentralization explains the transfer of power from the national to the subnational governments due to the liberalization of the market.

For example, in the case of the political group Mensalão, which was organized by José Dirceu and Marcus Valério, the access to public funds was provided for politicians through the transfer of money from the Rural Bank of Brazil and some private financial

institutions (Press Office of Brazilian Federal Senate, 2005). This extraction of capital, made possible through the “Gatekeeper”, formed the basis for the Labor Party (PT) under the da Silva administration and expressed itself in the institutional interactions regarding financing and payments of debts for electoral campaigns. To maximize the extraction capability of the “Gatekeeper” during the 2002 election, the size of the winning coalition was kept small in order to transfer capital to individual governmental elites of the following political parties: Liberal Party (PL), Brazilian Democratic Movement Party (PMDB), Progressive Party (PP), Labor Party (PT), and Brazilian Labor Party (PTB). As the governmental elites were identified, it became evident that President da Silva was a part of the Mensalão case (Press Office of Brazilian Federal Senate, 2005). Therefore, the “Gatekeeper” model demonstrates the consolidation of power in Brazilian national institutions and has the capability to reveal the actions of executives of a political party. Additionally, the “Gatekeeper” is able to maintain the coalition over time due to the lack of a regulatory framework that enables favoritism of elites.

The discontent in the Brazilian electorate expressed by civil society has pressured the national government toward decentralization. The driving force for subnational governments to decentralize has been used for illiberal ends, for example, to increase its presence in the regional public sector. In consequence, the federal structure exacerbates the conflictual relationships between subnational governments and the national government regarding political power. These conflictual relationships forced the Brazilian national government to reassess territorial autonomy and to recentralize political authority (Eaton, 2013; Eaton & Dickovick, 2004; O’Neill, 2003; Wibbels, 2001; Willis, Garman & Haggard, 1999). As a result of the centralization of political authority, “spill over” of policy has consolidated the administrative roles of the Executive Branch of government. In this scenario, the NPM policy reforms have developed a geographical functional approach by adopting an Executive Branch model. In the NPM policy reform, the financial, administrative, and market-based management models “spill over” into other policy fields.

The “spill over” that occurs in the creation of policy adds further autonomy to the political authority and its jurisdictions, which makes it harder for civil society and unions to challenge

or enforce legislative developments made by the elites (Eaton, 2013; Eaton & Dickovick, 2004; O'Neill, 2003). The “Gatekeeper” insulates governmental elites due to its jurisdictional area and the ability to utilize “credit-claiming” and “scapegoating” (Moravcsik, 1993). This allows the Brazilian national government to divide and fragment differing vested interests in politics. The “Gatekeeper” converges policies and relationships around administrative obligations in NPM policy and, thereby, creates a threshold for institutions to act toward administrative regulations. Furthermore, the interaction between state and nonstate actors within the “Gatekeeper” demonstrates a complex and multi-structure environment. While state actors develop an economic policy that favors a neo-liberal administrative agenda, nonstate actors pressure for an agenda set by public interest (e.g. Human Rights, environmental, economic, etc.). This, in turn, creates a pluralistic and stagnated policy agenda which is subject to a slow-moving legitimate process. In regards to creating policy change, the “Gatekeeper” uses policy strategies to evoke a political agenda.

The “Gatekeeper” focuses on the differentiation of political actors with the intention to replicate the structural understanding of the political framework throughout all levels of government (Matias-Pereira, 2010, 2013, 2014). As stated in this review, the policy process in a decentralized and centralized structure has a causal relationship between multilateral and domestic political origins of governmental structures and the implementation of international and domestic norms. Furthermore, the relationship between conditionality of policy norms and governmental structures highlights the role of the national government as a “Gatekeeper”, and the development process of structural and institutional factors show how the state transforms in a governance framework.

The second example in describing the role of the “Gatekeeper” refers to the case of the Pasadena Refining System Inc., where the coalition in the “Gatekeeper” was comprised of public employees, businessmen, and politicians. To access capital and consolidate power, the “Gatekeeper” utilized its access to Petrobras, the Brazilian State Owned Enterprise (SOE). Under the leadership of President Rousseff, the access to capital for governmental and business elites gave the coalition the ability to extract capital from Petrobras’ administration council in access of US \$1.2 billion to purchase

Pasadena's Refinery in Texas, USA, which was owned by the Belgium company Astra Oil (República Federativa do Brasil, 2014b). Since the asking price for the refinery was only US \$42 million, the "Gatekeeper" transferred the remaining money to the members of the winning coalition (República Federativa do Brasil, 2014b).

Due to its administrative authority and the relationships with governmental elites within Petrobras, the "Gatekeeper" has been able to consolidate power through political coalitions as well as to strengthen the *status quo* and the political agenda. Based on the jurisdiction of administrative authority and the influence of business elites in these jurisdictions, a pro-economic agenda has been enforced through either Petrobras or the privatization of public services (Matias-Pereira, 2005, 2013; República Federativa do Brasil, 2014b). Administrative capacity has allowed the Executive Branch to retain valuable sources of revenue from Petrobras in order to include governmental elites in the winning coalition. However, the allocation of capital resources from Petrobras has created a dependency on these resources, thereby limiting political and economic factors and hindering administrative efficiency and the creation of effective NPM policy. The political and economic limitations form the basis for the Executive Branch and central government to utilize the "Gatekeeper" for its regulatory capacity, and are documented in the institutional interactions regarding budget rigidities and fiscal redistribution (Fadul & de-Souza, 2005). As a result, the national government increases the capital of Petrobras via political institutions, creating dependencies within institutional "Gatekeeper" relationships. In consequence, the coalition between the Executive Branch, Petrobras, and the winning political party, intensifies their relationships due to regulatory noncompliance in a multi-level governance framework (Matias-Pereira, 2010). Furthermore, noncompliance shapes expectations regarding the behavior of other actors, allowing self-enforcing norms to be violated (Matias-Pereira, 2005 and 2013).

It has been the goal of the Brazilian administrative bureaucratic decentralization to provide efficiency and reduce economic cost by incorporating administrative neoliberal policy reforms and deregulation within the nation state. The enactment of administrative policy and developments is designed to promote the participation of civil societies in the political process. The intent of

administrative decentralization is to streamline the decision-making process in the development of policy and the consolidation of government resources. Therefore, the Brazilian NPM policy is aimed at increased participation in policy development and economic growth by local governments (Matias-Pereira, 2013). The NPM policy has allocated resources to civil society in the form of public services in a free market-based structure.

Due to the inability to affect meaningful societal change in Brazil, there has been a shift in the international arena regarding administrative and economic policy in the state towards the implementation of institutional political preferences (Easterly, 2005). Inasmuch as the institutional political preferences created by the international community demonstrate the evolution of the Brazilian national government from a policy maker to a policy manager, the author of this review also considers the Washington Consensus to be an important external force in the changing role of the Brazilian national government.

The two examples of the “Gatekeeper” demonstrate its presence in the bureaucracy of Brazil’s public administration through the consolidation of political power. Consequently, the “Gatekeeper” influences the administrative order through the decentralization of NPM, and by leveraging legislative amendments as an exchange for political support. To conclude, the Brazilian public administration has been influenced by patrimonialism and inefficiency, thus exacerbating fragility and distortions in the functioning of the Brazilian bureaucratic model. The ability of the “Gatekeeper” to insulate its actions in the monopolization of the governing coalition and to access capital enhances the distortion of its actions in the bureaucratic system, providing the ideal political space to maintain power.

Conclusions

In the Brazilian context, multi-level governance will prevail as a dominant framework to address institutional relationships in a hierarchical structure. Both multi-level governance structures, international organizations and Brazil, produce emerging relationships between actors and policy cooperation. In the

dynamics of these relationships it is the role of the “Gatekeeper” to control the process of policy-making in the national government, which, in turn, legitimizes the power of the “Gatekeeper” in interactions between subnational governments and international organizations. As such, the national government acts as a stopgap in the formulation of policy and maintenance of the *status quo*.

Within multi-level governance, the implementation of neoliberal policy goes hand-in-hand with a normative understanding of the effects of administrative reform on society. As shown in the case of NPM, pressure from the World Bank and the IMF to implement institutional decentralization creates a conflictual relationship between the centralizing forces of the state and the decentralizing forces of international institutions. This causes a conflict between traditional agendas of nation states and the consolidation of power in a centralized framework and forces the process of decentralization (Keohane & Victor, 2010; Young, 2011). Pressure by the World Bank, OECD, UNDP, and IMF to decentralize administrative reform and privatize industry, has allowed these institutions to impose neoliberal policies on Brazil. Throughout Brazil’s administrative history, the national government has incorporated a dialectical approach toward centralized and decentralized political structures depending on the levels of demand from subnational governments and international organizations for reform. Historically, the Brazilian government has developed state-run industries that are partially public in centralized as well as decentralized political structures. In both structures, it has been the policy of the Brazilian national government to consolidate NPM reform and to promote an economic and administrative neoliberal agenda in favor of private business and elites.

The promotion of private business and elites as an administrative agenda creates political competition and establishes the role for the Brazilian national government as “Gatekeeper”. The national government has been in competition for political legitimacy with domestic and international actors. As a result, it has been forced to take on the role as “Gatekeeper” to ensure its legitimacy as a political actor. Scholars have introduced the “Gatekeeper” theory to explain focal points of societal change in various academic fields around a single entity (Bachrach & Baratz, 1970; Putterman, 2005; Suchman & Cahill, 1996; Tushman & Katz, 1980).

The “Gatekeeper” model developed by Moravcsik (1993) and Pollack (1995) defines political power between state and nonstate actors in relation to the “Gatekeeper” and alternative strategic relationships of “gatekeeping”. This review expands on this theory by explaining the evolution and other political factors in the “Gatekeeper” and its institutional relationships. Domestic upheaval from civil society and multilateral policy pressure from the international community question Brazil’s traditional governmental responsibility as a facilitator of democratic norms and national sovereignty. The role of the Brazilian national government as “Gatekeeper” is characterized as the focal point between international and domestic institutions.

The national government in its role as “Gatekeeper” not only ensures to maintain its own power through a centralized organization, but also to hold on to political autonomy with the goal to implement national preference. This access to power emphasizes the impact that the national government has on NPM policy. As stated throughout this review, power is the ability of an actor to force other actors to change their behavior and position to carry out the actor’s own will despite resistance (Bendix, 1962; Freund, 1969). The outcome of such event is a political shift in power, which has changed the dynamics in NPM policy reform and the implementation toward further emphasis on economic sustainability priorities as they relate to the political economy interconnectedness between the international community and Brazil. A competitive political environment is created between international institutions to expand on regulatory legislation by reaching out to other state and nonstate actors such as international organizations and domestic institutions. This, in turn, leads to a pluralistic and stagnated neoliberal policy agenda, which is subject to a slow-moving legitimate process. Institutional strategies (*i.e.* “nesting” and “institutional overlapping”) produce fragmented policy developments around institutional interests which exacerbate legislative loopholes and weak agreements. A pluralistic legal environment pressures the “Gatekeeper” to take on the role of policy manager between international and domestic interests.

Due to the decentralized agenda of neoliberal policy, the federalist structure has the institutional power to maintain its political resilience. The strengthening of federalism is a result of the

dialectical process between governors and the national government over public policy. This back and forth political discussion between institutions and the national government on the federal level allows politicians to leverage their states' agenda for international resources through the national government. On the national level, the government consolidates power by giving federal states access to the "Gatekeeper" with the aim to help politicians and the business elite gain political and economic resources.

Institutional relationships between the national government and state as well as nonstate actors explain their interactions regarding policy development and the standardization of legislative policy. The new trend in Political Science and International Relations is to focus on the dynamics that connect actors around a single policy field and to not emphasize a state-centric approach. Also, in drawing a connection between civil society and state actors, the international arena and multi-national companies have developed mechanisms and roles to navigate a pluralistic political structure. To demonstrate further the dynamic relationship between nonstate and state actors regarding a normative framework, agendas for a structural framework in the developing world and studies on the structural relationship between multi-national nonstate and state actors have to be expanded on further.

The descriptive approach of multi-level governance in Political Science literature allows political scientists to understand political networks, legal jurisdictions, and political autonomy of the state. To perceive the relationship between power and the national government in a multi-level governance structure, it will be important for Political Science literature to expand on the analytical mechanisms that are at the foundation of relationships between institutions. This will allow political scientists to better recognize the state's role in a multi-level governance structure and the role of institutions in the structure. It will also shed light on how business elites, government officials, labor unions, and civil society manipulate political and economic resources for their own gain.

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