State-Level Implementation of the Secondary Education Reform in Brazil: Between Conflict, Ambiguity, and Heterogeneity

Detailed Methodology for Data Collection and Analysis

This section outlines the methods we used for data collection and analysis, aiming to promote transparency in scientific research and ensure the replicability of studies – specifically qualitative studies – following the criteria proposed by Aguinis and Solarino (2019). Since we ensured confidentiality for state government representatives – an essential condition for securing their cooperation, including interviews with state-level officials – we are unable to share the raw qualitative data. However, this appendix provides detailed information on our methodological procedures to enhance the transparency and credibility of the study and allow for some degree of replicability.

This study used qualitative methods to collect and analyze both primary and secondary data. Primary data were gathered through semi-structured interviews, while secondary data were obtained from documentary sources. Interviewees were selected using convenience sampling and the snowball method, based on their professional experience and roles at the time the research was conducted. Participants included mid- and high-level officials from state education departments, as well as external actors involved in the Secondary Education Reform in each state, such as representatives from state education councils and teachers' unions. In all cases, to minimize selection bias, we ensured that interviews included external actors, who often hold perspectives and represent interests distinct from those within the state departments.

The interviews with mid- and high-level officials from state education departments included both political and technical professionals, who were able to describe the key changes implemented over time and reconstruct the processes behind their formulation and implementation across various departments and levels within the secretariats. Representatives from state education councils discussed the decisions they were involved in and shared their perspectives as external actors – while still participant observers – of the reform processes. Meanwhile, representatives from state

education unions, who represent those most affected by the changes and who largely opposed them, provided critical viewpoints that helped shed light on the opposition to the reforms.

The researchers conducted data collection with a high degree of independence from the interviewees. However, given the contentious nature of the topic, in order to gain the interviewees' trust and encourage them to share relevant information for the study, confidentiality and anonymity were ensured. The interviews followed oral history techniques, with the researchers aiming to gather accounts of processes that had either not been documented or whose documentation was incomplete. This involved recording testimonies from individuals who had lived through specific historical events. By accumulating and contextualizing these interviews, the researchers were able to reconstruct these events, taking into account the different perspectives and representations on the issue.

The interviews were recorded and transcribed, and the transcriptions were analyzed alongside the collected documents, which include legislation related to the changes implemented by the states, such as curriculum, pathways, and implementation committees. The data analysis focused on identifying these changes and understanding how their formulation and implementation processes unfolded. This was done by examining their institutional contexts, characteristics, dynamics, and the legacy of previous policies and capacities, as well as the involvement of various internal and external actors. From a theoretical perspective, these processes were analyzed in light of the institutional contexts of the actors and their interactions.

References

AGUINIS, H. and SOLARINO, A. M. (2019), Transparency and replicability in qualitative research: The case of interviews with elite informants. *Strategic management journal*. Vol. 40, Nº 08, pp. 1291-1315.