

The pibid and the management of the school: “Implementation gap”?



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ABSTRACT

This work aims to understand how the management of the public institution of Elementary School II could contribute to the occurrence of the "implementation gap" in the PIBID-GEO subproject in the period from 2016 to 2018. Based

on Public Policy Analysis and the Policy Cycle as a virtually constructed analytical tool, the debate revolves around the moment of implementation as an uninterrupted process that may suffer some kind of problem caused by the street-level bureaucrats. This is a qualitative research developed through direct end unsystematic observation during the period in which the activities of the subproject were developed and, it was observed, that the maneuvers performed by managers due to their discretion did not collaborate with the implementation process, making it difficult for PIBID-GEO to be effectively "materialized" at the level of the educational institution.

Keywords: Public policy, Implementation, PIBID.

1 INTRODUCTION

The Institutional Program for Teaching Initiation Scholarships (PIBID) is part of the National Policy for the Training of Basic Education Professionals, developed by the Federal Government of Brazil through the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES) and implemented through a partnership between public or private Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and the Public Education Network (Federal, State, Municipal) at the various levels of Basic Education. According to the legal provisions, it aims to foster the improvement of teaching initiation training from the insertion of licentiate students in the effective pedagogical work in a school institution, for a certain period.

The subproject of the Degree in Geography course here called – PIBID-GEO – was implemented from 2014 to 2018 in a Basic Education institution¹ of the state education network of the state of Bahia. During this period, the management of the basic education institution underwent several changes that, in a way, produced some discomfort to those involved with the project – Teaching Initiation Scholarship Holders (IDs), supervising teachers and Area Coordinator. During the years in which it was developed, changes were made by the managers with the objective, it seemed, of getting

¹ The names of the municipality and the basic education institution where the subproject was implemented will be preserved.



closer to the school reality and, thus, ensuring implementation. And this, however, made us question, among other aspects: how did the manager act? Were there factors that put pressure on the manager to act that way? What manoeuvres were used by the manager? How did the manager's 'manoeuvres' (actions) affect the implementation?

We know that in the field of public policy studies, several theoretical-analytical subsidies have been used to understand them. Concomitantly, the complex conjuncture of society has demanded theoretical-methodological and analytical-conceptual references from those interested in the field of agriculture, which enable studies in a complex and broad manner.

In the educational area, it could not be different. However, it is important to consider that deference and legitimacy are quite recent, particularly with regard to the approach to education policies in the field of public policies, which has its own theoretical-methodological arsenal.

In addition, we start from the proposition that the study of public education policies presupposes an intention or interest (ideological, political, technical, organizational and cultural) of those who study it and the choice of subsidies and approximations conditions the type of information and results that will be produced (CAVALCANTI, 2013).

Therefore, the study of public policies, proposed here, is approached in a multidisciplinary way, and has as its object the public problems; the action for their solution; the causes and consequences of public action; the generation of action alternatives; discretion; bureaucratic insulation, the results of policies, etc., and is inserted in the field of Policy *Analysis*. Policy Cycle and *Public Policies*.

Therefore, the present study aims to understand how the management (managers/directors) of the public institution of basic education – "partnership school" – could contribute to the occurrence of the "implementation gap" in the subproject in question in the period from 2016 to 2018 and started from the need to devote more attention to public education policies.

2 SOME CONCEPTUAL CONSTRAINTS: FROM PUBLIC POLICY TO THE "IMPLEMENTATION GAP"

Public education policies are related to the intentions that determine the actions of the public power; to what the government chooses to do or not to do; to the decisions that aim to implement programs (projects, actions, etc.) to achieve objectives and goals in a given society; to the regulation (laws, resolutions, etc.) of education; to the struggle of interests of social ²actors (public and private sector); or even, with government activities, implemented by public agents or not, which have an influence on the lives of citizens regardless of the social class to which they belong.

²A social actor is understood as a person, group, or organization that participates in a social game; it has a political project; controls some relevant resource; It accumulates (or disaccumulates) forces in the course of its course and can produce facts to make its project viable. (CAVALCANTI, 2012; DAGNINO; CAVALCANTI, COSTA, 2016).



Therefore, when we talk about education policies, we are referring to the *political* dimensions (power play, etc.); *polity* (structure, organization of the system, etc.) and *public policy* (more concrete dimension, usually related to some type of action). The 'public' is directly related to the fact that the *policies* or *public policies* of education are the responsibility of the State and relate to its entire organization (*polity*) and, as such, are disputed by several social actors within a given 'game' (*politics*).

PIBID, therefore, is understood here as a public policy of education, more specifically, as a public policy of initial training for teachers, and the result of a certain *policy* (political process, power game, etc.) (CAVALCANTI, 2012) present in any democratic process. Its dimension, however, is concrete action (*policy* or *public policy*) and, to a certain degree, represents the response of the political-administrative system to a given situation (SUBIRATS *et al* 2012) which, in order to be materialized by the State, is implemented based on projects and subprojects (objectives, strategies, results, etc.) at the micro level of the education system – the "partner school" – serving a specific target audience.

PIBID as a public policy "is a deliberation taken by the State in which it reveals itself as the material condensation of a relationship of forces between classes or class fractions" (DIOGENES and SILVA, 2020, p.27914) and, therefore, can be understood from the theoretical arsenal of Policy Analysis understood "as a set of observations, of a descriptive, explanatory and normative nature, about public policies, which corresponds, respectively, to the questions about "what/how is it?", "why is it like this?" and "how should it be?" (SERAFIM and DIAS, 2012, p.127).

For Policy Analysis, *public policy can be modeled through a Policy Cycle generally* composed of three moments that happen simultaneously and interfere with each other, in a movement of constant feedback: formulation, implementation and evaluation (FREY, 2000; RÖTH DEUBEL, 2010; CAVALCANTI, 2012). The Policy Cycle can be considered much more of a theoretical and analytical framework than what actually happens in reality. (CAVALCANTI, 2012; DAGNINO; CAVALCANTI; COSTA, 2016). In other words, the Politics Cycle "is much more an analytical device for the study of a given policy, intellectually constructed, for the purposes of modeling, ordering, explaining and prescribing than a concrete phenomenon (CAVALCANTI, 2020, p.33).

Therefore, theoretically, after the policy is formulated (definition, objectives, actions, etc.), whether collectively or not, its implementation begins through existing bodies and mechanisms or mechanisms specially created by public management so that it is materialized at the most concrete level.

The implementation of a public policy virtually occurs when previously defined processes are converted into 'actions' and involves much more than technical (bureaucratic) aspects. This means that, during the implementation of education policies, the actions planned for a given period may undergo transformations depending on the position of the implementers responsible for their



'materialization' at the meso level (secretariats, agencies, etc.) or micro level of the system (educational institutions).

Therefore, it can be stated that the implementation of

[...] It is the moment when the planned actions are carried out, through institutions and groups or individuals of a public or private nature, in order to comply with the decisions already taken. In this dynamic, it is possible to detect a diversity of interests and power games, involving different actors, public powers (executive and legislative), institutions (public and private), professional entities, in addition to those affected by the policy. (CAVALCANTI, 2012, pp.202-203).

In the specific case, PIBID-GEO is implemented within a public educational institution of Basic Education, through an Institutional Project of an HEI that has subprojects (several degrees). In other words, between the formulation and implementation at the micro level – "partner school" – street level – there is a very complex path that extends from the publication of legal provisions (laws, public notices, etc.) through the adhesion of an educational institution to the effective moment of implementation. It would really be much simpler and less problematic if the plan was implemented, but we know that this may not happen.

The moment of implementation can be approached from several models, among them are: the Top-down (from top to bottom) and *Bottom-up (from bottom to top)* model . These models have a descriptive bias (alternative to the study, explanation of the processes by which policies are implemented) and prescriptive bias (alternatives to be adopted by formulators or implementers).

The *top-down* model emphasizes the perspective of high-level bureaucrats within the process of making public policy and, to a certain extent, places the responsibility almost exclusively on those who 'command'. In this sense, Passone (2013, p.599)

[...] implies the existence of a moment prior to the action which encompasses the process of formulation and decision-making by the central legislative authority. From this perspective, Pressman and Wildavsky (1984) coined the term "implementation deficit" to analyze the "small deficits" that occur when a policy starts to be transmitted within the system, starting from the top, of a federal system, for example, and transferring to other levels of government. The "implementation *deficits*" were considered gaps in the process of implementing the *policy*.

In the second, the *Bottom-up* Model, the role of implementers is considered of paramount importance for the success or failure of a policy (CAVALCANTI, 2012). From this perspective, the implementers – *street level bureaucrats* – who work directly with the target audience have the freedom to change and adapt the policy to a given reality (LIPSKY, 1980). This can generate effective decisions called "exercise of discretion", and the "degree of maneuver" varies depending on the level at which the implementers are in the hierarchy; in the proximity and position they occupy in relation to the target audience of the policy (CAVALCANTI, 2012; LOTTA, 2012 and 2019).

The *Bottom-up Model*, according to Rus Perez (2010, p.1185)



[...] It corresponds to the focus on the strategies, activities and relationships of the actors involved in the practice of public policies: "The basic assumptions of this model are the compatibility of the programs with the desires, desires and behavioral patterns of the actors and the process of decentralization.

Therefore, PIBID-GEO, like any policy, during the moment of implementation may present some kind of problem or mismatch. This problem can be what we call an "implementation gap." And this occurs when those involved with the implementation – the street-level bureaucrats – do not cooperate or are unable to overcome obstacles that hinder it (CAVALCANTI, 2012). The "implementation gap," therefore, is different from the implementation *deficit*. The latter deals with technical and material quality and is generally related to the comparison of the goals that have been stipulated with the results that have been achieved. The "hiatus", on the other hand, is based on the premise that implementation is not something merely technical and, therefore, it may not happen as planned (even if it was carried out collectively or with all the technical and financial aspects considered, etc.); and that the implementers (street-level bureaucrats) have a discretionary power capable of collaborating or not with the implementation process from a political, technical, etc. According to Lotta (2012a, p. 224), understanding the implementation process

[...] It starts from the understanding that there are a number of specific factors and conditions that influence the actions and decisions taken by implementing bureaucrats. Thus, in order to unravel the implementation, it is important, in the first place, to understand how the context of implementation of the policy in question is shaped and, especially, what are the factors that affect and determine it.

Based on the above statement, school management should not be considered neutral, considering that it encompasses the organization, development and evaluation of the pedagogical work of each institution, establishing relationships with its environment. Therefore, management, in the figure of the manager, here understood as an articulator, enabler, etc., together with his team (vice-principal, coordinators, teachers, etc.), has as its central focus to be concerned so that all areas of the school institution achieve the objectives of the pedagogical work, and their options derive from context and conjuncture.

School management is understood as a set of processes, decision-making and implementation of actions that allow pedagogical practices to be carried out, and the manager articulates and encompasses the various dimensions of school management and educational actions, as a condition to guarantee a certain work unit (LÜCK, 2009).

Therefore, school management can be perceived as a political, pedagogical, and administrative process through which the dynamics of the teaching-learning process are organized (MORAES, 2020). In this sense, the management (principals, etc.) of an educational institution plays an important role in the implementation of any pedagogical activity (projects, workshops, etc.), whether it comes from the



school community itself or from an adhesion/collaboration between institutions, as is the case of PIBID-GEO.

In the same way, for the purpose of the analysis in question, management is understood as a set of processes and implementation of actions that allow PIBID-GEO to be carried out; Discretion is related to the degree of 'manoeuvre' of the street-level bureaucrat (manager/principal) and the 'implementation gap' points to the cooperation or not of the manager ("partner school") with the process of materialization (implementation) of the policy.

3 THE INVESTIGATIVE LOCUS AND METHODOLOGICAL DESIGNS

PIBID-GEO was implemented in the municipality of Bahia, in a small state Basic Education educational institution, called in the legal provisions "partner school, full-time (two shifts) and served Elementary School II (6th to 9th grade) approximately 160 students from 6th to 9th grade. It had 01 Director, 01 Vice-Director, 02 Pedagogical Coordinators of 20h each, 17 employees (porters, assistants, cooks, etc.).

In the period from 2016 to 2018, the subproject was composed of 01 Area Coordinator, 03 supervising teachers, 15 Geography Degree students (IDs scholarship holders) and organized through "conversation circles" and "pedagogical workshops" that covered from themes such as the environment to questions about identity and belonging. In addition to these activities, the IDs scholarship holders participated in other pedagogical and cultural activities (planning meetings, festive dates, scavenger hunts, etc.) when requested by the school institution's management or by PIBID-GEO supervisors.

The Teaching Initiation Fellows (IDs) worked at the partner school for a period of 4 hours per week and the activities were carried out mostly in the classes of the disciplines of Geography or Portuguese Language (morning shift) and in the disciplines of the Diversified Nucleus (afternoon shift). This is because, as previously mentioned, the institution – partner school – worked full-time and, therefore, had activities in two different shifts for the same class.

To achieve the objective of the research, the technique of direct and unsystematic observation was used at different times: 1) during frequent visits to the partner school, in the participation in pedagogical and cultural events and in the meetings in which the PIBID team participated (pedagogical planning meetings, Councils, etc.); 2) meetings (fortnightly and monthly) with the IDs and supervising teachers. In other words, there was no script or prior planning for obtaining data, but rather a concern to understand the dynamics of implementation based on the action of the management, in the figure of the manager (director), during various activities of the pedagogical work in the institution and the 'speeches' of those involved in the subproject during the meetings, in which it was possible to record all impressions. complaints, experiences, etc. In this way, it was possible, at first, to capture information from the various subjects in different activities and, in a second moment, to cross-reference



this information in order to obtain greater clarity about the action of the manager (director) in general and, more specifically, those related to PIBID-GEO.

Thus, due to the fact of participating in the dynamics of the partner school and PIBID-GEO, the access to the implementers (manager, supervising teachers and IDs scholarship holders) was simple, without a high degree of complexity or formality, and enabled a vast list of information. "The observation technique can be very useful for obtaining information. More than asking, we can verify a behavior" (PRODANOV and FREITAS, p.103, 2013).

4 THE REALITY ENCOUNTERED AND THE "IMPLEMENTATION GAP"?

The Basic Education educational institution in which PIBID-GEO was implemented was based on the principle of adherence. In this way, it is understood that the manager of the institution, together with his team (pedagogical, administrative, etc.) is able to enable the activities that were collectively elaborated to be effectively implemented. However, this correlation – adherence-implementation – may be more at the level of 'theoretical abstraction' than in the implementation process, when effectively the subproject is materialized at the micro level of the education system. In other words, the adhesion of the educational institution is a necessary condition, but it may not be sufficient for the activities to be implemented.

Through pedagogical interaction and direct observation, it was possible to perceive the complexity of the problems experienced by the school community and to detect some aspects that could contribute to the occurrence of what we call the "implementation gap" of PIBID-GEO: a) alternation of managers (principals); b) disorganization of school work (administrative, pedagogical, etc.); c) deviation from the role of the IDs scholarship holders by management.

Regarding the first aspect, during the period observed, the institution in question had more than 04 managers (directors) allocated by the public power through political appointment (governor or his allies at the level of the municipality in question). Even if the "replacement" of a manager is considered as an action external to him, the focus is on how he acted during the period in which he was in office and during the implementation of PIBID. At first, each of the managers had no direct relationship with the school community and, therefore, they were unaware of the reality in which the institution – partner school – was inserted. From this reality, the impression was that each one who took over the management was 'parachuting in' to put out the constant 'fires' that oscillated to a greater or lesser degree of complication.

The constant change of directors made it difficult, and at the limit, slipped into previously made agreements, collectively defined activities, etc., since when taking over, the manager in many cases did not continue what had been established. This dynamic, which in our understanding is not very fertile, directly and indirectly affected the activities proposed by PIBID-GEO, considering that each



director (during the period in which he remained in office) did not cooperate or had difficulty in overcoming the obstacles, when not, caused other bottlenecks in the process of implementing PIBID-GEO. In fact, some even tried not to 'get in the way', but maintaining a healthy environment from constant instabilities is something very complex and requires a significant effort on the part of the manager.

The second aspect observed is directly related to the previous one, considering that an institution with so many 'transient directors' had, consequently, a difficulty in properly organizing the pedagogical work, regardless of whether it was directly related to PIBID. It is possible to affirm that each one who held the position of director (manager) had the intention of 'practicing' a management that reflected his 'brand', 'personality', beliefs, etc. and, thus, his actions did not necessarily meet the improvement of this work, but rather an intention to practice a management that reflected his 'particular agenda', etc.

It is necessary to highlight that the degree of discretion that the manager has within a public educational institution is high, especially if we consider that he, even if he has some limits, has the power to intercede in the pedagogical, administrative, etc. work. However, a manager's 'manoeuvres' may or may not negatively influence the implementation of a policy. In this case, the 'maneuvers' caused a mismatch both in the progress of daily pedagogical activities and in the specific ones of PIBID-GEO. And, this discretionary power and the 'maneuvers' arising from it lead to the third aspect – deviation from the function of the IDs scholarship holders.

The 'dysfunction' – deviation from the IDs scholarship function – pointed out is characterized by the 'maneuver' that the manager used to take advantage of the IDs scholarship holders to replace the absent professors of any discipline. This aspect, in particular, drew attention, considering that the managers, even if they were 'passengers', always claimed to be aware of the 'rules' and pointed to the importance of PIBID-GEO and how necessary its activities were for the institution.

Considering that the subproject was already being implemented since 2014 and its guidelines (objectives, actions, etc.) should be known to all, the 'maneuver' that caused dysfunction should at least be avoided and in an ideal reality never be used. In this sense, the supervising professors, in many cases, were unable to reverse the manager's action, which generated discomfort both for them and for the IDs scholarship holders themselves. That is, on the one hand, the supervisors trying to ensure the implementation of PIBID-GEO (their actions, etc.) as planned and on the other, the manager trying to solve a problem of the institution without, however, worrying about what had been collectively outlined.

However, even in the face of this reality, it is possible to affirm that by making the 'maneuver' the manager, using his discretion, was trying, in his view, to do 'better' or 'different', or even solving a pedagogical, administrative and institutional problem – students without classes due to the absence of



a teacher. However, the manager was not collaborating with the PIBID-GEO implementation process, but was also causing problems in two dimensions: 1) legal and pedagogical. The first, because, according to the legal provisions, ID scholarship holders cannot replace a teacher and take over a classroom as a conductor, and the second – the pedagogical dimension – because it moved ID scholarship holders to a classroom activity without adequate preparation.

On the other hand, his 'maneuver', within what many in the school community expect from a manager, can be considered natural because he was trying to ensure, as much as possible, the teaching-learning process. At the limit, it is even possible to infer that he did not understand that he was hindering the implementation of PIBID-GEO. In this sense, "discretion is not, by nature, good or bad. But it can have positive or negative effects" (LOTTA, 2019, p.32). Its interpretation depends in part on value judgment.

[...] It is a matter of fact in that it depends on the ways in which discretion is exercised and the results of discretionary decision-making. It is a judgment of values to the extent that these results are viewed positively or negatively (ADLER and ASQUINTH, 1980 apud HAM and HILL, pp.168-169.)

Thus, we can affirm that even though PIBID-GEO is known by the school community and has as its contribution a democratic and collective process of construction of its activities, the management – in the figure of the managers – can play a fundamental role for the effective collaboration of the "partner school" in the implementation process. It is always good to point out that PIBID's "partner school" is based on the principle of adherence. Thus, it is assumed that the manager of the institution is available to collaborate in the development of the activities that have been collectively elaborated and, therefore, facilitates or promotes the necessary conditions to ensure the implementation. However, it seems that the relationship – adhesion – collaboration – implementation – may be more at the theoretical level than when the policy is actually materialized at the more concrete level, or even at the 'street level'.

In fact, many times, the 'maneuvers' performed by the manager not only hindered, but also created a challenging pedagogical environment for the entire team – supervising teachers, IDs and area coordinators – since the "discretion of one person has a great chance of being a restriction for another person" HAM and HILL (p.169, 1993).

In this sense, the frequent 'maneuvers' (actions) on the part of the management ("passenger managers") because they were poorly aligned with overcoming external/internal obstacles, during the period from 2016 to 2018 in which the PIBID-GEO activities were developed, made it difficult to 'materialize', contributing to what is called the "implementation gap".



5 FINAL THOUGHTS

PIBID is, according to the legal provisions, a program to encourage and value teaching and to improve the process of teacher training for Basic Education and fostered by CAPES and offers scholarships for students of the most diverse degrees to perform pedagogical activities in public institutions of Basic Education being guided by Area Coordinators (IES) and supervising teachers (teachers of the "partner school").

PIBID-GEO, understood as public *policy*, is consolidated through the regime of adhesion and collaboration between an HEI and the public educational institution – partner school. It is at this level that the implementers – street-level bureaucrats – managers of the institution, area coordinator, supervising professors, IDs scholarship holders must act so that the implementation of the activities occurs and, thus, so that the policy materializes.

From the study of implementation, it is possible to detect aspects that contribute to the success or failure of a public policy. It can also be noted that the degree of discretion of the implementers - *street level bureaucrats* - can vary.

In the specific case of PIBID-GEO, materialized at the micro level of the education system, it was evident that the implementer – Manager – had a high degree of discretion and his maneuvers collaborated for the occurrence of the "implementation hiatus" and producing, to a certain degree, another subproject.

Nevertheless, the observed reality points out that PIBID-GEO contributed to the training for teaching and to the perception of the public educational institution as a field of action and study to understand the complexity of pedagogical action in the most varied meanings.

Therefore, there is a need to improve the initial training process, increasingly expanding the participation of undergraduates in the activities of the school institution (MELO, 2013), as well as to deepen more comprehensive analyses of PIBID as a *public policy* and its implementation process considering *street level bureaucrats*.



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